

Forgotten Books

— www.forgottenbooks.com —

Copyright © 2016 FB &c Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

coherence or contradiction ..	167	Odysseus, and Diomédês, all in the battle of the eleventh book	178
Chronological reckoning in the Odyssey, inaccurate in one case	ib.	The first book concentrates attention upon Achilles, and upon the distress which the Greeks are to incur in con- sequence of the injury done to him.—Nothing done to realise this expectation until the eighth book	ib.
Inference erroneously drawn from hence, that the parts of the poem were originally se- parate	168	Primitive Achillêis includes books i. viii. xi. to xxii. ..	170
Double start and double stream of events, ultimately brought into confluence in the Ody- sey	169	Ninth book an unsuitable ad- dition	184
Skill displayed in this point by the poet	ib.	Transition from the Achillêis into the Iliad, in the begin- ning of the second book ..	ib.
Difficulty of imagining the Odyssey broken up into many pre-existing poems or songs	170	Transition from the Iliad back into the Achillêis at the end of the seventh book	187
Structure of the Odyssey—es- sentially one—cannot have been pieced together out of pre-existing epics	171	Fortification of the Grecian camp	188
Analogy of the Odyssey shows that long and premeditated epical composition consists with the capacities of the early Greek mind	172	Zeus in the fourth book, or Iliad, different from Zeus in the first and eighth, or Achil- lêis	195
Iliad—much less coherent and uniform than the Odyssey ..	ib.	Continuous Achillêis—from the eleventh book onward ..	ib.
Incoherence prevails only in parts of the poem—manifest coherence in other parts ..	173	Supposition of an enlarged Achillêis is the most conso- nant to all the parts of the poem as it stands	191
Wolfian theory explains the former, but not the latter	ib.	Question of one or many authors—difficult to decide	195
Theory of Welcker, Lange, and Nitzsch.—Age of the Epos preparatory to that of the Epopœe	175	Odyssey all by one author, Iliad probably not	196
Iliad essentially an organised poem — but the original scheme does not comprehend the whole poem	ib.	Difference of style in the last six books—may be explained without supposing difference of authorship	197
Iliad—originally an Achillêis		Last two books—probably not	

ook x. 201
dyssey—probably by a dif-
ferent author from the Iliad 203
nt, perhaps, of the same age *ib.*

but touching those feelings
which all men have in com-
mon 207
No didactic purpose in Homer 209

PART II.—HISTORICAL GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL GEOGRAPHY AND LIMITS OF GREECE.

Page	Page
Limits of Greece 213	phers on the influence of
Northern boundary of Greece	maritime habits and com-
—Olympus <i>ib.</i>	merce 226
Scardus and Pindus 214	Difference between the land-
Their extension and dissemi-	states and the sea-states in
nation through Southern	Greece 227
Greece and Peloponnesus .. 215	Effects of the configuration of
Ossa and Pelion—to the Cyclo-	Greece upon the political re-
ades 216	lations of the inhabitants .. <i>ib.</i>
Geological features 217	Effects upon their intellectual
Irregularity of the Grecian	development 229
waters—rivers dry in summer 218	Mineral productions 230
Frequent marshes and lakes 219	Its chief productions 231
Subterranean course of rivers,	Climate—better and more heal-
out of land-locked basins .. 220	thy in ancient times than it
Difficulty of land communi-	is now 233
cation, and transport in Greece 222	Great difference between one
Indentations in the line of	part of Greece and another <i>ib.</i>
coast—universal accessibili-	Epirots, Macedonians, &c. .. 234
ty by sea 224	Islands in the Ægean 235
Sea communication essential	Greeks on the coast of Asia
for the islands and colonies 225	Minor 236
Views of the ancient philoso-	

CHAPTER II.

THE HELLENIC PEOPLE GENERALLY, IN THE EARLY HISTORICAL TIMES.

The Hellens generally.—Bar-	ments, localities, and sacri-
barians—the word used as	fices 241
antithesis to Hellens 238	Olympic and other sacred games 243
Hellenic aggregate—how held	Habit of common sacrifice an
together. 1. Fellowship of	early feature of the Hellenic
blood 239	mind—began on a small scale 244
2. Common language 240	Amphiktyonies—exclusive re-
Greek language essentially one	ligious partnerships 245
with a variety of dialects .. 241	Their beneficial influence in
3. Common religious senti-	creating sympathies 246

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

Page	Page
What was called the Amphiktyonic Council 247	tial—village residence is looked upon as an inferior scale of living 260
Its twelve constituent members and their mutual position .. 248	Village residents—numerous in early Greece—many of them coalesced into cities 261
Antiquity of the Council—simplicity of the old oath .. 249	Sparta—retained its old village trim even at the height of its power 262
Amphiktyonic meeting originally at Thermopylæ 250	Hellenic aggregate accepted as a primary fact—its pre-existing elements untraceable 263
Valuable influence of these Amphiktyonies and festivals in promoting Hellenic union <i>ib.</i>	Ancient Pelasgians not knowable 264
Amphiktyons had the superintendence of the temple of Delphi 251	Historical Pelasgians—spoke a barbarous language 265
But their interference in Grecian affairs is only rare and occasional 252	Historical Leleges—barbarians in language also 266
Many Hellenic states had no participation in it 253	Statements of good witnesses regarding the historical Pelasgians and Leleges are to be admitted,—whether they fit the legendary Pelasgians and Leleges or not <i>ib.</i>
Temple of Delphi 254	Alleged ante-Hellenic colonies from Phœnicia and Egypt—neither verifiable nor probable 268
Oracles generally—habit of the Greek mind to consult them 256	Most ancient Hellas—Græci .. 269
General analogy of manners among the Greeks 257	
Political sovereignty attached to each separate city—essential to the Hellenic mind .. 258	
Each city stood to the rest in an international relation .. 259	
But city government is essen-	

CHAPTER III.

MEMBERS OF THE HELLENIC AGGREGATE, SEPARATELY TAKEN.—GREEKS NORTH OF PELOPONNESUS.

Amphiktyonic races 271	General sketch of them.—
Non-Amphiktyonic races .. 272	Greeks north of Thermopylæ 275
First period of Grecian history— —from 776-560 B.C. <i>ib.</i>	Thessalians and their dependents 276
Second period—from 560-300 B.C. 272	Thessalian character 278
Important differences between the two—the first period preparatory and very little known 274	Condition of the population of Thessaly—a villein race—the Penestæ 280
Extra-Peloponnesian Greeks (north of Attica) not known at all during the first period <i>ib.</i>	Who the Penestæ were—doubtful 281
	Quadruple division of Thessaly 282

CHAPTER IV.

EARLIEST HISTORICAL VIEW OF PELOPONNESUS.—DORIANS IN ARGOS AND THE NEIGHBOURING CITIES.

<p>Distribution of Peloponnesus about 450 B.C. 300</p> <p>Continuous Dorian states . . <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Western Peloponnesus 301</p> <p>Northern Peloponnesus— Achaia 302</p> <p>Central region—Arcadia . . . <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Difference between this distri- bution and that of 776 B.C. 303</p> <p>Portions of the population which were believed to be in- digenous: Arcadians, Kynu- rians, Achæans 304</p> <p>Immigrant portions—Dorians, Ætolo-Eleians, Dryopes, Tri- phylians 305</p> <p>Legendary account of the Do- rian immigration <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Alexandrine chronology from the return of the Herakleids to the first Olympiad 306</p> <p>Spartan kings <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Herakleid kings of Corinth . . 307</p> <p>Argos and the neighbouring Dorians greater than Sparta in 776 B.C. 309</p> <p>Early settlements of the Do- rians at Argos and Corinth— Temenion—Hill of Solygeius 310</p>	<p>Dorian settlers arrived by sea 310</p> <p>Early Dorians in Krete 311</p> <p>The Dryopians—their settle- ments formed by sea 312</p> <p>Dorian settlements in Argos quite distinct from those in Sparta and in Messenia . . <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Early position of Argos—me- tropolis of the neighbouring Dorian cities 313</p> <p>Pheidôn the Temenid—king of Argos 315</p> <p>His claims and projects as re- presentative of Hêraklês . . 316</p> <p>He claims the right of presi- ding at the Olympic games 317</p> <p>Relations of Pisa with Pheidôn, and of Sparta with Elis . . <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Conflict between Pheidôn and the Spartans, at or about the 8th Olympiad, 748 B.C. . . . 318</p> <p>Pheidôn the earliest Greek who coined money and determined a scale of weight 319</p> <p>Coincidence of the Æginæan scale with the Babylonian <i>ib.</i></p> <p>Argos at this time the first state in Peloponnesus 320</p>
--	---

CHAPTER IV.—*continued.*

	Page		Page
Her subsequent decline from the relaxation of her confederacy of cities	321	From hence arose the coinage of money, &c. by Pheidôn ..	324
Dorians in the Argolic peninsula—their early commerce with the Dorian islands in the Ægean	322	Pheidonian coinage and statistical scale—belong originally to Argos, not to Ægina ..	<i>ib.</i>

CHAPTER V.

ÆTOLO-DORIAN IMMIGRATION INTO PELOPONNESUS.—ELIS, LACONIA, AND MESSENA.

Ætolian immigration into Peloponnesus	326	Messenian kings	330
Dorians of Sparta and Stenyklêrus—accompanying or following them across the Corinthian Gulf	327	Analogous representations in regard to the early proceedings both of Spartans and Messenians	331
Settlement at Sparta made by marching along the valleys of the Alpheius and Eurotas ..	<i>ib.</i>	The kings of Stenyklêrus did not possess all Messenia ..	332
Causes which favoured the settlement	328	Olympic festival—the early point of union of Spartans, Messenians and Eleians ..	334
Settlements confined at first to Sparta and Stenyklêrus ..	<i>ib.</i>	Previous inhabitants of southern Peloponnesus—how far different from the Dorians ..	335
First view of historical Sparta	329	Doric and Æolic dialect ..	336

CHAPTER VI.

LAWS AND DISCIPLINE OF LYKURGUS AT SPARTA.

Lykurgus—authorities of Plutarch respecting him	338	He is sent by the Delphian oracle to reform the state ..	345
Uncertainties about his genealogy	<i>ib.</i>	His institutions ascribed to him—senate and popular assembly—ephors	<i>ib.</i>
Probable date of Lykurgus ..	340	Constitution ascribed to Lykurgus agrees with that which we find in Homer	348
Opinion of O. Müller (that Sparta is the perfect type of Dorian character and tendencies) is incorrect. Peculiarity of Sparta	341	Pair of kings at Sparta—their constant dissensions—a security to the state against despotism	349
Early date of Lykurgus	342	Idea of Kleomenês III. respecting the first appointment of the ephors	350
View taken of Lykurgus by Herodotus	343		
Little said about Lykurgus in the earlier authors	344		

CHAPTER VI.—*continued.*

Page	Page		
Subordination of the kings, and supremacy of the ephors, during the historical times ..	352	Syssitia or public mess	380
Position and privileges of the kings	353	Public training or discipline ..	381
Power of the ephors	355	Manners and training of the Spartan women—opinion of Aristotle	383
Public assembly	357	Statement of Xenophon and Plutarch	384
The Senate	358	Number of rich women in the time of Aristotle—they had probably procured exemption from the general training ..	387
Spartan constitution—a close oligarchy	359	Earnest and lofty patriotism of the Spartan women	388
Long duration of the constitution without formal change—one cause of the respect in Greece and pride in the Spartans themselves	<i>ib.</i>	Lykurgus is the trainer of a military brotherhood more than the framer of a political constitution	389
Dorians divided into three tribes—Hylleis, Pamphyli, and Dymanes	361	His end, exclusively warlike—his means, exclusively severe ..	391
Local distinctions known among the Spartans	362	Statements of Plutarch about Lykurgus—much romance in them	392
Population of Laconia—1. Spartans	363	New partition of lands—no such measure ascribed to Lykurgus by earlier authors down to Aristotle	393
2. Pericæki	364	The idea of Lykurgus as an equal partitioner of lands belongs to the century of Agis and Kleomenès	396
Special meaning of the word Pericæki in Laconia	366	Circumstances of Sparta down to reign of Agis	397
Statement of Isokratès as to the origin of the Pericæki ..	367	Diminished number of citizens and degradation of Sparta in the reign of Agis. His ardent wish to restore the dignity of the state	398
Statement of Ephorus—different from Isokratès, yet not wholly irreconcilable	369	Historic fancy of Lykurgus as an equal partitioner of lands grew out of this feeling ..	399
Spartans and Pericæki—no distinction of race known between them in historical times	371	Partition proposed by Agis ..	400
3. Helots—essentially villagers	373	Opinion that Lykurgus proposed some agrarian interference, but not an entire repartition, gratuitous and improbable	401
They were serfs—adscripti glebæ—their condition and treatment	374	The statement of Plutarch is best explained by supposing	
Bravery and energy of the Helots—fear and cruelty of the Spartans	376		
Evidence of the character of the Spartan government ..	377		
The Krypteia	378		
Manumitted Helots	379		
Economical and social regulations ascribed to Lykurgus	380		
Partition of lands	<i>ib.</i>		

CHAPTER VI.—*continued.*

Page	Page
it a fiction of the time of Agis 402	Lykurgean system—originally applied only to Sparta—introduced equal severity of discipline, not equality of property 416
Acknowledged difficulty of understanding by what means the fixed number and integrity of the lots were maintained 405	Original Dorian allotment of land in Sparta unknown—probably not equal <i>ib.</i>
Plutarch's story about the ephor Epitadeus 406	Gradual conquest of Laconia, the result of the new force imparted by the Lykurgean discipline 417
Landed property was always unequally divided at Sparta 407	Conquest of Amyklæ, Pharis and Geronthræ, by king Téléklus 419
Nor were there any laws which tended to equalise it 408	Helus conquered by Alkamenês 420
Opinions of Aristotle <i>ib.</i>	Progressive increase of Sparta <i>ib.</i>
Erroneous suppositions with regard to the Spartan law and practice of succession .. 409	

CHAPTER VII.

FIRST AND SECOND MESSENIAN WARS.

Authorities for the history of the Messenian wars 421	Revolt of the Messenians against Sparta—second Messenian war—Aristomenês .. 428
Chiefly belong to the time after the foundation of Messênê by Epameinondas' 422	His chivalrous exploits and narrow escapes—end of the second war—the Messenians again conquered <i>ib.</i>
Absence of real or ancient traditions concerning these wars: contradictions about the Messenian hero Aristomenês 423	Narrative of Pausanias, borrowed from the poet Rhianus, is undeserving of credit .. 429
Dates of the first wars—B.C. 743-724 <i>ib.</i>	The poet Tyrtæus, the ally of Sparta—his great efficiency and influence over the Spartan mind 430
Causes alleged by the Spartans 424	Musical susceptibilities of the Spartans 432
Spartan king Téléklus slain by the Messenians at the temple of Artemis Limnatis 425	Powerful ethical effect of the old Grecian music 433
First Messenian war 426	Sufferings of the Spartans in the second Messenian war .. <i>ib.</i>
Messenian kings, Euphaês and Aristodêmus <i>ib.</i>	Date of the second war, B.C. 648-631 435
Messenians concentrate themselves on Mount Ithômê—after a long siege they are completely conquered 427	Punishment of the traitor Aristokratês, king of the Arcadian Orchomenus 436
Harsh treatment and Helotism of the conquered Messenians under Sparta <i>ib.</i>	

CHAPTER VII.—*continued.*

Page	Page		
Spartans acquire the country west of Taygetus	437	Relations of Pisa and Elis ..	439
The Messenian Dorians had no considerable fortified places—lived in small townships and villages	438	Struggles of the Pisatæ and Triphylians for autonomy.—The latter in after-times sustained by the political interests of Sparta	440

CHAPTER VIII.

CONQUESTS OF SPARTA TOWARDS ARCADIA AND ARGOLIS.

State of Arcadia	441	portion of Peloponnesus, from sea to sea, by the Spartans, before 540 B.C.	452
Tegea and Mantinea the most powerful Arcadian towns before the building of Megalopolis	444	Great comparative power of Sparta at that early time ..	453
Encroachments of Sparta upon the southern boundary of Arcadia	445	Careful personal training of the Spartans—at a time when other states had no training at all	454
Unsuccessful attempts of the Spartans against Tegea ..	446	Military institutions of Sparta—Peculiar and minute military subdivisions, distinct from the civil—Enômoties, &c.	456
They are directed by the oracle to bring to Sparta the bones of the hero Orestês	447	Careful drilling of the Enômoties	457
Their operations against Tegea become more successful; nevertheless Tegea maintains her independence	448	In other Grecian cities there were no peculiar military divisions distinct from the civil	460
Boundaries of Sparta towards Argos—conquest of Thyreātis by Sparta	<i>ib.</i>	Recognised superiority of Sparta—a part of early Grecian sentiment—coincident with the growing tendency to increased communion	461
Battle of the 300 select champions, between Sparta and Argos, to decide the possession of the Thyreatis—valour of Othryades	449	Homeric mode of fighting—probably belonged to Asia, not to Greece	462
Thyreatis comes into possession of Sparta—efforts of the Argæians to recover it	450	Argos—her struggles to recover the headship of Greece	<i>ib.</i>
Alteration in Grecian opinion, as to the practice of deciding disputes by select champions	451	Her conquest of Mykenæ, Tiryns, and Kleônæ.—Nemean games	464
Kynurians in Argolis—said to be of Ionic race, but dorised	<i>ib.</i>	Achaia—twelve autonomous towns, perhaps more—little known	<i>ib.</i>
Full acquisition of the southern			

HISTORY OF GREECE.

PART I.

CONTINUATION OF LEGENDARY GREECE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CLOSING EVENTS OF LEGENDARY GREECE.—PERIOD OF INTERMEDIATE DARKNESS, BEFORE THE DAWN OF HISTORICAL GREECE.

SECTION I.—RETURN OF THE HERAKLEIDS INTO PELOPONNESUS.

IN one of the preceding chapters, we have traced the descending series of the two most distinguished mythical families in Peloponnêsus—the Perseids and the Pelopids. We have followed the former down to Hêraklês and his son Hyllus, and the latter down to Orestês son of Agamemnôn, who is left in possession of that ascendancy in the peninsula which had procured for his father the chief command in the Trojan war. The Herakleids or sons of Hêraklês, on the other hand, are expelled fugitives, dependent upon foreign aid or protection: Hyllus had perished in single combat with Echemus of Tegea, (connected with the Pelopids by marriage with Timandra sister of Klytæmnêstra,¹) and a solemn compact had been made, as the preliminary condition of this duel, that no similar attempt at an invasion of the peninsula should be undertaken by his family for the space of 100 years. At the end of the stipulated period the attempt was renewed, and with complete success; but its

¹ Hesiod, Eoiai, Fragm. 58. p. 43, ed. Düntzer.

success was owing not so much to the valour of their leaders as to a powerful body of new allies. They re-appear as leaders and companions of the Dorians in the northerly section of the Greek name, which first come into importance,—poor indeed as a powerful force along with the Dorians. Their re-appearance as a powerful force along with the Dorians. mythical renown, since they are never mentioned in the Iliad, and only once casually mentioned in the Odyssey, as a fraction among the long-tongued inhabitants of Krête—but they nevertheless form one of the grand and predominant elements through all the career of historical Hellas.

The son of Hyllus—Kleodæus—as well as his grandsons Aristomachus, were now dead, and the lineage of Iphiklos was represented by the three sons of the latter—Tersandros, Kresphontês, and Aristodêmus. Under their conduct the Dorians penetrated into the peninsula. The mythical account of this alliance, as well as of the three tribes of Dorians, traces back this intimate union between the Herakleids and the Dorians to a period in which Hêraklês himself had rendered valuable aid to the Dorian king Ægimius. The latter was hard pressed in a contest with the Lapithæ. Hêraklês defeated the Lapithæ, slew their king Korônus; in return for which he assigned to his deliverer one-third part of his whole territory, and adopted Hyllus as his son. Hêraklês desired that the territory thus made over might be held in reserve for a time should come when his descendants might need of it; and that time did come, after the death of Iphiklos (see Chap. V.). Some of the Herakleids then fourished at Trikorythus in Attica, but the remainder, turning their steps towards Ægimius, solicited from him the portion of land which had been promised to their valiant progenitor. Ægimius received them according to his engage-

came intimately united together into one social communion. Pamphylus and Dymas, sons of Ægimius, accompanied Têmenus and his two brothers in their invasion of Peloponnêsus.

Such is the mythical incident which professes to explain the origin of those three tribes into which all the Dorian communities were usually divided—the Hyllêis, the Pamphyli, and the Dymanes—the first of the three including certain particular families, such as that of the kings of Sparta, who bore the special name of Herakleids. Hyllus, Pamphylus, and Dymas are the eponymous heroes of the three Dorian tribes.

Têmenus and his two brothers resolved to attack Peloponnêsus, not by a land-march along the Isthmus, such as that in which Hyllus had been previously slain, but by sea across the narrow inlet between the promontories of Rhium and Antirrhium with which the Gulf of Corinth commences. According to one story indeed—which however does not seem to have been known to Herodotus—they are said to have selected this line of march by the express direction of the Delphian god, who vouchsafed to expound to them an oracle which had been delivered to Hyllus in the ordinary equivocal phraseology. Both the Ozolian Lokrians, and the Ætolians, inhabitants of the northern coast of the Gulf of Corinth, were favourable to the enterprise, and the former granted to them a port for building their ships, from which memorable circumstance the port ever afterwards bore the name of Nau-paktus. Aristodêmus was here struck with lightning and died, leaving twin sons, Eurysthenês and Proklês; but his remaining brothers continued to press the expedition with alacrity.

Têmenus,
Kresphon-
tês, and
Aristode-
mus invade
Pelopon-
nêsus
across the
Gulf of
Corinth.

At this juncture, an Akarnanian prophet named Karnus, presented himself in the camp¹ under the inspiration

other,—Iô, the Argonauts, Pêleus and Thetis, &c. But the name which it bears seems to imply that the war of Ægimius against the Lapithæ, and the aid given to him by Hêraklês, was one of its chief topics. Both O. Müller (*History of the Dorians*, vol. i. b. l. c. 8) and Welcker (*Der Epische Cyklus*,

p. 263) appear to me to go beyond the very scanty evidence which we possess in their determination of this lost poem; compare Markt-scheffel, *Præfat. Hesiod. Fragm.* cap. 5. p. 159.

¹ Respecting this prophet, compare Enomaus ap. Eusebium, *Præparat. Evangel.* v. p. 211 Ac-

of Apollo, and uttered various predictions: he was however so much suspected of treacherous collusion with the Peloponnesians, that Hippotês, great grandson of Hêraklês through Phylas and Antiochus, slew him. His death drew upon the army the wrath of Apollo, who destroyed their vessels and punished them with famine. Têmenus in his distress, again applying to the Delphian god for succour and counsel, was made acquainted with the cause of so much suffering, and was directed to banish Hippotês for ten years, to offer expiatory sacrifice for the death of Karnus, and to seek as the guide of the army a man with three eyes.¹ On coming back to Naupaktus, he met the Ætolian Oxylus son of Andræmôn returning to his country, after a temporary exile in Elis incurred for homicide: Oxylus had lost one eye, but as he was seated on a horse, the man and the horse together made up the three eyes required, and he was adopted as the guide prescribed by the oracle.² Conducted by him, they refitted their ships, landed on the opposite coast of Achaia, and marched to attack Tisamenus son of Orestês, then the great potentate of the peninsula. A decisive battle was fought, in which the latter was vanquished and slain, and in which Pamphylus and Dymas also perished. This battle made the Dorians so completely masters of the Peloponnêsus, that they proceeded to distribute the territory among themselves. The fertile land of Elis had been by previous stipulation reserved for Oxylus, as a recompense for his services as conductor: and it was agreed that the three Herakleids—Têmenus, Kres-

The prophet Karnus slain by Hippotês.

Oxylus chosen as guide.

phontês, and the infant sons of Aristodêmus— should draw lots for Argos, Sparta, and Messênê. Argos fell to Têmenus, Sparta to the sons of Aristodêmus, and Messênê to Kresphontês; the latter having secured for himself this prize, the most fertile territory of the three, by the fraud of putting into the vessel out of which the lots were drawn, a lump of clay instead of a stone, whereby the lots of his brothers were drawn out while his own remained inside. Solemn sacrifices were offered by each upon this partition; but as they proceeded to the ceremony, a miraculous sign was seen upon the altar of each of the brothers—a toad corresponding to Argos, a serpent to Sparta, and a fox to Messênê. The prophets, on being consulted, delivered the import of these mysterious indications: the toad, as an animal slow and stationary, was an evidence that the possessor of Argos would not succeed in enterprises beyond the limits of his own city; the serpent denoted the aggressive and formidable future reserved to Sparta; the fox prognosticated a career of wile and deceit to the Messenian.

Division of the lands of Peloponnêsus among the invaders.

Such is the brief account given by Apollodôrus of the Return of the Herakleids, at which point we pass, as if touched by the wand of a magician, from mythical to historical Greece. The story bears on the face of it the stamp, not of history, but of legend—abridged from one or more of the genealogical poets,¹ and presenting such an account as they thought satisfactory, of the first formation of the great Dorian establishments in Peloponnêsus, as well as of the semi-Ætolian Elis. Its incidents are so conceived as to have an explanatory bearing on Dorian institutions—upon the triple division of tribes, characteristic of the Dorians—upon the origin of the great festival of the Karneia at Sparta and other Dorian cities, alleged to be celebrated in expiation of the murder of Karnus—upon the different temper and character of the Dorian states among themselves—

Explanatory value of these legendary events.

¹ Herodotus observes, in reference to the Lacedæmonian account of their first two kings in Peloponnêsus (Eurysthenês and Proklês, the twin sons of Aristodêmus), that the Lacedæmonians gave a story not in harmony with

any of the poets,—Λακεδαιμόνιοι γάρ, ὁμολογέοντες οὐδενὶ ποιητῆι, λέγουσιν αὐτὸν Ἄριστοδήμον . . . βασιλεύοντα ἀγαγεῖν σφέας ἐς ταύτην τὴν χώραν τὴν νῦν ἐκτέταται, ἀλλ' οὐ τοὺς Ἄριστοδήμου παῖδας (Herodot. vi. 52).

upon the early alliance of the Dorians with Elis, which contributed to give ascendancy and vogue to the Olympic games—upon the reverential dependence of Dorians towards the Delphian oracle—and lastly upon the etymology of the name Naupaktus. If we possessed the narrative more in detail, we should probably find many more examples of colouring of the legendary past suitable to the circumstances of the historical present.

Above all, this legend makes out in favour of the Dorians and their kings a mythical title to their Peloponnesian establishments; Argos, Sparta, and Messênê are presented as rightfully belonging, and restored by just retribution, to the children of Hêraklês. It was to them that Zeus had specially given the territory of Sparta; the Dorians came in as their subjects and auxiliaries.¹ Plato

Mythical title of the Dorians to Peloponnêsus. gives a very different version of the legend, but we find that he too turns the story in such a manner as to embody a claim of right on the part of the conquerors. According to him, the Achæans who returned from the capture of Troy, found among their fellow-citizens at home—the race which had grown up during their absence—an aversion to re-admit them: after a fruitless endeavour to make good their rights, they were at last expelled, but not without much contest and bloodshed. A leader named Dorieus collected all these exiles into one body, and from him they received the name of Dorians instead of Achæans; then marching back under the conduct of the Herakleids into Peloponnêsus they re-

covered by force the possessions from which they had been shut out, and constituted the three Dorian establishments under the separate Herakleid brothers, at Argos, Sparta, and Messênê. These three fraternal dynasties were

Plato makes out a different title for the same purpose.

¹ Tyrtaeus, Fragm.—

Αὐτός γὰρ Κρονίων, καλλιστεφάνου
πόσις Ἡρας,

Ζεὺς Ἡρακλειδαῖς τήνδε δέδωκε
πόλιν·

Οἷσιν ἄμα, προλιπόντες Ἐρίνεον
ἠνεμόεντα,

Εὐρείαν Πέλοπος νῆσον ἀφικό-
μεθα.

In a similar manner Pindar says that Apollo had planted the sons

of Hêraklês, jointly with those of Ægimius, at Sparta, Argos and Pylus (Pyth. v. 93).

Isokratês (Or. vi. *Archidamus*, p. 120) makes out a good title by a different line of mythical reasoning. There seem to have been also stories, containing mythical reasons why the Herakleids did not acquire possession of Arcadia (Polyæn. i. 7).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



into their territory. The leading Ionians declining this request, under the apprehension that Tisamenus might be chosen as sovereign over the whole, the latter accomplished his object by force. After a vehement struggle, the Ionians were vanquished and put to flight, and Tisamenus thus acquired possession of Helikê, as well as of the northern coast of the peninsula, westward from Sikyôn; which coast continued to be occupied by the Achæans, and received its name from them, throughout all the historical times. The Ionians retired to Attica, many of them taking part in what is called the Ionic emigration to the coast of Asia Minor, which followed shortly after. Pausanias indeed tells us that Tisamenus, having gained a decisive victory over the Ionians, fell in the engagement,¹ and did not himself live to occupy the country of which his troops remained masters. But this story of the death of Tisamenus seems to arise from a desire on the part of Pausanias to blend together into one narrative two discrepant legends; at least the historical Achæans in later times continued to regard Tisamenus himself as having lived and reigned in their territory, and as having left a regal dynasty which lasted down to Ogygês,² after whom it was exchanged for a popular government.³

The conquest of Têmenus, the eldest of the three Herakleids, originally comprehended only Argos and its neighbourhood: it was from thence that Trœzen, Epidaurus, Ægina, Sikyôn, and Phlius were successively occupied by Dorians, the sons and son-in-law of Têmenus—Dêiphontês, Phalkês, and Keisus—being the leaders under whom this was accomplished.⁴ At Sparta the success of the Dorians was furthered by the treason of a man named Philonomus, who received as recompense the neighbouring town and

Occupation
of Argos,
Sparta, and
Mêssên^a
by the
Dorians.

¹ Pausan. vii. 1—3.

² Polyh. ii. 45; iv. 1. Strabo, viii. p. 383—384. This Tisamenus derives his name from the memorable act of revenge ascribed to his father Orestês. So in the legend of the Siege of Thêbes, Thersander, as one of the Epigoni, avenged his father Polynikês; the son of Thersander was also called *Tisamenus* (Herodot. iv. 149). Compare O. Müller, Dorians i. p. 69,

note 9, Eng. Trans.

³ Diodôr. iv. 1. The historian Ephorus embodied in his work a narrative in considerable detail of this grand event of Grecian legend,—the Return of the Herakleids,—with which he professed to commence his consecutive history: from what sources he borrowed we do not know.

⁴ Strabo, viii. p. 389. Pausan. ii. 6, 2; 12, 1.

under another leader, though still a Herakleid. Hippotês—descendant of Hêraklês in the fourth generation, but not through Hyllus—had been guilty (as already mentioned) of the murder of Karnus the prophet at the camp of Naupaktus, for which he had been banished and remained in exile for ten years; his son deriving the name of Alêtês from the long wanderings endured by the father. At the head of a body of Dorians, Alêtês attacked Corinth: he pitched his camp on the Solygeian eminence near the city, and harassed the inhabitants with constant warfare until he compelled them to surrender. Even in the time of the Peloponnesian war, the Corinthians professed to identify the hill on which the camp of these assailants had been placed. The great mythical dynasty of the Sisyphids was expelled, and Alêtês became ruler and Œkist of the Dorian city; many of the inhabitants however, Æolic or Ionic, departed.³

Dorians at
Corinth—
Alêtês.

The settlement of Oxylus and his Ætolians in Elis is said by some to have been accomplished with very little opposition; the leader professing himself to be descended from Ætolus, who had been in a previous age banished from Elis into Ætôlia, and the two people, Epeians and Ætolians, acknowledging a kindred origin one with the other.⁴ At first indeed, according to Ephorus, the Epeians appeared in arms, determined to repel the intruders, but at length it was agreed on both sides to abide the issue of a single

Oxylus
and the
Ætolians
at Elis.

¹ Conôn, Narr. 36; Strabo, viii. p. 365.

² Strabo, viii. p. 359; Conôn, Narr. 39.

³ Thucyd. iv. 42. Schol. Pindar. Olymp. xiii. 17; and Nem. vii.

155. Conôn. Narrat. 26. Ephor. ap. Strab. viii. p. 389.

Thucydidês calls the ante-Dorian inhabitants of Corinth Æolians; Conôn calls them Ionians.

⁴ Ephorus ap. Strabo, x. p. 463.

combat. Degmenus, the champion of the Epeians, confided in the long shot of his bow and arrow; but the Ætolian Pyræchmês came provided with his sling,—a weapon then unknown and recently invented by the Ætolians,—the range of which was yet longer than that of the bow of his enemy: he thus killed Degmenus, and secured the victory to Oxylus and his followers. According to one statement the Epeians were expelled; according to another they fraternised amicably with the new-comers. Whatever may be the truth as to this matter, it is certain that their name is from this moment lost, and that they never reappear among the historical elements of Greece:¹ we hear from this time forward only of Eleians, said to be of Ætolian descent.²

One most important privilege was connected with the possession of the Eleian territory by Oxylus, coupled with his claim on the gratitude of the Dorian kings. The Eleians acquired the administration of the temple at Olympia, which the Achæans are said to have possessed before them; and in consideration of this sacred function, which subsequently ripened into the celebration of the great Olympic games, their territory was solemnly pronounced to be inviolable. Such was the statement of Ephorus:³ we find, in this case as in so many others, that the return of the Herakleids is made to supply a legendary basis for the historical state of things in Peloponnêsus.

It was the practice of the great Attic tragedians, with rare exceptions, to select the subjects of their composition from the heroic or legendary world. Euripidês had composed three dramas, now lost, on the adventures of Têmenus with his daughter Hyrnethô and his son-in-law Dêiphontês—on the family misfortunes of Kresphontês and Meropê—and on the successful valour of Archelaus the son of Têmenus in Macedonia, where he was

Family of Têmenus and Kresphontês lowest in the series of subjects for the Heroic drama.

¹ Strabo, viii, p. 358; Pausan. v. 4, 1. One of the six towns in Triphylia mentioned by Herodotus is called Ἐπειών (Herodot. iv. 149).

² Herodot. viii. 73; Pausan. v. 1, 2. Hekataeus affirmed that the Epeians were completely alien to the Eleians; Strabo does not seem

to have been able to satisfy himself either of the affirmative or negative (Hekataeus, Fr. 348, ed. Didot; Strabo, viii. p. 341).

³ Ephorus ap. Strab. viii. p. 358. The tale of the inhabitants of Pisa, the territory more immediately bordering upon Olympia, was very different from this.

alleged to have first begun the dynasty of the Temenid kings. Of these subjects the first and second were eminently tragical, and the third, relating to Archelaus, appears to have been undertaken by Euripidês in compliment to his contemporary sovereign and patron, Archelaus king of Macedonia: we are even told that those exploits which the usual version of the legend ascribed to Têmenus, were reported in the drama of Euripidês to have been performed by Archelaus his son.¹ Of all the heroes, touched upon by the three Attic tragedians, these Dorian Herakleids stand lowest in the descending genealogical series—one mark amongst others that we are approaching the ground of genuine history.

Though the name Achæans, as denoting a people, is henceforward confined to the North-Peloponnesian territory specially called Achaia, and to the inhabitants of Achæa Phthiôtis, north of Mount Œta—and though the great Peloponnesian states always seem to have prided themselves on the title of Dorians—yet we find the kings of Sparta, even in the historical age, taking pains to appropriate to themselves the mythical glories of the Achæans, and to set themselves forth as the representatives of Agamemnôn and Orestês. The Spartan king Kleomenês even went so far as to disavow formally any Dorian parentage; for when the priestess at Athens refused to permit him to sacrifice in the temple of Athênê, on the plea that it was peremptorily closed to all Dorians, he replied—“I am no Dorian, but an Achæan.”² Not only did the Spartan envoy, before Gelôn of Syracuse, connect the indefeasible title of his country to the supreme command of the Grecian military force, with the ancient name and lofty prerogatives of Agamemnôn³—but in farther pursuance of the same feeling, the Spartans are said to have carried to Sparta both the bones of Orestês from Tegea, and those of Tisamenus

Pretence of the historical Spartan kings to Achæan origin.

¹ Agatharchides ap. Photium, Sect. 250, p. 1332. Οὐδ' Εὐριπίδου κατηγορῶ, τῷ Ἀρχελάῳ περιτεθεικότος τὰς Τημένου πράξεις.

Compare the Fragments of the Τημενίδαι, Ἀρχέλαος, and Κρεσφόντης, in Dindorf's edition of Euripidês, with the illustrative remarks of Welcker, Griechische

Tragödien, pp. 697, 708, 828.

The Prologue of the Archelaus seems to have gone through the whole series of the Herakleidan lineage, from Ægyptus and Danaus downwards.

² Herodot. v. 72.

³ Herodot. vii. 159.

from Helikê,¹ at the injunction of the Delphian oracle. There is also a story that Oxylus in Elis was directed by the same oracle to invite into his country an Achæan, as Ækist, conjointly with himself; and that he called in Agorius, the great-grandson of Orestês, from Helikê, with a small number of Achæans who joined him.² The Dorians themselves, being singularly poor in native legends, endeavoured, not unnaturally, to decorate themselves with those legendary ornaments which the Achæans possessed in abundance.

As a consequence of the Dorian establishments in Peloponnêsus, several migrations of the pre-existing inhabitants are represented as taking place. 1. The Epeians of Elis are either expelled, or merged in the new-comers under Oxylus, and lose their separate name. 2. The Pylians, together with the great heroic family of Nêleus and his son Nestôr, who preside over them, give place to the Dorian establishment of Messênia, and retire to Athens, where their leader Melanthus becomes king: a large portion of them take part in the subsequent Ionic emigration. 3. A portion of the Achæans, under Penthilus, and other descendants of Orestês, leave Peloponnêsus, and form what is called the Æolic Emigration, to Lesbos, the Trôad, and the Gulf of Adramyttium: the name *Æôlians*, unknown to Homer and seemingly never applied to any separate tribe at all, being introduced to designate a large section of the Hellenic name, partly in Greece Proper and partly in Asia. 4. Another portion of Achæans expel the Ionians from Achaia properly so called, in the north of Peloponnêsus; the Ionians retiring to Attica.

The Homeric poems describe Achæans, Pylians, and Epeians, in Peloponnêsus, but take no notice of Ionians in the northern district of Achaia: on the contrary, the Catalogue in the Iliad distinctly included this territory under the dominions of Agamemnôn. Though the Catalogue of Homer is not to be regarded as an historical document, fit to be called as evidence for the actual state of Peloponnêsus at any prior time, it certainly seems a better

Emigrations from Peloponnêsus consequent on the Dorian occupation—Epeians, Pylians, Achæans, Ionians.

Ionians in the north of Peloponnêsus—not recognised by Homer.

¹ Herodot. i. 68; Pausan. vii. 1, 3.

² Pausan. v. 4, 2.

authority than the statements advanced by Herodotus and others respecting the occupation of northern Peloponnêsus by the Ionians, and their expulsion from it by Tisamenus. In so far as the Catalogue is to be trusted, it negatives the idea of Ionians at Helikê, and countenances what seems in itself a more natural supposition—that the historical Achæans in the north part of Peloponnêsus are a small undisturbed remnant of the powerful Achæan population once distributed throughout the peninsula, until it was broken up and partially expelled by the Dorians.

The Homeric legends, unquestionably the oldest which we possess, are adapted to a population of Achæans, Danaans, and Argeians, seemingly without any special and recognised names, either aggregate or divisional, other than the name of each separate tribe or kingdom. The Post-Homeric legends are adapted to a population classified quite differently—Hellens, distributed into Dorians, Ionians, and Æolians. If we knew more of the time and circumstances in which these different legends grew up, we should probably be able to explain their discrepancy; but in our present ignorance we can only note the fact.

Whatever difficulty modern criticism may find in regard to the event called “The Return of the Herakleids,” no doubt is expressed about it even by the best historians of antiquity. Thucydidês accepts it as a single and literal event, having its assignable date, and carrying at one blow the acquisition of Peloponnêsus. The date of it he fixes as eighty years after the capture of Troy. Whether he was the original determiner of this epoch, or copied it from some previous author, we do not know. It must have been fixed according to some computation of generations, for there were no other means accessible—probably by means of the lineage of the Herakleids, which, as belonging to the kings of Sparta, constituted the most public and conspicuous thread of connexion between the Grecian real and mythical world, and measured the interval between the Siege of Troy itself and the first recorded Olympiad. Hêraklês himself represents the generation before the siege, and his son Tlepolemus fights in the besieging army. If we suppose the first generation after Hêraklês to commence with the beginning of the siege, the fourth generation

Date assigned by Thucydidês to the return of the Herakleids.

port.

SECTION II.—MIGRATION OF THESSALIANS AND BOEOTIANS.

In the same passage in which Thucydidês speaks of the Return of the Herakleids, he also marks out the date of another event a little antecedent, which is alleged to have powerfully affected the condition of Northern Greece. "Sixty years after the capture of Troy (he tells us) the Bœotians were driven by the Thessalians from Arnê, and migrated into the land then called Kadmêis, but now Bœotia, wherein there had previously dwelt a section of their race, who had contributed the contingent to the Trojan war."

The expulsion here mentioned, of the Bœotians from Arnê "by the Thessalians," has been construed, with probability, to allude to the immigration of the Thessalians, properly so called, from the Thesprôtid in Epirus into Thessaly. That the Thessalians had migrated into Thessaly from the Thesprôtid territory, is stated by Herodotus,² though he says nothing about time or circumstances. Antiphus and Pheidippus appear in the Homeric Catalogue as commander of the Grecian contingent from the islands of Kôs and Karpatus, on the south-east coast of Asia Minor: they are sons of Thessalus, who is himself the son of Hêraklês. A legend ran, that these two chiefs, in the dispersion which ensued after the victory, had been driven by storms into the Ionian Gulf, and cast upon the coast of Epirus, where they landed

¹ The date of Thucydidês is calculated, μετὰ ἑλίου ἀλωσιν (i. 13).

² Herod. vii. 176.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Bœotians— with the other. While the Homeric epic recog-
 their migra- nises the Bœotians in Bœotia, but not in Thes-
 tion, from saly, Thucydidês records a statement which he
 The^s saly had found of their migration from the latter into
 into the former. But in order to escape the necessity of
 Bœotia. flatly contradicting Homer, he inserts the parenthesis that
 there had been previously an outlying fraction of Bœotians
 in Bœotia at the time of the Trojan war,¹ from whom the
 troops who served with Agamemnôn were drawn. Never-
 theless, the discrepancy with the Iliad, though less stri-
 kingly obvious, is not removed, inasmuch as the Catalogue
 is unusually copious in enumerating the contingents from
 Thessaly, without once mentioning Bœotians. Homer dis-
 tinguishes Orchomenus from Bœotia, and he does not specially
 notice Thêbes in the Catalogue: in other respects his enu-
 meration of the towns coincides pretty well with the ground
 historically known afterwards under the name of Bœotia.

Pausanias gives us a short sketch of the events which
 he supposes to have intervened in this section of Greece
 between the Siege of Troy and the Return of the Hera-
 kleids. Peneleôs, the leader of the Bœotians at the siege,
 having been slain by Eurypylus the son of Telephus, Tisa-
 menus, son of Thersander and grandson of Polynikês, acted
 as their commander both during the remainder of the siege
 and after their return. Autesiôn, his son and successor,
 became subject to the wrath of the avenging Erinnyes of
 Laius and Œdipus: the oracle directed him to expatriate,
 and he joined the Dorians. In his place Damasiçthôn, son
 of Opheltas and grandson of Peneleôs, became king of the
 Bœotians; he was succeeded by Ptolemæus, who was himself
 followed by Xanthus. A war having broken out at that time
 between the Athenians and Bœotians, Xanthus engaged in
 single combat with Melanthus son of Andropompus, the
 champion of Attica, and perished by the cunning of his
 opponent. After the death of Xanthus, the Bœotians
 passed from kingship to popular government.² As Melan-
 thus was of the lineage of the Neleids, and had migrated
 from Pylus to Athens in consequence of the successful
 establishment of the Dorians in Messênia, the duel with
 Xanthus must have been of course subsequent to the
 Return of the Herakleids.

¹ Thucyd. i. 12. ἦν δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ ἀπὸ δασμῶν καὶ ἐς Ἴλ.ον ἐστράτευσαν.
 ἀποδασμῶν προτερον ἐν τῇ γῆ ταύτῃ ² Pausan. ix. 5, 8.

Here then we have a summary of alleged Bœotian history between the Siege of Troy and the Return of the Herakleids, in which no mention is made of the immigration of the mass of Bœotians from Thessaly, and seemingly no possibility left of fitting in so great and capital an incident. The legends followed by Pausanias are at variance with those adopted by Thucydidês, but they harmonise much better with Homer.

Discrepant legends about the Bœotians.

So deservedly high is the authority of Thucydidês, that the migration here distinctly announced by him is commonly set down as an ascertained datum, historically as well as chronologically. But on this occasion it can be shown that he only followed one amongst a variety of discrepant legends, none of which there were any means of verifying.

Pausanias recognised a migration of the Bœotians from Thessaly, in early times anterior to the Trojan war;¹ and the account of Ephorus, as given by Strabo, professed to record a series of changes in the occupants of the country:—first, the non-Hellenic Aones and Temmikes, Leleges and Hyantes; next, the Kadmeians, who, after the second siege of Thêbes by the Epigoni, were expelled by the Thracians and Pelasgians, and retired into Thessaly, where they joined in communion with the inhabitants of Arnê,—the whole aggregate being called Bœotians. After the Trojan war, and about the time of the Æolic emigration, these Bœotians returned from Thessaly and reconquered Bœotia, driving out the Thracians and Pelasgians,—the former retiring to Parnassus, the latter to Attica. It was on this occasion (he says) that the Minyæ of Orchomenus were subdued, and forcibly incorporated with the Bœotians. Ephorus seems to have followed in the main the same narrative as Thucydidês, about the movement of the Bœotians out of Thessaly; coupling it however with several details current as explanatory of proverbs and customs.²

¹ Pausan. x. 8, 3.

² Ephor. Fragm. 30, ed. Marx.; Strabo, ix. p. 401—402. The story of the Bœotians at Arnê in Polyænus (i. 12) probably comes from Ephorus.

Diodôrus (xix. 53) gives a summary of the legendary history of Thêbes from Deukalion down-

wards: he tells us that the Bœotians were expelled from their country, and obliged to retire into Thessaly during the Trojan war, in consequence of the absence of so many of their brave warriors at Troy; they did not find their way back into Bœotia until the fourth generation.

The only fact which we make out, independent of these legends, is, that there existed certain homonymies and certain affinities of religious worship, between parts of Bœotia and parts of Thessaly, which appear to indicate a kindred race. A town named Arnê,¹ similar in name to the Thessalian, was enumerated in the Bœotian Catalogue of Homer, and antiquaries identified it sometimes with the historical town Chæroneia,² sometimes with Akræphium. Moreover there was near the Bœotian Korôncia a river named Kuarius or Koralius, and a venerable temple dedicated to the Itonian Athênê, in the sacred ground of which the Pambœotia, or public council of the Bœotian name, was held; there was also a temple and a river of similar denomination in Thessaly, near to a town called Iton or Itônus.³ We may from these circumstances presume a certain ancient kindred between the population of these regions, and such a circumstance is sufficient to explain the generation of legends describing migrations backward and forward, whether true or not in point of fact.

What is most important to remark is, that the stories of Thucydidês and Ephorus bring us out of the mythical into the historical Bœotia. Orchomenus is Bœotised, and we hear no more of the once-powerful Minyæ: there are no more Kadmeians

¹ Stephan. Byz. v. Ἄρνη, makes the Thessalian Arnê an ἄποικος of the Bœotian.

² Homer, Iliad, ii.; Strabo, ix. p. 413; Pausan. ix. 40, 3. Some of the families at Chæroneia, even during the time of the Roman dominion in Greece, traced their origin to Peripoltas the prophet, who was said to have accompanied Opheltas in his invading march out of Thessaly (Plutarch, Kimon, c. 1).

³ Strabo, ix. 411—435; Homer, Iliad, ii. 696; Hekataëus, Fr. 338, Didot.

The Fragment from Alkæus (cited by Strabo, but briefly and with a mutilated text) serves only to identify the river and the town.

Itônus was said to be son of Amphiktyôn, and Bœôtus son of Itônus (Pausan. ix. 1, 1. 34, 1: compare Steph. Byz. v. Βοιωτία) by Melanippê. By another legendary genealogy (probably arising after the name *Æolic* had obtained footing as the class-name for a large section of Greeks, but as old as the poet Asius, Olympiad 30) the eponymous hero Bœôtus was fastened on to the great lineage of Æolus, through the paternity of the god Poseidôn either with Melanippê or with Arnê, daughter of Æolus (Asius, Fragm. 8, ed. Düntzer; Strabo, vi. p. 265; Diodôr. v. 67; Hellanikus ap. Schol. Iliad. ii. 494). Two lost plays of Euripidês were founded on the mis-

at Thêbes, nor Bœotians in Thessaly. The Minyæ and the Kadmeians disappear in the Ionic emigration, which will be presently adverted to. Historical Bœotia is now constituted, apparently in its federative league under the presidency of Thêbes, just as we find it in the time of the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.

SECTION III.—EMIGRATIONS FROM GREECE TO ASIA AND THE ISLANDS OF THE ÆGEAN.

1. ÆOLIC.—2. IONIC.—3. DORIC.

To complete the transition of Greece from its mythical to its historical condition, the secession of the races belonging to the former must follow upon the introduction of those belonging to the latter. This is accomplished by means of the Æolic and Ionic migrations.

Secession of the mythical races of Greece.

The presiding chiefs of the Æolic emigration are the representatives of the heroic lineage of the Pelopids: those of the Ionic emigration belong to the Neleids; and even in what is called the Doric emigration to Thêra, the Ækist Thêras is not a Dorian but a Kadmeian, the legitimate descendant of Œdipus and Kadmus.

The Æolic, Ionic, and Doric colonies were planted along the western coast of Asia Minor, from the coast of the Propontis southward down to Lykia (I shall in a future chapter speak more exactly of their boundaries); the Æolic occupying the northern portion together with the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos; the Doric occupying the southernmost, together with the neighbouring islands of Rhodes and Kôs; and the Ionic being planted between them, comprehending Chios, Samos, and the Cyclades islands.

1. ÆOLIC EMIGRATION.

The Æolic emigration was conducted by the Pelopids: the original story seems to have been that Orestês himself was at the head of the first batch of colonists, and this version of the event is still preserved by Pindar and by Hellanikus.¹ But

Æolic migration under the Pelopids.

fortunes of Melanippê, and her twin children by Poseidôn—Bœôtus and Æolus (Hygin. Fab. 186; see the Fragments of Μελανίππη Σοφῆ and Μελανίππη Δεσμώτις in Din-

dorf's edition, and the instructive comments of Welcker, Griech. Tragöd. vol. ii. p. 840—860).

¹ Pindar, Nem. xi. 43; Hellanic.

the more current narratives represented the descendants of Orestês as chiefs of the expeditions to Æolis,—his illegitimate son Penthilus, by Erigonê daughter of Ægisthus,¹ together with Echelatus and Gras, the son and grandson of Penthilus—also Kleuês and Malaus, descendants of Agamemnôn through another lineage. According to the account given by Strabo, Orestês began the emigration, but died on his route in Arcadia; his son Penthilus, taking the guidance of the emigrants, conducted them by the long land-journey through Bœotia and Thessaly to Thrace;² from whence Archelaus, son of Penthilus, led them across the Hellespont, and settled at Daskylum on the Propontis. Gras, son of Archelaus, crossed over to Lesbos and possessed himself of the island. Kleuês and Malaus, conducting another body of Achæans, were longer on their journey, and lingered a considerable time near Mount Phrikium in the territory of Lokris; ultimately however they passed over by sea to Asia and took possession of Kymê, south of the Gulf of Adramyttium, the most considerable of all the Æolic cities on the continent.³ From Lesbos and Kymê, the other less considerable Æolic towns, spreading over the region of Ida as well as the Trêad, and comprehending the island of Tenedos, are said to have derived their origin.

Though there are many differences in the details, the accounts agree in representing these Æolic settlements as formed by the Achæans expatriated from Lacônia under the guidance of the dispossessed Pelopids.⁴ We are told that in their journey through Bœotia they received considerable reinforcements, and Strabo adds that the emi-

Fragm. 114, ed. Didot. Compare Stephan. Byz. v. Πέριυθος.

¹ Kinæthon ap. Pausan. ii. 18, 5. Penthilids existed in Lesbos during the historical times (Aristot. Polit. v. 10, 2).

² It has sometimes been supposed that the country called Thrace here means the residence of the Thracians near Parnassus; but the length of the journey, and the number of years which it took up, are so specially marked, that I think Thrace in its usual and obvious sense must be intended.

³ Strabo, xiii. p. 582. Hellanikus

seems to have treated of this delay near Mount Phrikium (see Steph. Byz. v. Φρίκτιον). In another account (xiii. p. 621), probably copied from the Kyuæan Ephorus, Strabo connects the establishments of this colony with the sequel of the Trojan war: the Pelasgians, the occupants of the territory, who had been the allies of Priam, were weakened by the defeat which they had sustained, and unable to resist the immigrants.

⁴ Velleius Patercul. i. 4; compare Antikleidês ap. Athenæ. xi. c. 3; Pausanias, iii. 2, 1.

grants started from Aulis, the port from whence Agamemnon departed in the expedition against Troy.¹ He also informs us that they missed their course and experienced many losses from nautical ignorance, but we do not know to what particular incidents he alludes.²

2. IONIC EMIGRATION.

THE Ionic emigration is described as emanating from and directed by the Athenians, and connects itself with the previous legendary history of Athens, which must therefore be here briefly recapitulated.

The great mythical hero Theseus, of whose military prowess and errant exploits we have spoken in a previous chapter, was still more memorable in the eyes of the Athenians as an internal political reformer. He was supposed to have performed for them the inestimable service of transforming Attica out of many states into one. Each *dême*, or at least a great many out of the whole number had before his time enjoyed political independence under its own magistrates and assemblies, acknowledging only a federal union with the rest under the presidency of Athens. By a mixture of conciliation and force, Theseus succeeded in putting down all these separate governments and bringing them to unite in one political system centralised at Athens. He is said to have established a constitutional government, retaining for himself a defined power as king or president, and distributing the people into three classes: Eupatridæ, a sort of sacerdotal noblesse; *Geômorî* and *Demiurgi*, husbandmen and artisans.³ Having brought these important changes into efficient working, he commemorated them for his posterity by introducing solemn and appropriate festivals. In confirmation of the dominion of Athens over the Megarid territory, he is said farther to have erected a pillar at the extremity of the latter towards the Isthmus, marking the boundary between Peloponnêsus and Iônia.

Ionic emigration—
branches off
from the
legendary
history of
Athens.

But a revolution so extensive was not consummated without creating much discontent. Menestheus, the rival of Theseus,—the first specimen, as we are told, of an artful demagogue,—took advantage

Theseus
and Menestheus.

¹ Strabo, ix. p. 401.

³ Plutarch, Theseus, c. 24, 25, 26.

² Strabo, i. p. 10.

of this feeling to assail and undermine him. Thêseus had quitted Attica to accompany and assist his friend Feirithoüs in his journey down to the under-world, in order to carry off the goddess Persephonê,—or (as those who were critical in legendary story preferred recounting) in a journey to the residence of Aidôneus, king of the Molossians in Epirus, to carry off his daughter. In this enterprise Peirithoüs perished, while Thêseus was cast into prison, from whence he was only liberated by the intercession of Hêraklês. It was during his temporary absence that the Tyndarids Castêr and Pollux invaded Attica for the purpose of recovering their sister Helen, whom Thêseus had at a former period taken away from Sparta and deposited at Aphidnæ; and the partisans of Menestheus took advantage both of the absence of Thêseus and of the calamity which his licentiousness had brought upon the country, to ruin his popularity with the people. When he returned he found them no longer disposed to endure his dominion, or to continue to him the honours which their previous feelings of gratitude had conferred. Having therefore placed his sons under the protection of Elephenôr in Eubœa, he sought an asylum with Lykomêdês prince of Scyros, from whom however he received nothing but an insidious welcome and a traitorous death.¹

Menestheus, succeeding to the honours of the expatriated hero, commanded the Athenian troops at the siege of Troy. But though he survived the capture, he never returned to Athens—different stories being related of the place where he and his companions settled. During this interval the feelings of the Athenians having changed, they restored the sons of Thêseus, who had served at Troy under Elephenôr and had returned unhurt, to the station and functions of their father. The Theseids Demophoôn, Oxyntas, Apheidas, and Thymcêtês, had successively filled this post for the space of about sixty years,² when the Dorian invaders of Peloponnêsus (as has been before related) compelled Melanthus and the Neleid family to abandon their kingdom of Pylus. The refugees found shelter at Athens, where a fortunate adventure soon raised Melanthus to the throne. A war breaking out between the Athenians and Bœotians

Restoration
of the sons
of Thêseus
to their
father's
kingdom.

¹ Plutarch, Thêseus, c. 34—35.

228-229, ed. Scaliger; Pausan. ii,

² Eusebius, Chronic. Can. p. 18, 7.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ever, they retained possession of Megara, where they established permanent settlers, and which became from this moment Dorian,—seemingly at first a dependency of Corinth, though it afterwards acquired its freedom and became an autonomous community.¹ This memorable act of devoted patriotism, analogous to that of the daughters of Erechtheus at Athens, and of Menœkeus at Thêbes, entitled Kodrus to be ranked among the most splendid characters in Grecian legend.

Kodrus is numbered as the last king of Athens: his descendants were styled Archons, but they held that dignity for life—a practice which prevailed during a long course of years afterwards. Medon and Neileus, his two sons, having quarrelled about the succession, the Delphian oracle decided in favour of the former; upon which the latter, affronted at the preference, resolved upon seeking a new home.² There were at this moment many dispossessed sections of Greeks, and an adventitious population accumulated in Attica, who were anxious for settlements beyond sea. The expeditions which now set forth to cross the Ægean, chiefly under the conduct of members of the Kodrid family, composed collectively the memorable Ionic Emigration, of which the Ionians, recently expelled from Peloponnêsus, formed a part, but, as it would seem, only a small part; for we hear of many quite distinct races, some renowned in legend, who withdraw from Greece amidst this assemblage of colonists. The Kadmeians, the Minyæ of Orchomenus, the Abantes of Eubœa, the Dryopes; the Molossi, the Phokians, the Bœotians, the Arcadian Pelasgians, and even the Dorians of Epidaurus—are represented as furnishing each a proportion of the crews of these emigrant vessels.³ Nor were the results unworthy of so mighty a confluence of different races. Not only the Cyclades islands in the Ægean, but the great islands of Samos and Chios near the Asiatic coast, and ten different cities on the coast of Asia Minor, from

Devotion
and death
of Kodrus
—no more
kings at
Athens.

Quarrel of
the sons of
Kodrus,
and emi-
gration of
Neileus.

Different
races who
furnished
the emi-
grants to
Ionia.

¹ Strabo, xiv. p. 653.

² Pausan. vii. 2, 1.

³ Herodot. i. 146; Pausan. vii. 2, 3, 4. Isokratês extols his Athenian ancestors for having provided, by

means of this emigration, settlements for so large a number of distressed and poor Greeks at the expense of Barbarians (Or. xii. Panathenaic. p. 241).

And it is a remarkable fact mentioned by Pausanias (though we do not know on what authority), that the inhabitants of Phokæa—which was the northernmost city of Iônia on the borders of Æolis, and one of the last founded—consisting mostly of Phokian colonists under the conduct of the Athenians Philogenês and Dæmon, were not admitted into the Pan-Ionic Amphiktyony until they consented to choose for themselves chiefs of the Kodrid family.³ Proklês, the chief who conducted the Ionic emigrants from Epidaurus to Samos, was said to be of the lineage of Iôn son of Xuthus.⁴

Of the twelve Ionic states constituting the Pan-Ionic Amphiktyony—some of them among the greatest cities in Hellas—I shall say no more at present, as I have to treat of them again when I come upon historical ground.

3. DORIC EMIGRATIONS.

The Æolic and Ionic emigrations are thus both presented to us as direct consequences of the event called the Return of the Herakleids: and in like manner the formation of the Dorian Hexapolis in the south-western corner of Asia Minor: Kôs, Knidus, Halicarnassus and Rhodes, with its three separate cities, as well as the Dorian establishments in Krête, Melos, and Thêra, are all traced more or less directly to the same great revolution.

Dorian colonies in Asia.

¹ Herodot. i. 146; vii. 95; viii. 16. Vellei. Paterc. i. 4. Pherekydês, Frag. 111, ed. Didot.

² Herodot. i. 147; Pausan. vii. 2, 7.

³ Pausan. vii. 2, 2; vii. 3, 4.

⁴ Pausan. vii. 4, 3.

Thêra, more especially, has its root in the legendary world. Its Œkist was Thêras, a descendant of the heroic lineage of Œdipus and Kadmus, and maternal uncle of the young kings of Sparta, Eurysthenês and Proklês, during whose minority he had exercised the regency. On their coming of age his functions were at an end; but being

unable to endure a private station, he determined to put himself at the head of a body of emigrants. Many came forward to join him, and the expedition was further reinforced by a body of interlopers, belonging to the Minyæ, of whom the Lacedæmonians were anxious to get rid. These Minyæ had arrived in Laconia, not long before, from the island of Lemnos, out of which they had been expelled by the Pelasgian fugitives from Attica. They landed without asking permission, took up their abode and began to "light their fires" on Mount Taygetus. When the Lacedæmonians sent to ask who they were and wherefore they had come, the Minyæ replied that they were sons of the Argonauts who had landed at Lemnos, and that being expelled from their own homes, they thought themselves entitled to solicit an asylum in the territory of their fathers; they asked, withal, to be admitted to share both the lands and the honours of the state. The Lacedæmonians granted the request, chiefly on the ground of a common ancestry—their own great heroes, the Tyndarids, having been enrolled in the crew of the Argô: the Minyæ were then introduced as citizens into the tribes, received lots of land, and began to intermarry with the pre-existing families. It

Legend of
the Minyæ
from Lem-
nos.

was not long, however, before they became insolent: they demanded a share in the kingdom (which was the venerated privilege of the Herakleids), and so grossly misconducted themselves in other ways, that the Lacedæmonians resolved to put them to death, and began by casting them into prison. While the Minyæ were thus confined, their wives, Spartans by birth and many of them daughters of the principal men, solicited permission to go in and see them: leave being granted, they made use of the interview to change clothes with their husbands, who thus escaped and fled again to Mount Taygetus. The greater number of them quitted Laconia, and marched to Triphylia in the western regions of Pelopon-nêsus, from whence they expelled the Paroreatæ and the Kaukones, and founded six towns of their own, of which

Lepreum was the chief. A certain proportion, however, departed with him to the island of Kallistê, then possessed by Phœnician inhabitants who were descended from the kinsmen and companions of Kadmus, and who had been left there by that prince, when he came forth in search of Eurôpa, eight generations preceding. Arriving thus among men of kindred lineage with himself, Thêras met with a fraternal reception, and the island derived from him the name, under which it is historically known, of Thêra.¹

Such is the foundation-legend of Thêra, believed both by the Lacedæmonians and by the Theræans, Minyæ in and interesting as it brings before us, character- Triphylia. istically as well as vividly, the persons and feelings of the mythical world,—the Argonauts, with the Tyndarids as their children. In Lepreum, as in the other towns of Triphylia, the descent from the Minyæ of old seems to have been believed in the historical times, and the mention of the river Minyëius in those regions by Homer tended to confirm it.² But people were not unanimous as to the legend by which that descent should be made out; while some adopted the story just cited from Herodotus, others imagined that Chlôris, who had come from the Minyeian town of Orchomenus as the wife of Nêleus to Pylus, had brought with her a body of her countrymen.³

These Minyæ from Lemnos and Imbros appear again as portions of another narrative respecting the settlement of the colony of Mêlos. It has already been mentioned, that when the Herakleids and the Dorians invaded Lacônia,

¹ Herodot. iv. 145—149; Valer. Maxim. iv. c. 6; Polyæn. vii. 49, who however gives the narrative differently by mentioning "Tyrrhenians from Lemnos aiding Sparta during the Helotic war:" another narrative in his collection (viii. 71), though imperfectly preserved, seems to approach more closely to Herodotus.

² Homer, Iliad, xi. 721.

³ Strabo, viii. p. 547. M. Raoul Rochette, who treats the legends for the most part as if they were so much authentic history, is much displeased with Strabo for ad-

mitting this diversity of stories (Histoire des Colonies Grecques, t. iii. ch. 7, p. 54)—"Après des détails si clairs et si positifs, comment est-il possible que ce même Strabon, bouleversant toute la chronologie, fasse arriver les Minyens dans la Triphylie sous la conduite de Chloris, mère de Nestor?"

The story which M. Raoul Rochette thus puts aside is quite equal in point of credibility to that which he accepts: in fact no measure of credibility can be applied.

Migrations
of Dorians
to Krête.

Taking the direction of Krête, they stopped their way to land a portion of their colonists on the island of Mêlos, which remained through the historical times a faithful and attached colony of Lacedæmôn.¹ On arriving in Krête, they are said to have set at the town of Gortyn. We find, moreover, that other Dorian establishments, either from Lacedæmôn or Argos were formed in Krête, and Lyktos in particular is noted not only as a colony of Sparta, but as distinguished for the analogy of its laws and customs.² It is even said that Krête immediately after the Trojan war, had been visited by the wrath of the gods, and depopulated by famine and pestilence, and that in the third generation afterwards, so great was the influx of immigrants, that the entire population of the island was renewed with the exception of the Eteokrates at Polichnæ and Præsus.³

There were Dorians in Krête in the time of the Odyssey: Homer mentions different languages and different names of men, Eteokrêtes, Kydônes, Dorians, Achæans, and Pelasgians, as all co-existing in the island, which he describes to be populous, and to contain ninety cities. A legend given by Andrôn, based seemingly upon the statement of Herodotus, that Dôrus the son of Hellen had settled in Histiaia, ascribed the first introduction of the three races to Tektaphus son of Dôrus—who had come forth from that country a colony of Dorians, Achæans, Pelasgians, and had landed in Krête during the reign of

¹ Conôn, Narrat. 36. Compare Plutarch, Quæstion. Græc. c. 21, where Tyrrhenians from Lemnos are mentioned, as in the passage of Polyænus referred to in a preceding note.

² Strabo, x. p. 481; Aristot. Polit. ii. 10

³ Herodot. vii. 171 (see above,

Ch. xii.). Diodôrus (v. 80), as well as Herodotus, mentions general large immigrations into Krête from Lacedæmôn and Argos; but the laborious research of M. Rochette (*Histoire des Colonies Grecques*, t. iii. c. 9, p. 6) fails in collecting any details of particulars of them.

indigenous king Krês.¹ This story of Andrôn so exactly fits on to the Homeric Catalogue of Kretan inhabitants, that we may reasonably presume it to have been designedly arranged with reference to that Catalogue, so as to afford some plausible account, consistently with the received legendary chronology, how there came to be Dorians in Krête before the Trojan war—the Dorian colonies after the return of the Herakleids being of course long posterior in supposed order of time. To find a leader sufficiently early for his hypothesis, Andrôn ascends to the primitive Eponymus Dôrus, to whose son Tektaphus he ascribes the introduction of a mixed colony of Dorians, Achæans, and Pelasgians into Krête. These are the exact three races enumerated in the Odyssey, and the king Krês, whom Andrôn affirms to have been then reigning in the island, represents the Eteokrêtes and Kydônes in the list of Homer. The story seems to have found favour among native Kretan historians, as it doubtless serves to obviate what would otherwise be a contradiction in the legendary chronology.²

Another Dorian emigration from Peloponnêsus to Krête, which extended also to Rhodes and Kôs, is farther said to have been conducted by Althæmenês, who had been one of the chiefs in the expedition against Attica in which Kodrus perished. This prince, a Herakleid and third in descent from

Althæmenês, founder of Rhodes.

¹ Steph. Byz. v. Δῶριον.—Περὶ ὧν ἱστορεῖ Ἄνδρων, Κρητὸς ἐν τῇ νήσῳ βασιλεύοντος, Τέκταρον τὸν Δῶρου τοῦ Ἑλληνος, ὁρμήσαντα ἐκ τῆς ἐν Θετταλίᾳ τότε μὲν Δωριῶος, νῦν δὲ Ἰστιαιωτιδος καλουμένης, ἀφικέσθαι εἰς Κρήτην μετὰ Δωριέων τε καὶ Ἀχαιῶν καὶ Πελασγῶν, τῶν οὐκ ἀπαράντων εἰς Τυρρηνίαν. Compare Strabo, x. p. 475—476, from which it is plain that the story was adduced by Andrôn with a special explanatory reference to the passage in the Odyssey (xv. 175).

The age of Andrôn, one of the authors of Atthides, is not precisely ascertainable; but he can hardly be put earlier than 300 B.C.; see the preliminary Dissertation

of C. Müller to the *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, ed. Didot, p. lxxxii.; and the *Prolusio de Atthidum Scriptoribus*, prefixed to Lenz's edition of the *Fragments of Phanodêmus and Dêmodon*, p. xxviii. Lips. 1812.

² See *Biodôr.* iv. 60; v. 80. From Strabo (*l. c.*) however we see that others rejected the story of Andrôn.

O. Müller (*History of the Dorians*, b. i. c. 1. § 9) accepts the story as substantially true, putting aside the name Dôrus, and even regards it as certain that Minos of Knôssus was a Dorian: but the evidence with which he supports this conclusion appears to me loose and fanciful.

Têmenus, was induced to expatriate by a family quarrel, and conducted a body of Dorian colonists from Argos first to Krête, where some of them remained; but the greater number accompanied him to Rhodes, in which island, after expelling the Karian possessors, he founded the three cities of Lindus, Ialysus, and Kamairus.¹

It is proper here to add, that the legend of the Rhodian archæologists respecting their Œkist Althæmenês, who was worshipped in the island with heroic honours, was something totally different from the preceding. Althæmenês was a Krêtan, son of the king Katreus, and grandson of Minos. An oracle predicted to him that he would one day kill his father: eager to escape so terrible a destiny, he quitted Krête, and conducted a colony to Rhodes, where the famous temple of the Atabyrian Zeus, on the lofty summit of Mount Atabyrum, was ascribed to his foundation, built so as to command a view of Krête. He had been settled on the island for some time, when his father Katreus, anxious again to embrace his only son, followed him from Krête: he landed in Rhodes during the night without being known, and a casual collision took place between his attendants and the islanders. Althæmenês hastened to the shore to assist in repelling the supposed enemies, and in the fray had the misfortune to kill his aged father.²

Either the emigrants who accompanied Althæmenês, or some other Dorian colonists afterwards, are reported to have settled at Kôs, Knidus, Karpathus, and Halikarnassus. To the last-mentioned city, however, Anthês of Trœzên is assigned as the œkist: the emigrants who accompanied him were said to have belonged to the Dymanian tribe, one of the three tribes always found in a Doric state: and the city seems to have been characterized as a colony sometimes of Trœzên, sometimes of Argos.³

¹ Conôn, Narrat. 47; Ephorus, Frag. 62, ed. Marx.

² Diodôr. v. 56; Apollodôr. iii. 2, 2. In the chapter next but one preceding this, Diodôrus had made express reference to native Rhodian mythologists,—to one in particular, named Zeno (c. 57).

Wesseling supposes two different

settlers in Rhodes, both named Althæmenês: this is certainly necessary, if we are to treat the two narratives as historical.

³ Strabo, xiv. p. 653; Pausan. ii. 39, 3; Kallimachus apud Stephan. Byz. v. Ἀλικαρνασσοῦς.

Herodotus (vii. 99) calls Halikarnassus a colony of Trœzên;



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



¹ "La période qui me semble la plus obscure et la plus remplie de difficultés, n'est pas celle que je viens de parcourir: c'est celle qui sépare l'époque des Héraclides de l'institution des Olympiades. La perte des ouvrages d'Ephore et de Théopompe est sans doute la cause en grande partie du vide immense que nous offre dans cet intervalle l'histoire de la Grèce. Mais si l'on en excepte l'établissement des colonies Éoliennes, Doriennes, et Ioniennes, de l'Asie Mineure, et quelques évènements, très rapprochés de la première de ces époques, l'espace de plus de quatre siècles qui les sépare est couvert d'une obscurité presque impénétrable, et l'on aura toujours lieu de s'étonner que les ouvrages des anciens n'offrent aucun secours pour remplir une lacune aussi considérable. Une pareille absence doit aussi nous faire soupçonner qu'il se passa dans la Grèce peu de ces grands évènements qui se gravent fortement dans la mémoire

des hommes: puisque, si les traces ne s'en étaient point conservées dans les écrits des contemporains, au moins le souvenir s'en serait-il perpétué par des monumens: or les monumens et l'histoire se taisent également. Il faut donc croire que la Grèce, agitée depuis si long temps par des révolutions de toute espèce, épuisée par ses dernières émigrations, se tourna toute entière vers des occupations paisibles, et ne chercha, pendant ce long intervalle, qu'à guérir, au sein du repos et de l'abondance qui en est la suite, les plaies profondes que sa population avait souffertes." (Baoul Rochette, *Histoire des Colonies Grecques*, t. ii. c. 16, p. 455.)

To the same purpose Gillies (*History of Greece*, ch. iii. p. 67, quarto): "The obscure transactions of Greece, during the four following centuries, ill correspond with the splendour of the Trojan, or even of the Argonautic expedition," &c.

appears to me the proper distinction between legend and history, it will be seen that a period of blank time between the two is perfectly conformable to the conditions under which the former is generated. It is not the immediate past, but a supposed remote past, which forms the suitable atmosphere of mythical narrative,—a past originally quite undetermined in respect to distance from the present, as we see in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. And even when we come down to the genealogical poets, who affect to give a certain measure of bygone time, and a succession of persons as well as of events, still the names whom they most delight to honour and upon whose exploits they chiefly expatiate, are those of the ancestral gods and heroes of the tribe and their supposed contemporaries; ancestors separated by a long lineage from the present hearer. The gods and heroes were conceived as removed from him by several generations, and the legendary matter which was grouped around them appeared only the more imposing when exhibited at a respectful distance, beyond the days of father and grandfather and of all known predecessors. The Odes of Pindar strikingly illustrate this tendency. We thus see how it happened that between the times assigned to heroic adventure and those of historical record, there existed an intermediate blank, filled with inglorious names; and how amongst the same society, which cared not to remember proceedings of fathers and grandfathers, there circulated much popular and accredited narrative respecting real or supposed ancestors long past and gone. The obscure and barren centuries which immediately precede the first recorded Olympiad, form the natural separation between the legendary return of the Herakleids and the historical wars of Sparta against Messênê;—between the province of legend wherein matter of fact (if any there be) is so intimately combined with its accompaniments of fiction, as to be undistinguishably without the aid of extrinsic evidence—and that of history, where some matters of fact can be ascertained, and where a sagacious criticism may be usefully employed in trying to add to their number.

CHAPTER XIX.

APPLICATION OF CHRONOLOGY TO GRECIAN LEGEND.

I NEED not repeat, what has already been sufficiently set forth in the preceding pages, that the mass of Grecian incident anterior to 776 B.C. appears to me not reducible either to history or to chronology, and that any chronological systems which may be applied to it must be essentially uncertified and illusory. It was however chronologised in ancient times, and has continued to be so in modern; and

Different schemes of chronology proposed for the mythical event: the various schemes employed for this purpose may be found stated and compared in the first volume (the last published) of Mr. Pynes Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici*. There were among the Greeks, and there still are among modern scholars, important differences as to the dates of the principal events: Eratosthenês dissented both from Herodotus and from Phantias and Kallimachus, while Larcher and Raoul Rochette (who follow Herodotus) stand opposed to O. Müller and to Mr. Clinton.¹ That the reader may have a general

¹ Larcher and Raoul Rochette, adopting the chronological date of Herodotus, fix the taking of Troy at 1270 B.C., and the Return of the Herakleids at 1190 B.C. According to the scheme of Eratosthenês, these two events stand at 1184 and 1104 B.C.

O. Müller, in his *Chronological Tables* (Appendix vi. to *History of Dorians*, vol. ii. p. 441, Engl. transl.), gives no dates or computation of years anterior to the Capture of Troy and the Return of the Herakleids, which he places with Eratosthenês in 1184 and 1104 B.C.

C. Müller thinks (in his *Annotatio ad Marmor Parium*, appended

to the *Fragmenta Historicorum Græcorum*, ed. Didot, pp. 556, 568, 572; compare his Prefatory Notice of the *Fragmenta of Hellanikus*, p. xxviii. of the same volume) that the ancient chronologists in their arrangement of the mythical events as antecedent and consequent, were guided by certain numerical attachments, especially by a reverence for the cycle of 63 years, product of the sacred numbers $7 \times 9 = 63$. I cannot think that he makes out his hypothesis satisfactorily, as to the particular cycle followed, though it is not improbable that some preconceived numerical theories *did* guide these early calculators. He calls atten-

conception of the order in which these legendary events were disposed, I transcribe from the *Fasti Hellenici* a double chronological table, contained in p. 139, in which the dates are placed in series, from Phorôneus to the Olympiad of Corœbus in B.C. 776—in the first column according to the system of Eratosthenês, in the second according to that of Kallimachus.

“The following table (says Mr. Clinton) offers a summary view of the leading periods from Phorôneus to the Olympiad of Corœbus, and exhibits a double series of dates; the one proceeding from the date of Eratosthenês, the other from a date founded on the reduced calculations of Phantias and Kallimachus, which strike out fifty-six years from the amount of Eratosthenês. Phantias, as we have seen, omitted fifty-five years between the Return and the registered Olympiads; for so we may understand the account: Kallimachus, fifty-six years between the Olympiad in which Corœbus won.¹ The first column of this table exhibits the *current* years before and after the fall of Troy: in the second column of dates the *complete* intervals are expressed.”

Wherever chronology is possible, researches such as those of Mr. Clinton, which have conduced so much to the better understanding of the later times of Greece, deserve respectful attention. But the ablest chronologist can accomplish nothing, unless he is supplied with a certain basis of matters of fact, pure and distinguishable from fiction, and authenticated by witnesses, both knowing the truth and willing to declare it. Possessing this preliminary stock, he may reason from it to refute distinct falsehoods and to correct partial mistakes: but if all the original statements submitted to him contain truth (at least wherever there

The data, essential to chronological determination, are here wanting.

tion to the fact that the Alexandrine computation of dates was only one among a number of others discrepant, and that modern inquirers are too apt to treat it as if it stood alone, or carried some superior authority (p. 568—572; compare Clemen. Alex. Stromat. i. p. 145, Sylb.). For example, O. Müller observes (Appendix to Hist. of Dorians, p. 442) that “Larcher’s criticism and rejection

of the Alexandrine chronologists may perhaps be found as groundless as they are presumptuous,”—an observation which, to say the least of it, ascribes to Eratosthenês a far higher authority than he is entitled to.

¹ The date of Kallimachus for *Iphitus* is approved by Clavier (*Prem. Temps*, tom. ii. p. 203), who considers it as not far from the truth.

Years before the Fall of Troy.		Years intervening between the different events.	B.C. Eratosth.	B.C. Kallimach.
(570) ¹	<i>Phoroneus</i> , p. 19	287	(1753)	(1697)
(283) {	<i>Danaus</i> , p. 73	} 33	(1466)	(1410)
(250)	<i>Pelasgus V.</i> p. 13, 88			
(200) {	<i>Deukalion</i> , p. 42	} 50	(1433)	(1377)
(150)	<i>Erechtheus</i>			
130	<i>Dardanus</i> , p. 88	} 50	(1383)	(1327)
(100)	<i>Azan, Aphidas, Elatus</i>			
78	<i>Kadmus</i> , p. 85	20	(1333)	(1277)
(42)	<i>Pelops</i>	30	1313	1257
30	Birth of <i>Hercules</i>	22	(1283)	(1227)
26	<i>Argonauts</i>	36	1261	1205
24	First Theban war, p. 51, h. ..	12	(1225)	(1169)
20	Death of <i>Hercules</i>	4	1213	1157
18	Death of <i>Eurystheus</i> , p. 106, x.	2	1209	1153
16	Death of <i>Hyllus</i>	4	1207	1151
10	Accession of <i>Agamemnon</i>	2Y 9 ^m	1203	1147
	Second Theban war, p. 87, 1 ..	2	1200	1144
	Trojan expedition (9Y 1 ^m)	6	1198	1142
		9	1192	1136
Years after the Fall of Troy.				
8	Troy taken	7	1183	1127
60 {	<i>Orestes</i> reigns at Argos in the 8th year	} 52	1176	1120
80	The <i>Thessali</i> occupy Thessaly ..			
109	The <i>Bæoti</i> return to Bæotia in the 60th year	} 20	1124	1068
110	Æolic migration under <i>Penthius</i>			
131	Return of the <i>Heraclidæ</i> in the 80th year	29	1104	1048
139	<i>Aletes</i> reigns at Corinth, p. 130, m.	1	1075	1019
140	Migration of <i>Theras</i>	29	1074	1018
151	Lesbos occupied 130 years after the æra	8	1053	997
169	Death of <i>Codrus</i>	1	1045	989
	Ionic migration 60 years after the Return	11	1044	988
	<i>Cymê</i> founded 150 years after the æra	18	1033	977
	<i>Smyrna</i> , 168 years after the æra, p. 105, t.	131	1015	959
300	Olympiad of <i>Iphitus</i>	229	} 884	828
408		108		
352	Olympiad of <i>Coræbus</i>	52	776	776

¹ These dates, distinguished from the rest by brackets, are proposed as mere conjectures, founded upon the probable length of generations.

is truth), in a sort of chemical combination with fiction, which he has no means of decomposing,—he is in the condition of one who tries to solve a problem without data: he is first obliged to construct his own data, and from them to extract his conclusions. The statements of the epic poets, our only original witnesses in this case, correspond to the description here given. Whether the proportion of truth contained in them be smaller or greater, it is at all events unassignable,—and the constant and intimate admixture of fiction is both indisputable in itself, and indeed essential to the purpose and profession of those from whom the tales proceed. Of such a character are all the deposing witnesses, even where their tales agree; and it is out of a heap of such tales, not agreeing, but discrepant in a thousand ways, and without a morsel of pure authenticated truth,—that the critic is called upon to draw out a methodical series of historical events adorned with chronological dates.

If we could imagine a modern critical scholar transported into Greece at the time of the Persian war—endued with his present habits of appreciating historical evidence, without sharing in the religious or patriotic feelings of the country—and invited to prepare, out of the great body of Grecian epic which then existed, a History and Chronology of Greece anterior to 776 B.C., assigning reasons as well for what he admitted as for what he rejected—I feel persuaded that he would have judged the undertaking to be little better than a process of guess-work. But the modern critic finds that not only Pherekydês and Hellanikus, but also Herodotus and Thucydidês have either attempted the task or sanctioned the belief that it was practicable,—a matter not at all surprising, when we consider both their narrow experience of historical evidence and the powerful ascendancy of religion and patriotism in predisposing them to antiquarian belief,—and he therefore accepts the problem as they have bequeathed it, adding his own efforts to bring it to a satisfactory solution. Nevertheless, he not only follows them with some degree of reserve and uneasiness, but even admits important distinctions quite foreign to their habits of thought. Thucydidês talks of the deeds of Hellên and his sons with as much confidence as we now speak of William

Modern
chronolo-
gists take
up the same
problem as
ancient, but
with a dif-
ferent
canon of
belief.

the Conqueror: Mr. Clinton recognises Hellên with his sons Dôrus, Æolus and Xuthus, as fictitious persons. Herodotus recites the great heroic genealogies down from Kadmus and Danaus with a belief not less complete in the higher members of the series than in the lower: but Mr. Clinton admits a radical distinction in the evidence of events before and after the first recorded Olympiad, or 776 B.C.—“the first date in Grecian chronology (he remarks, p. 123) which can be fixed upon *authentic evidence*”—the highest point to which Grecian chronology, *reckoning upward*, can be carried. Of this important epoch in Grecian development,—the commencement of authentic chronological life,—Herodotus and Thucydidês had no knowledge or took no account: the later chronologists, from Timæus downwards, noted it, and made it serve as the basis of their chronological comparisons, so far as it went: but neither Eratosthenês nor Apollodôrus seem to have recognised (though Varro and Africanus did recognise) a marked difference in respect of certainty or authenticity between the period before and the period after.

In further illustration of Mr. Clinton's opinion that the first recorded Olympiad is the earliest date which can be fixed upon authentic evidence, we have in p. 138 the following just remarks in reference to the dissentient views of Eratosthenês, Phantias and Kallimachus, about the date of the Trojan war:—“The chronology of Eratosthenês (he says), founded on a careful comparison of circumstances, and approved by those to whom the same stores of information were open, is entitled to our respect. But we must remember that a conjectural date can never rise to the authority of evidence; that what is accepted as a substitute for testimony, is not an equivalent: witnesses only can prove a date, and in the want of these, the knowledge of it is plainly beyond our reach. If, in the absence of a better light, we seek for what is probable, we are not to forget the distinction between conjecture and proof; between what is probable and what is certain. The computation then of Eratosthenês for the war of Troy is open to inquiry; and if we find it adverse to the opinions of many preceding writers, who fixed a lower date, and adverse to the acknowledged length of generation in the most authentic dynasties,

Mr. Clinton's opinion on the computation of the date of the Trojan war.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



and Thucydidês might well, upon this supposition, ask of Mr. Clinton, why he called upon them to alter their method of proceeding at the year 776 B.C., and why they might not be allowed to pursue their "upward chronological reckoning" without interruption from Leonidas up to Danaus, or from Peisistratus up to Hellên and Deukaliôn, without any alteration in the point of view. Authentic dynasties from the Olympiads, up to an epoch above the Trojan war, would enable us to obtain chronological proof of the latter date, instead of being reduced (as Mr. Clinton affirms that we are) to "conjecture" instead of proof.

The whole question, as to the value of the reckoning from the Olympiads up to Phorôneus, does in truth turn upon this one point:—Are those genealogies which profess to cover the space between the two, authentic and trustworthy or not? Mr. Clinton appears to feel that they are not so, when he admits the essential difference in the char-

Value of the chronological computations depends on the trustworthiness of the genealogies.

acter of the evidence, and the necessity of altering the method of computation before and after the first recorded Olympiad: yet in his Preface he labours to prove that they possess historical worth and are in the main correctly set forth: moreover, that the fictitious persons, wherever any such are intermingled, may be detected and eliminated. The evidences upon

perform the upward reckoning up to the nearer point of the Ionic migration. It is true that Eratosthenês gives all his statements of time from an older point to a newer (so far at least as we can judge from Clemens Alex. Strom. 1. p. 336); he says, "From the capture of Troy to the return of the Herakleids is 80 years; from thence to the Ionic migration, 60 years; then further on, to the guardianship of Lykurgus, 159 years; then to the first year of the first Olympiad, 108 years; from which Olympiad to the invasion of Xerxês, 297 years: from whence to the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, 48 years," &c But here is no difference between upward reckoning as high as the first

Olympiad, and then downward reckoning for the intervals of time above it. Eratosthenês first found or made some upward reckoning to the Trojan capture, either from his own time or from some time at a known distance from his own: he then assumes the capture of Troy as an æra, and gives statements of intervals going downwards to the Peloponnesian war: amongst other statements, he assigns clearly that interval which Mr. Clinton pronounces to be undiscoverable, viz. the space of time between the Ionic emigration and the first Olympiad, interposing one epoch between them. I reject the computation of Eratosthenês, or any other computation, to determine the supposed date

which he relies, are—1. Inscriptions; 2. The early poets.

1. An inscription, being nothing but a piece of writing on marble, carries evidentiary value under the same conditions as a published writing on paper. If the inscriber reports a contemporary fact which he had the means of knowing, and if there be no reason to suspect misrepresentation, we believe this assertion: if, on the other hand, he records facts belonging to a long period before his own time, his authority counts for little, except in so far as we can verify and appreciate his means of knowledge.

Mr. Clinton's vindication of the genealogies—his proofs.

In estimating therefore the probative force of any inscription, the first and most indispensable point is to assure ourselves of its date. Amongst all the public registers and inscriptions alluded to by Mr. Clinton, there is not one which can be positively referred to a date anterior to 776 B.C. The quoit of Iphitus—the public registers at Sparta, Corinth, and Elis—the list of the priestesses of Juno at Argos—are all of a date completely uncertified. O. Müller does indeed agree with Mr. Clinton (though in my opinion without any sufficient proof) in assigning the quoit of Iphitus to the age ascribed to that prince: and if we even grant thus much, we shall have an inscription as old (adopting Mr. Clinton's determination of the age of Iphitus) as 828 B.C. But when Mr. Clinton quotes O. Müller as admitting the registers of Sparta, Corinth, and Elis, it is right to add that the latter does not profess to guarantee the authenticity of these documents, or the age at which such registers began to be kept. It is not to be doubted that there were registers of the kings of Sparta carrying them up to Hêraklês, and of the kings of Elis from Oxylus to Iphitus: but the question is, at what time did these lists begin to be kept continuously? This is a point which we have no means of deciding, nor can we accept Mr. Clinton's unsupported conjecture, when he tells us—“*Perhaps* these were begun to be written as early as B.C. 1048, the probable time of the Dorian conquest.”

1. Inscriptions—none of proved antiquity.

of the Trojan war; but if I admitted it, I could have no hesitation in admitting also the space which he defines between the Ionic migration and the first Olympiad. Eusebius (Præp. Ev. x. 9, p. 485)

reckons upwards from the birth of Christ, making various halts but never breaking off, to the initial phænomena of Grecian antiquity—the deluge of Deukaliôn and the conflagration of Phaëthôn

Again he tells us—"At Argos a register was preserved of the priestesses of Juno, which *might be* more ancient than the catalogues of the kings of Sparta or Corinth. That register, from which Hellanikus composed his work, contained the priestesses from the earliest times down to the age of Hellanikus himself. . . . But this catalogue *might have* been commenced as early as the Trojan war itself, and even at a still earlier date." (pp. x. xi.) Again, respecting the inscriptions quoted by Herodotus from the temple of the Ismenian Apollo at Thêbes, in which Amphitryo and Laodamas are named, Mr. Clinton says—"They were ancient in the time of Herodotus, which *may* perhaps carry them back 400 years before his time: and in that case they *might* approach within 300 years of Laodamas and within 400 years of the probable time of Kadmus himself."—"It is granted (he adds in a note) that these inscriptions were *not genuine*, that is, not of the date to which they were assigned by Herodotus himself. But that they were ancient cannot be doubted," &c.

The time when Herodotus saw the temple of the Ismenian Apollo at Thêbes can hardly have been earlier than 450 B.C.: reckoning upwards from hence to 776 B.C., we have an interval of 326 years: the inscriptions which Herodotus saw may well therefore have been *ancient*, without being earlier than the first recorded Olympiad. Mr. Clinton does indeed tell us that *ancient* "may perhaps" be construed as 400 years earlier than Herodotus. But no careful reader can permit himself to convert such bare possibility into a ground of inference, and to make it available, in conjunction with other similar possibilities before enumerated, for the purpose of showing that there really existed inscriptions in Greece of a date anterior to 776 B. C., Unless Mr. Clinton can make out this, he can derive no benefit from inscriptions, in his attempt to substantiate the reality of the mythical persons or of the mythical events.

The truth is that the Herakleid pedigree of the Spartan kings (as has been observed in a former chapter) is only one out of the numerous divine and heroic genealogies with which the Hellenic world abounded,¹—a class of documents which become historical evidence only so high in the descending series as the names composing them

Genealogies numerous, and of unascertainable date.

¹ See the string of fabulous Halicarnassian Inscription, professing to enumerate the series of names placed at the head of the

are authenticated by contemporary, or nearly contemporary, enrolment. At what period this enrolment began, we have

priests of Poseidôn from the foundation of the city (Inscript. No. 2655, Boeckh), with the commentary of the learned editor: compare also what he pronounces to be an inscription of a genealogy partially fabulous at Hierapytna in Krête (No. 2563).

The memorable Parian marble is itself an inscription, in which legend and history,—gods, heroes, and men—are blended together in the various successive epochs without any consciousness of transition in the mind of the inscriber.

That the Catalogue of priestesses of Hêrê at Argos went back to the extreme of fabulous times, we may discern by the Fragments of Hellanikus (Frag. 45—53). So also did the registers at Sikyôn: they professed to record Amphion, son of Zeus and Antiopê, as the inventor of harp-music (Plutarch, *De Musicâ*, c. 3, p. 1132).

I remarked in a preceding page that Mr. Clinton erroneously cites K. O. Müller as a believer in the chronological *authenticity* in the lists of the early Spartan kings: he says (vol. iii. App. vi. p. 330), "Mr. Müller is of opinion that an *authentic* account of the years of each Lacedæmonian reign from the return of the Heraclidæ to the Olympiad of Korœbus had been preserved to the time of Eratosthenês and Apollodôrus." But this is a mistake: for Müller expressly disavows any belief in the *authenticity* of the lists (*Dorians*, i. p. 146): he says, "I do not contend that the chronological accounts in the Spartan lists form an *authentic document*, more than those in the catalogue of the priestesses of Hêrê and in the list of Halicarnassian priests. The chronological statements in the Spartan lists

may have been formed from imperfect memorials: but the Alexandrine chronologists must have found such tables in existence," &c.

The discrepancies noticed in Herodotus (vi. 52) are alone sufficient to prove that continuous registers of the names of the Lacedæmonian kings did not begin to be kept until very long after the date here assigned by Mr. Clinton.

Xenophôn (*Agesilaus*, viii. 7) agrees with what Herodotus mentions to have been the native Lacedæmonian story—that Aristodêmus (and not his sons) was the king who conducted the Dorian invaders to Sparta. What is farther remarkable is that Xenophôn calls him—'Αριστόδημος ὁ Ἡρακλέους. The reasonable inference here is, that Xenophôn believed Aristodemus to be the son of Hêraklês, and that this was one of the various genealogical stories current. But here the critics interpose: "ὁ Ἡρακλέους (observes Schneider), non παῖς, sed ἀπόγονος, ut ex Herodoto viii. 131 admonuit Weiske." Surely if Xenophôn had meant this, he would have said ὁ ἀφ' Ἡρακλέους.

Perhaps particular exceptional cases might be quoted, wherein the very common phrase of ὁ followed by a genitive means *descendant*, and not *son*. But if any doubt be allowed upon this point, chronological computations, founded on genealogies, will be exposed to a serious additional suspicion. Why are we to assume that Xenophôn *must* give the same story as Herodotus, unless his words naturally tell us so?

M. John Brandis, in an instructive Dissertation (*De Temporum*

no information. Two remarks however may be made, in reference to any approximate guess as to the time when actual registration commenced:—First, that the number of names in the pedigree, or the length of past time which it professes to embrace, affords no presumption of any superior antiquity in the time of registration:—Secondly, that looking to the acknowledged paucity and rudeness of Grecian writing even down to the 60th Olympiad (540 B.C.), and to the absence of the habit of writing, as well as the low estimate of its value, which such a state of things argues, the presumption is, that written enrolment of family genealogies did not commence until a long time after 776 B.C., and the obligation of proof falls upon him who maintains that it commenced earlier. And this second remark is farther borne out when we observe, that there is no registered list, except that of the Olympic victors, which goes up even so high as 776 B.C. The next list which O. Müller and Mr. Clinton produce, is that of the *Karneonikæ* or victors at the Karneian festival, which reaches only up to 676 B.C.

If Mr. Clinton then makes little out of inscriptions to sustain his view of Grecian history and chronology anterior to the recorded Olympiads, let us examine the inferences which he draws from his other source of evidence—the early poets. And here it will be found, First, that in order to maintain the credibility of these witnesses, he lays down positions respecting historical evidence both indefensible in themselves, and especially inapplicable to the early times of Greece: Secondly, that his reasoning is at the same time inconsistent—inasmuch as it includes admissions, which if properly understood and followed out, exhibit these very witnesses, as habitually, indiscriminately, and unconsciously, mingling truth and fiction, and therefore little fit to be believed upon their solitary and unsupported testimony.

To take the second point first, he says, Introduction, p. ii.-iii.—“The authority even of the genealogies has been

Græcorum Antiquissimorum Rationibus, Bonn, 1857) insists forcibly on the point that Herodotus knew nothing of these registers of Spartan kings, and that they did not exist at Sparta when his

history was composed (p. 6). M. Brandis conceives *Hellanikus* to be the first arranger and methodiser of these early genealogies (p. 8—37).

called in question by many able and learned persons, who reject Danaus, Kadmus, Hercules, Thêseus, and many others, as fictitious persons. It is evident that any fact would come from the hands of the poets embellished with many fabulous additions: and fictitious genealogies were undoubtedly composed. Because, however, some genealogies were fictitious, we are not justified in concluding that all were fabulous In estimating then the historical value of the genealogies transmitted by the early poets, we may take a middle course; not rejecting them as wholly false, nor yet implicitly receiving all as true. The genealogies *contain many real persons*, but these are *incorporated with many fictitious names*. The fictions however will have a basis of truth: the genealogical expression may be false, but the connexion which it describes is real. Even to those who reject the whole as fabulous, the exhibition of the early times which is presented in this volume may still be not unacceptable: because it is necessary to the right understanding of antiquity that the opinions of the Greeks concerning their own origin should be set before us, even if these are erroneous opinions, and that their story should be told as they have told it themselves. The names preserved by the ancient genealogies may be considered of three kinds; either they were the name of a race or clan converted into the name of an individual, or they were altogether fictitious, or lastly, they were real historical names. An attempt is made in the four genealogical tables inserted below to distinguish these three classes of names. Of those who are left in the third class (*i. e.* the real) all are not entitled to remain there. But I have only placed in the third class those names concerning which there seemed to be little doubt. The rest are left to the judgement of the reader."

Pursuant to this principle of division, Mr. Clinton furnishes four genealogical tables,¹ in which the names of persons representing races are printed in capital letters, and those of purely fictitious persons in italics. And these tables exhibit a curious sample of the intimate commixture of fiction with that which he calls truth: real son and mythical father, real husband and mythical wife, or *vice versâ*.

Mr. Clinton's separation of the genealogical persons into real and fabulous: principles on which it is founded.

¹ See Mr. Clinton's work, pp. 32, 40, 100.

Upon Mr. Clinton's tables we may remark—

1. The names singled out as fictitious are distinguished by no common character, nor any mark either assignable or defensible, from those which are left as real. To take an example (p. 40), why is Itônus the 1st pointed out as a fiction, while Itônus the 2nd, together with Physcus, Cynus, Salmôneus, Ormenus, &c., in the same page, are preserved as real, all of them being eponyms of towns just as much as Itônus?

2. If we are to discard Hellên, Dôrus, Æolus, Iôn, &c., as not being real individual persons, but expressions for personified races, why are we to retain Kadmus, Danaus, Hyllus, and several others, who are just as much eponyms of races and tribes as the four above mentioned? Hyllus, Pamphylus and Dymas are the eponyms of the three Dorian tribes,¹ just as Hoplês and the other three sons of Iôn were of the four Attic tribes: Kadmus and Danaus stand in the same relation to the Kadmeians and Danaans, as Argus and Achæus to the Argeians and Achæans. Besides, there are many other names really eponymous, which we cannot now recognise to be so, in consequence of our imperfect acquaintance with the subdivisions of the Hellenic population, each of which, speaking generally, had its god or hero, to whom the original of the name was referred. If, then, eponymous names are to be excluded from the category of reality, we shall find that the ranks of the real men will be thinned to a far greater extent than is indicated by Mr. Clinton's tables.

3. Though Mr. Clinton does not carry out consistently either of his disfranchising qualifications among the names and persons of the old mythes, he nevertheless presses them far enough to strike out a sensible proportion of the whole. By conceding thus much to modern scepticism, he has departed from the point of view of Hellanikus and Herodotus, and the ancient historians generally; and it is singular that the names, which he has been the most forward to sacrifice, are exactly those to which they were most attached and which it would have been most painful to their faith to part with—I mean the eponymous heroes. Neither Herodotus, nor Hellanikus, nor Eratosthenês, nor any one

¹ "From these three" (Hyllus, Pamphylus and Dymas), says Mr. Clinton, vol. i. ch. 5. p. 109, "the three Dorian tribes derived their names."



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



a basis for chronological computations, and that Mr. Clinton, when he mutilated the data of the ancient chronologists, ought at the same time to have abandoned their problems as insoluble. Genealogies of real persons, such as Herodotus and Eratosthenês believed in, afford a tolerable basis for calculations of time, within certain limits of error: "genealogies containing many real persons, but incorporated with many fictitious names," (to use the language just cited from Mr. Clinton,) are essentially unavailable for such a purpose.

It is right here to add, that I agree in Mr. Clinton's view of these eponymous persons: I admit with him that "the genealogical expression may often be false, when the connexion which it describes is real." Thus, for example, the adoption of Hyllus by Ægimius, the father of Pamphylus and Dymas, to the privileges of a son and to a third fraction of his territories, may reasonably be construed as a mythical expression of the fraternal union of the three Dorian tribes, Hyllêis, Pamphyli, and Dymanes: so about the relationship of Iôn and Achæus, of Dôrus and Æolus. But if we put this construction on the name of Hyllus, or Iôn, or Achæus, we cannot at the same time employ either of these persons as units in chronological reckoning; nor is it consistent to recognise them in the lump as members of a distinct class, and yet to enlist them as real individuals in measuring the duration of past time.

4. Mr. Clinton, while professing a wish to tell the story of the Greeks as they have told it themselves, seems unconscious how capitally his point of view differs from theirs. The distinction which he draws between real and fictitious persons would have appeared unreasonable, not to say offensive, to Herodotus or Eratosthenês. It is undoubtedly right that the early history (if so it is to be called) of the Greeks should be told as they have told it themselves, and with that view I have endeavoured in the previous narrative, as far as I could, to present the primitive legends in their original colour and character—pointing out at the same time the manner in which they were transformed and distilled into history by passing through the retort of later annalists. It is the legend as thus transformed which Mr. Clinton seems to understand as the story told by the Greeks themselves—which cannot be admitted to be true, unless the meaning of the expression be specially explained. In

his general distinction, however, between the real and fictitious persons of the mythical world, he departs essentially from the point of view even of the later Greeks. And if he had consistently followed out that distinction in his particular criticisms, he would have found the ground slipping under his feet in his upward march even to Troy—not to mention the series of eighteen generations farther up to Phorôneus; but he does *not* consistently follow it out, and therefore in practice he deviates little from the footsteps of the ancients.

Enough has been said to show that the witnesses upon whom Mr. Clinton relies blend truth and fiction habitually, indiscriminately and unconsciously, even upon his own admission. Let us now consider the positions which he lays down respecting historical evidence. He says (Introduct. p. vi. vii.):—

Mr. Clinton's position respecting historical evidence.

“We may acknowledge as real persons all those whom there is no reason for rejecting. The presumption is in favour of the early tradition, if no argument can be brought to overthrow it. The persons may be considered real, when the description of them is consonant with the state of the country at that time: when no national prejudice or vanity could be concerned in inventing them: when the tradition is consistent and general: when rival or hostile tribes concur in the leading facts: when the acts ascribed to the person (divested of their poetical ornament) enter into the political system of the age, or form the basis of other transactions which fall within known historical times. Kadmus and Danaus appear to be real persons; for it is conformable to the state of mankind, and perfectly credible, that Phœnician and Egyptian adventurers, in the ages to which these persons are ascribed, should have found their way to the coasts of Greece: and the Greeks (as already observed) had no motive from any national vanity to feign these settlements. Hercules was a real person. His acts were recorded by those who were not friendly to the Dorians; by Achæans and Æolians and Ionians, who had no vanity to gratify in celebrating the hero of a hostile and rival people. His descendants in many branches remained in many states down to the historical times. His son Tlepolemus and his grandson and great-grandson Cleodæus and Aristomachus are acknowledged (*i. e.* by O. Müller)

to be real persons: and there is no reason that can be assigned for receiving these, which will not be equally valid for establishing the reality both of Hercules and Hyllus. Above all, Hercules is authenticated by the testimonies both of the Iliad and Odyssey.”

These positions appear to me inconsistent with sound views of the conditions of historical testimony. According to what is here laid down, we are bound to accept as real all the persons mentioned by Homer, Arktinus, Leschês, the Hesiodic poets, Eumêlus, Asius, &c., unless we can adduce some positive ground in each particular case to prove the contrary. If this position be a true one, the greater part of the history of England, from Brute the Trojan down to Julius Cæsar, ought at once to be admitted as valid and worthy of credence. What Mr. Clinton here calls the *early tradition*, is in point of fact the narrative of these early poets. The word *tradition* is an equivocal word, and begs the whole question; for while in its obvious and literal meaning it implies only something handed down, whether truth or fiction—it is tacitly understood to imply a tale descriptive of some real matter of fact, taking its rise at the time when that fact happened, and originally accurate, but corrupted by subsequent oral transmission. Understanding therefore by Mr. Clinton’s words *early tradition*, the tales of the old poets, we shall find his position totally inadmissible—that we are bound to admit the persons or statements of Homer and Hesiod as real, unless where we can produce reasons to the contrary. To allow this, would be to put them upon a par with good contemporary witnesses; for no greater privilege can be claimed in favour even of Thucydidês, than the title of his testimony to be believed unless where it can be contradicted on special grounds. The presumption in favour of an asserting witness is either strong, or weak, or positively nothing, according to the compound ratio of his means of knowledge, his moral and intellectual habits, and his motive to speak the truth. Thus, for instance, when Hesiod tells us that his father quitted the Æolic Kymê and came to Askra in Bœôtia, we may fully believe him; but when he describes to us the battles between the Olympic gods and the Titans, or between Hêraklês and Kyknus—or when Homer depicts the efforts of Hectôr, aided by Apollo, for the

To what extent presumption may stand in favour of the early poets.

defence of Troy, and the struggles of Achilles and Odysseus, with the assistance of Hêrê and Poseidôn, for the destruction of that city, events professedly long past and gone—we cannot presume either of them to be in any way worthy of belief. It cannot be shown that they possessed any means of knowledge, while it is certain that they could have no motive to consider historical truth: their object was to satisfy an uncritical appetite for narrative, and to interest the emotions of their hearers. Mr. Clinton says, that “the persons may be considered real when the description of them is consistent with the state of the country at that time.” But he has forgotten, first, that we know nothing of the state of the country except what these very poets tell us; next, that fictitious persons may be just as consonant to the state of the country as real persons. While therefore, on the one hand, we have no independent evidence either to affirm or to deny that Achilles or Agamemnôn are consistent with the state of Greece or Asia Minor at a certain supposed date 1183 B.C.,—so, on the other hand, even assuming such consistency to be made out, this of itself would not prove them to be real persons.

Mr. Clinton’s reasoning altogether overlooks the existence of *plausible fiction*—fictitious stories which harmonise perfectly well with the general course of facts, and which are distinguished from matters of fact not by any internal character, but by the circumstance that matter of fact has some competent and well-informed witness to authenticate it, either directly or through legitimate inference. Fiction may be, and often is, extravagant and incredible; but it may also be plausible and specious, and in that case there is nothing but the want of an attesting certificate to distinguish it from truth. Now all the tests, which Mr. Clinton proposes as guarantees of the reality of the Homeric persons, will be just as well satisfied by plausible fiction as by actual matter of fact; the plausibility of the fiction consists in its satisfying those and other similar conditions. In most cases, the tales of the poets *did* fall in with the existing current of feelings in their audience: “prejudice and vanity” are not the only feelings, but doubtless prejudice and vanity were often appealed to, and it was from such harmony of sentiment that they acquired their hold on men’s belief. Without

Plausible fiction satisfies the conditions laid down by Mr. Clinton—not distinguishable from truth without the aid of evidence.

any doubt the Iliad appealed most powerfully to the reverence for ancestral gods and heroes among the Asiatic colonists who first heard it: the temptation of putting forth an interesting tale is quite a sufficient stimulus to the invention of the poet, and the plausibility of the tale a sufficient passport to the belief of the hearers. Mr. Clinton talks of “consistent and general tradition.” But that the tale of a poet, when once told with effect and beauty, acquired general belief—is no proof that it was founded on fact: otherwise, what are we to say to the divine legends, and to the large portion of the Homeric narrative which Mr. Clinton himself sets aside as untrue under the designation of “poetical ornament?” When a mythical incident is recorded as “forming the basis” of some known historical fact or institution—as for instance the successful stratagem by which Melanthus killed Xanthus in the battle on the boundary, as recounted in my last chapter,—we may adopt one of two views: we may either treat the incident as real, and as having actually given occasion to what is described as its effect—or we may treat the incident as a legend imagined in order to assign some plausible origin of the reality,—“Aut ex re nomen, aut ex vocabulo fabula.”¹ In cases where the legendary incident is referred to a time long anterior to any records—as it commonly is—the second mode of proceeding appears to me far more consonant to reason and probability than the first. It is to be recollected that all the persons and facts, here defended as matter of real history by Mr. Clinton, are referred to an age long preceding the first beginning of records.

I have already remarked that Mr. Clinton shrinks from his own rule in treating Kadmus and Danaus as real persons, since they are as much eponyms of tribes or races as Dôrus and Hellên. And if he can admit Hêraklês to be a real man, I do not see upon what reason he can consistently disallow any one of the mythical personages, for there is not one whose exploits are more strikingly at variance with the standard of historical probability. Mr. Clinton reasons upon the supposition that “Hercules was a *Dorian* hero:” but he was Achæan and Kadmeian as well as Dorian, though the legends respecting him

Kadmus,
Danaus,
Hyllus, &c.,
all epo-
nyms,
and falling
under Mr.
Clinton's
definition
of fictitious
persons.

¹ Pomponius Mela, iii. 7.

are different in all the three characters. Whether his son Tlepolemus and his grandson Kleodæus belong to the category of historical men, I will not take upon me to say, though O. Müller (in my opinion without any warranty) appears to admit it; but Hyllus certainly is not a real man, if the canon of Mr. Clinton himself respecting the eponyms is to be trusted. "The descendants of Herculês (observes Mr. Clinton) remained in many states down to the historical times." So did those of Zeus and Apollo, and of that god whom the historian Hekataëus recognised as his progenitor in the sixteenth generation: the titular kings of Ephesus, in the historical times, as well as Peisistratus, the despot of Athens, traced their origin up to Æolus and Hellên, yet Mr. Clinton does not hesitate to reject Æolus and Hellên as fictitious persons. I dispute the propriety of quoting the Iliad and Odyssey (as Mr. Clinton does) in evidence of the historic personality of Herculês. For even with regard to the ordinary men who figure in those poems, we have no means of discriminating the real from the fictitious; while the Homeric Hêraklês is unquestionably more than an ordinary man,—he is the favourite son of Zeus, from his birth predestined to a life of labour and servitude, as preparation for a glorious immortality. Without doubt the poet himself believed in the reality of Herculês, but it was a reality clothed with superhuman attributes.

Mr. Clinton observes (Introd. p. ii.), that "because some genealogies were fictitious, we are not justified in concluding that all were fabulous." It is no way necessary that we should maintain so extensive a position: it is sufficient that all are fabulous so far as concerns gods and heroes, —*some* fabulous throughout—and none ascertainably true, for the period anterior to the recorded Olympiads. How much, or what particular portions, may be true, no one can pronounce. The gods and heroes are, from our point of view, essentially fictitious; but from the Grecian point of view they were the most real (if the expression may be permitted, *i. e.* clung to with the strongest faith) of all the members of the series. They not only formed parts of the genealogy as originally conceived, but were in themselves the grand reason why it was conceived, —as a golden chain to connect the living man with a divine ancestor. The genealogy therefore taken as a whole (and

What is real in the genealogies cannot be distinguished from what is fictitious.

its value consists in its being taken as a whole) was from the beginning a fiction; but the names of the father and grandfather of the living man, in whose day it first came forth, were doubtless those of real men. Wherever therefore we can verify the date of a genealogy, as applied to some living person, we may reasonably presume the two lowest members of it to be also those of real persons: but this has no application to the time anterior to the Olympiads—still less to the pretended times of the Trojan war, the Kalydonian boar-hunt, or the deluge of Deukalion. To reason (as Mr. Clinton does, *Introd.* p. vi.),—“Because Aristomachus was a real man, therefore his father Cleodæus, his grandfather Hyllus, and so farther upwards, &c. must have been real men,”—is an inadmissible conclusion. The historian Hekataëus was a real man, and doubtless his father Hege-sander also—but it would be unsafe to march up his genealogical ladder fifteen steps to the presence of the ancestral god of whom he boasted: the upper steps of the ladder will be found broken and unreal. Not to mention that the inference, from real son to real father, is inconsistent with the admissions in Mr. Clinton’s own genealogical tables; for he there inserts the names of several mythical fathers as having begotten real historical sons.

The general authority of Mr. Clinton’s book, and the sincere respect which I entertain for his elucidations of the later chronology, have imposed upon me the duty of assigning those grounds on which I dissent from his conclusions prior to the first recorded Olympiad. The reader who desires to see the numerous and contradictory guesses (they deserve no better name) of the Greeks themselves in the attempt to chronologise their mythical narratives, will find them in the copious notes annexed to the first half of his first volume. As I consider all such researches not merely as fruitless in regard to any trustworthy result, but as serving to divert attention from the genuine form and really illustrative character of Grecian legend, I have not thought it right to go over the same ground in the present work. Differing as I do, however, from Mr. Clinton’s views on this subject, I concur with him in deprecating the application of etymology (*Introd.* p. xi.-xii.) as a general scheme of explanation to the characters and events of Greek legend. Amongst the many causes which operated as suggestives and stimulants to Greek fancy in the creation



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



most generally followed by those who succeeded them, and seems to have passed to modern times as the received date of this great legendary event—though some distinguished inquirers have adopted the epoch of Herodotus, which Larcher has attempted to vindicate in an elaborate, but feeble, dissertation.¹ It is unnecessary to state that in my view the inquiry has no other value except to illustrate the ideas which guided the Greek mind, and to exhibit its progress from the days of Homer to those of Herodotus. For it argues a considerable mental progress when men begin to methodise the past, even though they do so on fictitious principles, being as yet unprovided with those records which alone could put them on a better course. The Homeric man was satisfied with feeling,

Evidence
of mental
progress
when men
methodise
the past,
even on
fictitious
principles.

¹ Larcher, *Chronologie d'Hérodote*, chap. xiv. p. 352—401.

From the capture of Troy down to the passage of Alexander with his invading army into Asia, the latter a known date of 334 B.C., the following different reckonings were made:—

Phanias	gave	715	years.
Ephorus	"	735	"
Eratosthenês ..	"	774	"
Timæus	}	820	"
Kleitarchus ..			
Duris	"	1000	"

(Clemens. *Alexand. Strom.* i. p. 337.)

Democritus estimated a space of 730 years between his composition of the *Μυρὸς Διάκοσμος* and the capture of Troy (*Diogen. Laërt.* ix. 41). Isokratês believed the Lacedæmonians to have been established in Peloponnêsus 700 years, and he repeats this in three different passages (*Archidam.* p. 118; *Panathen.* p. 275; *De Pace*, p. 178). The dates of these three orations themselves differ by twenty-four years, the *Archidamus* being older than the *Panathenæic* by that interval; yet he employs the same number of years for each in cal-

culating backwards to the Trojan war (see *Clinton*, vol. i. *Introd.* p. 5). In round numbers, his calculation coincides pretty nearly with the 800 years given by Herodotus in the preceding century.

The remarks of Boeckh on the Parian marble generally, in his *Corpus Inscriptionum Græc.* t. ii. p. 322—336, are extremely valuable, but especially his criticism on the epoch of the Trojan war, which stands the twenty-fourth in the Marble. The ancient chronologists, from *Damastês* and *Hellanikus* downwards, professed to fix not only the exact year, but the exact month, day and hour in which this celebrated capture took place. [Mr. Clinton pretends to no more than the possibility of determining the event within fifty years, *Introd.* p. vi.] Boeckh illustrates the manner of their argumentation.

O. Müller observes (*History of the Dorians*, t. ii. p. 442. *Eng. Tr.*), "In reckoning from the migration of the *Heraklidæ* downward, we follow the Alexandrine chronology, of which it should be observed, that our materials only enable us to restore it to its origi-

CHAPTER XX.

STATE OF SOCIETY AND MANNERS AS EXHIBITED IN GRECIAN LEGEND.

THOUGH the particular persons and events chronicled in the legendary poems of Greece, are not to be regarded as belonging to the province of real history, those poems are nevertheless full of instruction as pictures of life and manners; and the very same circumstances which divest their composers of all credibility as historians, render them so much the more valuable as unconscious expositors of their own contemporary society. While professedly describing an uncertified past, their combinations are involuntarily borrowed from the surrounding present. For among communities, such as those of the primitive Greeks, without books, without means of extended travel, without acquaintance with foreign languages and habits, the imagination even of highly gifted men was naturally enslaved by the circumstances around them to a far greater degree than in the later days of Solôn or Herodotus; insomuch that the characters which they conceived and the scenes which they described would for that reason bear a stronger generic resemblance to the realities of their own time and locality. Nor was the poetry of that age addressed to lettered and critical authors, watchful to detect plagiarism, sated with simple imagery, and requiring something of novelty or peculiarity in every fresh production. To captivate their emotions, it was sufficient to depict with genius and fervour the more obvious manifestations of human adventure or suffering, and to idealise that type of society, both private and public, with which the hearers around were familiar. Even in describing the gods, where a great degree of latitude and deviation might have been expected,¹ we see that Homer introduces into Olympus

¹ Καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς δὲ διὰ τοῦτο πάν- οἱ μὲν ἔτι καὶ νῦν, οἱ δὲ τὸ ἀρχαῖον, τες φασὶ βασιλεύεσθαι, ὅτι καὶ αὐτοὶ, ἐβασίλευοντο. Ὡς περ δὲ καὶ τὰ εἶδη

the passions, the caprices, the love of power and patronage, the alternation of dignity and weakness, which animated the bosom of an ordinary Grecian chief; and this tendency, to reproduce in substance the social relations to which he had been accustomed, would operate still more powerfully when he had to describe simply human characters—the chief and his people, the warrior and his comrades, the husband, wife, father, and son—or the imperfect rudiments of judicial and administrative proceeding. That his narrative on all these points, even with fictitious characters and events, presents a close approximation to general reality, there can be no reason to doubt.¹ The necessity under which he lay of drawing from a store, then happily unexhausted, of personal experience and observation, is one of the causes of that freshness and vivacity of description for which he stands unrivalled, and which constituted the imperishable charm of the Iliad and Odyssey from the beginning to the end of Grecian literature.

While therefore we renounce the idea of chronologising or historicising the events of Grecian legend, we may turn them to profit as valuable memorials of that state of society, feeling and intelligence, which must be to us the starting-point of the history of the people. Of course the legendary age, like all those which succeeded it, had its antecedent causes and determining conditions; but of these we know nothing, and we are compelled to assume it as a primary fact for the purpose of following out its subsequent changes. To conceive absolute beginning or origin (as Niebuhr has justly remarked) is beyond the reach of our faculties: we can neither apprehend nor verify anything beyond progress, or development, or decay²—change from one set of circumstances to another,

They are memorials of the first state of Gr^eci^an society—the starting-point of Grecian history.

ἑαυτοῖς ἀφομοιοῦσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς βίους τῶν θεῶν, (Aristot. Politic. i. 1, 7).

¹ In the pictures of the Homeric Heroes, there is no material difference of character recognised between one race of Greeks and another—or even between Greeks and Trojans. See Helbig, Die sittlichen Zustände des Griechischen Heldenalters, part ii. p. 53.

² Niebuhr, Römische Geschichte, vol. i. p. 55, 2nd ed. “Erkennt man aber, dass aller Ursprung jenseits unserer nur Entwicklung und Fortgang fassenden Begriffe liegt; und beschränkt sich von Stufe auf Stufe im Umfang der Geschichte zurückzugehen, so wird man Völker eines Stammes (das heisst, durch eigenthümliche Art und Sprache identisch) vielfach

operated by some definite combination of physical or moral laws. In the case of the Greeks, the legendary age, as the earliest in any way known to us, must be taken as the initial state from which this series of changes commences. We must depict its prominent characteristics as well as we can, and show—partly how it serves to prepare, partly how it forms a contrast to set off—the subsequent ages of Solôn, of Periklês, and of Demosthenês.

1. The political condition, which Grecian legend everywhere presents to us, is in its principal features strikingly different from that which had become universally prevalent among the Greeks in the time of the Peloponnêsian war. Historical oligarchy, as well as democracy, agreed in requiring a certain established system of government, comprising these three elements—specialised functions, temporary functionaries, and ultimate responsibility (under some forms or other) to the mass of qualified citizens—either a Senate or an Ecclesia, or both. There were of course many and capital distinctions between one government and another, in respect to the qualification of the citizen, the attributes and efficiency of the general assembly, the admissibility to power, &c.; and men might often be dissatisfied with the way in which these questions were determined in their own city. But in the mind of every man, some determining rule or system—something like what in modern times is called a *constitution*

Compari-
son of
legendary
with
historical
Greece—
govern-
ment of
the latter—

eben an sich entgegenliegenden Küstenländern antreffen . . . ohne dass irgend etwas die Voraussetzung erheischte, eine von diesen getrennten Landschaften sei die ursprüngliche Heimath gewesen, von wo ein Theil nach der andern gewandert wäre . . . Dies ist der Geographie der Thiergeschlechter und der Vegetation analog: deren grosse Bezirke durch Gebirge geschieden werden und beschränkte Meere einschliessen."

"When we once recognise, however, that *all absolute beginning lies out of the reach of our mental conceptions, which comprehend nothing beyond development and*

progress, and when we attempt nothing more than to go back from the later to the earlier stages in the compass of history, we shall often find, on opposite coasts of the same sea, people of one stock (that is of the same peculiar customs and language), without being warranted in supposing that either of these separate coasts was the primitive home from whence emigrants crossed over to the other. This is analogous to the geography of animals and plants, whose wide districts are severed by mountains and enclose internal seas."

—was indispensable to any government entitled to be called legitimate, or capable of creating in the mind of a Greek a feeling of moral obligation to obey it. The functionaries who exercised authority under it might be more or less competent or popular; but his personal feelings towards them were commonly lost in his attachment or aversion to the general system. If any energetic man could by audacity or craft break down the constitution and render himself permanent ruler according to his own will and pleasure—even though he might govern well, he could never inspire the people with any sentiment of duty towards him. His sceptre was illegitimate from the beginning, and even the taking of his life, far from being interdicted by that moral feeling which condemned the shedding of blood in other cases, was considered meritorious. Nor could he be mentioned in the language except by a name¹ (*τύραννος*, *despot*) which branded him as an object of mingled fear and dislike.

If we carry our eyes back from historical to legendary Greece, we find a picture the reverse of what has been here sketched. We discern a government in which there is little or no scheme or system,—still less any idea of responsibility to the governed,—but in which the main-spring of obedience on the part of the people consists in their personal feeling and reverence towards the chief. We remark, first and foremost, the King; next, a limited number of subordinate kings or chiefs; afterwards, the mass of armed freemen, husbandmen, artisans, freebooters, &c.; lowest all, the free labourers for hire and the bought slaves. The King is not distinguished by any broad or impassable boundary from the other chiefs, to each of whom the title *Basileus* is applicable as well as to himself: his supremacy has been inherited from his ancestors, and passes by descent, as a general rule, to his eldest son, having been conferred upon the family as a privilege by the favour of Zeus.² In

The king—
in legen-
dary
Greece.

¹ The Greek name *τύραννος* cannot be properly rendered *tyrant*; for many of the *τύραννοι* by no means deserved to be so called, nor is it consistent with the use of language to speak of a mild and well-intentioned tyrant. The word *despot* is the nearest approach which we can make to it, since it

is understood to imply that a man has got more power than he ought to have, while it does not exclude a beneficent use of such power by some individuals. It is however very inadequate to express the full strength of Grecian feeling which the original word called forth.

² The Phæakian king Alkinous

war, he is the leader, foremost in personal prowess, and directing all military movements; in peace, he is the general protector of the injured and oppressed; he farther offers up those public prayers and sacrifices which are intended to obtain for the whole people the favour of the gods. An ample domain is assigned to him as an appurtenance of his lofty position, while the produce of his fields and his cattle is consecrated in part to an abundant, though rude, hospitality. Moreover, he receives frequent presents, to avert his enmity, to conciliate his favour,¹ or to buy off

(*Odyss.* vii 55—65): there are twelve other Phæakian Βασιλῆες, he is himself the thirteenth (*viii.* 391).

The chief men in the *Iliad*, and the suitors of Penelopè in the *Odyssey*, are called usually and indiscriminately both Βασιλῆες and Ἄνακτες; the latter word however designates them as men of property and masters of slaves (analogous to the subsequent word δεσπότης, which word does not occur in Homer, though δέσποινα is found in the *Odyssey*), while the former word marks them as persons of conspicuous station in the tribe (see *Odyss.* i. 393—401; *xiv.* 63). A chief could only be Βασιλεύς of freemen; but he might be Ἄναξ either of freemen or of slaves.

Agamemnôn and Menelaus belong to the most kingly race (γένος βασιλευτέρων: compare Tyrtaeus, *Fragm.* ix. v. 8, p. 9, ed. Schneidewin) of the Pelopids, to whom the sceptre originally made for Zeus has been given by Hermès (*Iliad*, ii. 101; ix. 160; x. 239); compare *Odyss.* xv. 539. The race of Dardanus are the favourite offspring of Zeus, βασιλεύτατον among the Trojans (*Iliad*, xx. 304). These races are the parallels of the kingly *prosapia* called Amali, Asdingi, Gungingi and Lithingi, among the Goths, Vandals, and Lombards (*Jornandes, De Rebus Geticis*, c. 14—22; Paul Warne-

frid, *Gest. Langob.* c. 14—21); and the ἀργικὸν γένος among the Chaonian Epirots (*Thucyd.* ii. 80).

¹ *Odyss.* i. 392; xi. 184; xiii. 14; xix. 109.—

Οὐ μὲν γὰρ τι καχὸν βασιλεύεμεν.
αἰψὰ τε οἱ δῶ

Ἄφνειον πέλεται, καὶ τιμηέστερος
αὐτός.

Iliad, ix. 154—297 (when Agamemnôn is promising seven townships to Achilles, as a means of appeasing his wrath):—

Ἐν δ' ἄνδρες ναίουσι πολυῤῥῆνες,
πολυβοῦται,

Οἳ κέ σε δωτήνησι, θεὸν ὦς, τιμή-
σουσι,

Καὶ σοι ὑπὸ σκήπτρῳ λιπαρὰς τε-
λέουσι θέμιστας.

See *Iliad*, xii. 312; and the reproaches of Thersitês (*ii.* 226)—*βασιλῆας δωροφάγους* (*Hesiod, Opp. Di.* 38—264).

The Roman kings had a large *τέμενος* assigned to them,—“*agri, arva, et arbusta et pascui læti atque uberes*” (*Cicero, De Republ.* v. 2): the German kings received presents: “*Mos est civitatibus* (observes Tacitus respecting the Germans whom he describes, *M. G.* 15) *ultro ac viritim conferre principibus, vel armentorum vel frugum, quod pro honore acceptum etiam necessitatibus subvenit.*”

The revenue of the Persian kings before Darius consisted only of what were called δῶρα or presents (*Herod.* iii. 89): Darius first intro-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



exhibited in an odious point of view, and is indeed never heard of except from some one or more of the subordinate princes. To keep alive and justify such feelings in the public mind, however, the king must himself possess various accomplishments, bodily and mental, and that too in a superior degree.¹ He must be brave in the field, wise in the council, and eloquent in the agora; he must be endued with bodily strength and activity above other men, and must be an adept, not only in the use of his arms, but also in those athletic exercises which the crowd delight to witness. Even the more homely varieties of manual acquirements are an addition to his character,—such as the craft of the carpenter or shipwright, the straight furrowing of the ploughman, or the indefatigable persistence of the mower without repose or refreshment throughout the longest day.² The conditions of voluntary obedience, during the Grecian heroic times, are family descent with personal force and superiority, mental as well as bodily, in the chief, coupled with the favour of the gods: an old chief, such as Pêleus and Laërtes, cannot retain his position.³ But, on the other hand, where these elements of force are present, a good deal of violence, caprice and rapacity is tolerated: the ethical judgement is not exact in scrutinising the conduct of individuals so pre-eminently endowed. As in the case of the gods, the general epithets of *good*, *just*, &c. are applied to them as euphemisms arising from submission and fear, being not only not suggested, but often pointedly belied, by their particular acts. These words signify⁴ the man of

memnôn in the Iliad—Πάρ γὰρ ἔμοι θάνατος—are not in our present copies: the Alexandrine critics effaced many traces of the old manners.

¹ Striking phrases on this head are put into the mouth of Sarpêdôn (Iliad, xii. 310—322).

Kings are named and commissioned by Zeus,—Ἐξ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες (Hesiod, Theogon. 96; Callimach. Hymn. ad Jov. 79: κρατέρω θεράποντε Διὸς is a sort of paraphrase for the kingly dignity in the case of Pelias and Nêleus (Odys. xi. 255; compare Iliad, ii. 204).

² Odysseus builds his own bed and bedchamber and his own raft (Odys. xxiii. 188; v. 246—255): he boasts of being an excellent mower and ploughman (xviii. 365—375): for his astonishing proficiency in the athletic contests, see viii. 180—230. Paris took a share in building his own house (Iliad, vi. 314).

³ Odys. xi. 496; xxiv. 136—248.

⁴ See this prominent meaning of the words ἀγαθός, ἐσθλός, καχός, &c., copiously illustrated in Welcker's excellent Prolegomena to Theognis, sect. 9—16. Camerarius, in his notes on that poet (v. 19), had already conceived clearly the

birth, wealth, influence and daring, whose arm is strong to destroy or to protect, whatever may be the turn of his moral sentiments; while the opposite epithet, *bad*, designates the poor, lowly and weak, from whose dispositions, be they ever so virtuous, society has little either to hope or to fear.

Aristotle, in his general theory of government, lays down the position,¹ that the earliest sources of obedience and authority among mankind are personal, exhibiting themselves most perfectly in the type of paternal supremacy; and that therefore the kingly government, as most conformable to this stage of social sentiment, became probably the first established everywhere. And in fact it still continued in his time to be generally prevalent among the non-Hellenic nations immediately around; though the Phœnician cities and Carthage, the most civilised of all non-Hellenic states, were republics. Nevertheless, so completely were the feelings about kingship reversed among his contemporary Greeks, that he finds it difficult to enter into the voluntary obedience paid by his ancestors to their early heroic chiefs. He cannot explain to his own satisfaction how any one man should have been so much superior to the companions around him as to main-

Difficulty which Aristotle found in explaining to himself the voluntary obedience paid to the early kings.

sense in which these words are used. Iliad, xv. 323. Οἷα τε τοῖς ἀγαθοῖσι παραδρῶωσι χέρηες. Compare Hesiod, Opp. Di. 216, and the line in Athenæus, v. p. 178, Ἀυτόματοι δ' ἀγαθοὶ δειλῶν ἐπὶ δαίτας ἴασιν.

"*Moralis illarum vocum vis, et civilis—quarum hæc a lexicographis et commentatoribus plurimis fere neglecta est—probe discernendæ erunt. Quod quo facilius fieret, nescio an ubi posterior intellectus valet, majusculâ scribendum fuisset Ἀγαθοὶ et Κακοί.*"

If this advice of Welcker could have been followed, much misconception would have been obviated. The reference of these words to power and not to worth, is their primitive import in the Greek language, descending from

the Iliad downward, and determining the habitual designation of parties during the period of active political dispute. The ethical meaning of the word hardly appears until the discussions raised by Sokratês, and prosecuted by his disciples: but the primitive import still continued to maintain concurrent footing.

I shall have occasion to touch more largely on this subject, when I come to expound the Grecian political parties. At present it is enough to remark that the epithets of *good men*, *best men* (the *better classes*, according to a phrase common even now), habitually applied afterwards to the aristocratical parties, descend from the rudest period of Grecian society.

¹ Aristot. Polit. i. 1, 7.

tain such immense personal ascendancy: he suspects that in such small communities great merit was very rare, so that the chief had few competitors.¹ Such remarks illustrate strongly the revolution which the Greek mind had undergone during the preceding centuries, in regard to the internal grounds of political submission. But the connecting link between the Homeric and the republican schemes of government is to be found in two adjuncts of the Homeric royalty, which are now to be mentioned—the *Boulê*, or council of chiefs, and the *Agora*, or general assembly of freemen.

These two meetings, more or less frequently convoked, and interwoven with the earliest habits of the primitive Grecian communities, are exhibited in the monuments of the legendary age as opportunities for advising the king, and media for promulgating his intentions to the people, rather than as restraints upon his authority. Unquestionably they must have conduced in practice to the latter result as well as to the former; but this is not the light in which the Homeric poems describe them. The chiefs, kings, princes, or *Gerontes*—for the same word in Greek designates both an old man and a man of conspicuous rank and position—compose the Council,² in which, according to the representations in the *Iliad*, the resolutions of *Agamemnôn* on the one side and of *Hectôr* on the other appear uniformly to prevail. The harshness and even contempt with which *Hectôr* treats respectful opposition from his ancient companion *Polydamas*—the desponding tone

¹ Καὶ διὰ τούτ' ἴσως ἐβασιλεύοιτο πρότερον, ὅτι σπάνιον ἦν εὑρεῖν ἄνδρας διαφέροντας κατ' ἀρετήν, ἄλλως τε καὶ τότε μικρὰς οἰκοῦντας πόλεις (*Polit.* iii. 10, 7): also the same treatise, v. 8, 5, and v. 8, 22. Οὐ γίνονται δ' ἔτι βασιλεῖαι νῦν, &c.

Aristotle handles monarchy far less copiously than either oligarchy or democracy: the tenth and eleventh chapters of his third book, in which he discusses it, are nevertheless very interesting to peruse.

In the conception of Plato also, the kingly government, if it is to work well, implies a breed superior

to humanity to hold the sceptre (*Legg.* iv. p. 6, 173).

The Athenian dramatic poets (especially *Euripidês*) often put into the mouths of their heroic characters popular sentiments adapted to the democratical atmosphere of Athens—very different from what we find in Homer.

² Βουλὴν δὲ πρῶτον μεγαθύμων ἕξε γερόντων (*Iliad*, ii. 53): compare x. 195—415. Ἴλου, παλαιῶ δημογέροντος (xi. 371). So also the modern words *Seigneur*, *Signore*, from *Senior*; and the Arabic word *Shaik*.

and conscious inferiority of the latter, and the unanimous assent which the former obtains, even when quite in the wrong—all this is clearly set forth in the poem:¹ while in the Grecian camp we see Nestôr tendering his advice in the most submissive and delicate manner to Agamemnôn, to be adopted or rejected as “the king of men” might determine.² The Council is a purely consultative body, assembled not with any power of peremptorily arresting mischievous resolves of the king, but solely for his information and guidance. He himself is the presiding (Boulephorus or) member³ of council; the rest, collectively as well as individually, are his subordinates.

We proceed from the Council to the Agora. According to what seems the received custom, the king, after having talked over his intentions with the former, proceeds to announce them to the people. The heralds make the crowd sit down in order,⁴ and enforce silence: any one of the chiefs or councillors—but as it seems, no one else⁵—is allowed to address them: the king first promulgates his intentions, which are then open to be commented upon by others. But in the Homeric agora no division of affirmative or negative voices ever takes place, nor is any formal resolution ever adopted. The nullity of positive function strikes us even more in the Agora than in the Council. It is an assembly for talk, communication and discussion to a certain extent by the chiefs, in presence of the people as listeners and sympathisers—often for eloquence, and sometimes for quarrel—but here its ostensible purposes end.

The Agora—a medium for promulgation of the intentions of the king.

¹ Iliad, xviii. 313.—

Ἕκτορι μὲν γὰρ ἐπήνησαν κακὰ
μητιόωντι,
Πουλυδάμαντι δ' ἄρ' οὔτις, δς
ἔσθλην φράζετο βουλήν.

Also xii. 213, where Polydamas says to Hectôr,—

. . . ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ ἔοικε
Δῆμον ἔοντα παρέξ ἀγορεύεμεν,
οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ,
Οὔτε ποτ' ἐν πολέμῳ, σὸν δὲ κρά-
τος αἰὲν ἀέξειν.

² Iliad, ix. 95—101.

³ Iliad, vii. 126, Πήλεος—Ἐσθλὸς
Μυρμιδόνων βουλευφόρος ἡδ' ἀγορήτης.

⁴ Considerable stress seems to

be laid on the necessity that the people in the agora should sit down (Iliad, ii. 96): a standing agora is a symptom of tumult or terror (Iliad, xviii. 246); an evening agora, to which men come elevated by wine, is also the forerunner of mischief (Odys. iii. 138).

Such evidences of regular formalities observed in the agora are not without interest.

⁵ Iliad, ii. 100,—

. . . . εἶποτ' ἀϋτῆς
Σγοῖατ', ἀκούσειαν δὲ διοτρεφέων
βασιλέων.

Nitzsch (ad Odys. ii. 14) con-

stigation of Athênê, not for the purpose of sub-
 proposition, but in order to give formal and p
 to the suitors to desist from their iniquitous in
 pillage of his substance, and to absolve himself
 fore gods and men, from all obligations toward
 they refuse to comply. For the slaughter of
 in all the security of the festive hall and ban
 forms the catastrophe of the Odyssey), was a
 involving much that was shocking to Grecian f
 therefore required to be preceded by such ample
 as would leave both the delinquents themself
 the shadow of excuse, and their surviving relati
 any claim to the customary satisfaction. For
 purpose Telemachus directs the hera
 mon an agora; but what seems most
 prising is, that none had ever been su
 held since the departure of Odysseus
 interval of twenty years. "No agora or sessio
 place amongst us (says the grey-headed Æg
 opens the proceedings) since Odysseus wen
 board: and now, who is he that has called us
 what man, young or old, has felt such a strong
 Has he received intelligence from our absent
 has he other public news to communicate? He
 friend for doing this: whatever his projects ma
 Zeus to grant him success."² Telemachus, ans
 appeal forthwith, proceeds to tell the assembl
 that he has no public news to communicate, l
 has convoked them upon his own private necess
 he sets forth pathetically the wickedness of
 calls upon them personally to desist and upon
 to restrain them, and concludes by solemnly wa
 that, being henceforward free from all obligati
 them, he will invoke the avenging aid of Zei

Agora sum-
 moned by
 Telemachus in
 Ithaka.

troverts this restriction of indivi-
 dual manifestation to the chiefs:
 the view of O. Müller (Hist. Do-
 rians, b. iii. c. 3) appears to me
 more correct: such was also the
 opinion of Aristotle—φησι τοίνυν
 Ἀριστοτέλης ἔτι ὁ μὲν ὄμιλος μόνου

τοῦ ἀκούσαι κύριος ἡ
 νες καὶ τοῦ πράξαι (S
 17): compare the s
 in his Nikomachean

¹ See Iliad, ix. 6.
 419.

² Odyss. ii. 25—40.

they may be slain in the interior of his own house, without bringing upon him any subsequent penalty."¹

We are not of course to construe the Homeric description as anything more than an *idéal*, approximating to actual reality. But allowing all that can be required for such a limitation, it exhibits the Agora more as a special medium of publicity and intercommunication,² from the king to the body of the people, than as including any idea of responsibility on the part of the former or restraining force on the part of the latter, however such consequences may indirectly grow out of it. The primitive Grecian government is essentially monarchical, reposing on personal feeling and divine right: the memorable dictum in the Iliad is borne out by all that we hear of the actual practice,—“The rule of many is not a good thing: let us have one ruler only—one king,—him to whom Zeus has given the sceptre and the tutelary sanctions.”³

¹ Odyss. ii. 43, 77, 145.—

Νῆποινοὶ κεν ἔπειτα δόμων ἔν-
τοςθεν ὀλοισθε.

² A similar character is given of the public assemblies of the early Franks and Lombards (Pfeffel, Histoire du Droit Public en Allemagne, t. i. p. 18; Sismondi, Histories des Républiques Italiennes, t. i. c. 2, p. 71).

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ii. 12) pays rather too high a compliment to the moderation of the Grecian heroic kings.

The kings at Rome, like the Grecian heroic kings, began with an ἀρχὴ ἀνυπεύθυνος: the words of Pomponius (De Origine Juris, i. 2) would be perhaps more exactly applicable to the latter than to the former: “Initio civitatis nostræ Populus sine certâ lege, sine jure certo, primum agere instituit: omniaque manu a Regibus gubernabantur.” Tacitus says (Ann. iii. 26), “Nobis Romulus, ut libitum, imperitaverat: dein Numa religionibus et divino jure populum devinxit, repertaque quædam a Tullo et Anco: sed præcipuus Servius

Tullius sanctor legum fuit, quis etiam Reges obtemperarent.” The appointment of a Dictator under the Republic was a reproduction, for a short and definite interval, of this old unbounded authority (Cicero, De Republ. ii. 32; Zonaras, Ann. vii. 13; Dionys. Hal. v. 75).

See Rubino, Untersuchungen über Römische Verfassung und Geschichte, Cassel, 1839, Buch I. Abschnitt 2, p. 112—132; and Wachsmuth, Hellenische Alterthumskunde, i. sect. 18, p. 81—91.

³ Iliad, ii. 204. Agamemnon promises to make over to Achilles seven well-peopled cities, with a body of wealthy inhabitants (Iliad, ix. 153); and Menelaus, if he could have induced Odysseus to quit Ithaka and settle near him in Argos, would have depopulated one of his neighbouring towns in order to make room for him (Odyss. iv. 176).

Manso (Sparta, i. 1, p. 34) and Nitzsch (ad Odyss. iv. 171) are inclined to exclude these passages as spurious,—a proceeding, in my

The second book of the Iliad, full as it is of beauty and vivacity, not only confirms our idea of the passive, recipient, and listening character of the Agora, but even presents a repulsive picture of the degradation of the mass of the people before the chiefs. Agamemnôn convokes the Agora for the purpose of immediately arming the Grecian host, under a full impression that the gods have at last determined forthwith to crown his arms with complete victory. Such impression has been created by a special visit of Oneirus (the Dream-god), sent by Zeus during his sleep—being indeed an intentional fraud on the part of Zeus, though Agamemnôn does not suspect its deceitful character. At this precise moment, when he may be conceived to be more than usually anxious to get his army into the field and snatch the prize, an unaccountable fancy seizes him, that instead of inviting the troops to do what he really wishes, and encouraging their spirits for this one last effort, he will adopt a course directly contrary; he will try their courage by professing to believe that the siege had become desperate, and that there was no choice except to go on shipboard and flee. Announcing to Nestôr and Odysseus, in preliminary council, his intention to hold this strange language, he at the same time tells them that he relies upon them to oppose it and counterwork its effect upon the multitude.¹ The agora is presently assembled, and the king of men pours forth a speech full of dismay and despair, concluding by a distinct exhortation to all present to go aboard and return home at once. Immediately the whole army, chiefs as well as people, break up and proceed to execute his orders: every one rushes off to get his ship afloat, except Odysseus, who looks on in mournful silence and astonishment. The army would have been quickly on its voyage home, had not the goddesses Hêrê and Athênê stimulated Odysseus to an instantaneous interference. He hastens among the dispersing crowd and diverts them from their purpose of retreat: to the chiefs he addresses flattering words, trying to shame them by gentle expostulation: but the people he visits with

opinion, inadmissible, without more direct grounds than they are able to produce.

¹ Iliad, ii. 74. Πρῶτα δ' ἐγὼν ἔπειν πειρήσομαι, &c.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



which Homer takes to heap upon him repulsive and deformities, than by the chastisement of Odysseus is lame, bald, crook-backed, of misshapen head and blinding vision.

But we cease to wonder at the submissive character of the Agora, when we read the proceedings of Odysseus towards the people themselves,—his fine words and flattery addressed to the chiefs, and his contemptuous reproof and manual violence towards the common men, at a moment when both doing exactly the same thing,—fulfilling the express wish of Agamemnôn, upon whom Odysseus does not utter a single comment. This scene, which excited a sense of strong displeasure among the democrats of his Athens,² affords a proof that the feeling of personal liberty, of which philosophic observers in Greece—Herodotus, Xenophôn, Hippokratês, and Aristotle—boasted, as distinguishing the free Greek citizen from the slavish subject, was yet undeveloped in the time of Homer.³ The epic is commonly so filled with the personal addresses of the chiefs, and the people are so constantly regarded as simple appendages attached to them, that we can but obtain a glimpse of the treatment of the one apart from the other, such as this memorable Homeric agora

where remains one other point of view in which we may regard the Agora of primitive Greece—as the scene in which justice was administered. The king is spoken of as instituted by Zeus the great judge of society. He has received from Zeus the sceptre and along with it the authority of command and sanction: the people obey these commands and enforce these sanctions, under him, en-

riching him at the same time with lucrative presents and payments.¹ Sometimes the king separately, sometimes the kings or chiefs or Gerontes in the plural number, are named as deciding disputes and awarding satisfaction to complainants; always however in public, in the midst of the assembled agora.² In one of the compartments of the shield of Achilles, the details of a judicial scene are described. While the agora is full of an eager and excited crowd, two men are disputing about the fine of satisfaction for the death of a murdered man—one averring, the other denying, that the fine had already been paid, and both demanding an inquest. The Gerontes are ranged on stone seats,³ in the holy circle, with two talents of gold lying before them, to be awarded to such of the litigants as shall make out his case to their satisfaction. The heralds with their sceptres, repressing the warm sympathies of the crowd in favour of one or other of the parties, secure an alternate hearing to both.⁴ This interesting picture completely harmonises with the brief allusion of Hesiod to the judicial

Justice administered in the Agora by the king or chiefs.

¹ The *σκηπτρον*, *θέμιστες* or *θέμις*, and *ἀγορῆ* go together, under the presiding superintendence of the gods. The goddess Themis both convokes and dismisses the agora (see Iliad, xi. 806; Odys. ii. 67; Iliad, xx. 4).

The *θέμιστες*, commandments, and sanctions, belong properly to Zeus (Odys. xvi. 403); from him they are given in charge to earthly kings along with the sceptre (Iliad, i. 238; ii. 206).

The commentators on Homer recognised *θέμις*, rather too strictly, as *ἀγορᾶς καὶ βουλῆς λέξις* (see Eustath. ad Odys. xvi. 403).

The presents and the *λιπαραὶ θέμιστες* (Iliad, ix. 156).

² Hesiod, Theogon. 85; the single person judging seems to be mentioned (Odys. xii. 439).

It deserves to be noticed that in Sparta the Senate decided accusations of homicide (Aristot. Polit. iii. 1, 7): in historical Athens the Senate of Areiopagus

originally did the same, and retained, even when its powers were much abridged, the trial of accusations of intentional homicide and wounding.

Respecting the judicial functions of the early Roman kings, Dionys. Hal. A. R. x. 1. *Τὸ μὲν ἀρχαῖον οἱ βασιλεῖς ἐφ' αὐτῶν ἔταπτον τοῖς δεομένοις τὰς δίκας, καὶ το δίκαιωθεν, ὑπ' ἐκείνων, τοῦτο νόμος ἦν* (compare iv. 25; and Cicero, Republic. v. 2; Rubino, Untersuchungen, i. 2, p. 122).

³ Iliad, xviii. 504.—

*Οἱ δὲ γέροντες
Ἔϊατ' ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοις, ἱερῶν ἐνὶ
κύκλῳ.*

Several of the old northern Sagas represent the old men assembled for the purpose of judging as sitting on great stones in a circle called the Urtheilsring or Gerichtsring (Leitfaden der Nordischen Alterthümer, p. 31, Copenhag. 1837).

⁴ Homer, Iliad, xviii. 497–510.

trial—doubtless a real trial—between himself and his brother Persês. The two brothers disputed about their paternal inheritance, and the cause was carried to be tried by the chiefs in agora; but Persês bribed them, and obtained an unjust verdict for the whole.¹ So at least Hesiod affirms, in the bitterness of his heart: earnestly exhorting his brother not to waste a precious time, required for necessary labours, in the unprofitable occupation of witnessing and abetting litigants in the agora—for which (he adds) no man has proper leisure, unless his subsistence for the year beforehand be safely treasured up in his garner.² He repeats more than once his complaints of the crooked and corrupt judgments of which the kings were habitually guilty; dwelling upon abuse of justice as the crying evil of his day, and predicting as well as invoking the vengeance of Zeus to repress it. And Homer ascribes the tremendous violence of the autumnal storms to the wrath of Zeus against those judges who disgrace the agora with their wicked verdicts.³

Though it is certain that in every state of society, the feelings of men when assembled in multitude will command a certain measure of attention, yet we thus find the Agora, in judicial matters still more than in political, serving merely the purpose of publicity. It is the King who is the grand personal mover of Grecian heroic society.⁴ He is on earth the equivalent of Zeus in the agora of the gods: the supreme god of Olympus is in the habit of carrying on his government with frequent publicity, of hearing some dissentient opinions, and of allowing himself occasionally to be wheedled by Aphroditê or worried into compliance by Hêrê; but his determination is at last conclusive, subject only to the overruling interference of the Mœræ or Fates.⁵ Both the society of gods, and the various societies of men, are, according to the conceptions of

The king among men is analogous to Zeus among gods.

¹ Hesiod, *Opp. Di.* 37.

² Hesiod, *Opp. Di.* 27—33.

³ Hesiod, *Opp. Di.* 250—263; Homer, *Iliad*, xvi. 387.

⁴ Tittmann (*Darstellung der Griechischen Staatsverfassungen*, book ii. p. 63) gives too lofty an

idea, in my judgment, of the condition and functions of the Homeric agora.

⁵ *Iliad*, i. 520—527; iv. 14—56; especially the agora of the gods (xx. 16).

Grecian legend, carried on by the personal rule of a legitimate sovereign, who does not derive his title from the special appointment of his subjects, though he governs with their full consent. In fact, Grecian legend presents to us hardly anything else, except these great individual personalities. The race, or nation, is as it were absorbed into the prince: eponymous persons, especially, are not merely princes, but fathers and representative unities, each the equivalent of that greater or less aggregate to which he gives name.

But though in the primitive Grecian government, the king is the legitimate as well as the real sovereign, he is always conceived as acting through the council and agora. Both the one and the other are established and essential media through which his ascendancy is brought to bear upon the society: the absence of such assemblies is the test and mark, of savage men, as in the case of the Cyclôpes.¹ Accordingly he must possess qualities fit to act with effect upon these two assemblies: wise reason for the council, unctuous eloquence for the agora.² Such is the *idéal* of the heroic government: a king not merely full of valour and resource as a soldier, but also sufficiently superior to those around him to ensure both the deliberate concurrence of the chiefs, and the hearty adhesion of the masses.³ That this picture is not, in all individual cases, realised, is unquestionable; but the endowments so often predicated of good kings show it to have been the type present to the mind of the describer.⁴ Xenophôn, in his *Cyropædia*,

¹ Odyss. ix. 114.—

Τοῖσιν δ' (the Cyclôpes) οὐτ'
ἀγοραὶ βουλευφόροι, οὐτε θέμιστες.
'Ἄλλ' οἷγ' ὑψηλῶν ὀρέων ναίουσι
κάρηνα
'Ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι θεμιστεύει
δὲ ἕκαστος
Παιδῶν ἢ δ' ἀλόγων· οὐδ' ἀλλήλων
ἀλέγουσι.

These lines illustrate the meaning of θέμις.

² See this point set forth in the prolix discourse of Aristeides, Περὶ Ῥητορικῆς (Or. xlv. vol. ii. p. 99). 'Ἡσιόδου . . . ταῦτά ἀντικρὺς Ὀμήρῳ λέγων . . . ἔτι τε ἡ Ῥητορικὴ σύνεδρος τῆς βασιλικῆς, &c.

³ *Péleus*, king of the Myrmidons, is called (Iliad, vii. 126) Ἴσθλός Μυρμιδόνων βουλευφόρος ἢ δ' ἀγορητής — *Diomedes*, ἀγορῆ δέ τ' ἀμείνω (iv. 400)—*Nestôr*, λιγὸς Πυλίων ἀγορητής—*Sarpédôn*, Λυκίων βουλευφόρος (v. 633); and *Idomeneus*, Κρητῶν βουλευφόρος (xiii. 219).

Hesiod (*Theogon.* 80—96) illustrates still more amply the *idéal* of the king governing by persuasion and inspired by the Muses.

⁴ See the striking picture in *Thucydides* (ii. 65). *Xenophôn*, in the *Cyropædia*, puts into the mouth of his hero the Homeric comparison between the good king and the

which had been at first subordinate, and suppressing remodelling on a totally new principle, that which had been originally predominant. When we approach historical Greece, we find that (with the exception of Sparta) primitive, hereditary, irresponsible monarch, uniting himself all the functions of government, has ceased to re—while the feeling of legitimacy, which originally induced his people to obey him willingly, has been exchanged into one of aversion towards the character and title generally. The multifarious functions which he once exercised have been parcelled out among temporary nominees. On the other hand, the Council or Senate, and the Agora, originally simple media through which the king acted, are elevated

The Council and Assembly, originally media through which the king acted, become in historical Greece the paramount depositaries of power.

into standing and independent sources of authority, controlling and holding in responsibility the various special officers to whom executive duties of one kind or another are confided. The general principle here indicated is common both to the oligarchies and the democracies which grew up in historical Greece. Much as these different governments differed from each other, and as many as were the varieties even between oligarchy or democracy and another, they stood in equal contrast with the principle of heroic government. Even in Sparta, where

good shepherd, implying as it does immense superiority of organisation, morality, and intelligence (Cyropæd. viii. p. 450, Hutchinson).

of ability, he is absolute; weak, he is a cipher. This proceeds from the want of fixed laws, a want common to all Asiatics (Travels in Egypt and Syria, ii. p. 68). Such was pretty n

ating the

senate.

There is yet another point of view in which it behoves us to take notice of the Council and the Agora as integral portions of the legendary government of the Grecian communities. We are thus enabled to trace the employment of public speaking, as the standing engine of government, and the proximate cause of obedience, to the social infancy of the nation. The power of speech in the direction of public affairs becomes more and more obvious, developed and irresistible, as we advance towards the culminating period of Grecian history, the century preceding the battle of Chæroneia. That its development was greatest among the most enlightened sections of the Grecian name, and smallest among the more obtuse and stationary, is matter of notorious fact; and it is not less true, that the prevalence of this habit was one of the chief causes of the intellectual eminence of the nation generally. At a time when all the countries around were

Employment of public speaking as an engine of government—coæval with the earliest times.

¹ Nevertheless the question put by Leotychides to the deposed Spartan king Demaratus—ἔχοιόν τι εἶη τὸ ἄρχειν μετὰ τὸ βασιλεύειν (Herodot. vi. 65), and the poignant insult which those words conveyed, afford one among many other evidences of the lofty estimate current in Sparta respecting the regal dignity, of which Aristotle in the *Politica* seems hardly to take sufficient account.

² O. Müller (*Hist. Dorians*, book

iii. i. 3) affirms that the fundamental features of the heroic royalty were maintained in the Dorian states, and obliterated only in the Ionian and democratical. In this point he has been followed by various other authors (see Helbig, *Die sittlichen Zustände des Heldenalters*, p. 73), but his position appears to me not correct, even as regards Sparta; and decidedly incorrect, in regard to the other Dorian states.

plunged comparatively in mental torpor, there was no motive sufficiently present and powerful to multiply so wonderfully the productive minds of Greece, except such as arose from the rewards of public speaking. The susceptibility of the multitude to this sort of guidance, their habit of requiring and enjoying the stimulus which it supplied, and the open discussion, combining regular forms with free opposition, of practical matters political as well as judicial—are the creative causes which formed such conspicuous adepts in the art of persuasion. Nor was it only professed orators who were thus produced; didactic aptitude was formed in the background, and the speculative tendencies were supplied with interesting phænomena for observation and combination, at a time when the truths of physical science were almost inaccessible. If the primary effect was to quicken the powers of expression, the secondary, but not less certain result, was to develop the habits of scientific thought. Not only the oratory of Demosthenês

Its effects
in stimu-
lating in-
tellectual
develop-
ment.

and Periklês, and the colloquial magic of Socratês, but also the philosophical speculation of Plato, and the systematic politics, rhetoric and logic of Aristotle, are traceable to the same general tendencies in the minds of the Grecian people.

We find the germ of these expansive forces in the senate and agora of their legendary government. The poets, first epic and then lyric, were the precursors of the orators in their power of moving the feelings of an assembled crowd; whilst the Homeric poems—the general training-book of educated Greeks—constituted a treasury of direct and animated expression, full of concrete forms and rare in the use of abstractions, and thence better suited to the workings of oratory. The subsequent critics had no difficulty in selecting from the Iliad and Odyssey samples of eloquence in all its phases and varieties.

On the whole, then, the society depicted in the old Greek poems is loose and unsettled, presenting very little of legal restraint, and still less of legal protection—but concentrating such political power as does exist in the hands of a legitimate hereditary king, whose ascendancy over the other chiefs is more or less complete according to his personal force and character. Whether that ascendancy be greater or less however, the mass of the people is in either case politically passive, and of little account. Though the



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



sympathy manifests itself—the succour and kindness shown to him arise mainly from his having gone through the consecrated formalities of supplication, such as that of sitting down in the ashes by the sacred hearth, thus obtaining a sort of privilege of sanctuary.¹ That ceremony exalts him

¹ Seuthês, in the *Anabasis* of Xenophôn (vii. 2, 33), describes how, when an orphan youth, he formally supplicated Mêdokos the Thracian king to grant him a troop of followers, in order that he might recover his lost dominions—ἐξαθέζομην ἐνδίοριος αὐτῷ ἰκέτης δοῦναί μοι ἄνδρας.

Thucydidês gives an interesting description of the arrival of the exiled Themistoklês, then warmly pursued by the Greeks on suspicion of treason, at the house of Admêtus, king of the Epirotic Molossians. The wife of Admêtus herself instructed the fugitive how to supplicate her husband in form: the child of Admêtus was placed in his arms, and he was directed to sit down in this guise close by the consecrated hearth, which was of the nature of an altar. While so seated, he addressed his urgent entreaties to Admêtus for protection: the latter raised him up from the ground and promised what was asked. "That (says the historian) was the most powerful form of supplication." Admêtus—ἀκούσας ἀνίστησι τε αὐτὸν μετὰ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ υἱέος, ὥσπερ καὶ ἔχων αὐτὸν ἐξαθέζετο, καὶ μέγιστον ἰκέτευμα ἦν τοῦτο (Thuc. i. 136). So Têlephus, in the lost drama of Æschylus called *Musci*, takes up the child Orestês. See Bothe's *Fragm.* 44. Schol. *Aristoph. Ach.* 305.

In the *Odyssey*, both Nausikaa and the goddess Athênê instruct Odysseus in the proper form of supplicating Alkinous: he first throws himself down at the feet of queen Arêtê, embracing her

knees and addressing to her his prayer, and then without waiting for a reply, sits down among the ashes on the hearth—ὡς εἰπὼν, κατ' ἄρ' ἔζετ' ἐπ' ἐσχάρῃ ἐν κονίῃσι—Alkinous is dining with a large company: for some time both he and the guests are silent: at length the ancient Echenêus remonstrates with him on his tardiness in raising the stranger up from the ashes. At his exhortation, the Phæakian king takes Odysseus by the hand, and raising him up, places him on a chair beside him: he then directs the heralds to mix a bowl of wine, and to serve it to every one round, in order that all may make libations to Zeus Hiketêsios. This ceremony clothes the stranger with the full rights and character of a suppliant (*Odys.* vi. 310; vii. 75, 141, 166): κατὰ νόμους ἀφικτόρων, Æschyl. *Supplic.* 242.

That the form counted for a great deal, we see evidently marked: but of course supplication is often addressed, and successfully addressed, in circumstances where this form cannot be gone through.

It is difficult to accept the doctrine of Eustathius (ad *Odys.* xvi. 424), that ἰκέτης is a *vox media* (like ξεῖνος), applied as well to the ἰκεταδογός as to the ἰκέτης properly so called: but the word ἀλλήλοισιν, in the passage just cited, does seem to justify his observation: yet there is no direct authority for such use of the word in Homer.

The address of Theoclymenos on first preferring his supplication to Telemachus is characteristic of the practice (*Odys.* xv. 260); com-

into something more than a mere suffering man—it places him in express fellowship with the master of the house, under the tutelary sanctions of Zeus Hiketêsios. There is great difference between one form of supplication and another: the suppliant however in any form becomes more or less the object of a particular sympathy.

Effect of special ceremonies.

The sense of obligation towards the gods manifests itself separately in habitual acts of worship, sacrifice, and libations, or by votive presents, such as that of the hair of Achilles, which he has pledged to the river god Spercheius,¹ and such as the constant dedicated offerings, which men who stand in urgent need of the divine aid first promise and afterwards fulfil. But the feeling towards the gods also appears, and that not less frequently, as mingling itself with and enforcing obligations towards some particular human person. The tie which binds a man to his father, his kinsman, his guest, or any special promise respecting which he has taken the engagement of an oath, is conceived in conjunction with the idea of Zeus, as witness and guarantee; and the intimacy of the association is attested by some surname or special appellation of the god.² Such personal feelings composed all the moral influences of which a Greek of that day was susceptible,—a state of mind which we can best appreciate by contrasting it with that of the subsequent citizen of historical Athens. In the view of the latter, the great impersonal authority called “The Laws” stood out separately both as guide and sanction, distinct from religious duty or private sympathies: but of this discriminated con-

Contrast with the feelings in historical Athens.

pare also Iliad, xvi. 574, and Hesiod. Scut. Hercul. 12—85.

The ideas of the ξεινος and the ικέτης run very much together. I can hardly persuade myself that the reading ικέτευσε (Odyss. xi. 520) is truly Homeric: implying as it does the idea of a pitiable sufferer, it is altogether out of place when predicated of the proud and impetuous Neoptolemus: we should rather have excepted ἐκέλευσε. (See Odyss. x. 15.)

The constraining efficacy of

special formalities of supplication, among the Scythians, is powerfully set forth in the Toxaris of Lucian; the suppliant sits upon an ox-hide, with his hands confined behind him (Lucian, Toxaris, c. 48, vol. iii. p. 69, Tauch.)—the μεγίστη ικετηρία among that people.

¹ Iliad, xxiii. 142.

² Odyss. xiv. 389.—

Ὁὐ γὰρ τοῦνεκ' ἐγὼ σ' αἰδέσσομαι,
οὐδὲ φιλήσω,
'Αλλὰ Δία ξένιον δείσας, αὐτὸν δ'
ἐλεαίρων.

ception of positive law and positive morality,¹ the germ only can be detected in the Homeric poems. The appropriate Greek word for human laws never occurs. Amidst a very wavering phraseology,² we can detect a gradual transition from the primitive idea of a personal goddess Themis, attached to Zeus, first to his sentences or orders

¹ Nägelsbach (Homerische Theologie, Abschn. v. s. 23) gives a just and well-sustained view of the Homeric ethics: "Es ist der charakteristische Standpunkt der Homerischen Ethik, dass die Sphären des Rechts, der Sittlichkeit, und Religiosität, bey dem Dichter, durchaus noch nicht auseinander fallen, so dass der Mensch z. B. $\delta\iota\nu\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$ seyn konnte ohne $\theta\epsilon\sigma\upsilon\delta\eta\varsigma$ zusein—sondern in unentwickelter Einheit beysammen sind."

² Nóμοι , *laws*, is not an Homeric word; $\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$, *law*, in the singular occurs twice in the Hesiodic Works and Days (276, 388).

The employment of the words $\delta\iota\chi\eta$, $\delta\iota\chi\alpha\iota$, $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\varsigma$, $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$, in Homer, is curious as illustrating the early moral associations, but would require far more space than can be given to it in a note; we see that the sense of each of these words was essentially fluctuating. *Themis*, in Homer, is sometimes decidedly a *person*, who exercises the important function of opening and closing the agora, both of gods and men (Iliad, xx. 4; Odys. ii. 68), and who, besides that, acts and speaks (Iliad, xiv. 87—93); always the associate and companion of Zeus the highest god. In Hesiod (Theog. 901) she is the wife of Zeus; in Æschylus (Prometh. 209) she is the same as $\Gamma\alpha\iota\alpha$: even in Plato (Legg. xi. p. 936) witnesses swear (to want of knowledge of matters under inquest) by Zeus, Apollo, and Themis. *Themis as a person* is probably the oldest sense of the word: then we have the plural $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ (con-

nected with the verb $\tau\acute{\iota}\theta\eta\mu\iota$, like $\theta\epsilon\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ and $\tau\epsilon\theta\mu\omicron\varsigma$), which are (not persons, but) special appurtenances or emanations of the Supreme God, or of a king acting under him, analogous to and joined with the sceptre. The sceptre, and the $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ or the $\delta\iota\chi\alpha\iota$ constantly go together (Iliad, ii. 209; ix. 99): Zeus or the king is a judge, not a law-maker: he issues decrees or special orders to settle particular disputes, or to restrain particular men; and agreeable to the concrete forms of ancient language, the decrees are treated as if they were a collection of ready-made substantive things, actually in his possession, like the sceptre, and prepared for being delivered out when the proper occasion arose:— $\delta\iota\chi\alpha\sigma\pi\omicron\lambda\omicron\iota$, $\omicron\iota\tau\epsilon$ $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\varsigma$ $\Pi\rho\omicron\varsigma$ $\Delta\iota\omicron\varsigma$ $\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\upsilon}\alpha\tau\alpha\iota$ (Il. i. 238), compared with the two passages last cited:— $\text{Ἄστρονα τοῦτον ἀνέντας, ὃς οὐτινα οἶδε θέμιστα}$ (Il. v. 761),— $\text{Ἄγριον, οὐτε δίκας εὔειδότα οὐτε θέμιστας}$ (Odys. ix. 215). The plural number $\delta\iota\chi\alpha\iota$ is more commonly used in Homer than the singular: $\delta\iota\chi\eta$ is rarely used to denote Justice as an abstract conception; it more often denotes a special claim of right on the part of some given man (Il. xviii. 508). It sometimes also denotes, simply, established custom or the known lot— $\delta\mu\acute{\omega}\omega\nu$ $\delta\iota\chi\eta$, $\gamma\epsilon\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omega\nu$, $\theta\epsilon\iota\omega\nu$ $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\acute{\eta}\omega\nu$, $\theta\epsilon\omega\nu$ (see Damm's Lexicon *ad voc.*); $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\mu\iota\varsigma$ is used in the same manner.

See upon this matter, Platner, De Notione Juris ap. Homerum, p. 81; and O. Müller, Prolegg. Mythol. p. 121.

called Themistes, and next by a still farther remove to various established customs, which those sentences were believed to sanctify—the authority of religion and that of custom coalescing into one indivisible obligation.

The family relations, as we might expect, are set forth in our pictures of the legendary world as the grand sources of lasting union and devoted attachment. The paternal authority is highly revered: the son who lives to years of maturity, repays by affection to his parents the charge of his maintenance in infancy, which the language notes by a special word; whilst, on the other hand, the Erinnys, whose avenging hand is put in motion by the curse of a father or mother, is an object of deep dread.¹

Force
of the
family tie.

In regard to marriage, we find the wife occupying a station of great dignity and influence, though it was the practice for the husband to purchase her by valuable presents to her parents,—a practice extensively prevalent among early communities, and treated by Aristotle as an evidence of barbarism. She even seems to live less secluded and to enjoy a wider sphere of action than was allotted to her in historical Greece.² Concubines are frequent with the chiefs, and

Marriage—
respect
paid to
the wife.

¹ Οὐδὲ τοκεῦσι θρέπτρα φίλοις ἀπέδωκε (Il. iv. 477): θρέπτρα or θρεπτήρια (compare Il. ix. 454; Odyss. ii. 134; Hesiod, Opp. Di. 186).

² Aristot. Polit. ii. 5, 11. The ἔδνα, or present given by the suitor to the father as an inducement to grant his daughter in marriage, are spoken of as very valuable,—ἀπερραίσια ἔδνα (Il. xi. 244; xvii. 178; xxi. 472): to grant a daughter without ἔδνα was a high compliment to the intended son-in-law (Il. ix. 141; compare xiii. 366). Among the ancient Germans of Tacitus, the husband gave presents, not to his wife's father, but to herself (Tacit. Germ. c. 18): the customs of the early Jews were in this respect completely Homeric; see the case of Shechem and Dinah (Genesis xxxix.

12) and others, &c.; also Mr. Catlin's Letters on the North American Indians, vol. i. Lett. 26, p. 213.

The Greek ἔδνα correspond exactly to the *mundium* of the Lombard and Alemannic laws, which is thus explained by Mr. Price (Notes on the Laws of King Ethelbert, in the Ancient Laws and Institutes of England, translated and published by Mr. Thorpe, vol. i. p. 20): "The Longobardic law is the most copious of all the barbaric codes in its provisions respecting marriage, and particularly so on the subject of the Mund. From that law it appears that the Mundium was a sum paid over to the family of the bride, for transferring the tutelage which they possessed over her to the family of the husband:—'Si quis

occasionally the jealousy of the wife breaks out in reckless excess against her husband, as may be seen in the tragical history of Phœnix. The continence of Laërtês, from fear of displeasing his wife Antikleia, is especially noticed.¹ A large portion of the romantic interest which Grecian legend inspires is derived from the women: Penelopê, Andromachê, Helen, Klytæmnêstra, Eriphylê, Iokasta, Hekabê, &c., all stand in the foreground of the picture, either from their virtues, their beauty, their crimes, or their sufferings.

Not only brothers, but also cousins, and the more distant blood-relations and clansmen, appear connected together by a strong feeling of attachment, sharing among them universally the obligation of mutual self-defence and revenge in the event of injury to any individual of the race. The legitimate brothers divide between them by lot the paternal inheritance,—a bastard brother receiving only a small share; he is however commonly very well treated,² though the murder of Phokus by Telamon and Pêleus constitutes a flagrant exception. The furtive pregnancy of young women, often by a god, is one of the most frequently recurring incidents in the legendary narratives; and the severity with which such a fact, when discovered, is visited by the father, is generally extreme. As an extension of the family connexion, we read of larger unions called the phratry and the tribe, which are respectfully, but not frequently mentioned.³

Brothers
and
kinsmen.

pro muliere liberâ aut puellâ mundium dederit et ei tradita fuerit ad uxorem,' &c. (ed. Rotharis, c. 183). In the same sense in which the term occurs in these dooms, it is also to be met with in the Alemannic law: it was also common in Denmark and in Sweden, where the bride was called a mund-bought or mund-given woman."

According to the 77th Law of King Ethelbert (p. 23), this *mund* was often paid in cattle: the Saxon daughters were παρθενοὶ ἀλφειβοὶαι (Iliad, xviii. 593).

¹ Odyss. i. 430; Iliad, ix. 450; see also Terpstra, Antiquitas Homerica, capp. 17 and 18.

Polygamy appears to be ascribed to Priam, but to no one else (Iliad, xxi. 88).

² Odyss, xiv. 202—215; compare Iliad, xi. 102. The primitive German law of succession divided the paternal inheritance among the sons of a deceased father, under the implied obligation to maintain and portion out their sisters (Eichhorn, *Deutsches Privat-Recht*, sect. 330).

³ Iliad, ii. 362.—

Ἀφρήτωρ, ἀθέμιστος, ἀνέστιός ἐστιν ἐκεῖνος,
Ὅς πολέμου ἔραται, &c. (Il. ix. 63.)

These three epithets include the three different classes of personal

The generous readiness with which hospitality is afforded to the stranger who asks for it,¹ the facility with which he is allowed to contract the peculiar connexion of guest with his host, and the permanence with which that connexion, when created by partaking of the same food and exchanging presents, is maintained even through a long period of separation, and even transmitted from father to son—these are among the most captivating features of the heroic society. The Homeric chief welcomes the stranger who comes to ask shelter in his house, first gives him refreshment, and then inquires his name and the purpose of his voyage.² Though not inclined to invite strangers to his house, he cannot repel them when they spontaneously enter it craving a lodging.³ The suppliant is also commonly a stranger, but a stranger under peculiar circumstances; who proclaims his own calamitous and abject condition, and seeks to place himself in a relation to the chief whom he solicits something like that in which men stand to the gods. Onerous as such special tie may become to him, the chief cannot decline it, if solicited in the proper form: the ceremony of supplication has a binding effect, and the Erinnyes punish the hardhearted person who disallows it. A conquered enemy may sometimes throw himself at the feet of his conqueror, and solicit mercy, but he cannot by doing so acquire the character and claims of a suppliant properly so called: the conqueror has free discretion either to kill him, or to spare him and accept a ransom.⁴

Hospita-
lity.
Reception
of the
stranger
and the
suppliant.

sympathy and obligation:—1. The Phratry, in which a man is connected with father, mother, brothers, cousins, brothers-in-law, clansmen, &c.; 2. the θέμιστες, whereby he is connected with his fellowmen who visit the same agora; 3. his Hestia or Hearth, whereby he becomes accessible to the ξείνος and the ικέτης.—

Τῷ δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ξίφος ὀξὺ καὶ ἄλκιμον ἔγχος ἔδωκεν,
'Αργήν ξεινοσύνης προσκηδέος οὐδέ τραπέζην
Γνώτην ἀλλήλοιν. (Odyss. xxi. 34.)

¹ It must be mentioned, however,

that when a chief received a stranger and made presents to him, he reimbursed to himself the value of the presents by collections among the people (Odyss. xiii. 14; xix. 197): ἀργαλέον γὰρ ἓνα προικὸς χάρισασθαι, says Alkinous.

² Odyss. i. 123; iii. 70. &c.

³ Odyss. xvii. 383.—

Τίς γὰρ δὴ ξείνον καλεῖ ἄλλοθεν αὐτος ἐπελθῶν

"Ἄλλον γ' εἰ μὴ τῶνδ', οἱ δημιόεργοι ἔασιν, &c.;

which breathes the plain-spoken shrewdness of the Hesiodic Works and Days, v. 355.

⁴ See the illustrative case of

There are in the legendary narratives abundant examples of individuals who transgress in particular acts even the holiest of these personal ties, but the savage Cyclops is the only person described as professedly indifferent to them, and careless of that sanction of the gods which in Grecian belief accompanied them all.¹ In fact, the tragical horror which pervades the lineage of Athamas or Kadmus, and which attaches to many of the acts of Hêraklês, of Pêleus, and Telamôn, of Jasôn and Mêdea, of Atreus and Thyestês, &c., is founded upon a deep feeling and sympathy with those special obligations, which conspicuous individuals, under the temporary stimulus of the maddening Atê, are driven to violate. In such conflict of sentiments, between the obligation generally revered and the exceptional deviation in an individual otherwise admired, consists the pathos of the story.

These feelings—of mutual devotion between kinsmen and companions in arms—of generous hospitality to the stranger, and of helping protection to the suppliant—constitute the bright spots in a dark age. We find them very generally prevalent amongst communities essentially rude and barbarous—amongst the ancient Germans as described by Tacitus, the Druses in Lebanon,² the Arabian tribes in the desert, and even the North American Indians.

Lykaon in vain craving mercy from Achilles (Iliad, xxi. 64—97. Ἀντί τοι εἶμ' ἰκέταο, &c.).

Menelaus is about to spare the life of the Trojan Adrastus, who clasps his knees and craves mercy, offering a large ransom—when Agamemnôn repels the idea of quarter, and kills Adrastus with his own hand: his speech to Menelaus displays the extreme of violent enmity, yet the poet says,—

Ὡς εἰπὼν, παρέπεισε, ἀδελφείου
φρένας ἦρωσ,
Αἴσιμα παρειπὼν, &c.

Adrastus is not called an ἰκέτης, nor is the expression used in respect to Dolon (Il. x. 456), nor in the equally striking case of Odysseus (Odys. xiv. 279) when begging for his life.

¹ Odys. ix. 112-275.

² Tacit. German. c. 21. "Quemcunque mortalium arcere tecto, nefas habetur: pro fortunâ quisque apparatis epulis excipit: cum defecere qui modo hospes fuerat, monstrator hospitii et comes, proximam domum non invitati adeunt: nec interest—pari humanitate accipiuntur. Notum ignotumque, quantum ad jus hospitii, nemo discernit." Compare Cæsar, B. G. vi. 22.

See about the Druses and Arabians, Volney, Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. ii. p. 76, Engl. Transl.; Niebuhr, Beschreibung von Arabien, Copenh. 1772, p. 46-49.

Pomponius Mela describes the ancient Germans in language not inapplicable to the Homeric Greeks: "Jus in viribus habent, adeo ut ne



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



to possess a greater tutelary force than really belongs to them—beneficent, indeed, in a high degree, with reference to their own appropriate period, but serving as a very imperfect compensation for the impotence of the magistrate, and for the absence of any all-pervading sympathy or sense of obligation between man and man. We best appreciate their importance when we compare the Homeric society with that of barbarians like the Thracians, who tattooed their bodies, as the mark of a generous lineage—sold their children for export as slaves—considered robbery, not merely as one admissible occupation among others, but as

the bloody shirt of the deceased A Morlach is implacable if injured or insulted. With him revenge and justice have exactly the same meaning, and truly it is the primitive idea, and I have been told that in Albania the effects of revenge are still more atrocious and more lasting. There, a man of the mildest character is capable of the most barbarous revenge, believing it to be his positive duty A Morlach who has killed another of a powerful family is commonly obliged to save himself by flight, and keep out of the way for several years. If during that time he has been fortunate enough to escape the search of his pursuers, and has got a small sum of money, he endeavours to obtain pardon and peace. . . . It is the custom in some places for the offended party to threaten the criminal, holding all sorts of arms to his throat, and at last to consent to accept his ransom.”

Concerning the influence of these two distinct tendencies—devoted personal friendship and implacable animosities—among the Illyrico-Sclavonian population, see Cyprien Robert, *Les Slaves de la Turquie*, ch. vii. p. 42—46, and Dr. Joseph Müller, *Albanien, Rumelien, und die Oesterreichisch-Montenegrinische Gränze*, Prag. 1844, p. 24—25.

“It is for the virtue of hospitality (observes Goguet, *Origin of Laws, &c.*, vol. i. book vi. ch. iv.) that the primitive times are chiefly famed. But, in my opinion, hospitality was then exercised not so much from generosity and greatness of soul, as from necessity. Common interest probably gave rise to that custom. In remote antiquity, there were few or no public inns: they entertained strangers, in order that they might render them the same service, if they happened to travel into their country. Hospitality was reciprocal. When they received strangers into their houses, they acquired a right of being received into theirs again. This right was regarded by the ancients as sacred and inviolable, and extended not only to those who had acquired it, but to their children and posterity. Besides, hospitality in these times could not be attended with much expense: men travelled but little. In a word, the modern Arabians prove that hospitality may consist with the greatest vices, and that this species of generosity is no decisive evidence of goodness of heart, or rectitude of manners.”

The book of Genesis, amidst many other features of resemblance to the Homeric manners, presents that of ready and exuberant hospitality to the stranger.

the only honourable mode of life; agriculture being held contemptible—and above all, delighted in the shedding of blood as a luxury. Such were the Thracians in the days of Herodotus and Thucydidês: and the Homeric society forms a mean term between that which these two historians yet saw in Thrace, and that which they witnessed among their own civilised countrymen.¹

When however among the Homeric men we pass beyond the influence of the private ties above enumerated, we find scarcely any other moralising forces in operation. The acts and adventures commemorated imply a community wherein neither the protection nor the restraints of law are practically felt, and wherein ferocity, rapine, and the aggressive propensities generally, seem restrained by no internal counterbalancing scruples. Homicide, especially, is of frequent occurrence, sometimes by open violence, sometimes by fraud: expatriation for homicide is among the most constantly recurring acts of the Homeric poems: and savage brutalities are often ascribed, even to admired heroes, with apparent indifference. Achilles sacrifices twelve Trojan prisoners on the tomb of Patroklos, while his son Neoptolemus not only slaughters the aged Priam, but also seizes by the leg the child Astyanax (son of the slain Hector) and hurls him from one of the lofty towers of Troy.² More-

Ferocious and aggressive passions unrestrained.

¹ Respecting the Thracians, compare Herodot. v. 11; Thucydid. vii. 29-30. The expression of the latter historian is remarkable,—τὸ δὲ γένος τῶν Θρακῶν, ἕμοια τοῖς μάλιστα τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἂν θαρσῆσῃ, φρονικώτατόν ἐστι.

Compare Herodot. viii. 116; the cruelty of the Thracian king of the Bisaltæ towards his own sons.

The story of Odysseus to Eumæus in the Odyssey (xiv. 210-226) furnishes a valuable comparison for this predatory disposition among the Thracians. Odysseus there treats the love of living by war and plunder as his own peculiar taste: he did not happen to like regular labour, but the latter is not treated as in any way mean or unbecoming a free-man:—

ἔργον δὲ μοι οὐ φίλον ἦεν
Οὐδ' οἰκωφελίη, ἧ τε τρεφεῖ ἀγλαὰ
τέκνον, &c.

² Ilias Minor, Fragm. 7. p. 18, ed. Düntzer; Iliad, xxiii. 175. Odysseus is mentioned once as obtaining poison for his arrows (Odys. i. 160), but no poisoned arrows are ever employed in either of the two poems.

The anecdotes recounted by the Scythian Toxaris in Lucian's work so entitled (vol. ii. c. 36. p. 544 seqq. ed. Hemst.) afford a vivid picture of this combination of intense and devoted friendship between individuals, with the most revolting cruelty of manners. "You Greeks live in peace and tranquillity," observes the Scythian—παρ' ἡμῖν δὲ συνεχεῖς οἱ πό-

λεμοι, καὶ ἡ ἐπελαύνομεν ἄλλοις, ἡ ὑποχωροῦμεν ἐπιόντας, ἡ συμπεσόντες ὑπὲρ νομῆς ἡ λείας μαχομεθα· ἐνθα μάλιστα δεῖ φίλων ἀγαθῶν &c.

¹ Odyss. xxi. 397; Pherekydês, Fragm. 63, ed. Didot; Autolykus, πλεῖστα κλέπτων ἐθυσάουριζεν. The Homeric Hymn to Hermês (the great patron-god of Autolykus) is a farther specimen of the admiration which might be made to attach to clever thieving.

The ἡμερόκοιτος ἀνὴρ, likely to rob the farm, is one great enemy against whom Hesiod advises precaution to be taken,—a sharp-toothed dog well-fed to serve as guard (Opp. Di. 604).

² Iliad, xi. 624; xx. 189. Odyss. iv. 81—90; ix. 40; xiv. 230: and the indirect revelation (Odyss. xix. 284), coupled with a compliment to the dexterity of Odysseus.

³ Even in the century prior to Thucydides, undistinguishing plunder at sea, committed by Greek ships against ships not Greek, seems not to have been held discreditable. The Phokæan Dionysius, after the ill-success of the Ionic revolt, goes with his

three ships of war to Sicily, and from thence plunders Tyrrhenians and Carthaginians (Herod. vi. 17).—ληιστῆς κατεστήχεε, Ἑλλήνων μὲν οὐδενός, Καρχηδονίων δὲ καὶ Τυρσηνῶν. Compare the conduct of the Phokæan settlers at Athalia in Corsica, after the conquest of Ionia by Harpagus (Herodot. i. 166).

In the treaty between the Romans and Carthaginians, made at some period subsequent to 509 B.C., it is stipulated—Τοῦ Καλοῦ Ἀκρωτηρίου, Μαστίας, Ταρσητίου, μὴ λητίζεσθαι ἐπέχεινα Ῥωμαίους, μηδ' ἐμπορεύεσθαι, μηδὲ πόλιν κτίζειν (Polyb. iii. 24, 4). Plunder, commerce and colonisation, are here assumed as the three objects which the Roman ships would pursue, unless they were under special obligation to abstain, in reference to foreigners. This morality approaches nearer to that of the Homeric age than to the state of sentiment which Thucydides indicates as current in his days among the Greeks.

⁴ See the interesting boastfulness of Nestôr, Iliad, xi. 670—700; also Odyss. xxi. 18; Odyss. iii. 71; Thucyd. i. 5.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



paternal inheritance and abandoned by all the friends of his father, whom he urgently supplicates, and who all harshly cast him off, is one of the most pathetic morsels in the whole poem.¹ In reference again to the treatment of the dead body of an enemy, we find all the Greek chiefs who come near (not to mention the conduct of Achilles himself) piercing with their spears the corpse of the slain Hectôr, while some of them even pass disgusting taunts upon it. We may add, from the lost epics, the mutilation of the dead bodies of Paris and Deiphobus by the hand of Menelaus.² But at the time of the Persian invasion, it was regarded as unworthy of a right-minded Greek to maltreat in any way the dead body of an enemy, even where such a deed might seem to be justified on the plea of retaliation. After the battle of Platæa, a proposition was made to the Spartan king Pausanias to retaliate upon the dead body of Mardonius the insults which Xerxês had heaped upon that of Leonidas at Thermopylæ. He indignantly spurned the suggestion, not without a severe rebuke, or rather a half-suppressed menace, towards the proposer: and the feeling of Herodotus himself goes heartily along with him.³

The different manner of dealing with homicide presents a third test, perhaps more striking yet, of the change in Grecian feelings and manners during the three centuries preceding the Persian invasion. That which the murderer in the Homeric times had to dread, was, not public prosecution and punishment, but the personal vengeance of the kinsmen and friends of the deceased, who were stimulated by the keenest impulses of honour and obligation to avenge the deed, and

¹ Iliad, xxii. 487—500. Hesiod dwells upon injury to orphan children, however, as a heinous offence (Opp. Di. 330).

² Iliad, xxii. 371. οὐδ' ἄρα οἷ τις ἀνούτητι γε παρέστη. Argument of Iliad Minor, ap. Düntzer, Epp. Fragm. p. 17; Virgil, Æneid, vi. 520.

Both Agamemnôn and the Oiliad Ajax cut off the heads of slain warriors and send them rolling like a ball or like a mortar among the crowd of warriors (Iliad, xi. 147; xiii. 102).

The ethical maxim preached by

Odysseus in the Odyssey, not to utter boastful shouts over a slain enemy (Οὐκ ὀσίη, χαμένοισιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσιν εὐχστᾶσθαι, xxii. 412), is abundantly violated in the Iliad.

³ Herodot. ix. 78—79. Contrast this strong expression from Pausanias with the conduct of the Carthaginians towards the end of the Peloponnesian war, after their capture of Selinus in Sicily, where, after having put to death 16,000 persons, they mutilated the dead bodies—κατὰ τὸ πάτριον ἔθος (Diodôr. xiii. 57—86).

were considered by the public as specially privileged to do so.¹ To escape from this danger, he is obliged to flee the country, unless he can prevail upon the incensed kinsmen to accept of a valuable payment (we must not speak of coined money in the days of Homer) as satisfaction for their slain comrade. They may, if they please, decline the offer, and persist in their right of revenge; but if they accept, they are bound to leave the offender unmolested, and he accordingly remains at home without further consequences. The chiefs in agora do not seem to interfere, except to ensure payment of the stipulated sum.

Here we recognise once more the characteristic attribute of the Grecian heroic age—the omnipotence of private force tempered and guided by family sympathies, and the practical nullity of that collective sovereign afterwards called *The City*—who in historical Greece becomes the central and paramount source of obligation, but who appears yet only in the background, as a germ of promise for the future. And the manner in which, in the case of homicide, that germ was developed into a powerful reality, presents an interesting field of comparison with other nations.

For the practice, here designated, of leaving the party guilty of homicide to compromise by valuable payment with the relatives of the deceased, and also of allowing to the latter a free choice whether they would accept such compromise or enforce their right of personal revenge—has been remarked in many rude communities, and is particularly memorable among the early German tribes.²

¹ The Mosaic law recognises this habit and duty on the part of the relatives of the murdered man, and provides cities of refuge for the purpose of sheltering the offender in certain cases (Deuteron. xxxv. 13–14; Bauer, *Handbuch der Hebräischen Alterthümer*, sect. 51–52).

The relative who inherited the property of a murdered man was specially obliged to avenge his death (H. Leo, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte des Jüdischen Staats*.—Vorl. iii. p. 35).

² “*Suscipere tam inimicitias, seu*

patris, seu propinqui, quam amicitias, necesse est. Nec implacabiles durant: luitur enim etiam homicidium certo pecorum armentorumque numero, recipitque satisfactionem universa domus.” (Tacit. *German.* 21.) Niebuhr, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 32.

“An Indian feast (says Loskiel, *Mission of the United Brethren in North America*) is seldom concluded without bloodshed. For the murder of a man 100 yards of wampum, and for that of a woman 200 yards, must be paid by the murderer. If he is too poor, which

Among the many separate Teutonic establishments which rose upon the ruins of the Western empire of Rome, the right as well as duty of private revenge, for personal injury or insult offered to any member of a family—and the endeavour to avert its effects by means of a pecuniary composition levied upon the offender, chiefly as satisfaction to the party injured, but partly also as perquisite to the king—was adopted as the basis of their legislation. This fundamental idea was worked out in elaborate detail as to the valuation of the injury inflicted, wherein one main circumstance was the rank, condition and power of the sufferer. The object of the legislator was to preserve the society from standing feuds, but at the same time to accord such full satisfaction as would induce the injured person to waive his acknowledged right of personal revenge—the full luxury of which as it presented itself to the mind of an Homeric Greek, may be read in more than one passage of the Iliad.¹ The German codes begin by trying to bring

is commonly the case, and his friends cannot or will not assist him, he must fly from the resentment of the relations.”

Rogge (*Gerichtswesen der Germanen*, capp. 1, 2, 3), Grimm (*Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, book v. cap. 1—2), and Eichhorn (*Deutsches Privat-Recht*, sect. 48) have expounded this idea and the consequences deduced from it among the ancient Germans. The practice of blood-feud, here alluded to, is still prevalent in British India; not only among the ruder Western tribes, coolies and others, but also among the more civilized and polished Rajpoots.

Aristotle alludes, as an illustration of the extreme silliness of ancient Greek practices (*εὐήθη πάμπαν*), to a custom which he states to have still continued at the Æolic Kymê, in cases of murder. If the accuser produced in support of his charge a certain number of witnesses from his own kindred, the person was held peremptorily guilty—οἶον ἐν Κύμῃ περὶ τὰ φονικά

νόμος ἔστιν, ἂν πλῆθος τι παράσχηται μαρτύρων ὁ διωκὼν τὸν φόνον τῶν αὐτοῦ συγγενῶν, ἔνοχον εἶναι τῷ φόνῳ τὸν φερόντα (*Polit.* ii. 5, 12). This presents a curious parallel with the Old German institution of the Eideshelfer or conjurators, who, though most frequently required and produced in support of the party accused, were yet also brought by the party accusing. See Rogge, sect. 36, p. 186; Grimm, p. 862.

¹ The word *ποινή* indicates this satisfaction by valuable payment for wrong done, especially for homicide: that the Latin word *pœna* originally meant the same thing may be inferred from the old phrases *dare pœnas*, *pendere pœnas*. The most illustrative passage in the Iliad is that in which Ajax, in the embassy undertaken to conciliate Achilles, censures by comparison the inexorable obstinacy of the latter in setting at naught the proffered presents of Agamemnon (*Il.* ix. 627):—



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



of sight, even so early as the Drakonian legislation, and at last restricted to a few extreme and special cases;¹ while the murderer came to be considered, first as having sinned against the gods, next as having deeply injured the society, and thus at once as requiring absolution and deserving punishment. On the first of these two grounds, he is interdicted from the agora and from all holy places, as well as from public functions, even while yet untried and simply a suspected person; for if this were not done, the wrath of the gods would manifest itself in bad crops and other national calamities. On the second ground, he is tried before the council of Areiopagus, and if found guilty, is condemned to death, or perhaps to disfranchisement and banishment.² The idea of a propitiatory payment to the relatives of the deceased has ceased altogether to be admitted: it is the protection of society which dictates, and the force of society which inflicts, a measure of punishment calculated to deter for the future.

Punished in
historical
Greece as
a crime
against
society.

¹ See Lysias, *De Cæde Eratosten.* Orat. i. p. 94; Plutarch, *Solon*, c. 23; Demosthen. cont. *Aristocrat.* p. 632—637.

Plato (*De Legg.* ix. p. 871—874), in his copious penal suggestions to deal with homicide, both intentional and accidental, concurs in general with the old Attic law (see Matthiæ, *Miscellanea Philologica*, vol. i. p. 171): and as he states with sufficient distinctness the grounds of his propositions, we see how completely the idea of a right to private or family revenge is absent from his mind. In one particular case, he confers upon kinsmen the privilege of avenging their murdered relative (p. 871); but generally, he rather seeks to enforce upon them strictly the duty of bringing the suspected murderer to trial before the court. By the Attic law, it was only the kinsmen of the deceased who had the right of prosecuting for murder—or the master, if the deceased was an οἰκέτης (Demos-

then. cont. *Euerg. et Mnesibul.* c. 18); they might by forgiveness shorten the term of banishment for the unintentional murderer (*Demosth. cont. Macart.* p. 1069). They seem to have been regarded, generally speaking, as religiously obliged, but not legally compellable, to undertake this duty; compare Plato, *Euthyphro*, cap. 4 & 5.

² Lysias, cont. *Agorat.* Or. xiii. p. 137. Antiphon. *Tetralog.* i. 1. p. 629. Ἀσύμφορον δ' ὑμῖν ἐστὶ τὸνδε, μιὰρὸν καὶ ἀναγνον ὄντα, εἰς τὰ τεμένη τῶν θεῶν εἰσιόντα μαιίνειν τὴν ἀγνείαν αὐτῶν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰς αὐτὰς τραπέζας ἴοντα συγκαταπιμπλάναι τοὺς ἀναίτιους· ἐκ γὰρ τούτων αἱ τε ἀφορίαι γίνονται, εὐστυχεῖς θ' αἱ πράξεις καθίστανται.

The three Tetralogies of Antiphon are all very instructive respecting the legal procedure in cases of alleged homicide: as also the Oration *De Cæde Herodis* (see capp. 1 and 2)—τοῦ νόμου κειμένου, τὸν ἀποκτείναντα ἀνταποθάνειν &c.

3. The society of legendary Greece includes, besides the chiefs, the general mass of freemen (λαοί), among whom stand out by special names certain professional men, such as the carpenter, the smith, the leather-dresser, the leech, the prophet, the bard, and the fisherman.¹ We have no means of appreciating their condition. Though lots of arable land were assigned in special property to individuals, with boundaries both carefully marked and jealously watched,² yet the larger proportion of surface was devoted to pasture. Cattle formed both the chief item in the substance of a wealthy man, the chief means of making payments, and the common ground of quarrels—bread and meat, in large quantities, being the constant food of every one.³ The estates of the owners were tilled, and their cattle tended, mostly by bought slaves, but to a certain degree also by poor freemen called Thêtes, working for hire and for stated periods. The principal slaves, who were entrusted with the care of large herds of oxen, swine, or goats, were of necessity men worthy of confidence, their

Condition, occupations, and professions of the Homeric Greeks.

The case of the Spartan Drakontius (one of the Ten Thousand Greeks who served with Cyrus the younger, and permanently exiled from his country in consequence of an involuntary murder committed during his boyhood) presents a pretty exact parallel to the fatal quarrel of Patroklos at Iliad, vi. 485, when a boy, with the son of Amphidamas, in consequence of which he was forced to seek shelter under the roof of Pêleus compare Iliad, xxiii. 85, with Xenoph. Anab. iv. 8, 25).

¹ Odyss. xvii. 384; xix. 135. Iliad, vi. 187; vii. 221. I know nothing which better illustrates the idea of the Homeric δημιουργοί—the bard, the prophet, the carpenter, the leech, the bard, &c.,—than the following description of the structure of an East Indian village (Mill's story of British India, b. ii. c. p. 266): "A village politically considered resembles a corporation township. Its proper estab-

lishment of officers and servants consists of the following descriptions:—The potail, or head inhabitant, who settles disputes and collects the revenue, &c.; the curnum, who keeps the accounts of cultivation, &c.; the tallier; the boundary-man; the superintendent of tanks and water-courses; the Brahman, who performs the village worship; the schoolmaster; the calendar Brahman, or astrologer, who proclaims the lucky or unpropitious periods for sowing or thrashing; the smith and carpenter; the potter; the washerman; the barber; the cowkeeper; the doctor; the dancing-girl, who attends at rejoicings; the musician and the poet."

Each of these officers and servants (δημιουργοί) is remunerated by a definite perquisite—so much landed produce—out of the general crop of the village (p. 264).

² Iliad, xii. 421; xxi. 405

³ Iliad. i. 155; ix. 154, xiv. 122.

They had other slaves subordinate to them, and to have been well treated: the deep and unshaken sentiment of Eumæus the swineherd and Philœtius the dog, to the family and affairs of the absent Odysseus, being the most interesting points in the ancient epic.

Slavery was a calamity which in that period of insecurity might befall any one. The chief who led a freebooting expedition, if he succeeded, brought with him a numerous troop of slaves, as many as he could seize²—if he failed, became very likely a slave himself: so that the slave was often by birth of equal dignity to his master—Eumæus was himself the son of a chief, carried away when a child by his nurse, and sold by Cretan kidnappers to Laertês. A slave of this character who conducted himself well, might often expect to be manumitted by his master, and placed in an independent position.³

On the whole, the slavery of legendary Greece does not present itself as existing under a peculiarly harsh form, especially if we consider that all the classes of society were very much upon a level in point of taste, sentiment, and education.⁴ In the absence of legal security or any other social sanction, it is probable that the condition of a slave under an average master may have been as good as that of the free Thête. The class of slaves whose lot was to have been the most pitiable were the females

Odysseus and other chiefs of Ionia had oxen, sheep, mules, and other animals on the continent and in Peloponnesus, under the care of herdsmen (Odys. iv. 636; xiv. 100).

Pharax, king of Bosphorus, was a Scythian Arsakomas—

also xix. 78: Eurykleia was also of dignified birth (i. 426). The questions put by Odysseus to Eumæus, to which the speech above referred to is an answer, indicate the proximate causes of slavery: "Was the city of your



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Mosaic narrative, as well as the wife of the native Macedonian chief (with whom the Temenid Perdiccas, ancestor of Philip and Alexander, first took service on retiring from Argos) baking her own cakes on the hearth,¹ exhibit a parallel in this respect to the Homeric pictures.

We obtain no particulars respecting either the common freemen generally, or the particular class of them called Thêtes. These latter, engaged for special jobs, or at the harvest and other busy seasons of field labour, seem to have given their labour in exchange for board and clothing: they are mentioned in the same line with the slaves,² and were (as has been just observed) probably on the whole little better off. The condition of a poor freeman in those days, without a lot of land of his own, going about from one temporary job to another, and having no powerful family and no social authority to look up to for protection, must have been sufficiently miserable.

When Eumæus indulged his expectation of being manumitted by his masters, he thought at the same time that they would give him a wife, a house, and a lot of land, near to themselves;³ without which collateral advantages, simple manumission might perhaps have been no improvement in his condition. To be Thête in the service of a very poor farmer is selected by Achilles as the maximum of human hardship: such a person could not give to his Thête the same ample food, and good shoes and clothing, as the wealthy chief Eurymachus, while he would exact more severe labour.⁴ It was probably among such smaller occupants, who could not advance the price necessary to purchase slaves, and were glad to save the cost of keep when they did not need service, that the Thêtes found employment: though we may conclude that the brave and strong amongst these poor freemen found it preferable to accompany some freebooting chief, and to live by the plunder acquired.⁵ The exact Hesiod advises his farmer, whose work is chiefly performed

¹ Herodot. viii. 137.

² Odyss. iv. 643.

³ Odyss. xiv. 64.

⁴ Compare Odyss. xi. 490, with xviii. 358. Klytæmnêstra, in the *Agamemnôn* of Æschylus, preaches a something similar doctrine to *Kassandra*,—how much kinder the ἀρχαίοπλουτοι δεσποταὶ were towards

their slaves, than masters who had risen by unexpected prosperity (*Agamemn.* 1042).

⁵ Thucyd. i. 5. ἐτράποντο πρὸς λήσθειαν, ἡγουμένων ἀνδρῶν οὐ τῶν ἀδυνατωτάτων, κέρδους τοῦ σφστεροῦ αὐτῶν ἕνεκα, καὶ τοῖς ἀσθενέσι τροφῆς.

by slaves, to employ and maintain the Thête during summer-time, but to dismiss him as soon as the harvest is completely got in, and then to take into his house for the winter, a woman "without any child;" who would of course be more useful than the Thête for the indoor occupations of that season.¹

In a state of society such as that which we have been describing, Grecian commerce was necessarily trifling and restricted. The Homeric poems mark either total ignorance or great vagueness of apprehension respecting all that lies beyond the coasts of Greece and Asia Minor and the islands between or adjoining them. Libya and Egypt are supposed so distant as to be known only by name and hearsay: indeed when the city of Kyrene was founded, a century and a half after the first Olympiad, it was difficult to find anywhere a Greek navigator who had ever visited the coast of Libya, or was fit to serve as guide to the colonists.² The mention of the Sikels in the *Odyssey*³ leads us to

Limited
commerce
and naviga-
tion of the
Homeric
Greeks.

¹ Hesiod, *Opp. Di.* 459—ἐφορμη-
θῆναι, ὁμῶς δμῶές τε καὶ αὐτός—
and 603:—

. . . . Αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ
Πάντα βίον κατάρθαι ἐπήρμενον
ἐνδοθι οἴκου,
θῆτά τ' ἄοικοι ποιῆσθαι, καὶ
ἄτεχνον ἔριθον
Δίξασθαι χέλομαι· χαλεπή δ' ὑπό-
πορτις ἔριθος.

The two words ἄοικον ποιῆσθαι seem here to be taken together in the sense of "dismiss the Thête," or "make him houseless;" for when put out of his employer's house, he had no residence of his own. Götting (*ad loc.*), Nitzsch (*ad Odys.* iv. 643), and Lehrs (*Quæst. Epic.* p. 205) all construe ἄοικον with θῆτα, and represent Hesiod as advising that the houseless Thête should be at that moment taken on, just at the time when the summer's work was finished. Lehrs (and seemingly Götting also), sensible that this can never have been the real meaning of the poet, would throw out the two

lines as spurious. I may remark further that the translation of θῆς given by Götting—*villicus*—is inappropriate: it includes the idea of superintendence over other labourers, which does not seem to have belonged to the Thête in any case.

There were a class of poor free-women who made their living by taking in wool to spin and perhaps to weave: the exactness of their dealing as well as the poor profit which they made, are attested by a touching Homeric simile (*Iliad*, xiii. 434). See *Iliad*, vi. 289; xxiii. 742. *Odys.* xv. 414.

² Herodot. iv. 151. Compare Ukert, *Geographie der Griechen und Römer*, part i. p. 16—19.

³ *Odys.* xx. 383—xxiv. 210. The identity of the Homeric Scheria with Korkyra, and that of the Homeric Thrinakia with Sicily, appear to me not at all made out. Both Welcker and Klausen treat the Phæakians as purely mythical persons (see W. C. Müller, *De*

conclude that Korkyra, Italy and Sicily were not wholly unknown to the poet. Among seafaring Greeks, the knowledge of the latter implied the knowledge of the two former—since the habitual track, even of a well-equipped Athenian trireme during the Peloponnesian war, from Peloponnêsus to Sicily, was by Korkyra and the Gulf of Tarentum. The Phokæans, long afterwards, were the first Greeks who explored either the Adriatic or Tyrrhenian sea.¹ Of the Euxine sea no knowledge is manifested in Homer, who, as a general rule, presents to us the names of distant regions only in connexion with romantic or monstrous accompani-
Kretans, ments. The Kretans, and still more the Ta-

Phœni- western islan
cians. mentioned as

Mentês professes to be there exchanged for copper;² but both Taphians and Kretans are more corsairs than traders.³ The strong sense of the dangers of the sea, expressed by the poet Hesiod, and the imperfect structure of the early Grecian ship, attested by Thucydidês (who points out the more recent date of that improved shipbuilding which prevailed in his time), concur to demonstrate the then narrow range of nautical enterprise.⁴

Such was the state of the Greeks as traders, at a time when Babylon combined a crowded and industrious population with extensive commerce, and when the Phœnician merchant-ships visited in one direction the southern coast of Arabia, perhaps even the island of Ceylon—in another direction, the British islands.

The Phœnician, the kinsman of the ancient Jew, exhibits the type of character belonging to the latter—with greater enterprise and ingenuity, and less of religious exclusiveness, yet still different from, and even antipathetic to, the character of the Greeks. In the Homeric poems, he appears somewhat like the Jew of the middle ages, a

Corcyræorum Republicâ, Götting. 1835, p. 9).

¹ Herodot. i. 163.

² Nitzsch. ad Odyss. i. 181; Strabo, i. p. 6. The situation of Temesa, whether it is to be placed in Italy or in Cyprus, has been a disputed

point among critics both ancient and modern.

³ Odyss. xv. 426. Τάφιοι, ληϊστορες ἄνδρες; and xvi, 426. Hymn to Dêmêtêr, v. 123.

⁴ Hesiod. Opp. Di. 615—684; Thucyd. i. 13.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Thucydidês tells us that the Phœnicians and Karians, in very early periods, occupied many of the islands of the Ægean, and we know, from the striking remnant of their mining works which Herodotus himself saw in Thasus, off the coast of Thrace, that they had once extracted gold from the mountains of that island—at a period indeed very far back, since their occupation must have been abandoned prior to the settlement of the poet Archilochus.¹ Yet few of the islands in the Ægean were rich in such valuable products, nor was it in the usual course of Phœnician proceeding to occupy islands, except where there was an adjoining mainland with which trade could be carried on. The traffic of these active mariners required no permanent settlement. But as occasional visitors they were convenient, in enabling a Greek chief to turn his captives to account,—to get rid of slaves, or friendless Thêtes who were troublesome—and to supply himself with the metals, precious as well as useful.² The halls of Alkinous and Menelaus glitter with gold, copper, and electrum. Large stocks of yet unemployed metal—gold, copper and iron—are stored up in the treasure-chamber of Odysseus and other chiefs.³

metal akin to gold (Antigone, 1033).

See the dissertation of Buttman, appended to his collection of essays called *Mythologus*, vol. ii. p. 337; also Beckmann, *History of Inventions*, vol. iv. p. 12, Engl. Transl. “The ancients (observes the latter) used as a peculiar metal a mixture of gold and silver, because they were not acquainted with the art of separating them, and gave it the name of *electrum*.” Dr. Thirlwall (*Hist. of Greece*, vol. i. p. 241) thinks that the Homeric *electrum* is amber; on the contrary, Hüllmann thinks that it was a metallic substance (*Handels-Geschichte der Griechen*, p. 63-81).

Beckmann doubts whether the oldest *χαλκίτερος* of the Greeks was really tin: he rather thinks that it was “the *stannum* of the Romans, the *werk* of our smelting-houses, —that is, a mixture of lead, silver, and other accidental metals” (*ibid.*

p. 20). The Greeks of Massalia procured tin from Britain, through Gaul, by the Seine, the Saone, and the Rhone (Diodôr. v. 22).

¹ Herodot. ii. 44; vi. 47. Archiloch. *Fragm.* 21—22, ed. Gaisf. CEnomaus, ap. Euseb. *Præp. Ev.* vi. 7. Thucyd. i. 12.

The Greeks connected this Phœnician settlement in Thasus with the legend of Kadmus and his sister Eurôpa: Thasus, the eponymus of the island, was brother of Kadmus. (Herod. *ib.*)

² The angry Laomedôn threatens, when Poseidôn and Apollo ask from him (at the expiration of their term of servitude) the stipulated wages of their labour, to cut off their ears and send them off to some distant islands (*Iliad*, xxi. 454). Compare xxiv. 752. *Odyss.* xx. 383; xviii. 83.

³ *Odyss.* iv. 73; vii. 85; xxi. 61. *Iliad*, ii. 223; vi. 47.

Coined money is unknown to the Homeric age—the trade carried on being one of barter. In reference also to the metals, it deserves to be remarked that the Homeric descriptions universally suppose copper, and not iron, to be employed for arms, both offensive and defensive. By what process the copper was tempered and hardened, so as to serve the purposes of the warrior, we do not know;¹ but the use of iron for these objects belongs to a later age, though the Works and Days of Hesiod suppose this change to have been already introduced.²

The mode of fighting among the Homeric heroes is not less different from the historical times, than the material of which their arms were composed. In historical Greece, the Hoplites, or heavy-armed infantry, maintained a close order and well-dressed line, charging the enemy with their

Weapons and mode of fighting of the Homeric Greeks.

¹ See Millin, *Minéralogie Homérique*, p. 74. That there are, however, modes of tempering copper, so as to impart to it the hardness of steel, has been proved by the experiments of the Comte de Caylus.

The Massagetæ employed only copper—no iron—for their weapons (Herodot. i. 215).

² Hesiod, *Opp. Di.* 150—420. The examination of the various matters of antiquity discoverable throughout the north of Europe, as published by the Antiquarian Society of Copenhagen, recognises a distinction of three successive ages:—1. Implements and arms of stone, bone, wood, &c.; little or no use of metals at all; clothing made of skins. 2. Implements and arms of copper and gold, or rather bronze and gold; little or no silver or iron. Articles of gold and electrum are found belonging to this age, but none of silver, nor any evidences of writing. 3. The age which follows this has belonging to it arms of iron, articles of silver, and some Runic inscriptions: it is the last age of northern paganism, immediately pre-

ceding the introduction of Christianity (*Leitfaden zur Nordischen Alterthumskunde*, pp. 31, 57, 63, Copenhagen, 1837.)

The Homeric age coincides with the second of these two periods. Silver is comparatively little mentioned in Homer, while both bronze and gold are familiar metals. Iron also is rare, and seems employed only for agricultural purposes—*Χρυσόν τε, χάλκον τε ἄλις, ἐσθῆτα θ' ὕφαντήν* (*Iliad*, vi. 48; *Odyss.* ii. 338; xiii. 136). The *χρυσοχόος* and the *χαλκεύς* are both mentioned in Homer, but workers in silver and iron are not known by any special name (*Odyss.* iii. 415—436).

“The hatchet, wimble, plane, and level, are the tools mentioned by Homer, who appears to have been unacquainted with the saw, the square, and the compass.” (*Gilles, Hist. of Greece*, chap. ii. p. 61.)

The Gauls known to Polybius, seemingly the Cisalpine Gauls only, possessed all their property in cattle and gold—*θρέμματα καὶ χρυσός*,—on account of the easy transportability of both (*Polyh.* ii. 17).

spears protended at even distance, and coming thus to close conflict without breaking their rank: there were special troops, bowmen, slingers, &c. armed with missiles, but the hoplite had no weapon to employ in this manner. The heroes of the Iliad and Odyssey, on the contrary, habitually employ the spear as a missile, which they launch with tremendous force: each of them is mounted in his war-chariot drawn by two horses and calculated to contain the warrior and his charioteer; in which latter capacity a friend or comrade will sometimes consent to serve. Advancing in his chariot at full speed, in front of his own soldiers, he hurls his spear against the enemy: sometimes indeed he will fight on foot and hand to hand, but the chariot is usually near to receive him if he chooses, or to ensure his retreat. The mass of the Greeks and Trojans coming forward to the charge, without any regular step or evenly-maintained line, make their attack in the same way by hurling their spears. Each chief wears habitually a long sword and a short dagger, besides his two spears to be launched forward—the spear being also used, if occasion serves, as a weapon for thrust. Every man is protected by shield, helmet, breastplate and greaves: but the armour of the chiefs is greatly superior to that of the common men, while they themselves are both stronger and more expert in the use of their weapons. There are a few bowmen, as rare exceptions, but the general equipment and proceeding is as here described.

Such loose array, immortalised as it is in the Iliad, is familiar to every one; and the contrast which it presents, with those inflexible ranks and that irresistible simultaneous charge which bore down the Persian throng at Plataea and Kunaxa,¹ is such as to illustrate forcibly the general difference between heroic and historical Greece. While in the

Contrast with the military array of historical Greece.

¹ Tyrtæus, in his military expressions, seems to conceive the Homeric mode of hurling the spear as still prevalent—*δόρυ δ' εὐτόλμως βάλλοντες* (Fragm. ix. Gaisford). Either he had his mind prepossessed with the Homeric array, or else the close order and conjunct spears of the hoplites had not yet been introduced during the second Messenian war.

Thiersch and Schneidewin would substitute *πάλλοντες* in place of *βάλλοντες*. Euripidès (Androm. 695) has a similar expression, yet it does not apply well to hoplites; for one of the virtues of the hoplite consisted in carrying his spear steadily: *δοράτων κίνησις* betokens a disorderly march and the want of steady courage and self-possession. See the remarks of Brasidas upon



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



primitive Greek towns or villages derived a precarious security, not from their walls, but merely from sites lofty and difficult of access. They were not built immediately upon the shore, or close upon any convenient landing-place, but at some distance inland, on a rock or elevation which could not be approached without notice or scaled without difficulty. It was thought sufficient at that time to guard against piratical or marauding surprise: but as the state of society became assured—as the chance of sudden assault comparatively diminished and industry increased—these uninviting abodes were exchanged for more convenient sites on the plain or declivity beneath; or a portion of the latter was enclosed within larger boundaries and joined on to the original foundation, which thus became the Acropolis of the new town. Thêbes, Athens, Argos, &c. belonged to the latter class of cities; but there were in many parts of Greece deserted sites on hill-tops, still retaining even in historical times the traces of former habitation, and some of them still bearing the name of the old towns. Among the mountainous parts of Krête, in Ægina and Rhodes, in portions of Mount Ida and Parnassus, similar remnants might be perceived.¹

Probably in such primitive hill villages, a continuous circle of wall would hardly be required as an additional means of defence, and would often be rendered very difficult by the rugged nature of the ground. But Thucydidês represents the earliest Greeks—those whom he conceives anterior to the Trojan war—as living thus universally in unfortified villages chiefly on account of their poverty, rudeness, and thorough carelessness for

Earliest residences of the Greeks—hill villages lofty and difficult of access.

¹ Ἡ παλαιὰ πόλις in Ægina (Herodot. vi. 88); Ἀστυπάλαια in Samos (Polyæn. i. 23, 2; Etymol. Mag. v. Ἀστυπάλαια: it became seemingly the acropolis of the subsequent city).

About the deserted sites in the lofty regions of Krête, see Theophrastus, de Ventis, v. 13, ed. Schneider, p. 762.

The site of Παλαίσκηψις in Mount Ida,—ἐπάνω Κέβρητος κατὰ τὸ μετεωρότατον τῆς Ἰδῆς (Strabo, xiii. p. 607); ὕστερον δὲ κατωτέρω στα-

διοῖς ἐξήκοντα εἰς τὴν νῦν Σαῆψιν μετωχίσθησαν. Paphos in Cyprus was the same distance below the ancient Palæ-Paphos (Strabo, xiv. p. 683).

Near Mantinea in Arcadia was situated ὄρος ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ, τὰ ἐρείπια ἔτι Μαντινείας ἔχον τῆς ἀρχαίας· καλεῖται δὲ τὸ χωρίον ἐφ' ἡμῶν Πτόλις (Pausan. viii. 12, 4.). See a similar statement about the lofty sites of the ancient town of Orchomenus (in Arcadia) Paus. viii. 13, 2), of Nonakris (viii. 17, 5), of

the morrow. Oppressed and held apart from each other by perpetual fear, they had not yet contracted the sentiment of fixed abodes—they were unwilling even to plant fruit-trees because of the uncertainty of gathering the produce—and were always ready to dislodge, because there was nothing to gain by staying, and a bare subsistence might be had any where. He compares them to the mountaineers of Ætolia and of the Ozolian Lokris in his own time, who dwelt in their unfortified hill villages with little or no inter-communication, always armed and fighting, and subsisting on the produce of their cattle and their woods¹—clothed in undrest hides, and eating raw meat.

The picture given by Thucydidês, of these very early and unrecorded times, can only be taken as conjectural—the conjectures indeed of a statesman and a philosopher,—generalised too, in part, from the many particular instances of contention and expulsion of chiefs which he found in the old legendary poems. The Homeric poems, however, present to us a different picture. They recognise walled towns; fixed abodes, strong local attachments, hereditary individual property in land, vineyards planted and carefully cultivated, established temples

Homeric society recognises walled towns, individual property, and strong local attachments.

Lusi (viii. 18, 3), Lykoreia on Parnassus (Paus. x. 6, 2; Strabo, ix. p. 418).

Compare also Plato (Legg. iii. 2. p. 678-679), who traces these lofty and craggy dwellings, general among the earliest Grecian townships, to the commencement of human society after an extensive deluge, which had covered all the lower grounds and left only a few survivors.

¹ Thucyd. i. 2. Φαίνεται γὰρ ἡ νῦν Ἑλλάς καλουμένη, οὐ πάλαι βεβαίως οἰκουμένη, ἀλλὰ μεταναστάσεις τε οὔσαι τὰ πρότερα, καὶ ῥαδίως ἕκαστοι τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀπολείποντες, βιαζόμενοι ὑπὸ τινῶν αἰεὶ πλειόνων· τῆς γὰρ ἐμπορίας οὐκ οὔσης, οὐδ' ἐπιμιγνύοντες ἀδεῶς ἀλλήλοις, οὔτε κατὰ γῆν οὔτε διὰ θαλάσσης, νεμόμενοι δὲ τὰ αὐτῶν ἕκαστοι ἔσον ἀποζῆν, καὶ περιουσίαν χρημάτων οὐ

ἔχοντες οὐδὲ γῆν φυτεύοντες, ἄδηλον δὲν ὅποτε τις ἐπελθῶν, καὶ ἀτειχίστων ἅμα ὄντων, ἄλλος ἀφαιρήσεται, τῆς τε καθ' ἡμέραν ἀναγκαίου τροφῆς πανταχοῦ ἂν ἡγούμενοι ἐπικρατεῖν, οὐ χαλεπῶς ἀπανίσταντο, καὶ δι' αὐτὸ οὔτε μεγέθει πόλεων ἰσχυοῦν, οὔτε τῇ ἄλλῃ παρασκευῇ.

About the distant and unfortified villages and rude habits of the Ætolians and Lokrians, see Thucyd. iii. 94; Pausan. x. 38, 3: also of the Cisalpine Gauls, Polyh. ii. 17.

Both Thucydidês and Aristotle seem to have conceived the Homeric period as mainly analogous to the βάρβαροι of their own day—Δύει δ' Ἀριστοτέλης λέγων, δι' τοιαῦτα αἰεὶ ποιεῖ Ὀμηρος οἷα ἦν τότε· ἦν δὲ τοιαῦτα τὰ παλαιὰ οἷα περ καὶ νῦν ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις (Schol. Iliad. x. 151).

of the gods, and splendid palaces of the chiefs.¹ The description of Thucydidês belongs to a lower form of society, and bears more analogy to that which the poet himself conceives as antiquated and barbarous—to the savages Cyclopes who dwell on the tops of mountains, in hollow caves, without the plough, without vine or fruit culture, without arts or instruments—or to the primitive settlement of Dardanus son of Zeus, on the higher ground of Ida, while it was reserved for his descendants and successors to found the holy Ilium on the plain.² Ilium or Troy represents the perfection of Homeric society. It is a consecrated spot, containing temples of the gods as well as the palace of Priam, and surrounded by walls which are the fabric of the gods; while the antecedent form of ruder society, which the poet briefly glances at, is the parallel of that which the theory of Thucydidês ascribes to his own early semi-barbarous ancestors.

Walled towns serve thus as one of the evidences, that
 Means of a large part of the population of Greece had,
 defence even in the Homeric times, reached a level higher
 superior to those of than that of the Ætolians and Lokrians of the
 attack. days of Thucydidês. The remains of Mykênæ
 and Tiryns demonstrate the massy and Cyclopiian style of
 architecture employed in those early days: but we may
 remark, that while modern observers seem inclined to treat
 the remains of the former as very imposing, and significant
 of a great princely family, Thucydidês, on the contrary,
 speaks of it as a small place, and labours to elude the in-
 ference, which might be deduced from its insignificant size,
 in disproof of the grandeur of Agamemnôn.³ Such forti-
 fications supplied a means of defence incomparably superior
 to those of attack. Indeed even in historical Greece, and
 after the invention of battering engines, no city could be
 taken except by surprise or blockade, or by ruining the
 country around, and thus depriving the inhabitants of their

¹ Odyss. vi. 10; respecting Nausithous, past king of the Phæakians:

Ἄμφι δὲ τεῖχος ἔλασσε πόλει, καὶ
 ἑδείματο οἴκους,
 Καὶ νηοὺς ποίησε θεῶν, καὶ ἐδάσ-
 σατ' ἀρούρας.

The vineyard, olive-ground and garden of Laërtes, is a model of

careful cultivation (Odyss. xxiv. 245); see also the shield of Achilles (Iliad, xviii. 541—580), and the Kalydonian plain (Iliad, ix. 575).

² Odyss. x. 106—115; Iliad, xx. 216.

³ Thucyd. i. 10. Καὶ ὅτι μὲν Μυκῆναι μικρὸν ἦν, ἧ εἶ τι τῶν τότε πόλισμα μὴ ἀξιοχρέων δοκεῖ εἶναι, &c.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Aggressions of the sort here described were of course most numerous in those earliest times when the *Ægean* was not yet an Hellenic sea, and when many of the Cyclades were occupied, not by Greeks, but by *Karians*—perhaps by *Phœnicians*: the number of *Karian* sepulchres discovered in the sacred island of *Delos* seems to attest such occupation as an historical fact.¹ According to the legendary account, espoused both by *Herodotus* and by *Thucydidês*, it was the *Kretan Minôs* who subdued these islands and established his sons as rulers in them; either expelling the *Karians*, or reducing them to servitude and tribute.² *Thucydidês* presumes that he must of course have put down piracy, in order to enable his tribute to be remitted in

and even highway robbery generally, found considerable approving sentiment in the middle ages. "All Europe (observes Mr. Hallam, *Hist. Mid. Ag.* ch. viii. part 3, p. 247) was a scene of intestine anarchy during the middle ages; and though England was far less exposed to the scourge of private war than most nations on the continent, we should find, could we recover the local annals of every country, such an accumulation of petty rapine and tumult, as would almost alienate us from the liberty which served to engender it. . . . Highway robbery was from the earliest times a sort of national crime. . . . We know how long the outlaws of *Sherwood* lived in tradition; men who, like some of their betters, have been permitted to redeem by a few acts of generosity the just ignominy of extensive crimes. These indeed were the heroes of vulgar applause: but when such a judge as *Sir John Fortescue* could exult, that more Englishmen were hanged for robbery in one year than French in seven—and that, if an Englishman be poor, and see another having riches, which may be taken from him by might, he will not spare to do so,—it may be perceived how thoroughly these

sentiments had pervaded the public mind."

The robberies habitually committed by the noblesse of France and Germany during the middle ages, so much worse than any thing in England—and those of the Highland chiefs even in later times—are too well-known to need any references: as to France, an ample catalogue is set forth in *Dulaure's Histoire de la Noblesse* (Paris, 1792). The confederations of the German cities chiefly originated in the necessity of keeping the roads and rivers open for the transit of men and goods against the nobles who infested the high roads. *Scaliger* might have found a parallel to the *ληστὰι* of the heroic ages in the noblesse of *la Rouergue* as it stood even in the 16th century, which he thus describes:—"In Comitatu Rodez pessimi sunt: nobilitas ibi latrocinatur; nec possunt reprimi" (ap. *Dulaure*, c. 9).

¹ *Thucyd.* i. 4, 8. τῆς νῦν Ἑλληνικῆς θαλάσσης.

² *Herodot.* i. 171; *Thucyd.* i. 4—8. *Isokratês* (*Panathenaic.* p. 241) takes credit to Athens for having finally expelled the *Karians* out of these islands at the time of the *Ionic* emigration.

safety, like the Athenians during the time of their hegemony.¹ Upon the legendary thalassocracy of Minôs I have already remarked in another place:² it is sufficient here to repeat, that in the Homeric poems (long subsequent to Minôs in the current chronology) we find piracy both frequent and held in honourable estimation, as Thucydidês himself emphatically tells us—remarking moreover that the vessels of those early days were only half-decked, built and equipped after the piratical fashion,³ in a manner upon which the nautical men of his time looked back with disdain. Improved and enlarged ship-building, and the trireme, or ship with three banks of oars, common for warlike purposes during the Persian invasion, began only with the growing skill, activity and importance of the Corinthians, three quarters of a century after the first Olympiad.⁴ Corinth, even in the Homeric poems, is distinguished by the epithet of wealthy, which it acquired principally from its remarkable situation on the Isthmus, and from its two harbours of Lechæum and Kenchreæ, the one on the Corinthian, the other on the Sarônic gulf. It thus supplied a convenient connexion between Epirus and Italy on the one side, and the Ægean sea on the other, without imposing upon the unskilful and timid navigator of those days the necessity of circumnavigating Peloponnêsus.

The extension of Grecian traffic and shipping is manifested by a comparison of the Homeric with the Hesiodic poems; in respect to knowledge of places and countries—the latter being probably referable to dates between B.C. 740 and B.C. 640. In Homer, acquaintance is shown (the accuracy of such acquaintance however being exaggerated by Strabo and other friendly critics) with continental Greece and its neighbouring islands, with Krête and the principal islands of the Ægean, and with Thrace, the Troad, the Hellespont, and Asia Minor between Paphlagonia northward and Lykia southward. The Sikels are mentioned in the Odyssey, and Sikania in the last book of that poem, but nothing is said to evince a knowledge of Italy or the realities of the western world. Libya, Egypt

Extended geographical knowledge in the Hesiodic poems, as compared with Homer.

¹ Thucyd. i. 4. τό τε ληστικὸν ὡς εἰχὼς, καθήρει ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης ἐφ' ὅσον ἠδύνατο, τοῦ τὰς προσόδους μᾶλλον ἰέναι αὐτῷ.

² See chap. xii.

³ Thucyd. i. 10. τῷ παλαιῷ τρόπῳ ληστικωτερον παρεσκευασμένα.

⁴ Thucyd. i. 13.

and Phœnike, are known by name and by vague hearsay, but the Nile is only mentioned as “the river Egypt:” while the Euxine sea is not mentioned at all.¹ In the Hesiodic poems, on the other hand, the Nile, the Ister, the Phasis and the Eridanus, are all specified by name;² Mount Ætna, and the island of Ortygia near to Syracuse, the Tyrrhenians and Ligurians in the west, and the Scythians in the north, were also noticed.³ Indeed within forty years after the first Olympiad, the cities of Korkyra and Syracuse were founded from Corinth—the first of a numerous and powerful series of colonies, destined to impart a new character both to the south of Italy and to Sicily.

In reference to the astronomy and physics of the Homeric Greek, it has already been remarked that he connected together the sensible phenomena which form the subject matter of these sciences by threads of religious and personifying fancy, to which the real analogies among them were made subordinate; and that these analogies did not begin to be studied by themselves, apart from the religious element by which they had been at first overlaid, until the age of Thales, coinciding as that period did with the increased opportunities for visiting Egypt and the interior of Asia. The Greeks obtained access in both of these countries to an enlarged stock of astronomical observations, to the use of the gnomon or sun-dial,⁴ and to a more exact determination

¹ See Voelcker, *Homerische Geographie*, ch. iii. sect. 55—63. He has brought to bear much learning and ingenuity to identify the places visited by Odysseus with real lands, but the attempt is not successful. Compare also Ukert, *Hom. Geog.* vol. i. p. 14, and the valuable treatises of J. H. Voss, *Alte Weltkunde*, annexed to the second volume of his *Kritische Blätter* (Stuttgart, 1828), pp. 245—413. Voss is the father of just views respecting Homeric geography.

² Hesiod. *Theog.* 338—340.

³ Hesiod. *Theogon.* 1016; Hesiod. *Fragm.* 190—194, ed. Götting; Strabo, i. p. 16; vii. p. 300. Compare Ukert, *Geographie der Grie-*

chen und Römer, i. p. 37.

⁴ The Greeks learnt from the Babylonians *πόλο, καὶ γνώμονα καὶ τὰ ὀυωκαίδεκα μέρεα τῆς ἡμέρης* (Herodot. ii. 109). The word *πόλον* means the same as *horologium*, the circular plate upon which the vertical gnomon projected its shadow, marked so as to indicate the hour of the day—twelve hours between sunrise and sunset: see Ideler, *Handbuch der Chronologie*, vol. i. p. 233. Respecting the opinions of Thales, see the same work, part ii. p. 18—57; Plutarch. *de Placit. Philosophor.* ii. c. 12; Aristot. *de Cælo*, ii. 13. Costard, *Rise and Progress of Astronomy among the Ancients* p. 99.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



at the outset, as distinguished from the inspired dicta of prophets or oracles, and from those special signs of the purposes of the gods, which formed the habitual reliance of the Homeric man.¹ We shall see these two modes of anticipating the future—one based upon the philosophical, the other upon the religious appreciation of nature—running simultaneously on throughout Grecian history, and sharing between them in unequal portions the empire of the Greek mind; the former acquiring both greater predominance and wider application among the intellectual men, and partially restricting, but never abolishing, the spontaneous employment of the latter among the vulgar.

Neither coined money, nor the art of writing,² nor painting, nor sculpture, nor imaginative architecture, belong to the Homeric and Hesiodic times. Such rudiments of arts, destined ultimately to acquire great development in Greece, as may have existed in these early days, served only as a sort of nucleus to the fancy of the poet, to shape out for himself the fabulous creations ascribed to Hephæstus or Dædalus. No statues of the gods, not even of wood, are mentioned in the Homeric poems. All the many varieties, in Grecian music, poetry and dancing—the former chiefly borrowed from Lydia and Phrygia—date from a period considerably later than the first Olympiad. Terpander, the earliest musician whose date is assigned—and the inventor of the harp with seven strings instead of that with four strings—does not come until the 26th Olympiad, or 676 B.C.: the poet Archilochus is nearly of the same date. The iambic and elegiac metres—the first deviations from the primitive epic strain and subject—do not reach up to the year 700 B.C.

It is this epic poetry which forms at once both the undoubted prerogative and the solitary jewel of the earliest æra of Greece. Of the many epic poems which existed in Greece during the eighth century before the Christian æra, none have been preserved except

¹ Odyss. iii. 173.—

Ἡτέομεν δὲ θεὸν φαίνειν τέρας·
αὐτὰρ ἔγ' ἤμιν
Δεῖξε, καὶ ἠνώγει πέλαγος μέσον
εἰς Εὐβοίαν
Τέμνειν, &c.

Compare Odyss. xx. 100; Iliad, i.

62; Eurip. Suppl. 216—230.

² The σήματα λυγρὰ mentioned in Iliad. vi. 168, if they prove anything, are rather an evidence against, than for, the existence of alphabetical writing at the times when the Iliad was composed.

the Iliad and Odyssey: the *Æthiopis* of Arktinus, the *Ilias Minor* of Leschês, the *Cyprian Verses*, the *Capture of Œchalia*, the *Returns of the Heroes from Troy*, the *Thêbais* and the *Epigoni*—several of them passing in antiquity under the name of Homer—have all been lost. But the two which remain are quite sufficient to demonstrate in the primitive Greeks, a mental organisation unparalleled in any other people, and powers of invention and expression which prepared, as well as foreboded, the future eminence of the nation in all the various departments to which thought and language can be applied. Great as the power of thought afterwards became among the Greeks, their power of expression was still greater; in the former, other nations have built upon their foundations and surpassed them—in the latter they still remain unrivalled. It is not too much to say that this flexible, emphatic and transparent character of the language as an instrument of communication—its perfect aptitude for narrative and discussion, as well as for stirring all the veins of human emotion without ever forfeiting that character of simplicity which adapts it to all men and all times—may be traced mainly to the existence and the wide-spread influence of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. To us these compositions are interesting as beautiful poems, depicting life and manners, and unfolding certain types of character, with the utmost vivacity and artlessness: to their original hearer, they possessed all these sources of attraction, together with others more powerful still, to which we are now strangers. Upon him they bore with the full weight and solemnity of history and religion combined, while the charm of the poetry was only secondary and instrumental. The poet was then the teacher and preacher of the community, not simply the amuser of their leisure hours: they looked to him for revelations of the unknown past and for expositions of the attributes and dispensations of the gods, just as they consulted the prophet for his privileged insight into the future. The ancient epic comprised many different poets and poetical compositions, which fulfilled this purpose with more or less completeness. But it is the exclusive prerogative of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, that after the minds of men had ceased to be in full harmony with their original design, they yet retained their empire by the mere force of secondary excellences; while

Its great and permanent influence on the Greek mind

the remaining epics—though serving as food for the curious, and as storehouses for logographers, tragedians, and artists—never seem to have acquired very wide popularity even among intellectual Greeks.

I shall, in the succeeding chapter, give some account of the epic cycle, of its relation to the Homeric poems, and of the general evidences respecting the latter, both as to antiquity and authorship.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



consecrated measure of the epic:¹ but they belong to a different species, and burst out from a different vein in the Grecian mind. It seems to have been the more common belief among the historical Greeks that such mystic effusions were more ancient than their narrative poems; and that Orpheus, Musæus, Linus, Olên, Pamphus, and even Hesiod, &c.&c., the reputed composers of the former, were of earlier date than Homer. But there is no evidence to sustain this opinion, and the presumptions are Those compositions, which in the sixth cent Christian æra passed under the name of Musæus, seem to have been unquestionably We cannot even admit the modified conclusion of Hermann,

ting aside the particular compos Orpheus and others) preceded in order of time the narrative.²

Besides the Iliad and Odyssey, we make out the titles of about thirty lost epic poems, sometimes with a brief hint of their contents.

Concerning the legend of Troy there were five—the Cyprian Verses, the Æthiopis and the Capture of Troy, both ascribed to Arktinus; the Lesser Iliad, ascribed to Leschês; the Returns (of the Heroes from Troy), to which the name of Hagias of Trœzên is attached; and the Telegonia, by Eugammôn, a continuation of the Odyssey. Two poems—the Thebais and the Epigoni (perhaps two parts of one and the same poem) were devoted to the legend of Thêbes—the two sieges of that city by the Argeians. Another poem, called Œdipodia, had for its subject the tragical destiny of Œdipus and his family; and perhaps that which is cited as Eurôpia, or verses on Eurôpa, may have comprehended the tale of her brother Kadmus, the mythical founder of Thêbes.³

¹ Aristot. Poetic. c. 41. He considers the Hexameter to be the *natural* measure of narrative poetry: any other would be unseemly.

² Ulrici, Geschichte des Griechischen Epos, 5te Vorlesung, pp. 96–108; G. Hermann, Ueber Homer und Sappho, in his Opuscula,

tom. vi. p. 89.

The superior antiquity of Orpheus as compared with Homer passed as a received position to the classical Romans (Horat. Art. Poet. 392).

³ Respecting these lost epics, see Düntzer, Collection of the Fragmenta Epicor. Græcorum;

The exploits of Hêraklês were celebrated in two compositions, each called Hêrakteia, by Kinæthôn and Pisanter—probably also in many others of which the memory has not been preserved. The capture of Œchalia by Hêraklês formed the subject of a separate epic. Two other poems, the Ægimius and the Minyas, are supposed to have been founded on other achievements of this hero—the effective aid which he lent to the Dorian king Ægimius against the Lapithæ, his descent to the under-world for the purpose of rescuing the imprisoned Thêseus, and his conquest of the city of the Minyæ, the powerful Orchomenus.¹

Other epic poems—the Phorônîs, the Danaîs, the Alkmæônîs, the Atthis, the Amazonia²—we know only by name. We can just guess obscurely at their contents so far as the name indicates. The Titanomachia, the Gigantomachia, and the Corinthiaca, three compositions all ascribed to Eumêlus, afford by means of their titles an idea somewhat clearer of the matter which they comprised. The Theogony ascribed to Hesiod still exists, though partially corrupt and mutilated: but there seem to have been other poems, now lost, of the like import and title.

Of the poems composed in the Hesiodic style, diffusive and full of genealogical detail, the principal were, the Catalogue of Women and the Great Eoiai; the latter of which indeed seems to have been a continuation of the former. A large number of the celebrated women of heroic Greece were commemorated in these poems, one after the other, without any other than an arbitrary bond of connexion. The Marriage of Kêyx—the Melampodia—and a string of fables called Astronomia, are farther ascribed to Hesiod: and the poem above mentioned, called Ægimius, is also sometimes connected with his name, sometimes with that of Kerkops. The Naupaktian Verses (so called probably from the birth-place of their author), and the genealogies of Kinæthôn and Asius, were compositions of the same

Wüllner, *De Cyclo Epico*, p. 43—66; and Mr. Fynes Clinton's *Chronology*, vol. iii. p. 349—359.

¹ Welcker, *Der Epische Cyklus*, p. 256—266; *Apollodor.* ii. 7, 7; *Diodor.* iv. 37; O. Müller, *Dorians*, i. 28.

² Welcker (*Der Epische Cyklus*, p. 209) considers the Alkmæônîs

as the same with the Epigoni, and the Atthis of Hegesinous the same with the Amazonia: in *Suidas* (v. Ὀμηρος) the latter is among the poems ascribed to Homer.

Leutsch (*Thebaidos Cyclicæ Reliquiæ*, p. 12—14) views the Thebais and the Epigoni as different parts of the same poem.

rambling character, as far as we can judge from the scanty fragments remaining.¹ The Orchomenian epic poet Chersias, of whom two lines only are preserved to us by Pausanias, may reasonably be referred to the same category.²

The oldest of the epic poets, to whom any date, carrying with it the semblance of authority, is assigned, is Arktinus of Milêtus, who is placed by Eusebius in the first Olympiad, and by Suidas in the ninth. Eugammôn, the author of the Telegonia, and the latest of the catalogue, is placed in the fifty-third Olympiad, B.C. 566. Between these two we find Asius and Leschês, about the thirtieth Olympiad,—a time when the vein of the ancient epic was drying up, and when other forms of poetry—elegiac, iambic, lyric and choric—had either already arisen, or were on the point of arising, to compete with it.³

It has already been stated in a former chapter, that in the early commencements of prose-writing, Heraklatus, Pherekydês, and other logographers, made it their business to extract from the ancient fables something like a continuous narrative chronologically arranged. It was upon a principle somewhat analogous that the Alexandrine literati, about the second century before the Christian æra,⁴ arranged the multitude of old epic poets into a series founded on the supposed order of

¹ See the Fragments of Hesiod, Eumêlus, Kinêthôn, and Asius, in the collections of Marktscheffel, Düntzer, Götting and Gaisford.

I have already, in going over the ground of Grecian legend, referred to all these lost poems in their proper places.

² Pausan. ix. 38, 6; Plutarch. Sept. Sap. Conv. p. 156.

³ See Mr. Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici*, about the date of Arktinus, vol. i. p. 350.

⁴ Perhaps Zenodotus, the superintendent of the Alexandrine library under Ptolemy Philadelphus, in the third century B.C.: there is a Scholion on Plautus, published not many years ago by Osann, and since more fully by Ritschl,—“Cæcius in commento Co-

mædiarum Aristophanis in Pluto—Alexander Ætolus, et Lycophron Chalcidensis, et Zenodotus Ephesius, impulsu regis Ptolemæi, Philadelphicognovento, artis poetices libros in unum collegerunt et in ordinem redegerunt; Alexander tragœdias, Lycophron comœdias, Zenodotus vero Homeri poemata et reliquorum illustrium poetarum.” See Lange, *Ueber die Kyklischen Dichter*, p. 56 (Mainz 1837); Welcker, *Der Epische Cyklus*, p. 8; Ritschl, *Die Alexandrinischen Bibliotheken*, p. 3 (Breslau, 1838).

Lange disputes the sufficiency of this passage as proof that Zenodotus was the framer of the Epic Cycle: his grounds are however unsatisfactory to me.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Eoiai, and others, which could not be made to fit in to any chronological sequence of events.¹ Both the Iliad and the Odyssey were comprised in the Cycle, so that the denomination of cyclic poet did not originally or designedly carry with it any association of contempt. But as the great and capital poems were chiefly spoken of by themselves, or by the title of their own separate authors, so the general name of *poets of the Cycle* came gradually to be applied only to the worst, and thus to imply vulgarity or common-place; the more so as many of the inferior compositions included in the Cycle to have been anonymous, and their authors in consequence describable only under some such common designation as that of the cyclic poets. It is in this manner that we are to explain the disparaging sentiment connected by Horace and others with the idea of a cyclic writer, though no such sentiment was implied in the original meaning of the Epic Cycle.

¹ Our information respecting the Epic Cycle is derived from Butychius Proclus, a literary man of Sicca during the second century of the Christian æra, and tutor of Marcus Antoninus (Jul. Capitolin. Vit. Marc. c. 2)—not from Proclus, called Diadochus, the new-Platonic philosopher of the fifth century, as Heyne, Mr. Clinton, and others have imagined. The fragments from his work called Chrestomathia give arguments of several of the lost cyclic poems connected with the siege of Troy, communicating the important fact that the Iliad and Odyssey were included in the cycle, and giving the following description of the principle upon which it was arranged.—*Διαλαμβάνει δὲ περὶ τοῦ λεγομένου ἐπικοῦ κύκλου, ὃς ἄρχεται μὲν ἐκ τῆς Οὐράνου καὶ Γῆς ὁμολογουμένης μίξεως . . . καὶ περατοῦται ὁ ἐπικὸς κύκλος, ἐκ διαφόρων ποιητῶν συμπληρούμενος, μέχρι τῆς ἀποβάσεως Ὀδυσσεύως . . . Λέγει δὲ ὡς τοῦ ἐπικοῦ κύκλου τὰ ποιήματα διασωζε-*

ται καὶ σπουδάζεται τοῖς πολλοῖς, οὐχ οὕτω διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν, ὡς διὰ τὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ πραγμάτων (ap. Photium, cod. 239).

This much-commented passage, while it clearly marks out the cardinal principle of the Epic Cycle (*ἀκολουθία πραγμάτων*), neither affirms nor denies anything respecting the excellence of the constituent poems. Proclus speaks of the taste common in his own time (*σπουδάζεται τοῖς πολλοῖς*): there was not much relish in his time for these poems as such, but people were much interested in the sequence of epical events.

The abstracts, which he himself drew up in the form of arguments of several poems, show that he adapted himself to this taste. We cannot collect from his words that he intended to express any opinion of his own respecting the goodness or badness of the cyclic poems.

The poems of the Cycle were thus mentioned in contrast and antithesis with Homer,¹ though originally the Iliad and Odyssey had both been included among them: and this alteration of the meaning of the word has given birth to a mistake as to the primary purpose of the classification, as if it had been designed especially to part off the inferior epic productions from Homer. But while some critics are disposed to distinguish the cyclic poets too pointedly from Homer, I conceive that Welcker goes too much into the other extreme, and identifies the cycle too closely with that poet. He construes it as a classification deliberately framed to comprise all the various productions of the Homeric epic, with its unity of action and comparative paucity both of persons and adventures—as opposed to the Hesiodic epic, crowded

Relation of
the epic
cycle to
Homer.

¹ The gradual growth of a contemptuous feeling towards the *scriptor cyclicus* (Horat. Ars Poetic. 136), which was not originally implied in the name, is well set forth by Lange (Ueber die Kyklisch. Dicht. p. 53—56).

Both Lange (p. 36—41) however and Ulrici (Geschichte des Griech. Epos, 9te Vorles. p. 418) adopt another opinion with respect to the cycle, which I think unsupported and inadmissible,—that the several constituent poems were not received into it entire (*i. e.* with only such changes as were requisite for a corrected text), but cut down and abridged in such manner as to produce an *exact* continuity of narrative. Lange even imagines that the cyclic Odyssey was thus dealt with. But there seems no evidence to countenance this theory, which would convert the Alexandrine literati from critics into logographers. That the cyclic Iliad and Odyssey were the same in the main (allowing for corrections of text) as the common Iliad and Odyssey, is shown by the fact, that Proclus merely names them in the series without giving any abstract

of their contents: they were too well known to render such a process necessary. Nor does either the language of Proclus or that of Cæcius as applied to Zenodotus, indicate any transformation applied to the poets whose works are described to have been brought together and put into a certain order.

The hypothesis of Lange is founded upon the idea that the (*ἀκολουθία πραγμάτων*) continuity of narrated events must necessarily have been exact and without break, as if the whole constituted one work. But this would not be possible, let the framers do what they might: moreover, in the attempt, the individuality of all the constituent poets must have been sacrificed, in such manner that it would be absurd to discuss their separate merits.

The continuity of narrative in the Epic Cycle could not have been more than approximative,—as complete as the poems composing it would admit: nevertheless it would be correct to say that the poems were arranged in series upon this principle and upon no other. The librarians

with separate persons and pedigrees, and destitute of central action as well as of closing catastrophe. This opinion does indeed coincide to a great degree with the fact, inasmuch as few of the Hesiodic epics appear to have been included in the Cycle. To say that *none* were included, would be too much, for we cannot venture to set aside either the Theogony or the *Ægimius*; but we may account for their absence perfectly well without supposing any design to exclude them, for it is obvious that their rambling character (like that of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid) forbade the possibility of interweaving them in any continuous series. Continuity in the series of narrated events, coupled with a certain degree of antiquity in the poems, being the principle on which the arrangement called the Epic Cycle was based, the Hesiodic poems generally were excluded, not from any pre-conceived intention, but because they could not be brought into harmony with such orderly reading.

What were the particular poems which it comprised, we cannot now determine with exactness. Welcker What poems were included in the cycle. arranges them as follows:—Titanomachia, Danaïs, Amazonia (or Atthis), *Ædipodia*, Thebaïs (or expedition of Amphiaraüs), Epigoni (or Alkmæônis), Minyas (or Phokaïs), Capture of *Æchalia*, Cyprian Verses, Iliad, *Æthiopis*, Lesser Iliad, Iliupersis or the Taking of Troy, Returns of the Heroes, Odyssey, and Telegonia. Wuellner, Lange, and Mr. Fynes Clinton enlarge the list of cyclic poems still farther.¹ But all such reconstructions of the Cycle are conjectural and destitute of authority. The only poems which we can affirm on positive grounds to have been comprehended in it, are, first, the series respecting the heroes of Troy, from the Cypria to the Telegonia, of which Proclus has preserved the arguments, and which includes the Iliad and Odyssey—next, the old Thebaïs, which is expressly termed cyclic² in order to distinguish it from the poem of the same name composed by Antimachus. In regard to other particular compositions, we have no evidence

might have arranged in like manner the vast mass of tragedies in their possession (if they had chosen to do so) upon the principle of sequence in the subjects: had they done so, the series would have formed a *Tragic Cycle*.

¹ Welcker, *Der Epische Cyklus*,

p. 37—41; Wuellner, *De Cyclo Epico*, p. 43 *seq.*; Lange, *Ueber die Kyklischen Dichter*, p. 47; Clinton, *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. i. p. 349.

² Schol. Pindar. *Olymp.* vi. 26; *Athenæ.* xi. p. 405.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Homeric poems have given rise, it can hardly be said that any of the points originally doubtful have obtained a solution such as to command universal acquiescence. To glance at all these controversies, however briefly, would far transcend the limits of the present work. But the most abridged Grecian history would be incomplete without some inquiry respecting *the Poet* (so the Greek critics in their veneration denominated Homer), and the productions which pass now, or have heretofore passed, under his name.

Who or what was Homer? What date is to be assigned to him? What were his compositions?

A person, putting these questions to Greeks of different towns and ages, would have obtained answers wide crepant and contradictory. Since the invaluable of Aristarchus and the other Alexandrine critics on the text of the Iliad and Odyssey, it has indeed been customary to regard those two (putting aside the Hymns and a few other minor poems) as being the only genuine Homeric compositions: and the literary men called Chorizontes, or the Separators, at the head of whom were Xenôn and Hellenikus, endeavoured still farther to reduce the number by disconnecting the Iliad and Odyssey, and pointing out that both could not be the work of the same author. Throughout the whole course of Grecian antiquity, the Iliad and the Odyssey, and the Hymns have been received as Homeric. But if we go back to the time of Herodotus or still earlier, we find that several other epics also were ascribed to Homer—and there were not wanting¹ critics, earlier than the Alexandrine age, who regarded the whole Epic Cycle, together with the satirical poem called Margitês, the Batrachomyomachia, and other smaller pieces, as Homeric works. The cyclic Thebais and the Epigoni (whether they be two separate poems, or the latter a second part of the former) were in early days currently ascribed to Homer: the same was the

had examined into the ages of Hesiod and Homer with the most laborious scrutiny, but that he knew too well the calumnious dispositions of contemporary critics and poets, to declare what conclusion he had come to (Paus. ix. 30, 2): Περὶ δὲ Ἡσιόδου τε ἡλικίας

καὶ Ὀμήρου, πολυπραγμονήσαντι ἐς τὸ ἀκριβέστατον οὐ μοι γράφειν ἠδὲ ἦν, ἐπισταμένῳ τὸ φιλαίτιον ἄλλων τε καὶ οὐχ ἡχίστα ὄσοι κατ' ἐμὲ ἐπιποιήσει τῶν ἔπων καθειστήκεσαν.

¹ See the extract of Proclus, in Photius Cod. 239.

case with the Cyprian Verses: some even attributed to him several other poems,¹ the Capture of Æchalia, the Lesser Iliad, the Phokæ's, and the Amazonia. The title of the poem called Thebaïs to be styled Homeric depends upon evidence more ancient than any which can be produced to authenticate the Iliad and the Odyssey: for Kallinus, the ancient elegiac poet (B.C. 640). mentioned Homer as the author of it—and his opinion was shared by many other competent judges.² From the remarkable description given by Herodotus of the expulsion of the rhapsodes from Sikyôn, by the despot Kleisthenês, in the time of Solôn (about B.C. 580), we may form a probable judgement that the Thebaïs and the Epigoni were then rhapsodised at Sikyôn as Homeric productions.³ And it is clear from the

¹ Suidas, v. Ὀμηρος; Eustath. ad Iliad. ii. p. 330.

² Pausan. ix. 9, 3. The name of Kallinus in that passage seems certainly correct; Τα δὲ ἔπη ταῦτα (the Thebaïs) Καλλίνος ἀρχικ μενος αὐτῶν ἐς μνήμην, εφησεν Ὀμηρον τὸν ποιήσαντα εἶναι. Καλλίνω δὲ πολλοὶ τε καὶ ἄξιοι λόγου κατὰ ταῦτα ἔγνωσαν. Ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν ποίησιν ταύτην μετὰ γε Ἰλιάδα καὶ Ὀδύσσειαν ἐπαινῶ μάλιστα.

To the same purpose the author of the Certamen of Hesiod and Homer, and the pseudo-Herodotus (Vit. Homer. c. 9). The Ἀμφισβέω ἐξελασίη, alluded to in Suidas as the production of Homer, may be reasonably identified with the Thebaïs (Suidas, v. Ὀμηρος).

The cyclographer Dionysius, who affirmed that Homer had lived both in the Theban and the Trojan wars, must have recognised that poet as author of the Thebaïs as well as of the Iliad (ap. Procl. ad Hesiod. p. 3).

³ Herodot. v. 67. Κλεισθένης γὰρ Ἀργείοισι πολεμήσας—τοῦτο μὲν, ραψωδοῦς ἔπαυσε ἐν Εἰκυῶνι ἀγωνίζεσθαι, τῶν Ὀμηρείων ἐπέων, εἶνεκα, ὅτι Ἀργεῖοί τε καὶ Ἄργος τὰ πολλὰ πάντα ὑμνεῖται—τοῦτο δὲ, ἡρώων γὰρ ἦν καὶ ἐστὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἀγορᾷ τῶν

Σικυωνίων Ἀδρήστου τοῦ Ταλαοῦ τοῦτον ἐπεθύμησε ὁ Κλεισθένης, εὐόντα Ἀργεῖον, ἐκβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς χώρας. Herodotus then goes on to relate how Kleisthenês carried into effect his purpose of banishing the hero Adrastus: first, he applied to the Delphian Apollo for permission to do so directly and avowedly; next, on that permission being refused, he made application to the Thebans to allow him to introduce into Sikyôn their hero Melanippus, the bitter enemy of Adrastus in the old Theban legend; by their consent, he consecrated a chapel to Melanippus in the most commanding part of the Sikyonian agora, and then transferred to the newly-imported hero the rites and festivals which had before been given to Adrastus.

Taking in conjunction all the points of this very curious tale, I venture to think that the rhapsodes incurred the displeasure of Kleisthenês by reciting, not the Homeric Iliad, but the *Homeric Thebaïs and Epigoni*. The former does not answer the conditions of the narrative; the latter fulfils them accurately.

1. It cannot be said even by the utmost latitude of speech, that in

language of Herodotus, that in his time the general opinion ascribed to Homer both the Cyprian Verses and the Epigoni, though he himself dissents.¹ In spite of such dissent, however, that historian must have conceived the names of Homer and Hesiod to be nearly co-extensive with the whole of the ancient epic, otherwise he would hardly have delivered his memorable judgement, that they two were the framers of Grecian Theogony.

That many different cities laid claim to the birth of

the Iliad "Little else is sung except Argos and the Argeians"—("in illis ubique fere nonnisi Argos et Argivi celebrantur"—is the translation of Schweighäuser): Argos is rarely mentioned in it, and never exalted into any primary importance: the Argeians, as inhabitants of Argos separately, are never noticed at all: that name is applied in the Iliad, in common with *Achæans* and *Danaans*, only to the general body of Greeks—and even applied to them much less frequently than the name of *Achæans*.

2. Adrastus is twice, and only twice, mentioned in the Iliad, as master of the wonderful horse Areion and as father-in-law of Tydeus; but he makes no figure in the poem, and attracts no interest.

Wherefore, though Kleisthenês might have been ever so much incensed against Argos and Adrastus, there seems no reason why he should have interdicted the rhapsodes from reciting the Iliad. On the other hand, the Thebais and Epigoni could not fail to provoke him especially. For,

1. Argos and its inhabitants were the grand subject of the poem, and the proclaimed assailants in the expedition against Thêbes. Though the poem itself is lost, the first line of it has been preserved (Leutsch, *Theb. Cycl. Reliq.* p. 5; compare Sophoklês, *Œd. Col.* 380 with Scholia),—

Ἄργος ἄειδε, θεὰ, πολυδίψιον, ἔνθεν ἄνακτες. &c.

2. Adrastus was king of Argos, and the chief of the expedition.

It is therefore literally true, that Argos and the Argeians were "the burden of the song" in these two poems.

To this we may add—

1. The rhapsodes would have the strongest motive to recite the Thebais and Epigoni at Sikyôn, where Adrastus was worshipped and enjoyed so vast a popularity, and where he even attracted to himself the choric solemnities which in other towns were given to Dionysus.

2. The means which Kleisthenês took to get rid of Adrastus indicates a special reference to the Thebais: he invited from Thêbes the hero Melanippus, the *Hector* of Thêbes in that very poem.

For these reasons I think we may conclude that the Ὀμήρειαι ἔπη alluded to in this very illustrative story of Herodotus are the Thebais and the Epigoni, not the Iliad.

¹ Herodot. ii. 117; iv. 32. The words in which Herodotus intimates his own dissent from the reigning opinion are treated as spurious by F. A. Wolf, but vindicated by Schweighäuser: whether they be admitted or not, the general currency of the opinion adverted to is equally evident.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Thus conflicting would have been the answers returned in different portions of the Grecian world to any questions respecting the person of Homer. But there were a poetical gens (fraternity or guild) in the Ionic island of Chios, who, if the question had been put to them, would have answered in another manner. To them Homer was not a mere antecedent man, of kindred nature with themselves, but a divine or semi-divine eponymus and progenitor, whom they worshipped in their gentile sacrifices, and in whose ascendant name and glory the individuality of every member of the gens was merged. The compositions of each separate Homêrid, or the combined efforts of many of them in conjunction, were the works of Homer: the name of the individual bard perishes and his authorship is forgotten, but the common gentile father lives and grows in renown, from generation to generation, by the genius of his self-renewing sons.

Such was the conception entertained of Homer by the poetical gens called Homêridæ or Homêrids; and in the general obscurity of the whole case, I lean towards it as the most plausible conception. Homer is not only the reputed author of the various compositions emanating from the gentile members, but also the recipient of the many different legends and of the divine genealogy, which it pleases their imagination to confer upon him. Such manufacture of fictitious personality, and such perfect incorporation of the entities of religion and fancy with the real world, is a process familiar and even habitual in the retrospective vision of the Greeks.¹

It is to be remarked that the poetical gens here brought to view, the Homêrids, are of indisputable authenticity. Their existence and their considerations were maintained down to the historical times in the island of Chios.² If

¹ Even Aristotle ascribed to Homer a divine parentage: a damsel of the isle of Ios, pregnant by some god, was carried off by pirates to Smyrna at the time of the Ionic emigration, and there gave birth to the poet (Aristotel. ap. Plutarch Vit. Homer. p. 1059).

Plato seems to have considered Homer as having been an itinerant

rhapsode, poor and almost friendless (Republ. p. 600).

² Pindar, Nem. ii. 1, and Scholia; Akusilaus, Fragm. 31, Didot; Harpokration, v. 'Ομηρίδαι: Hellenic. Fr. 55, Didot; Strabo, xiv. p. 645.

It seems by a passage of Plato (Phædrus, p. 252), that the Homêridæ professed to possess unpublished

verses of their ancestral poet—ἔπη ἀποθέτα. Compare Plato, Republic. p. 599, and Isocrat. Helen. p. 218.

¹ Nitzsch (De Historiâ Homeri, Fascic. 1, p. 128, Fascic. 2, p. 71), and Ulrici (Geschichte der Episch. Poesie. vol. i. p. 240—381) question the antiquity of the Homêrid gens, and limit their functions to simple reciters, denying that they ever composed songs or poems of their own. Yet these *gentes*, such as the Euneidæ, the Lykomidæ, the Eutadæ, the Talthybiadæ, the descendants of Cheirôn at Peliôn, &c., the Hesychidæ (Schol. Sophocl. Œdip. Col. 489) (the acknowledged parallels of the Homêridæ), may be surely all considered as belonging to the earliest known elements of Grecian history: rarely at least, if ever, can such gens, with its tripartite character of civil, religious and professional, be shown to have commenced at any recent period. And in the early times, composer and singer were one person: often at least, though probably not always, the bard combined both functions. The Homeric ἀοιδὸς sings his own

compositions; and it is reasonable to imagine that many of the early Homêrids did the same.

See Niebuhr, Römisch. Gesch. vol. i. p. 324; and the treatise, Ueber die Sikeler in der Odyssee in the Rheinisches Museum, 1828, p. 257; and Boeckh, in the Index of Contents to his Lectures of 1834.

“The Sage Vyasa (observes Professor Wilson, System of Hindu Mythology, Introd. p. Ixii.) is represented, not as the author, but as the arranger and compiler of the Vedas and the Purânas. His name denotes his character, meaning *the arranger or distributor* (Welcker gives the same meaning to the name *Homer*); and the recurrence of many Vyasas,—many individuals who new modelled the Hindu scriptures,—has nothing in it that is improbable, except the fabulous intervals by which their labours are separated.” Individual authorship and the thirst of personal distinction are in this case also buried under one great and common name, as in the case of Homer.

emanate, as perhaps they may, from different individuals numbered among the Homêrids. But this disallowance of the historical personality of Homer is quite distinct from the question, with which it has been often confounded, whether the Iliad and Odyssey are originally entire poems, and whether by one author or otherwise. To us, the name of Homer means these two poems, and little else: we desire to know as much as can be learnt respecting their date, their original composition, their preservation, and their mode of communication to the public. All these questions are more or less complicated one with the other.

Concerning the date of the poems, we have no other information except the various affirmations, What may be the dates of the Iliad and Odyssey. respecting the age of Homer, which differ among themselves (as I have before observed) by an interval of 460 years, and which for the most part determine the date of Homer by reference to some other event, itself fabulous and unauthenticated—such as the Trojan war, the Return of the Hêracleids, or the Ionic migration. Kratês placed Homer earlier than the Return of the Hêracleids and less than eighty years after the Trojan war: Eratosthenês put him 100 years after the Trojan war: Aristotle, Aristarchus and Castor made his birth contemporary with the Ionic migration, while Apollodôrus brings him down to 100 years after that event, or 240 years after the taking of Troy. Thucydidês assigns to him a date much subsequent to the Trojan war.¹ On the other hand, Theopompus and Euphoriôn refer his age to the far more recent period of the Lydian king Gygês (Ol. 18-23, B.C. 708-688), and put him 500 years after the Trojan epoch.² What were the grounds of these various conjectures, we do not know, though, in the statements of

¹ Thucyd. i. 3.

² See the statements and citations respecting the age of Homer, collected in Mr. Clinton's Chronology, vol. i. p. 146. He prefers the view of Aristotle, and places the Iliad and Odyssey a century earlier than I am inclined to do,—940—927 B.C.

Kratês probably placed the poet anterior to the Return of the Hêracleids, because the Iliad makes no mention of Dorians in Pelopon-

nêsus: Eratosthenês may be supposed to have grounded his date on the passage of the Iliad which mentions the three generations descended from Æneas. We should have been glad to know the grounds of the very low date assigned by Theopompus and Euphoriôn.

The Pseudo-Herodotus, in his life of Homer, puts the birth of the poet 168 years after the Trojan war.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



In appreciating the effect of the poems, we must always take account of this great difference between early Greece and our own times—between the congregation mustered at a solemn festival, stimulated by community of sympathy, listening to a measured and musical recital from the lips of trained bards or rhapsodes, whose matter was supposed to have been inspired by the Muse—and the solitary reader with a manuscript before him; such manuscript being, down to a very late period in Greek literature, indifferently written, without division into parts and without marks of punctuation. As in the case of dramatic performances in all ages, so in that of the early Grecian epic—a very large proportion of its impressive effect was derived from the talent of the reciter and the force of the general accompaniments, and would have disappeared altogether in solitary reading. Originally the bard sung his own epical narrative commencing with a proœmium or hymn to one of the gods:¹ his profession was separate and special, like that of the carpenter, the leech, or the prophet: his manner and enunciation must have required particular training no less than his imaginative faculty. His character presents itself in the *Odyssey* as one highly esteemed; and in the *Iliad*, even Achilles does not disdain to touch the lyre with his own hands, and to sing heroic deeds.² Not only did the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the poems embodied in the Epic Cycle, produce all their impression and gain all their renown by this process of oral delivery,

¹ The Homeric hymns are proœms of this sort, some very short, consisting only of a few lines—others of considerable length. The Hymn (or rather one of the two hymns) to Apollo is cited by Thucydides as the Proœm of Apollo.

The Hymns to Aphrodite, Apollo, Hermes, Demeter and Dionysus, are genuine epical narratives. Hermann (Præf. ad Hymn. p. lxxxix.) pronounces the Hymn to Aphrodite to be the oldest and most genuine; portions of the Hymn to Apollo (Herm. p. xx.) are also very old, but both that hymn and the others are largely interpolated. His opinion respecting these interpolations, however,

is disputed by Franke (Præfat. ad Hymn. Homeric. p. ix.—xix.); and the distinction between what is genuine and what is spurious depends upon criteria not very distinctly assignable. Compare Ulrichi, *Gesch. der Ep. Poesie* p. 385—391.

² Phemius, Demodokus and the nameless bard who guarded the fidelity of Klytemnestra, bear out this position (*Odys.* i. 155; iii. 267; viii. 490; xxi. 330; Achilles in *Iliad*, ix. 190).

A degree of inviolability seems attached to the person of the bard as well as to that of the herald (*Odys.* xxii. 355—357).

but even the lyric and choric poets who succeeded them were known and felt in the same way by the general public, even after the full establishment of habits of reading among lettered men. While in the case of the epic, the recitation or singing had been extremely simple and the measure comparatively little diversified, with no other accompaniment than that of the four-stringed harp—all the variations superinduced upon the original hexameter, beginning with the pentameter and iambus, and proceeding step by step to the complicated strophês of Pindar and the tragic writers, still left the general effect of the poetry greatly dependent upon voice and accompaniments and pointedly distinguished from mere solitary reading of the words. And in the dramatic poetry, the last in order of time, the declamation and gesture of the speaking actor alternated with the song and dance of the Chorus, and Lyric and choric poetry, intended for the ear. with the instruments of musicians, the whole being set off by imposing visible decorations. Now both dramatic effect and song are familiar in modern times, so that every man knows the difference between reading the words and hearing them under the appropriate circumstances: but poetry, as such, is, and has now long been, so exclusively enjoyed by reading, that it requires an especial memento to bring us back to the time when the Iliad and Odyssey were addressed only to the ear and feelings of a promiscuous and sympathising multitude. Readers there were none, at least until the century preceding Solên and Peisistratus: from that time forward, they gradually increased both in number and influence; though doubtless small, even in the most literary period of Greece, as compared with modern European society. So far as the production of beautiful epic poetry was concerned, however, the select body of instructed readers furnished a less potent stimulus than the unlettered and listening crowd of the earlier periods. The poems of Chœrilus and Antimachus, towards the close of the Peloponnesian war, though admired by erudite men, never acquired popularity; and the Emperor Hadrian failed in his attempt to bring the latter poet into fashion at the expense of Homer.¹

¹ Spartian, Vit. Hadrian. p. 8; Dio Cass. lxi. 4; Plut. Tim. c. 36. There are some good observations on this point in Näke's comments on Chœrilus, ch. viii. p. 59:—

for the chorus and drama. The lyric and dramatic poets taught with their own lips the delivery of their compositions, and so prominently did this business of teaching present itself to the view of the public, that the name *Didaskalia*, by which the dramatic exhibition was commonly designated, derived from thence its origin.

Among the number of rhapsodes who frequented the festivals at a time when Grecian cities were multiplied and easy of access, for the recitation of the ancient epic, there must have been of course great differences of excellence; but that the more considerable individuals of the class were elaborately trained and highly accomplished in the exercise of their profession, we may assume as certain. But it happens that Sokratês with his two pupils Plato and Xenophôn speak contemptuously of their merits, and many persons have been disposed, somewhat too readily, to admit this sentence of condemnation as conclusive, without taking account of the point of view from which it was delivered.¹

"Habet hoc epica poesis, vera illa, cujus perfectissimam normam agnoscimus Homericam—habet hoc proprium, ut non in possessione virorum eruditorum, sed quasi viva sit et coram populo recitanda: ut cum populo crescat, et si populus Deorum et antiquorum heroum facinora, quod præcipuum est epicæ poeseos argumentum, audire et secum repetere dediderit, obmutescat. Id vero tum factum est in Græciâ, quum populus eâ ætate, quam pueritiam dicere possis, peractâ, partim ad res serias tristesque, politicas maxime—easque multo, quam antea, impeditiores—abstrahebatur: partim epicæ poeseos pertæsus, ex aliis poeseos generibus, quæ tum nascebantur, novum et diversum ob-

lectamenti genus primo præsigiro sibi, deinde haurire, cœpit."

Nâke remarks too that the "splendidissima et propria Homericæ poeseos ætas, ea quæ sponte quasi suâ inter populum et quasi cum populo viveret," did not reach below Peisistratus. It did not, I think, reach even so low as that period.

¹ Xenoph. Memorab. iv. 2, 10; and Sympos. iii. 6. Οἷσθ' ἄ τι οὖν ἔθνος ἡλιθιώτερον ῥαψώδων; . . . Δῆλον γάρ ὅτι τὰς ὑπονοίας οὐκ ἐπίστανται. Σὺ δὲ Στησιμβρότῳ τε καὶ Ἀναξιμάνδρῳ καὶ ἄλλοις πολλοῖς πολὺ δέδωκας ἀργύριον, ὥστε οὐδὲν σε τῶν πολλοῦ ἀξίων λέληθε.

These ὑπονοῖαι are the hidden meanings or allegories which a certain set of philosophers under-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



priate graces of action and intonation. In this their genuine task they were valuable members of the Grecian community, and seemed to have possessed all the qualities necessary for success.

These rhapsodes, the successors of the primitive *Acædi* or Bards, seem to have been distinguished from them by the discontinuance of all musical accompaniment. Originally the bard sung, enlivening the song with occasional touches of the simple four-stringed harp: his successor the rhapsode, recited, holding in his hand nothing but a branch of laurel, and depending for effect upon voice and manner,—a species of musical and rhythmical declamation,¹ which gradually

¹ Aristotel. *Poetic.* c. 47; Welcker, *Der Episch. Cyklus; Ueber den Vortrag der Homerischen Gedichte*, pp. 340—406, which collects all the facts respecting the *Acædi* and the rhapsodes. Unfortunately the ascertained points are very few.

The laurel branch in the hand of the singer or reciter (for the two expressions are often confounded) seems to have been peculiar to the recitation of Homer and Hesiod (*Hesiod*, *Theog.* 30; *Schol. ad. Aristophan. Nub.* 1367; *Pausan.* x. 7, 2). “*Poemata omne genus (says Apuleius, Florid. p. 122, Bipont.) apta virgæ, lyræ, socco, cothurno.*”

Not only Homer and Hesiod, but also Archilochus, were recited by rhapsodes (*Athenæ.* xii. 620; also *Plato, Legg.* ii. p. 658). Consult, besides, *Nitzsch, De Historiâ Homeri*, Fascic. 2, p. 114, seq, respecting the rhapsodes; and *O. Müller, History of the Literature of ancient Greece*, ch. iv. s. 3.

The ideas of singing and speech are however often confounded, in reference to any verse solemnly and emphatically delivered (*Thucyd.* ii. 53)—*ῥάσκοντες οἱ πρεσβύτεροι πάλαι ἄδουσαι*, “*Ἦσει Δωριακὸς πόλεμος καὶ λοιμὸς ἄμ’ αὐτῶ.*” And the rhapsodes are said to sing Homer (*Plato, Eryxias*, c. 13;

Heysch. v. *Βραχυωντοίς*); *Strabo* (i. p. 18) has a good passage upon song and speech.

William Grimm (Deutsche Heldensage, p. 373) supposes the ancient German heroic romances to have been recited or declaimed in a similar manner with a simple accompaniment of the harp, as the *Servian heroic lays* are even at this time delivered.

Fauriel also tells us, respecting the *French Carlovingian Epic (Romans de Chevalerie, Revue des Deux Mondes, xiii. p. 559)*: “The romances of the 12th and 13th centuries were really sung: the *jongleur* invited his audience to hear a *belle chanson d’histoire*,—‘le mot chanter ne manque jamais dans la formule initiale’,—and it is to be understood literally; the music was simple and intermittent, more like a recitative; the *jongleur* carried a *rebek*, or violin with three strings, an Arabic instrument; when he wished to rest his voice, he played an air or *retournelle* upon this; he went thus about from place to place, and the romances had no existence among the people except through the aid and recitations of these *jongleurs*.”

It appears that there had once been rhapsodic exhibitions at the festivals of *Dionysus*, but they

increased in vehement emphasis and gesticulation until it approached to that of the dramatic actor. At what time this change took place, or whether the two different modes of enunciating the ancient epic may for a certain period have gone on simultaneously, we have no means of determining. Hesiod receives from the muses a branch of laurel, as a token of his ordination into their service, which marks him for a rhapsode; while the ancient bard with his harp is still recognised in the Homeric Hymn to the Delian Apollo, as efficient and popular at the Panionic festivals in the island of Delos.¹ Perhaps the improvements made in the harps, to which three strings, in addition to the original four, were attached by Terpander (B.C. 660), and the growing complication of instrumental music generally, may have contributed to discredit the primitive accompaniment, and thus to promote the practice of recital: the story, that Terpander himself composed music not only for hexameter poems of his own, but also for those of Homer, seems to indicate that the music which preceded him was ceasing to find favour.² By whatever steps the change from the

Variations
in the mode
of reciting
the ancient
epic.

were discontinued (Klearchus ap. Athenæ. vii. p. 275)—probably superseded by the dithyramb and the tragedy;

The etymology of ῥαψωδός is a disputed point: Welcker traces it to ῥάβδος; most critics derive it from ῥάπτειν ἀοιδῆν, which O. Müller explains “to denote the coupling together of verses without any considerable divisions or pauses,—the even, unbroken, continuous flow of the epic poem,” as contrasted with the strophic or choric periods (*l. c.*).

¹ Homer, Hymn to Apoll. 170. The κιθάρη, ἀοιδῆ, ὄρχηθμός, are constantly put together in that hymn: evidently the instrumental accompaniment was essential to the hymns at the Ionic festival. Compare also the Hymn to Hermês (430), where the function ascribed to the Muses can hardly be understood to include non-musical re-

citation. The Hymn to Hermês is more recent than Terpander, inasmuch as it mentions the seven strings of the lyre, v. 50.

² Terpander—see Plutarch. de Musicâ, c. 3–4; the facts respecting him are collected in Plehn's *Lesbiaca*, pp. 140–160; but very little can be authenticated.

Stesander at the Pythian festivals sang the Homeric battles, with a harp accompaniment of his own composition (Athenæ. xiv. p. 368).

The principal testimonies respecting the rhapsodising of the Homeric poems at Athens chiefly at the Panathenaic festival, are Isokratês, *Panegyric*, p. 74; Lycurgus *contra Leocrat.* p. 161; Plato, *Hipparch*, p. 228; Diogen. Laërt. *Vit. Solon.* i. 57.

Inscriptions attest that rhapsodising continued in great esteem, down to a late period of the historical age, both at Chios and Theôs,

bard to the rhapsode took place, certain it is that before the time of Solôn, the latter was the recognised and exclusive organ of the old Epic; sometimes in short fragments before private companies, by single rhapsodes—sometimes several rhapsodes in continuous succession at a public festival.

Respecting the mode in which the Homeric poems were preserved, during the two centuries (or, as some think, longer interval) between their original composition and the period shortly preceding Solôn—and respecting their original composition and subsequent changes—there are wide differences of opinion among able critics. Were they preserved with, or without, being written? Was the Iliad originally composed as one poem, and the Odyssey in like manner, or is each of them an aggregation of parts originally self-existent and unconnected? Was the authorship of each poem single-headed or many-headed?

At what time the Homeric poems began to be written.

Either tacitly or explicitly, these questions have been generally coupled together and discussed with reference to each other, by inquiries into the Homeric poems; though Mr. Payne Knight's Prolegomena have the merit of keeping them distinct. Half a century ago, the acute and valuable Prolegomena of F. A. Wolf, turning to account the Venetian Scholia which had then been recently published, first opened philosophical discussion as to the history of the Homeric text. A considerable part of that dissertation (though by no means the whole) is employed in vindicating the position, previously announced by Bentley amongst others, that the separate constituent portions of the Iliad and Odyssey had not been cemented together into any compact body and unchangeable order until the days of Peisistratus, in the sixth century before Christ. As a step towards that conclusion, Wolf maintained that no written copies of either poem could be shown to have existed during the earlier times to which their composition is referred—and that without writing, neither the perfect symmetry of so complicated a work could have been originally conceived by any poet, nor, if realised by him, especially the former: it was the subject of competition by trained youth, and of prizes for the victor, at periodical religious solemnities: see Corp. Inscript. Boeckh, No. 2214—3088.

Prolegomena of Wolf—raised new questions respecting the Homeric text—connected unity of authorship with poems written from the beginning.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



have no remaining inscription earlier than the 40th Olympiad, and the early inscriptions are rude and unskilfully executed: nor can we even assure ourselves whether Archilochus, Simonidês of Amorgus, Kallinus, Tyrtæus, Xanthus, and the other early elegiac and lyric poets, committed their compositions to writing, or at what time the practice of doing so became familiar. The first positive ground, which authorises us to presume the existence of a manuscript of Homer, is in the famous ordinance of Solên with regard to the rhapsodes at the Panathenæa; but for what length of time, previously, manuscripts had existed, we are unable to say.

Those who maintain the Homeric poems to have been written from the beginning, rest their case, not upon positive proofs—nor yet upon the existing habits of society with regard to poetry, for they admit generally that the Iliad and Odyssey were not read, but recited and heard—but upon the supposed necessity that there must have been manuscripts,¹ to ensure the preservation of the poems,—the unassisted memory of reciters being neither sufficient nor trustworthy. But here we only escape a smaller difficulty by running into a greater; for the existence of trained bards, gifted with extraordinary memory, is far less astonishing than that of long manuscripts in an age essentially non-reading and non-writing, and when even suitable instruments and materials for the process are not obvious. Moreover there is a strong positive reason for believing that the bard was under no necessity of refreshing his memory by consulting a manuscript. For if such had been the fact, blindness would have been a disqualification for the profession, which we know that it was not: as well from the example of Demodokus in the Odyssey, as from that of the blind bard of Chios, in the Hymn to the Delian Apollo, whom Thucydidês, as well as the general tenor of Grecian legend, identifies with

Bards or rhapsodes of adequate memory, less inconsistent with the conditions of the age than long MSS.

I do not quite subscribe to Mr. Knight's language, when he says that *there is nothing wonderful* in the long preservation of the Homeric poems *unwritten*. It is enough to maintain that the existence and practical use of long manuscripts by all the rhapsodes, under the

condition and circumstances of the 8th and 9th centuries among the Greeks, would be a greater wonder.

¹ See this argument strongly put by Nitzsch, in the prefatory remarks at the beginning of his second volume of Commentaries on

Nor will it be found, after all, that the effort of memory required either from bards or rhapsodes, even for the longest of these old epic poems,—though doubtless great,—was at all superhuman. Taking the case with reference to the entire Iliad and Odyssey, we know that there were educated gentlemen at Athens who could repeat both poems by heart:² but in the professional recitations, we are

the Odyssey (p. x.-xxix.). He takes great pains to discard all idea that the poems were written in order to be read. To the same purpose Franz (Epigraphicê Græc. Introd. p. 32), who adopts Nitzsch's positions,—“Audituris enim, non lectoris, carmina parabant.”

¹ Odyss. vii. 65; Hymn. ad Apoll. 172; Pseudo-Herodot. Vit. Homer. c. 3; Thucyd. iii. 104.

Various commentators on Homer imagined that under the misfortune of Demodokus the poet in reality described his own (Schol. ad Odyss. 1, 1; Maxim. Tyr. xxxviii. 1).

² Xenoph. Sympos. iii. 5. Compare, respecting the laborious discipline of the Gallic Druids, and the number of unwritten verses which they retained in their memories, Cæsar. B. G. vi. 14; Mela, iii. 2: also Wolf, Prolegg. s. xxiv. and Herod. ii. 77, about the prodigious memory of the Egyptian priests at Heliopolis.

I transcribe, from the interesting Discours of M. Fauriel (prefixed to his Chants Populaires de la Grèce Moderne, Paris, 1824), a few particulars respecting the number, the mnemonic power, and the popularity of those itinerant singers or rhapsodes who frequent the festivals or *paneghyris* of modern

Greece: it is curious to learn that this profession is habitually exercised by *blind* men (p. xc. seq.).

“Les aveugles exercent en Grèce une profession qui les rend non seulement agréables, mais nécessaires; le caractère, l'imagination, et la condition du peuple, étant ce qu'ils sont: c'est la profession de chanteurs ambulans . . . Ils sont dans l'usage, tant sur le continent que dans les îles, de la Grèce, d'apprendre par cœur le plus grand nombre qu'ils peuvent de chansons populaires de tout genre et de toute époque. Quelques-uns finissent par en savoir une quantité prodigieuse, et tous en savent beaucoup. Avec ce trésor dans leur mémoire, ils sont toujours en marche, traversent la Grèce en tout sens: ils s'en vont de ville en ville, de village en village, chantant à l'auditoire qui se forme aussitôt autour d'eux, partout où ils se montrent, celles de leurs chansons qu'ils jugent convenir le mieux, soit à la localité, soit à la circonstance, et reçoivent une petite rétribution qui fait tout leur revenu. Ils ont l'air de chercher de préférence, en tout lieu, la partie la plus inculte de la population, qui en est toujours la plus curieuse, la plus avide

not to imagine that the same person did go through the whole: the recitation was essentially a joint undertaking, and the rhapsodes who visited a festival would naturally understand among themselves which part of the poem should devolve upon each particular individual. Under such circumstances, and with such means of preparation beforehand, the quantity of verse which a rhapsode could deliver would be measured, not so much by the exhaustion of his memory, as by the physical sufficiency of his voice,

d'impressions, et la moins difficile dans le choix de celles qui leur sont offertes. Les Turcs seuls ne les écoutent pas. C'est aux réunions nombreuses, aux fêtes de village connues sous le nom de *Panegyris*, que ces chanteurs ambulans accourent le plus volontiers. Ils chantent en s'accompagnant d'un instrument à cordes que l'on touche avec un archet, et qui est exactement l'ancienne lyre des Grecs, dont il a conservé le nom comme la forme.

“Cette lyre, pour être entière, doit avoir cinq cordes: mais souvent elle n'en a que deux ou trois, dont les sons, comme il est aisé de présumer, n'ont rien de bien harmonieux. Les chanteurs aveugles vont ordinairement isolés, et chacun d'eux chante à part des autres: mais quelquefois aussi ils se réunissent par groupes de deux ou de trois, pour dire ensemble les mêmes chansons . . . Ces modernes rhapsodes doivent être divisés en deux classes. Les uns (et ce sont, selon toute apparence, les plus nombreux) se bornent à la fonction de recueillir, d'apprendre par cœur, et de mettre en circulation, des pièces qu'ils n'ont point composées. Les autres (et ce sont ceux qui forment l'ordre le plus distingué de leurs corps), à cette fonction de répétiteurs et de colporteurs de poésies d'autrui, joignent celle de poètes, et ajoutent

à la masse des chansons apprises d'autres chants de leur façon . . . Ces rhapsodes aveugles sont les nouvellistes et les historiens, en même temps que les poètes du peuple, en cela parfaitement semblables aux rhapsodes anciens de la Grèce.”

To pass to another country—Persia, once the great rival of Greece:—“The Kurroglan rhapsodes are called *Kurroglou-Khans*, from *khaunden*, to sing. Their duty is to know by heart all the *mejilisses* (meetings) of Kurroglou, narrate them, or sing them with the accompaniment of the favourite instrument of Kurroglou, the chungur or sitar, a three-stringed guitar. Ferdausi has also his *Shah-nama-Khans*, and the prophet Mahommed his *Koran-Khans*. The memory of those singers is truly astonishing. At every request they recite in one breath for some hours, without stammering, beginning the tale at the passage or verse pointed out by the hearers.” (Specimens of the Popular Poetry of Persia, as found in the Adventures and Improvisations of Kurroglou, the Bandit Minstrel of Northern Persia, by Alexander Chodsko: London 1842. Introd. p. 13.)

“One of the songs of the Calmuck national bards sometimes lasts a whole day.” (Ibid. p. 372.)



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



poems were composed, the Digamma was an effective consonant, and figured as such in the structure of the verse: at the time when they were committed to writing, it had ceased to be pronounced, and therefore never found a place in any of the manuscripts—inso-much that the Alexandrine critics, though they knew of its existence in the much later poems of Alkæus and Sapphô, never recognised it in Homer. The hiatus, and the various perplexities of metre, occasioned by the loss of the Digamma, were corrected by different grammatical stratagems. But the whole history of this lost letter is very curious, and is rendered intelligible only by the supposition that the Iliad and Odyssey belonged for a wide space of time to the memory, the voice and the ear, exclusively.

At what period these poems, or indeed any other Greek poems, first began to be written, must be matter of conjecture, though there is ground for assurance that it was before the time of Solôn. If in the absence of evidence we may venture upon naming any more determinate period, the question at once suggests itself, what were the purposes which in that stage of society, a manuscript at its first commencement must have been intended to answer? For whom was a written Iliad necessary? Not for the rhapsodes; for with them it was not only planted in the memory, but also interwoven with the feelings, and conceived in conjunction with all those flexions and intonations of voice, pauses and other oral artifices, which were required for emphatic delivery, and which the naked manuscript could never reproduce. Not for the general public—*they* were accustomed to receive it with its rhapsodic delivery, and with its accompaniments of a solemn and crowded festival. The only persons for whom the written Iliad would be suitable, would be a select few; studious and curious men—a class of readers, capable of analysing the complicated emotions which they had experienced as hearers in the crowd, and who would on perusing the written words realise in their

same chapter, that all the manuscripts of Homer, mentioned in the Scholia, were written in the Ionic alphabet (with H and Q as marks for the long vowels, and no

special mark for the rough breathing), in so far as the special citations out of them enable us to verify.

imaginations a sensible portion of the impression communicated by the reciter.¹

Incredible as the statement may seem in an age like the present, there is in all early societies, and there was in early Greece, a time when no such reading class existed. If we could discover at what time such a class first began to be formed, we should be able to make a guess at the time when the old Epic poems were first committed to writing. Now the period which may with the greatest probability be fixed upon as having first witnessed the formation even of the narrowest reading class in Greece, is the middle of the seventh century before the Christian æra (B.C. 660 to B.C. 630),—the age of Terpander, Kallinus, Archilochus, Simonidês of Amorgus, &c. I ground this supposition on the change then operated in the character and tendencies of Grecian poetry and music,—the elegiac and iambic measures having been introduced as rivals to the primitive hexameter, and poetical compositions having been transferred from the epical past to the affairs of present and real life. Such a change was

Reasons for presuming that they were first written about the middle of the seventh century B.C.

¹ Nitzsch and Welcker argue, that because the Homeric poems were *heard* with great delight and interest, therefore the first rudiments of the art of writing, even while beset by a thousand mechanical difficulties, would be employed to record them. I cannot adopt this opinion, which appears to me to derive all its plausibility from our present familiarity with reading and writing. The first step from the recited to the written poem is really one of great violence, as well as useless for any want then actually felt. I much more agree with Wolf when he says: "Diu enim illorum hominum vita et simplicitas nihil admodum habuit, quod scripturâ dignum videretur: in aliis omnibus occupati agunt illi, quæ posterî scribunt, vel (ut de quibusdam populis accepimus) etiam monstratam operam hanc spernunt tanquam

indecori otii: carmina autem quæ pangunt, longo usu sic ore fundere et excipere consueverunt ut cantu et recitatione cum maxime vigentia deducere ad mutas notas, ex illius ætatis sensu nihil aliud esset, quam perimere ea et vitali vi ac spiritu privare." (Prolegom. s. xv. p. 59.)

Some good remarks on this subject are to be found in William Humboldt's Introduction to his elaborate treatise *Ueber die Kawi-Sprache*, in reference to the oral tales current among the Basques. He too observes how great and repulsive a proceeding it is, to pass at first from verse sung or recited, to verse written; implying that the words are conceived detached from the *Vortrag*, the accompanying music and the surrounding and sympathising assembly. The Basque tales have no charm for the people themsel-

important at a time when poetry was the only known mode of publication (to use a modern phrase not altogether suitable, yet the nearest approaching to the sense). It argued a new way of looking at the old epical treasures of the people, as well as a thirst for new poetical effect; and the men who stood forward in it may well be considered as desirous to study, and competent to criticise, from their own individual point of view, the written words of the Homeric rhapsodes, just as we are told that Kallinus both noticed and eulogised the Thebais as the production of Homer. There seems therefore ground for conjecturing, that (for the use of this newly-formed and important, but very narrow class) manuscripts of the Homeric poems and other old epics—the Thebais and the Cypria as well as the Iliad and the Odyssey—began to be compiled towards the middle of the seventh century B.C.:¹ and the opening of Egypt to Grecian commerce, which took place about the same period, would furnish increased facilities for obtaining the requisite papyrus to write upon. A reading class, when once formed, would doubtless slowly increase, and the number of manuscripts along with it; so that before the time of Solôn, fifty years afterwards, both readers and manuscripts, though still comparatively few, might have attained a certain recognised authority, and formed a tribunal of reference, against the carelessness of individual rhapsodes. .

We may, I think, consider the Iliad and Odyssey to have been preserved without the aid of writing for a period

ves when put in Spanish words and read (Introduction, sect. xx. p. 258—259).

Unwritten prose tales, preserved in the memory and said to be repeated nearly in the same words from age to age, are mentioned by Mariner in the Tonga Islands (Mariner's Account, vol. ii. p. 377).

The Druidical poems were kept unwritten by design, after writing was in established use for other purposes (Cæsar, B. G. vi. 13).

¹ Mr. Fynes Clinton (Fasti Hellenici, vol. i. p. 368—373) treats it as a matter of certainty that Archilochus and Alkman wrote their

poems. I am not aware of any evidence for announcing this as positively known—except indeed an admission of Wolf, which is doubtless good as an *argumentum ad hominem*, but is not to be received as proof (Wolf, Proleg. p. 50). The evidences mentioned by Mr. Clinton (p. 368) certainly cannot be regarded as proving anything to the point.

Giese (Ueber den Æolischen Dialekt, p. 172) places the first writing of the separate rhapsodies composing the Iliad in the seventh century B.C.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



sufficient testimony, but also opposed to other testimony as well as to a strong force of internal probability. The authorities quoted by Wolf are Josephus, Cicero, and Pausanias:¹ Josephus mentions nothing about Peisistratus, but merely states (what we may accept as the probable fact) that the Homeric poems were originally unwritten, and preserved only in songs or recitations, from which they were at a subsequent period put into writing: hence many of the discrepancies in the text. On the other hand, Cicero and Pausanias go farther, and affirm that Peisistratus both collected, and arranged in the existing order, the rhapsodies of the Iliad and Odyssey (implied as poems originally entire and subsequently broken into pieces), which he found partly confused and partly isolated from each other—each part being then remembered only in its own portion of the Grecian world. Respecting Hipparchus the son of Peisistratus, too, we are told in the Pseudo-Platonic dialogue which bears his name, that he was the first to introduce into Attica the poetry of Homer, and that he prescribed to the rhapsodes to recite the parts at the Panathenaic festival in regular sequence.²

Wolf and William Müller occasionally speak as if they admitted something like an Iliad and Odyssey as established aggregates prior to Peisistratus; but for the most part they represent him or his associates as having been the first to put together Homeric poems which were before distinct and self-existent compositions. And Lachmann, the recent expositor of the same theory, ascribes to Peisistratus still more unequivocally this original integration of parts in reference to the Iliad—distributing the first twenty-two books of the poem into sixteen separate songs, and treating it as ridiculous to imagine that the fusion

¹ Joseph. cont. Apion. i. 2; Cicero de Orator. iii. 34; Pausan. vii. 26, 6; compare the Scholion on Plautus in Ritschl, Die Alexandrin. Bibliothek, p. 4. Ælian (V. H. xiii. 14), who mentions both the introduction of the Homeric poems into Peloponnesus by Lykurgus, and the compilation by Peisistratus, can hardly be considered as adding to the value of the testimony: still less Libanius and Sui-

das. What we learn is, that some literary and critical men of the Alexandrine age (more or fewer, as the case may be; but Wolf exaggerates when he talks of an *unanimous* conviction) spoke of Peisistratus as having first put together the fractional parts of the Iliad and Odyssey into entire poems.

² Plato, Hipparch. p. 223.

of these songs into an order such as we now read, belongs to any date earlier than Peisistratus.¹

Upon this theory we may remark, first, that it stands opposed to the testimony existing respecting the regulations of Solôn; who, before the time of Peisistratus, had enforced a fixed order of recitation on the rhapsodes of the Iliad at the Panathenaic festival: not only directing that they should go through the rhapsodies *seriatim* and without omission or corruption, but also establishing a prompter or censorial authority to ensure obedience,²—which implies the existence (at the same

¹ “Doch ich komme mir bald lächerlich vor, wenn ich noch immer die Möglichkeit gelten lasse, dass unsere Ilias in dem gegenwärtigen Zusammenhange der bedeutenden Theile, und nicht bloß der wenigen bedeutendsten, jemals vor der Arbeit des Peisistratus gedacht worden sey.” (Lachmann, Fernere Betrachtungen über die Ilias, sect. xxviii. p. 32; Abhandlungen Berlin. Academ. 1841.) How far this admission—that for the few most important portions of the Iliad there did exist an established order of succession prior to Peisistratus—is intended to reach, I do not know: but the language of Lachmann goes farther than either Wolf or William Müller. (See Wolf, Prolegomen. p. cxli. cxlii., and W. Müller, Homerische Vorschule, Abschnitt vii. pp. 96, 98, 100, 102.) The latter admits that neither Peisistratus nor the Diaskeuasts could have made any considerable changes in the Iliad and Odyssey, either in the way of addition or of transposition; the poems as aggregates being too well-known, and the Homeric vein of invention too completely extinct, to admit of such novelties.

I confess I do not see how these last-mentioned admissions can be reconciled with the main doctrine

of Wolf, in so far as regards Peisistratus.

² Diogen. Laërt. i. 57,—Τὰ δὲ Ὀμήρου ἐξ ὑποβολῆς γέγραφε (Σόλων) ῥαψωδεῖσθαι, οἷον ὅπου ὁ πρῶτος ἔληξεν, ἔκειθεν ἄρχεσθαι τὸν ἀρχόμενον, ὡς φησι Διευχίδας ἐν τοῖς Μεγαρικοῖς.

Respecting Hipparchus, son of Peisistratus, the Pseudo-Plato tells us (in the dialogue so called, p. 228)—καὶ τὰ Ὀμήρου ἔπη πρῶτος ἐχόμισεν εἰς τὴν γῆν ταυτηνί, καὶ ἠνάγκασε τοὺς ῥαψωδοῦς Παναθηναίους ἐξ ὑποβολῆς εφεξῆς αὐτὰ διέναι, ὡσπερ νῦν ἔτι οἷδε ποιοῦσι.

These words have provoked multiplied criticisms from all the learned men who have touched upon the theory of the Homeric poems—to determine what was the practice which Solôn found existing, and what was the change which he introduced. Our information is too scanty to pretend to certainty, but I think the explanation of Hermann the most satisfactory (“*Quid sit ὑποβολή et ὑποβλή ἢ ὅτιν.*”—*Opuscula*, tom. v. p. 300, tom. vii. p. 162).

Ἵποβολεὺς is the technical term for the prompter at a theatrical representation (Plutarch, Præcept. gerend. Reip. p. 813); ὑποβολή and ὑποβάλλειν have corresponding meanings, of aiding the memory of a speaker and keeping him in

time that it proclaims the occasional infringement) of an orderly aggregate, as well as of manuscripts professedly complete. Next, the theory ascribes to Peisistratus a character not only materially different from what is indicated by Cicero and Pausanias—who represent him, not as having put together atoms originally distinct, but as the renovator

accordance with a certain standard, in possession of the prompter; see the words ἐξ ὑποβολῆς, Xenophon. *Cyropæd.* iii. 3, 37. Ὑποβολή therefore has no necessary connexion with a series of rhapsodes, but would apply just as much to one alone; although it happens in this case to be brought to bear upon several in succession. Ὑπόληψις, again, means “the taking up in succession of one rhapsode by another:” though the two words, therefore, have not the same meaning, yet the proceeding described in the two passages in reference both to Solôn and Hipparchus appears to be in substance the same—i. e. to ensure, by compulsory supervision, a correct and orderly recitation by the successive rhapsodes who went through the different parts of the poem.

There is good reason to conclude from this passage that the rhapsodes before Solôn were guilty both of negligence and of omission in their recital of Homer, but no reason to imagine either that they transposed the books, or that the legitimate order was not previously recognised.

The appointment of a systematic ὑποβολεὺς or prompter plainly indicates the existence of complete manuscripts.

The direction of Solôn, that Homer should be rhapsodised under the security of a prompter with his manuscript, appears just the same as that of the orator Lycurgus in reference to Æschylus, Sophoklês, and Euripidês (Pseudo-

Plutarch. *Vit.* X. *Rhetor.* *Lycurgi Vit.*)—εἰσήνεγκε δὲ καὶ νόμους—ὡς χαλκᾶς εἰκόνας ἀναθεῖναι τῶν ποιητῶν Αἰσχύλου, Σοφοκλέους, Εὐριπίδου, καὶ τὰς τραγωδίας αὐτῶν ἐν κοινῷ γραψαμένους φυλάττειν, καὶ τὸν τῆς πόλεως γραμματεῖα παραναγιγνώσκειν τοῖς ὑποκρινομένοις· οὐ γὰρ εἴη αὐτὰς (ἄλλως) ὑποκρίνεσθαι. The word ἄλλως which occurs last but one is introduced by the conjecture of Grysar, who has cited and explained the above passage of the Pseudo-Plutarch in a valuable dissertation—*De Græcorum Tragædiâ, qualis fuit circa tempora Demosthenis* (Cologne 1830). All the critics admit the text as it now stands to be unintelligible, and various corrections have been proposed, among which that of Grysar seems the best. From his Dissertation I transcribe the following passage, which illustrates the rhapsodising of Homer ἐξ ὑποβολῆς.—

“Quum histriones fabulis interpolandis ægre abstinerent, Lycurgus legem supra indicatam eo tulit consilio, ut recitationes histrionum cum publico illo exemplo omnino congruas redderet. Quod ut assequeretur, constituit, ut dum fabulæ in scenâ recitarentur, scriba publicus simul exemplum civitatis inspiceret, juxta sive in theatro sive in postscenio sedens. Hæc enim verbi παραναγιγνώσκειν est significatio, posita præcipue in præpositione παρά, ut idem sit, quod contra sive juxta legere; id quod faciunt ii, qui lecta ab altero vel recitata cum suis conferre cupiunt.” (Grysar, p. 7.)



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



he might hope both to procure respect for Athens and to constitute a fashion for the rest of Greece. But this step of "collecting the torn body of sacred Homer" is something generically different from the composition of a new Iliad out of pre-existing songs: the former is as easy, suitable, and promising, as the latter is violent and gratuitous.¹

To sustain the inference, that Peisistratus was the first architect of the Iliad and Odyssey, it ought at least to be shown that no other long continuous poems existed during the earlier centuries. But the contrary of this is known to be the fact. The *Æthiopis* of Arktinus, which contained 9100 verses, dates from a period more than two centuries earlier than Peisistratus: several other of the lost cyclic epics, some among them of considerable length, appear during the century succeeding Arktinus; and it is important to notice that three or four at least of these poems passed currently under the name of Homer.² There is no greater

¹ That the Iliad or Odyssey were ever recited with all the parts entire, at any time anterior to Solôn, is a point which Ritschl denies (*Die Alexandrin. Bibliothek.* p. 67—70). He thinks that before Solôn, they were always recited in parts, and without any fixed order among the parts. Nor did Solôn determine (as he thinks) the order of the parts: he only checked a licence of the rhapsodes as to the recitation of the separate books; it was Peisistratus, who, with the help of Onomakritus and others, first settled the order of the parts and bound each poem into a whole, with some corrections and interpolations. Nevertheless he admits that the parts were originally composed by the same poet, and adapted to form a whole amongst each other: but the primitive entireness (he asserts) was only maintained as a sort of traditional belief, never realised in recitation, and never reduced to an obvious, unequivocal, and permanent fact—until

the time of Peisistratus.

There is no sufficient ground, I think, for denying all entire recitation previous to Solôn, and we only interpose a new difficulty, both grave and gratuitous, by doing so.

² The *Æthiopis* of Arktinus contained 9100 verses, as we learn from the *Tabula Iliaca*: yet Proklus assigns to it only four books. The *Ilias Minor* had *four* books, the Cyprian verses *eleven*, though we do not know the number of lines in either.

Nitzsch states it as a certain matter of fact, that Arktinus recited his own poem *alone*, though it was too long to admit of his doing so without interruption. (See his *Vorrede* to the 2nd vol. of the *Odyssey*, p. xxiv.) There is no evidence for this assertion, and it appears to me highly improbable.

In reference to the Romances of the Middle Ages, belonging to the Cycle of the Round Table, M. Fauriel tells us that the German

culty in supposing long epics to have begun
and Odyssey than with the Æthiopis: the
of the name of Homer, and the subordinate
rktinus, in the history of early Grecian poetry,
e the former in preference to the latter.

r, we find particular portions of the Iliad,
sly pronounce themselves, by their Catalogue in
evidence, as belonging to a large the Iliad—
not as separate integers. We can essentially
give the catalogue in the second a part of
as a fractional composition, and a long
e to a series of approaching exploits; poem—
part by itself, such a barren enumeration of its early
have stimulated neither the fancy of the poet authority.

tion of the listeners. But the Homeric Cata-
quired a sort of canonical authority even in
olôn, insomuch that he interpolated a line into
cused of doing so, for the purpose of gaining
point against the Megarians, who on their side
other version.¹ No such established reverence
been felt for this document, unless there had
a long time prior to Peisistratus, the habit of
and listening to the Iliad as a continuous poem.
the philosopher Xenophanês, contemporary
atus, noticed Homer as the universal teacher,
ed him as an unworthy describer of the gods,
e connected this great mental sway, not with a
nconnected rhapsodies, but with an aggregate
dyssey; probably with other poems also, as-
e same author, such as the Cypria, Epigoni,

l, it is true, references in various authors to
the Iliad each by its own separate name, such

early 25,000 verses
lf as long again as
perceval of Christian
obably more; the
n, of Godfrey of

The ancient unwritten poems of
the Icelandic Skalds are as much
lyric as epic: the longest of them
does not exceed 800 lines, and
they are for the most part much

Catalogue
of the Iliad
interpolated

as the Teichomachy, the Aristeia (pre-eminent exploits) of Diomedês or of Agamemnôn, the Doloneia or Night-expedition (of Dolôn as well as of Odysseus and Diomedês), &c., and hence it has been concluded that these portions originally existed as separate poems, before they were cemented together into an Iliad. But such references prove nothing to the point; for until the Iliad was divided by Aristarchus and his colleagues into a given number of books or rhapsodies, designated by the series of letters in the alphabet, there was no method of calling attention to any particular portion of the poem except by special indication of its subject-matter.¹ Authors subsequent to Peisistratus, such as Herodotus and Plato, who unquestionably conceived the Iliad as a whole, cite the separate fractions of it by designations of this sort.

The foregoing remarks on the Wolfian hypothesis respecting the text of the Iliad, tend to separate two points which are by no means necessarily connected, though that hypothesis, as set forth by Wolf himself, by W. Müller, and by Lachmann, presents the two in conjunction. First, was the Iliad originally projected and composed by one author and as one poem, or were the different parts composed separately and by unconnected authors, and subsequently strung together into an aggregate? Secondly, assuming that the internal evidences of the poem negative the former supposition, and drive us upon the latter, was the construction of the whole poem deferred, and did the parts exist only in their separate state, until a period so late as the reign of Peisistratus? It is obvious that these two questions are essentially separate, and that a man may believe the Iliad to have been put together out of preexisting songs, without recognising the age of Peisistratus as the period of its first compilation. Now whatever may be the steps through which the poem passed to its ultimate integrity, there is sufficient reason for believing that they had been accomplished long before that period: the friends of Peisistratus found an Iliad already existing, and already ancient in their time, even granting that the poem had not been originally born in a state of unity. Moreover, the Alexandrine critics, whose

Iliad and
Odyssey
were entire
poems long
anterior to
Peisistra-
tus, whe-
ther they
were origi-
nally con-
posed as
entire
or not.

¹ The Homeric Scholiast refers to Quintus Calaber ἐν τῇ Ἀμυζο-
νομαχίᾳ, which was only one por-

tion of his long poem (Schol. ad Iliad. ii. 220).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



to be deferred until the latter half of the sixth century—it we imagine that Solôn, with all his contemporaries and predecessors, knew nothing about any aggregate Iliad, but was accustomed to read and hear only those sixteen distinct epical pieces into which Lachmann would dissect the Iliad, each of the sixteen bearing a separate name of its own—no compilation then for the first time made by the friends of Peisistratus could have effaced the established habit, and planted itself in the general convictions of Greece as that primitive Homeric production. Had the sixteen pieces remained disunited and individualised down to the time of Peisistratus, they would in all probability have continued so ever afterwards; nor could the extensive changes and transpositions which (according to Lachmann's theory) were required to melt them down into our present Iliad, have obtained at that late period universal acceptance. Assuming it to be true that such changes and transpositions did really take place, they must at least be referred to a period greatly earlier than Peisistratus or Solôn.

The whole tenor of the poems themselves confirms what is here remarked. There is nothing either

No traces
in the
Homeric
poems, of
ideas or
customs
belonging
to the age
of Peisis-
tratus.

ism, applying that term to the age of Peisistratus; nothing which brings to our view the alterations, brought about by two centuries, in the Greek language, the coined money, the habits of writing and reading, the despotisms and republican governments, the close military array, the

improved construction of ships, the Amphiktyonic convocations, the mutual frequentation of religious festivals, the Oriental and Egyptian veins of religion, &c., familiar to the latter epoch. These alterations Onomakritus and the other literary friends of Peisistratus could hardly have failed to notice even without design, had they then for the first time undertaken the task of piecing together many self-existent epics into one large aggregate.¹ Everything in the two

¹ Wolf allows both the uniformity of colouring and the antiquity of colouring which pervade the Homeric poems, also the strong line by which they stand distinguished from the other Greek poets: —“Immo congruunt in iis omnia

ferme in idem ingenium, in eosdem mores, in eandem formam sentiendi et loquendi.” Prolegom. p. cclxv.; compare p. cxxxviii.)

He thinks indeed that this harmony was restored by the ability and care of Aristarchus (“mirificum

great Homeric poems, both in substance and in language, belongs to an age two or three centuries earlier than Peisistratus. Indeed even the interpolations (or those passages which on the best grounds are pronounced to be such) betray no trace of the sixth century before Christ, and may well have been heard by Archilochus and Kallinus—in some cases even by Arktinus and Hesiod—as genuine Homeric matter. As far as the evidences on the case, as well internal as external, enable us to judge, we seem warranted in believing that the Iliad and Odyssey were recited substantially as they now stand (always allowing for partial divergences of text and interpolations) in 776 B.C., our first trustworthy mark of Grecian time. And this ancient date—let it be added—as it is the best authenticated fact, so it is also the most important attribute of the Homeric poems, considered in reference to Grecian history. For they thus afford us an insight into the ante-historical character of the Greeks—enabling us to trace the subsequent forward march of the nation, and to seize instructive contrasts between their former and their later condition.

Rejecting therefore the idea of compilation by Peisistratus, and referring the present state of the Iliad and Odyssey to a period more than two centuries earlier, the question still remains, by what process, or through whose agency, they reached that state? Is each poem the work of one author, or of several? If the latter, do all the parts belong to the same age? What ground is there for believing; that any or all of these parts existed before as separate poems, and have been accommodated to the place in which they now appear by more or less systematic alteration?

Homeric poems—
1. Whether by one author, or several?
2. Whether of one date and scheme?

The acute and valuable Prolegomena of Wolf, half a century ago, powerfully turned the attention of scholars to the necessity of considering the Iliad and Odyssey with reference to the age and society in which they arose, and to the material differences in this respect between Homer

illum concentum revocatum Aristarcho imprimis debemus"). This is a very exaggerated estimate of the interference of Aristarchus: but at any rate the *concentus* itself was ancient and original, and

Aristarchus only *restored* it when it had been spoiled by intervening accidents; at least, if we are to construe *revocatum* strictly, which perhaps is hardly consistent with Wolf's main theory.

and more recent epic poets.¹ Since that time an elaborate study has been bestowed upon the early manifestations of poetry (Sagenpoesie) among other nations; and the German critics especially, among whom this description of literature has been most cultivated, have selected it as the only appropriate analogy for the Homeric poems. Such poetry, consisting for the most part of short, artless effusions, with little of deliberate or far-sighted combination, has been assumed by many critics as a fit standard to apply for measuring the capacities of the Homeric age; an age exclusively of speakers, singers, and hearers, not of readers or

Question raised by Wolf—Sagenpoesie—New standard applied to the Homeric poems.

writers. In place of the unbounded admiration which was felt for Homer, not merely as a poet of detail, but as constructor of a long epic, at the time when Wolf wrote his Prolegomena, the tone of criticism passed to the opposite extreme, and attention was fixed entirely upon the defects in the arrangement of the Iliad and Odyssey.

Whatever was to be found in them of symmetry or pervading system, was pronounced to be decidedly post-Homeric. Under such preconceived anticipations Homer seems to have been generally studied in Germany, during

Homeric unity—generally rejected by German critics in the last generation—now again partially revived.

the generation succeeding Wolf, the negative portion of whose theory was usually admitted, though as to the positive substitute—what explanation was to be given of the history and present constitution of the Homeric poems—there was by no means the like agreement. During the last ten years, however, a contrary tendency has manifested itself; the Wolfian theory has been re-examined and shaken by

¹ See Wolf, Prolegg. c. xii. p. xliii. "Nondum enim prorsus ejecta et explosa est eorum ratio, qui Homerum et Callimachum et Virgilium et Nonnum et Miltonum eodem animo legunt, nec quid uniuscujusque ætas ferat, expendere legendo et computare laborant," &c.

A similar and earlier attempt to construe the Homeric poems with reference to their age, is to be seen in the treatise called *Il Vero Omero* of Vico,—marked with a good

deal of original thought, but not strong in erudition (*Opere di Vico*, ed. Milan, vol. v. p. 437—497).

An interesting and instructive review of the course of Homeric criticism during the last fifty years, comprising some new details on the gradual development of the theories both of Wolf and of Lachmann, will be found in a recent Dissertation published at Königsberg — "Die Homerische Kritik von Wolf bis Grote"—by



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



us the history of these poems except the poems themselves.

Scanty evidence—
difficulty of
forming any
conclusive
opinion.

Not only do we possess no collateral information respecting them or their authors, but we have no one to describe to us the people or the age in which they originated: our knowledge respecting contemporary Homeric society is collected exclusively from the Homeric compositions themselves. We are ignorant whether any other, or what other, poems preceded them or divided with them the public favour, nor have we anything better than conjecture to determine either the circumstances under which they were brought before the hearers, or the conditions which a bard of that day was required to satisfy. On all these points, moreover, the age of Thucydides¹ and Plato seems to have been no better informed than we are, except in so far as they could profit by the analogies of the cyclic and other epic poems, which would doubtless in many cases have afforded valuable aid.

Nevertheless no classical scholar can be easy without *some* opinion respecting the authorship of these immortal poems. And the more defective the evidence we possess, the more essential is it that all that evidence should be marshalled in the clearest order, and its bearing upon the points in controversy distinctly understood beforehand. Both these conditions seem to have been often neglected, throughout the long-continued Homeric discussion.

To illustrate the first point:—Since two poems are comprehended in the problem to be solved, the natural process would be, first to study the easier of the two, and then to apply the conclusions thence deduced as a means of explaining the other. Now the *Odyssey*, looking at its aggregate character, is incomparably more easy to com-

shortsighted vision cannot distinguish, for everything cannot be made clear to children, which the mature man sees through at a glance (Ulrici, *Geschichte des Griechischen Epos*, Part i. ch. vii. p. 260—261). Read also Payne Knight, *Proleg. c. xxvii.*, about the insanity of the Wolfian school, obvious even to the “*homunculus e trivio.*”

I have the misfortune to dissent from both Lachmann and Ulrici; for it appears to me a mistake to

put the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* on the same footing, as Ulrici does, and as is too frequently done by others.

¹Plato, Aristotle, and their contemporaries generally, read the most suspicious portions of the Homeric poems as genuine (Nitzsch, *Plan und Gang der Odyssee*, in the Preface to his second vol. of *Comments on the Odyssey*, p. lx.-lxiv.).

Thucydides accepts the Hymn to Apollo as a composition by the author of the *Iliad*.

prehend than the Iliad. Yet most Homeric critics apply the microscope at once, and in the first instance, to the Iliad.

To illustrate the second point:—What evidence is sufficient to negative the supposition that the Iliad or the Odyssey is a poem originally and intentionally one? Not simply particular gaps and contradictions, though they be even gross and numerous; but the preponderance of these proofs of mere unprepared coalescence over the other proofs of designed adaptation scattered throughout the whole poem. For the poet (or the co-operating poets, if more than one) may have intended to compose an harmonious whole, but may have realised their intention incompletely, and left partial faults; or perhaps the contradictory lines may have crept in through a corrupt text. A survey of the whole poem is necessary to determine the question; and this necessity, too, has not always been attended to.

Method of studying the question of Homeric unity.

If it had happened that the Odyssey had been preserved to us alone, without the Iliad, I think the dispute respecting Homeric unity would never have been raised. For the former is, in my judgement, pervaded almost from beginning to end by marks of designed adaptation; and the special faults which Wolf, W. Müller, and B. Thiersch,¹ have singled out for the purpose of disproving such unity of intention, are so few and of so little importance, that they would have been universally regarded as mere instances of haste or unskilfulness on the part of the poet, had they not been seconded by the far more powerful battery opened against the Iliad. These critics, having laid down their general presumptions against the antiquity of the long epopee, illustrate their principles by exposing the many flaws and fissures in the Iliad, and then think it sufficient if they can show a few similar defects in the Odyssey—as if the breaking up of Homeric unity in the former naturally entailed a similar necessity with regard to the latter; and their method of proceeding, contrary to the rule above laid down, puts the more difficult problem in the foreground, as a means of solution for the easier. We can hardly wonder, however, that they have applied their observations in the first instance to the Iliad,

¹ Bernhard Thiersch, Ueber das (Halberstadt 1832), Einleitung, p. Zeitalter und Vaterland des Homer 4-18.

be studied first, as of more simple and intelligible structure than the Iliad.

acter of Homer is more intimately connected with it than with the Odyssey. This may serve as an explanation of the course pursued; but be the case as it may in respect to comparative poetical merit, it is not the less true, that as an aggregate, the Odyssey is more simple and easily understood, and therefore ought to come first in the order of analysis.

Odyssey—evidences of one design throughout its structure.

Now, looking at the Odyssey by itself, the proofs of a unity of design seem unequivocal and everywhere to be found. A premeditated structure, and a concentration of interest upon one prime hero under well-defined circumstances, may be traced from the first book to the twenty-third. Odysseus is always either directly or indirectly kept before the reader, as a warrior returning from the fulness of glory at Troy, exposed to manifold and protracted calamities during his return home, on which his whole soul is so bent that he refuses even the immortality offered by Calypsô;—a victim, moreover, even after his return, to mingled injury and insult from the suitors, who have long been plundering his property and dishonouring his house; but at length obtaining, by valour and cunning united, a signal revenge which restores him to all that he had lost. All the persons and all the events in the poem are subsidiary to this main plot: and the divine agency, necessary to satisfy the feeling of the Homeric man, is put forth by Poseidôn and Athênê, in both cases from dispositions directly bearing upon Odysseus. To appreciate the unity of the Odyssey, we have only to read the objections taken against that of the Iliad—especially in regard to the long withdrawal of Achilles, not only from the scene, but from the memory—together with the independent prominence of Ajax, Diomêdês and other heroes. How far we are entitled from hence to infer the want of premeditated unity in the Iliad, will be presently considered; but it is certain that the constitution of the Odyssey in this respect everywhere demonstrates the presence of such unity. Whatever may be the interest attached to Penelope, Telemachus, or Eumæus, we never disconnect them from their association with Odysseus. The present is not the place for collecting the



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



part of the poet, who did not anticipate, and did not experience in ancient times, so strict a scrutiny; an inaccuracy certainly not at all wonderful; the matter of real wonder is, that it stands almost alone, and that there are no others in the poem.

Now this is one of the main points on which W. Müller and B. Thiersch rest their theory—explaining the chronological confusion by supposing that the journey of Telemachus to Pylus and Sparta constituted the subject of an epic originally separate (comprising the first four books and a portion of the fifteenth), and incorporated at second-hand with the remaining poem. And they conceive this view to be farther confirmed by the double assembly of the gods (at the beginning of the first book as well as of the fifth), which they treat as an awkward repetition, such as could not have formed part of the primary scheme of any epic poet. But here they only escape a small difficulty by running into another and a greater. For it is impossible to comprehend how the first four books and part of the fifteenth can ever have constituted a distinct epic; since the adventures of Telemachus have no satisfactory termination, except at the point of confluence with those of his father, when the unexpected meeting and recognition takes place under the roof of Eumæus—nor can any epic poem ever have described that meeting and recognition without giving some account how Odysseus came thither. Moreover the first two books of the *Odyssey* distinctly lay the ground, and carry expectation forward, to the final catastrophe of the poem—treating Telemachus as a subordinate person, and his expedition as merely provisional towards an ulterior result. Nor can I agree with W. Müller, that the real *Odyssey* might well be supposed to begin with the fifth book. On the contrary, the exhibition of the suitors and the Ithakesian agora, presented to us in the second book, is absolutely essential to the full comprehension of the books subsequent to the thirteenth. The suitors are far too important personages in the poem to allow of their being first introduced in so

the "homines rudes et agrestes" of that day as excellent judges of what fell under their senses and observation, but careless, credulous, and unobservant of contradiction, in matters which came only under the mind's eye.

informal a manner as we read in the sixteenth book: indeed the passing allusions of Athênê (xiii. 310, 375) and Eumæus (xiv. 41, 81) to the suitors, presuppose cognizance of them on the part of the hearer.

Lastly, the twofold discussion of the gods, at the beginning of the first and fifth books, and the double interference of Athênê, far from being a needless repetition, may be shown to suit perfectly both the genuine epical conditions and the unity of the poem.¹ For although the final consummation, and the organisation of measures against the suitors, was to be accomplished by Odysseus and Telemachus jointly, yet the march and adventures of the two, until the moment of their meeting in the dwelling of Eumæus, were essentially distinct. But according to the religious ideas of the old epic, the presiding direction of Athênê was necessary for the safety and success of both of them. Her first interference arouses and inspires the son, her second produces the liberation of the father—constituting a point of union and common origination for two lines of adventures in both of which she takes earnest interest, but which are necessarily for a time kept apart in order to coincide at the proper moment.

Double start and double stream of events, ultimately into confluence in the Odyssey.

It will thus appear that the twice-repeated agora of the gods in the Odyssey, bringing home as it does to one and the same divine agent that double start which is essential to the scheme of the poem, consists better with the supposition of premeditated unity than with that of distinct self-existent parts. And assuredly the manner in which Telemachus and Odysseus, both by different roads, are brought into meeting and conjunction, at the dwelling of Eumæus, is something not only contrived, but very skilfully contrived. It is needless to advert to the highly interesting character of Eumæus, rendered available as a rallying point, though

Skill displayed in this point by the poet.

¹ W. Müller is not correct in saying that in the first assembly of the gods, Zeus promises something which he does not perform: Zeus does not promise to send Hermês as messenger to Kalypsô, in the first book, though Athênê urges him to do so. Zeus indeed

requires to be urged twice before he dictates to Kalypsô the release of Odysseus, but he had already intimated in the first book that he felt great difficulty in protecting the hero, because of the wrath manifested against him by Poseidôn.

many pre-
existing
poems or
songs.

formed the subject of a separate epos, apart from Odysseus, appears inconsistent with the whole character of that youth as it stands in the poem, and with the events in which he is made to take part. We could better imagine the distribution of the adventures of Odysseus himself into two parts—one containing his wanderings and return, the other handling his ill-treatment by the suitors and his final triumph. But though either of these two subjects might have been adequate to furnish out a separate poem, it is nevertheless certain, that as they are presented in the *Odyssey*, the former cannot be divorced from the latter. The simple return of Odysseus, as it now stands in the poem, could satisfy no one as a final close, so long as the suitors remain in possession of his house and forbid his reunion with his wife. Any poem which treated his wanderings and return separately, must have represented his reunion with Penelopê and restoration to his house as following naturally upon his arrival in Ithaka—thus taking little or no notice of the suitors. But this would be a capital mutilation of the actual epical narrative, which considers the suitors at home as an essential portion of the destiny of the much-suffering hero, not less than his shipwrecks and trials at sea. His return (separately taken) is foredoomed, according to the curse of Polyphemus executed by Poseidôn, to be long-deferred, miserable, solitary, and ending with destruction in his house to greet him;¹ and the ground is thus laid, in the very recital of his wanderings, for a new series of events which are to happen to him after his arrival in Ithaka. There is no tenable halting-place between the departure of Odysseus from Troy and the final restoration to his house

¹ *Odyss.* ix. 524.—

Ὅψε κακῶς ἔλθοι, ὀλέσας ἀπὸ πάν-
τας ἑταίρους,
Νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίας, εὖροι δ' ἐν
πήματα οἴκῳ—

Ὡς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος· (the Cyclops
to Poseidôn) τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε Κυανο-
χαίτης.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



We learn something respecting the character and capacities of that early age which has left no other mementos except these two poems. Long continuous epics (it is observed by those who support the views of Wolf), with an artistical structure, are inconsistent with the capacities of a rude and non-writing age. Such epics (we may reply) are *not inconsistent* with the early age of the Greeks, and the *Odyssey* is a proof of it; for in that poem the integration of the whole, and the composition of the parts, must have been simultaneous. The analogy of the *Odyssey* enables us to rebut that preconception under which many ingenious critics sit down to the study of the *Iliad*, and which induces them to explain all the incoherences of the latter by breaking it up into smaller unities, as if short epics were the only manifestation of poetical power which the age admitted. There ought to be no reluctance in admitting a presiding scheme and premeditated unity of parts, in so far as the parts themselves point to such a conclusion.

Iliad—
much less
coherent
and uni-
form than
the
Odyssey.

That the *Iliad* is not so essentially one piece as the *Odyssey*, every man agrees. It includes a much greater multiplicity of events, and, what is yet more important, a greater multiplicity of prominent personages: the very indefinite title which it bears, as contrasted with the speciality of the name *Odyssey*, marks the difference at once. The parts stand out more conspicuously from the whole, and admit more readily of being felt and appreciated in detached recitation. We may also add, that it is of more unequal execution than the *Odyssey*—often rising to a far higher pitch of grandeur, but also occasionally tamer: the story does not move on continuously; incidents occur without plausible motive, nor can we shut our eyes to evidences of incoherence and contradiction.

To a certain extent, the *Iliad* is open to all these remarks, though Wolf and William Müller, and above all Lachmann, exaggerate the case in degree. And from hence has been deduced the hypothesis which treats the parts in their original state as separate integers, independent of and unconnected with each other, and forced into unity only by the afterthought of a subsequent age; or sometimes not even themselves as integers, but as aggregates grouped

together out of fragments still smaller—short epics formed by the coalescence of still shorter songs. Now there is some plausibility in these reasonings, so long as the discrepancies are looked upon as the whole of the case. But in point of fact they are not the whole of the case: for it is not less true, that there are large portions of the Iliad which present positive and undeniable evidences of coherence as antecedent and consequent, though we are occasionally perplexed by inconsistencies of detail. To deal with these latter, is a portion of the duties of a critic. But he is not to treat the Iliad as if inconsistency prevailed everywhere throughout its parts; for coherence of parts—symmetrical antecedence and consequence is discernible throughout the larger half of the poem.

Incoherence prevails only in parts of the poem—manifest coherence in other parts.

Now the Wolfian theory explains the gaps and contradictions throughout the narrative, but it explains nothing else. If (as Lachmann thinks) the Iliad originally consisted of sixteen songs or little substantive epics (Lachmann's sixteen songs cover the space only as far as the 22nd book or the death of Hector, and two more songs would have to be admitted for the 23rd and 24th books)—not only composed by different authors, but by each¹ without any view to conjunction with the rest—we have then no right to expect any intrinsic continuity between them; and all that continuity which we now find must be of extraneous origin. Where are we to look for the origin? Lachmann follows Wolf in ascribing the whole constructive process to Peisistratus and his associates, at a period when the creative epical faculty is admitted to have died out. But upon this supposition Peisistratus (or his associates) must have done much more than omit, transpose, and interpolate, here and there; he must have gone far to rewrite the whole

Wolfian theory explains the former, but not the latter.

¹ Lachmann seems to admit one case in which the composer of one song manifests cognizance of another song, and a disposition to give what will form a sequel to it. His fifteenth song (the Patrokleia) lasts from xv. 592 down to the end of the 17th book: the sixteenth song (including the four next books, from 18 to 22 inclusive)

is a continuation of the fifteenth, but by a different poet. (Fernere Betrachtungen über die Ilias, Abhandl. Berlin. Acad. 1841, sect. xxvi. xxviii. xxix. pp. 24, 34, 42.)

This admission of premeditated adaptation to a certain extent breaks up the integrity of the Wolfian hypothesis.

poem. A great poet might have recast pre-existing separate songs into one comprehensive whole, but no mere arrangers or compilers would be competent to do so: and we are thus left without any means of accounting for that degree of continuity and consistence which runs through so large a portion of the Iliad, though not through the whole. The idea that the poem as we read it grew out of atoms not originally designed for the places which they now occupy, involves us in new and inextricable difficulties when we seek to elucidate either the mode of coalescence or the degree of existing unity.¹

Admitting then premeditated adaptation of parts to a certain extent as essential to the Iliad, we may yet inquire whether it was produced all at once or gradually enlarged—whether by one author or by several; and if the parts be of different age, which is the primitive kernel, and which are the additions.

Welcker, Lange, and Nitzsch² treat the Homeric poems as representing a second step in advance, in the progress of popular poetry. First comes the age of short narra-

¹ The advocates of the Wolfian theory appear to feel difficulties which beset it; for their language is wavering in respect to these supposed primary constituent atoms. Sometimes Lachmann tells us, that the original pieces were much finer poetry than the Iliad as we now read it; at another time, that it cannot be now discovered what they originally were: nay, he further admits (as remarked in the preceding note) that the poet of the sixteenth song had cognizance of the fifteenth.

But if it be granted that the original constituent songs were so composed, though by different poets, as that the more recent were adapted to the earlier, with more or less dexterity and success, this brings us into totally different conditions of the problem. It is a virtual surrender of the Wolfian hypothesis, which however Lachmann both means to defend, and does defend with ability; though

his vindication of it has, to my mind, only the effect of exposing its inherent weakness by carrying it out into something detailed and positive. I will add, in respect to his Dissertations, so instructive as a microscopic examination of the poem,—1. That I find myself constantly dissenting from that critical feeling, on the strength of which he cuts out parts as interpolations, and discovers traces of the hand of distinct poets; 2. that his objections against the continuity of the narrative are often founded upon lines which the ancient scholiasts and Mr. Payne Knight had already pronounced to be interpolations; 3. that such of his objections as are founded upon lines undisputed, admit in many cases of a complete and satisfactory reply.

² Lange, in his letter to Goethe, Ueber die Einheit der Iliade, p. 33 (1826); Nitzsch, *Historia Homerica*, Fasciculus 2. Præfat. p. x.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



characters and incidents are fewer, and the whole plot appears of one projection, from the beginning to the death of the suitors: none of the parts look as if they had been composed separately and inserted by way of addition into a pre-existing smaller poem. But the Iliad, on the contrary, presents the appearance of a house built upon a plan comparatively narrow and subsequently enlarged by suc-

Iliad—originally an Achillêis built upon a narrower plan, then enlarged .

cessive additions. The first book, together with the eighth, and the books from the eleventh to the twenty-second inclusive, seem to form the primary organisation of the poem, then properly an Achillêis: the twenty-third and twenty-fourth books are, perhaps, additions at the tail of this primitive poem, which still leave it nothing more than an enlarged Achillêis. But the books from the second to the seventh inclusive, together with the tenth, are of a wider and more comprehensive character, and convert the poem from an Achillêis into an Iliad.¹ The primitive frontispiece, inscribed with the anger of Achilles and its direct consequences, yet remains after it has ceased to be coextensive with the poem. The parts added, however, are not necessarily inferior in merit to the original poem: so far is this from being the case, that amongst them are comprehended some of the noblest efforts of the Grecian epic. Nor are they more recent in date than the original; strictly speaking, they must be a little more recent, but they belong to the same generation and state of society as the primitive Achillêis. These qualifications are necessary to keep apart different questions which, in discussions of Homeric criticism, are but too often confounded.

If we take those portions of the poem which I imagine to have constituted the original Achillêis, it will be found that the sequence of events contained in them is more rapid, more unbroken, and more intimately knit together

v. p. 53),—“Nisi admirabilis illa Homericorum carminum suavitas lectorum animos quasi incantationibus quibusdam captos teneret, non tam facile delitescerent, quæ accuratius considerata, et multo minus apte quam quis jure postulet composita esse apparere necesse est.”

This treatise contains many

criticisms on the structure of the Iliad, some of them very well founded, though there are many from which I dissent.

¹ In reference to the books from the second to the seventh inclusive, I agree with the observations of William Müller, *Homerische Vorschule*, Abschnitt. viii. p. 115-

118.

in the way of cause and effect, than in the other books. Heyne and Lachmann indeed, with other object- ing critics, complain of the action in them as being too much crowded and hurried, since one day lasts from the beginning of the eleventh book to the middle of the eighteenth, without any sensible halt in the march throughout so large a portion of the journey. Lachmann likewise admits that those separate songs, into which he imagines that the whole Iliad may be dissected, cannot be severed with the same sharpness, in the books subsequent to the eleventh, as in those before it.¹ There is only one real halting-place from the eleventh book to the twenty-second—the death of Patroclus; and this can never be conceived as the end of a separate poem,² though it is a capital step in the development of the Achillêis, and brings about that entire revolution in the temper of Achilles which was essential for the purpose of the poet. It would be a mistake to imagine that there ever could have existed a separate poem called Patrocleia, though a part of the Iliad was designated by that name. For Patroclus has no substantive position: he is the attached friend and second of Achilles, but nothing else,—standing to the latter in a relation of dependence resembling that of Telemachus to Odysseus. And the way in which Patroclus is dealt with in the Iliad is (in my judgement)

Parts which constitute the primitive Achillêis exhibit a coherent sequence of events.

¹ Lachmann, *Fernere Betrachtungen über die Ilias*, *Abhandlungen* Berlin. Acad. 141, p. 4.

After having pointed out certain discrepancies which he maintains to prove different composing hands, he adds,—“Nevertheless, we must be careful not to regard the single constituent songs in this part of the poem as being distinct and separable in a degree equal to those in the first half; for they all with one accord harmonise in one particular circumstance, which with reference to the story of the Iliad is not less important even than the anger of Achilles, viz. that the three most distinguished heroes, Agamemnôn, Odysseus, and Diomêdês, all become disabled

throughout the whole duration of the battles.”

Important for the story of the *Achillêis*, I should say, not for that of the *Iliad*. This remark of Lachmann is highly illustrative for the distinction between the original and the enlarged poem.

² I confess my astonishment that a man of so much genius and power of thought as M. Benjamin Constant, should have imagined the original Iliad to have concluded with the death of Patroclus, on the ground that Achilles then becomes reconciled with Agamemnôn. See the review of B. Constant's work *De la Religion*, &c., by O. Müller, in the *Kleine Schriften* of the latter, vol. ii. p. 74.

the most dexterous and artistical contrivance in the poem—that which approaches nearest to the neat tissue of the *Odyssey*.¹

The great and capital misfortune which prostrates the strength of the Greeks and renders them incapable of defending themselves without Achilles, is the disablement by wounds of Agamemnôn, Diomêdês, and Odysseus: so that the defence of the wall and of the ships is left only to heroes of the second magnitude (Ajax alone excepted), such as Idomeneus, Leonteus, Polypoëtês, Merionês, Menelaus, &c. Now it is remarkable that all these three first-rate chiefs are in full force at the beginning of the eleventh book: all three are wounded in the battle which that book describes, and at the commencement of which Agamemnôn is full of spirits and courage.

Nothing can be more striking than the manner in which Homer concentrates our attention in the first book upon Achilles as the hero, his quarrel with Agamemnôn, and the calamities to the Greeks which are held out as about to ensue from it, through the intercession of Thetis with Zeus. But the incidents dwelt upon from the beginning of the second book down to the combat between Hector and Ajax in the seventh, animated and interesting as they are, do nothing to realise this promise. They are a splendid picture of the Trojan war generally, and eminently suitable to that larger title under which the poem has been immortalised—but the consequences of the anger of Achilles do not appear until the eighth book. The tenth book, or *Doloneia*, is also a portion of the *Iliad*, but not of the *Achillêis*; while the ninth book appears to me a subsequent addition, nowise harmonising with that main stream of the *Achillêis*

¹ He appears as the mediator between the insulted Achilles and the Greeks, manifesting kindly sympathies for the latter without renouncing his fidelity to the former. The wounded Machaôn, an object of interest to the whole camp, being carried off the field by Nestor—Achilles, looking on from his distant ship, sends Patroclus to inquire whether it be really Machaôn; which enables Nestor to lay before Patroclus the deplorable state of the Grecian host, as a motive to induce him and Achilles again to take arms. The compassionate feelings of Patroclus being powerfully touched,

Disap- e-
point- of
Agamem-
nôn, Odys-
seus, and
Diomêdês,
all in the
battle of the
eleventh
book.

The first
book con-
centrates
attention
upon Achil-
les, and
upon the
distress
which the
Greeks are
to incur in
conse-
quence of
the injury
done to
him.—
Nothing
done to
realise this
expecta-
tion until
the eighth
book.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



mind the main event of the ninth book,—the outpouring of profound humiliation by the Greeks, and from Agamem-

collect that this is in contradiction to the ninth book, and tries to remove the contradiction by saying “that he had been previously mollified by conversation with Phœnix” —ἤδη δὲ προμαλαχθεὶς ἦν ἐκ τῶν Φοίνικος λόγων—a supposition neither countenanced by any thing in the poet, nor sufficient to remove the difficulty.

2. The speech of Poseidôn (xiii. 115) to encourage the dispirited Grecian heroes, in which, after having admitted the injury done to Achilles by Agamemnôn, he recommends an effort to heal the sore, and intimates “that the minds of good men admit of this healing process” (Ἄλλ’ ἀχεωμεθα θᾶσσον ἀχεσταί τε φρένες ἐσθλῶν), is certainly not very consistent with the supposition that this attempt to heal *had been made* in the best possible way, and that Achilles had manifested a mind implacable in the extreme on the evening before—while the mind of Agamemnôn was already brought to proclaimed humiliation and needed no farther healing.

3. And what shall we say to the language of Achilles and Patroclus at the beginning of the sixteenth book, just at the moment when the danger has reached its maximum, and when Achilles is about to send forth his friend?

Neither Nestor, when he invokes and instructs Patroclus as intercessor with Achilles (xi. 654—790), nor Patroclus himself, though in the extreme of anxiety to work upon the mind of Achilles, and reproaching him with hardness of heart—ever bring to remembrance the ample atonement which had been tendered to him; while Achilles himself repeats the original ground

of quarrel, the wrong offered to him in taking away Briséis, continuing the language of the first book; then without the least allusion to the atonement and restitution since tendered, he yields to his friend’s proposition just like a man whose wrong remained unredressed, but who was nevertheless forced to take arms by necessity (xvi. 52—63):—

Ἄλλὰ τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι ἐάσομεν,
οὔδ’ ἄρα πως ἦν
Ἄσπερχές κεχολῶσθαι ἐνὶ φρεσίν·
ἤτοι ἔφην γε
Οὐ πρὶν μηνιθμὸν καταπαύσεμεν,
ἀλλ’ ὁπότεν δὴ
Νῆας ἐμὰς ἀφίχεται ἀϋτὴ τε πτό-
λεμός τε.

I agree with the Scholiast and Heyne in interpreting ἔφην γε as equivalent to διενεγήθη—*not as referring to any express antecedent declaration.*

Again, further on in the same speech, “The Trojans (Achilles says) now press boldly forward upon the ships, for they no longer see the blaze of my helmet: but if Agamemnôn *were favourably disposed towards me*, they would presently run away and fill the ditches with their dead bodies” (71):—

..... τάχα κεν φεύγοντες ἐναύ-
λους
Πλήσειαν νεχύων, εἴ μοι χρείων
Ἄγαμέμνων
Ἦπια εἰδείη· νῦν δὲ στράτον ἀμ-
φιμάχονται.

Now here again, if we take our start from the first book, omitting the ninth, the sentiment is perfectly just. But assume the ninth book, and it becomes false and misplaced; for Agamemnôn is then a prostrate and repentant man, not merely “favourably disposed” towards Achilles, but offering to pay

nôn especially, before Achilles, coupled with formal offers to restore Brisêis and pay the amplest compensation for

any price for the purpose of appeasing him.

4. Again, a few lines further, in the same speech, Achilles permits Patroclus to go forth, in consideration of the extreme peril of the fleet, but restricts him simply to avert this peril and do nothing more: "Obey my words, so that you may procure *for me honour and glory from the body of Greeks*, and that they may send back to me the damsel, giving me ample presents besides: when you have driven the Trojans from the ships, come back again":—

Ὡς ἂν μοι τιμὴν μεγάλην καὶ κῦ-
δος ἄροιο

Πρὸς πάντων Δαναῶν· ἀτὰρ οἱ πε-
ριχαλλέα κούρην

Ἄψ ἀπονάσσωσι, προτὶ δ' ἀγλαὰ
δῶρα πόρωσιν·

Ἐκ νηῶν ἐλάσας, ἰέναι πάλιν (84-
87).

How are we to reconcile this with the ninth book, where Achilles declares that he does not care for being honoured by the Greeks, ix. 604? In the mouth of the affronted Achilles of the first book such words are apt enough: he will grant succour, but only to the extent necessary for the emergency, and in such a way as to ensure redress for his own wrong,—which redress he has no reason as yet to conclude that Agamemnon is willing to grant. But the ninth book *has actually* tendered to him everything which he here demands and even more (the daughter of Agamemnon in marriage, without the price usually paid for a bride, &c.): Brisêis, whom now he is so anxious to re-possess, was then offered in restitution, and he disdained the offer. Mr. Knight in fact strikes out these lines as

spurious; partly because they contradict the ninth book, where Achilles has actually rejected what he here thirsts for ("Dona cum puellâ jam antea oblata aspernatus erat")—partly because he thinks that they express a sentiment unworthy of Achilles; in which latter criticism I do not concur.

5. We proceed a little farther to the address of Patroclus to the Myrmidons, as he is conducting them forth to the battle: "Fight bravely, Myrmidons, that we may bring honour to Achilles; and that the wide-ruling Agamemnon may know the mad folly which he committed, when he dishonoured the bravest of the Greeks."

To impress this knowledge upon Agamemnon was no longer necessary. The ninth book records his humiliating confession of it, accompanied by atonement and reparation. To teach him the lesson a second time is to break the bruised reed, — to slay the slain. But leave out the ninth book, and the motive is the natural one,—both for Patroclus to offer, and for the Myrmidons to obey: Achilles still remains a dishonoured man, and to humble the rival who has dishonoured him is the first of all objects, as well with his friends as with himself.

6. Lastly, the time comes when Achilles, in deep anguish for the death of Patroclus, looks back with aversion and repentance to the past. To what point should we expect that his repentance would naturally turn? Not to his primary quarrel with Agamemnon, in which he had been undeniably wronged—but to the scene in the ninth book, where the maximum of atonement for the previous wrong is tendered

past wrong. The words of Achilles (not less than those of Patroclus and Nestor) in the eleventh and in the fol-

to him and scornfully rejected. Yet when we turn to xviii. 108, and xix. 55, 68, 270, we find him reverting to the primitive quarrel in the first book, just as if it had been the last incident in his relations with Agamemnon: moreover Agamemnon (xix. 86), in his speech of reconciliation, treats the past just in the same way,—deplores his original insanity in wronging Achilles.

7. When we look to the prayers of Achilles and Thetis, addressed to Zeus in the first book, we find that the consummation prayed for is,—honour to Achilles,—redress for the wrong offered to him,—victory to the Trojans until Agamemnon and the Greeks shall be made bitterly sensible of the wrong which they have done to their bravest warrior (i. 409—509). Now this consummation is brought about in the ninth book. Achilles can get no more, nor does he ultimately get more, either in the way of redress to himself or remorseful humiliation of Agamemnon, than what is here tendered. The defeat which the Greeks suffer in the battle of the eighth book (*Κόλος Μάχη*) has brought about the consummation. The subsequent and much more destructive defeats which they undergo are thus causeless: yet Zeus is represented as inflicting them reluctantly, and only because they are necessary to honour Achilles (xiii. 350; xv. 75, 235, 598; compare also viii. 372 and 475).

If we reflect upon the constitution of the poem, we shall see that the fundamental sequence of events in it is, a series of misfortunes to the Greeks, brought on by Zeus for the special purpose

of procuring atonement to Achilles and bringing humiliation on Agamemnon: the introduction of Patroclus superadds new motives of the utmost interest, but it is most harmoniously worked into the fundamental sequence. Now the intrusion of the ninth book breaks up the scheme of the poem by disuniting this sequence: Agamemnon is on his knees before Achilles, entreating pardon and proffering reparation, yet the calamities of the Greeks become more and more dreadful. The atonement of the ninth book comes at the wrong time and in the wrong manner.

There are four passages (and only four, so far as I am aware) in which the embassy of the ninth book is alluded to in the subsequent books; one in xviii. 444—456, which was expunged as spurious by Aristarchus (see the Scholia and Knight's commentary *ad loc.*); and three others in the following book, wherein the gifts previously tendered by Odysseus as the envoy of Agamemnon are noticed as identical with the gifts actually given in the nineteenth book. I feel persuaded that these passages (vv. 140—141, 192—195, and 243) are specially inserted for the purpose of establishing a connexion between the ninth book and the nineteenth. The four lines (192—195) are decidedly better away: the first two lines (140—141) are noway necessary; while the word *χθιζός* (which occurs in both passages) is only rendered admissible by being stretched to mean *nudius tertius* (Heyne *ad loc.*).

I will only further remark with respect to the ninth book, that the speech of Agamemnon (17—28),



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



only becomes desperate when the three great chiefs, Agamemnôn, Odysseus, and Diomêdês, are disabled by wounds;¹ this is the irreparable calamity which works upon Patroclus, and through him upon Achilles. The ninth book as it now stands seems to me an addition, by a different hand, to the original Achillêis, framed so as both to forestal and to spoil the nineteenth book, which is the real reconciliation of the two inimical heroes: I will venture to add that it carries the pride and egotism of Achilles beyond even the largest exigencies of insulted honour, and is shocking to that sentiment of Nemesis which was so deeply seated in the Grecian mind. We forgive any excess of fury against the Trojans and Hector, after the death of Patroclus; but that he should remain unmoved by restitution, by abject supplications, and by the richest atoning presents, tendered from the Greeks, indicates an implacability such as neither the first book, nor the books between the eleventh and the seventeenth, convey.²

It is with the Grecian agora in the beginning of the second book that the Iliad (as distinguished from the Achillêis) commences,—continued through the Catalogue, the muster of the two armies, the single combat between Menelaus and Paris, the renewed promiscuous battle caused by the arrow of Pandarus, the (Epipôlêsis or) personal circuit of Agamemnôn round the army, the Aristeia or brilliant exploits of Diomêdês, the visit of Hector to Troy for purposes of sacrifice, his interview with Andromachê, and his combat with Ajax—down to the seventh book. All these are beautiful poetry, presenting to us the general Trojan war and its conspicuous individuals under different

original conception, this feeling is so natural, that we could hardly fail to find it at the beginning of the eleventh book, numbered among the motives of Agamemnôn.

¹ Iliad. xi. 659; xiv. 128; xvi. 25.

² In respect to the ninth book of the Iliad, Friedländer (Die Homerische Kritik von Wolf bis Grote, p. 37) cites a passage from Kaiser (De Interpretatione Homericâ, p. 11) to the following

effect—"Nonum librum a sextodecimo adeo discrepare in gravissimis rebus quæ pro cardine totius Iliadis habentur, ut unius poetæ Πρεσβεία et Πατροκλεία esse nequeant. Recentior autem, ni magnopere fallor, Πρεσβεία." He also alludes to a similar expression of opinion by Nægelsbach in the Münchner Gelehrten Anzeigen, 1842, p. 314.

points of view, but leaving no room in the reader's mind for the thought of Achilles. Now the difficulty for an enlarging poet was, to pass from the Achillêis in the first book to the Iliad in the second, and it will accordingly be found that here is an awkwardness in the structure of the poem which counsel on the poet's behalf (ancient or modern) do not satisfactorily explain.

In the first book, Zeus has promised Thetis that he will punish the Greeks for the wrong done to Achilles: in the beginning of the second book, he deliberates how he shall fulfil the promise, and sends down for that purpose "mischievous Oneirus" the (Dream-God) to visit Agamemnon in his sleep, to assure him that the gods have now with one accord consented to put Troy into his hands, and to exhort him forthwith to the assembling of his army for the attack. The ancient commentators were here perplexed by the circumstance that Zeus puts a falsehood into the mouth of Oneirus. But there seems no more difficulty in explaining this than in the narrative of the book of 1 Kings (chap. xxii. 20), where Jehovah is mentioned to have put a lying spirit into the mouth of Ahab's prophets—the real awkwardness is, that Oneirus and his falsehood produce no effect. For in the first place Agamemnon takes a step very different from that which his dream recommends—and in the next place, when the Grecian army is at length armed and goes forth to battle, it does not experience defeat (which would be the case if the exhortation of Oneirus really proved mischievous), but carries on a successful day's battle, chiefly through the heroism of Diomêdês. Instead of arming the Greeks forthwith, Agamemnon convokes first a council of chiefs, and next an agora of the host. And though himself in a temper of mind highly elate with the deceitful assurances of Oneirus, he deliberately assumes the language of despair in addressing the troops, having previously prepared Nestor and Odysseus for his doing so—merely in order to try the courage of the men, and with for

that they are to speak in opposition to him. Now this intervention of Zeus and Oneirus, eminently unsatisfactory when coupled with the incidents which now follow it, and making Zeus appear, but only appear, to realise his promise of honouring Achilles as well as of hurting the

Greeks,—forms exactly the point of junction between the Achillêis and the Iliad.¹

The freak which Agamemnôn plays off upon the temper of his army, though in itself childish, serves a sufficient purpose, not only because it provides a special matter of interest to be submitted to the Greeks, but also because it calls forth the splendid description, so teeming with vivacious detail, of the sudden breaking up of the assembly after Agamemnôn's harangue, and of the decisive interference of Odysseus to bring the men back, as well as to put down Thersitês. This picture of the Greeks in agora, bringing out the two chief speaking and counselling heroes, was so important a part of the general Trojan war, that the poet has permitted himself to introduce it by assuming an inexplicable folly on the part of Agamemnôn; just as he has ushered in another fine scene in the third book—the Teichoskopy or conversation between Priam and Helen on the walls of Troy—by admitting the supposition that the old king in the tenth year of the war did not know the persons of Agamemnôn and the other Grecian chiefs. This may serve as an explanation of the delusion practised by Agamemnôn towards his assembled host; but it does not at all explain the tame and empty intervention of Oneirus.²

¹ The intervention of Oneirus ought rather to come as an immediate preliminary to book viii. than to book ii. The first forty-seven lines of book ii. would fit on and read consistently at the beginning of book viii., the events of which book form a proper sequel to the mission of Oneirus.

² O. Müller (History of Greek Literature, ch. v. § 8) doubts whether the beginning of the second book was written "by the ancient Homer, or by one of the latter Homerids:" he thinks the speech of Agamemnôn, wherein he plays off the deceit upon his army, is "a copious parody (of the same words used in the ninth book) composed by a later Homerid, and inserted in the room of an originally shorter account of the arming of the Greeks." He treats

the scene in the Grecian agora as "an entire mythical comedy, full of fine irony and with an amusing plot, in which the deceiving and deceived Agamemnôn is the chief character."

The comic or ironical character which is here ascribed to the second book appears to me fanciful and incorrect; but Müller evidently felt the awkwardness of the opening incident, though his way of accounting for it is not successful. The second book seems to my judgement just as serious as any part of the poem.

I think also that the words alluded to by O. Müller in the ninth book are a transcript of those in the second, instead of the reverse, as he believes—because it seems probable that the ninth book is an addition made to the poem



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



and from thence to the eleventh book, might well assume the fortification—and talk of it as a thing existing, without adducing any special reason why it was erected. The hearer would naturally comprehend and follow the existence of a ditch and wall round the ships, as a matter of course, provided there was nothing in the previous narrative to make him believe that the Greeks had originally been without these bulwarks. And since the *Achillêis*, immediately after the promise of Zeus to Thetis at the close of the first book, went on to describe the fulfilment of that promise and the ensuing disasters of the Greeks, there

Fortifica-
tion of
the Grecian
camp.

was nothing to surprise any one in hearing that their camp was fortified. But the case was altered when the first and the eighth books

were parted asunder in order to make room for descriptions of temporary success and glory on the part of the besieging army. The brilliant scenes sketched in the books from the second to the seventh, mention no fortification, and even imply its non-existence; yet since notice of it occurs amidst the first description of Grecian disasters in the eighth book, the hearer who had the earlier books present to his memory might be surprised to find a fortification mentioned immediately afterwards, unless the construction of it were specially announced to have intervened. But it will at once appear, that there was some difficulty in finding a good reason why the Greeks should begin to fortify at this juncture, and that the poet who discovered the gap might not be enabled to fill it up with success. As the Greeks have got on up to this moment without the wall, and as we have heard nothing but tales of their success, why should they now think farther laborious precautions for security necessary? we will not ask, why the Trojans should stand quietly by and permit a wall to be built, since the truce was concluded expressly for burying the dead.¹

and the defeat which the Greeks experience in consequence of it); we may dispense with the rest.

¹ O. Müller (*Hist. Greek Literat.* ch. v. § 6) says about this wall, — “Nor is it until the Greeks are taught by the experience of the first day’s fighting, that the Trojans can resist them in open battle,

that the Greeks build the wall round their ships This appeared to Thucydides so little conformable to historical probability, that without regard to the authority of Homer, he placed the building of these walls immediately after the landing.”

It is to be lamented, I think,

The tenth book (or Doloneia) was considered by some of the ancient scholiasts,¹ and has been confidently set forth by the modern Wolfian critics, as originally a separate poem, inserted by Peisistratus into the Iliad. How it can ever have been a separate poem, I do not understand. It is framed with great specialty for the antecedent circumstances under which it occurs, and would suit for no other place; though capable of being separately recited, inasmuch as it has a definite beginning and end, like the story of Nisus and Euryalus in the Æneid. But while distinctly presupposing and resting upon the incidents in the eighth book, and in line 88 of the ninth (probably, the appointment of sentinels on the part of the Greeks as well as of the Trojans

that Thucydids took upon him to determine the point at all as a matter of history; but when he once undertook this, the account in the Iliad was not of a nature to give him much satisfaction, nor does the reason assigned by Müller make it better. It is implied in Müller's reason that before the first day's battle the Greeks did not believe that the Trojans *could* resist them in open battle: the Trojans (according to him) never had maintained the field so long as Achilles was up and fighting on the Grecian side, and therefore the Greeks were quite astonished to find how, for the first time, that they *could* do so.

Now nothing can be more at variance with the tenor of the second and following books than this supposition. The Trojans come forth readily and fight gallantly: neither Agamemnôn, nor Nestôr, nor Odysseus consider them as enemies who cannot hold front; and the circuit of exhortation by Agamemnôn (Epipôlêsis), so strikingly described in the fourth book, proves that *he* does not anticipate a very easy victory. Nor does Nestôr, in proposing the construction of the wall, give the smallest hint that the power of the Trojans to resist in the open field was to the

Greeks an unexpected discovery.

The reason assigned by Müller, then, is a fancy of his own, proceeding from the same source of mistake as others among his remarks; because he tries to find, in the books between the first and eighth, a governing reference to Achilles (the point of view of the Achillêis), which those books distinctly refuse. The Achillêis was a poem of Grecian disasters up to the time when Achilles sent forth Patroclus: and during those disasters, it might suit the poet to refer by contrast to the past time when Achilles was active, and to say that *then* the Trojans did not dare even to present themselves in battle array in the field, whereas *now* they were assailing the ships. But the author of books ii. to vii. has no wish to glorify Achilles; he gives us a picture of the Trojan war generally, and describes the Trojans not only as brave and equal enemies, but well known by the Greeks themselves to be so.

The building of the Grecian wall, as it now stands described, is an unexplained proceeding which Müller's ingenuity does not render consistent.

¹ Schol. ad Iliad. x. i.

formed the close of the battle described in the eighth book), it has not the slightest bearing upon the events of the eleventh or the following books: it goes to make up the general picture of the Trojan war, but lies quite apart from the Achillêis. And this is one mark of a portion subsequently inserted—that though fitted on to the parts which precede, it has no influence on those which follow.

If the proceedings of the combatants on the plain of Troy, between the first and the eighth book, have no reference either to Achilles or to an Achillêis, we find Zeus in Olympus still more completely putting that hero out of the question, at the beginning of the fourth book. He is in this last-mentioned passage the Zeus of the Iliad, not of the Achillêis. Forgetful of his promise to Thetis in the first book he discusses nothing but the question of continuance or termination of the war, and manifests anxiety only for the salvation of Troy, in opposition to the miso-Trojan goddesses, who prevent him from giving effect to the victory of Menelaus over Paris and the stipulated restitution of Helen—in which case of course the wrong offered to Achilles would remain unexpiated. An attentive comparison will render it evident that the poet who composed the discussion among the gods, at the beginning of the fourth book, has not been careful to put himself in harmony either with the Zeus of the first book or with the Zeus of the eighth.

So soon as we enter upon the eleventh book, the march of the poem becomes quite different. We are then in a series of events, each paving the way for that which follows, and all conducing to the result promised in the first book—the re-appearance of Achilles, as the only means of saving the Greeks from ruin—preceded by ample atonement,¹ and followed by the maximum both of glory and revenge. The intermediate career of Patroclus introduces new elements, which however are admirably woven into the scheme of the poem as disclosed in the first book. I shall not deny that

¹ Agamemnôn, after deploring the misguiding influence of Atê, which induced him to do the original wrong to Achilles, says (xix. 88—137),—

Ἄλλ' ἐπεὶ ἀσάμην καὶ μὲν φρένας
ἐξέλετο Ζεὺς,
Ἄψ' ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι, δόμεναί τ' ἀπε-
ρῆσαι ἄποινα, &c.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



promise, which are manifest when we read the books in the order i. viii. xi. to xxii., as contrasted with the absence of these two qualities in books ii. to vii., ix. and x. An entire organisation, preconceived from the beginning, would not be likely to produce any such disparity, nor is any such visible in the *Odyssey*;¹ still less would the result be ex-

Preface to his edition of W. Müller's *Homerische Vorschule*, p. xlv.—xlix.)

Nitzsch distinguishes the *Odyssey* from the *Iliad*, and I think justly, in respect to this supposed enlargement. The reasons which warrant us in applying this theory to the *Iliad* have no bearing upon the *Odyssey*. If there ever was an *Ur-Odyssee*, we have no means of determining what it contained.

¹ The remarks of O. Müller on the *Iliad* (in his *History of Greek Literature*) are highly deserving of perusal: with much of them I agree, but there is also much which seems to me unfounded. The range of combination, and the far-fetched narrative stratagem which he ascribes to the primitive author are in my view inadmissible (chap. v. § 5—11):—

“The internal connexion of the *Iliad* (he observes, § 6) rests upon the union of certain parts; and neither the interesting introduction describing the defeat of the Greeks up to the burning of the ship of Protesilaus, nor the turn of affairs brought about by the death of Patroclus, nor the final pacification of the anger of Achilles, could be spared from the *Iliad*, when the fruitful seed of such a poem had once been sown in the soul of Homer and had begun to develop its growth. But the plan of the *Iliad* is certainly very much extended beyond what was actually necessary; and in particular the preparatory part, consisting of the *attempts* on the

part of the other heroes to compensate for the absence of Achilles, has, it must be owned, been drawn out to a disproportionate length, so that the suspicion that there were later insertions of importance applies with greater probability to the first than to the last books A design manifested itself at an early period to make this poem complete in itself, so that all the subjects, descriptions, and actions, which could alone give interest to a poem on the entire war, might find a place within the limits of its composition. For this purpose it is not improbable that many lays of earlier bards, who had sung single adventures of the Trojan war, were laid under contribution, and the finest parts of them incorporated in the new poem.”

These remarks of O. Müller intimate what is (in my judgement) the right view, inasmuch as they recognise an extension of the plan of the poem beyond its original limit, manifested by insertions in the first half; and it is to be observed that in his enumeration of those parts, the union of which is necessary to the internal connexion of the *Iliad*, nothing is mentioned except what is comprised in books i. viii. xi. to xxii. or xxiv. But his description of “the preparatory part,” as “the attempts of the other heroes to compensate for the absence of Achilles,” is noway borne out by the poet himself. From the second to the seventh book, Achilles is scarcely alluded to; more-

plained by supposing integers originally separate and brought together without any designed organisation. And

over the Greeks do perfectly well without him. This portion of the poem displays not "the *insufficiency* of all the other heroes without Achilles," as Müller had observed in the preceding section, but the perfect *sufficiency* of the Greeks under Diomédês, Agamemnôn, &c., to make head against Troy; it is only in the eighth book that their *insufficiency* begins to be manifested, and only in the eleventh book that it is consummated by the wounds of the three great heroes. Diomédês is in fact exalted to a pitch of glory in regard to contests with the gods, which even Achilles himself never obtains afterwards, and Helenus the Trojan puts him above Achilles (vi. 99) in terrific prowess. Achilles is mentioned two or three times as absent, and Agamemnôn in his speech to the Grecian agora regrets the quarrel (ii. 377), but we never hear any such exhortation as "Let us do our best to make up for the absence of Achilles,"—not even in the *Epipôlêsis* of Agamemnôn, where it would most naturally be found. "Attempts to compensate for the absence of Achilles" must therefore be treated as the idea of the critic, not of the poet.

Though O. Müller has glanced at the distinction between the two parts of the poem (an original part, having chief reference to *Achilles and the Greeks*; and a superinduced part, having reference to *the entire war*), he had not conceived it clearly, nor carried it out consistently. If we are to distinguish these two points of view at all, we ought to draw the lines at the end of the first book and at the beginning of the eighth, thus regarding the intermediate six books as be-

longing to the picture of *the entire war* (or the *Iliad* as distinguished from the *Achillêis*); the point of view of the *Achillêis*, dropt at the end of the first book, is resumed at the beginning of the eighth. The natural fitting together of these two parts is noticed in the comment of Heyne ad viii. 1: "*Cæterum nunc Jupiter aperte solvit Thetidi promissa, dum reddit causam Trojanorum bello superiorem, ut Achillis desiderium Achivos, et pœnitentia injuriæ ei illatæ Agamemnonem incessat* (cf. i. 5). *Nam quæ adhuc narrata sunt, partim continebantur in fortunâ belli utrinque tentatâ . . . partim valebant ad narrationem variandam,*" &c. The first and the eighth books belong to one and the same point of view, while *all* the intermediate books belong to the other. But O. Müller seeks to prove that a portion of these intermediate books belongs to one common point of view with the first and eighth, though he admits that they have been enlarged by insertions. Here I think he is mistaken. Strike out anything which can be reasonably allowed for enlargement in the books between the first and eighth, and the same difficulty will still remain in respect to the remainder; for *all* the incidents between those two points are brought out in a spirit altogether indifferent to Achilles or his anger. The Zeus of the fourth book, as contrasted with Zeus in the first or eighth, marks the difference; and this description of Zeus is absolutely indispensable as the connecting link between book iii. on the one side, and books iv. and v. on the other. Moreover the attempt of O. Müller, to force upon the larger por-

it is between these three suppositions that our choice has to be made. A scheme, and a large scheme too, must unquestionably be admitted as the basis of any sufficient hypothesis. But the *Achillêis* would have been a long poem, half the length of the present *Iliad*, and probably not less compact in its structure than the *Odyssey*. Moreover being parted off only by an imaginary line from the boundless range of the Trojan war, it would admit of enlargement more easily, and with greater relish to hearers, than the adventures of one single hero; while the expansion would naturally take place by adding new Grecian victory—since the original poem arrived at the exaltation of Achilles only through a painful series of Grecian disasters. That the poem under these circumstances should have received additions, is no very violent hypothesis: in fact when we recollect that the integrity both of the *Achillêis* and of the *Odyssey* was neither guarded by printing nor writing, we shall perhaps think it less wonderful that the former was enlarged,¹ than that the latter was not. Any relaxation

tion of what is between the first and eighth books the point of view of the *Achillêis*, is never successful: the poet does not exhibit in those books "insufficient efforts of other heroes to compensate for the absence of Achilles," but a general and highly interesting picture of the Trojan war, with prominent reference to the original ground of quarrel. In this picture the duel between Paris and Menelaus forms naturally the foremost item—but how far-fetched is the reasoning whereby O. Müller brings that striking recital within the scheme of the *Achillêis*! "The Greeks and Trojans are for the first time struck by an idea, which might have occurred in the previous nine years, if the Greeks, *when assisted by Achilles*, had not, from confidence in their superior strength, considered every compromise as unworthy of them,—namely, to decide the war by a single combat between the authors of it." Here the causality of

Achilles is dragged in by main force, and unsupported either by any actual statement in the poem or by any reasonable presumption; for it is *the Trojans* who propose the single combat, and we are not told that they had ever proposed it before—though they would have had stronger reasons for proposing it during the presence of Achilles than during his absence.

O. Müller himself remarks (§ 7), "that from the second to the seventh book Zeus appears as it were to have forgotten his resolution and his promise to Thetis." In other words, the poet during this part of the poem drops the point of view of the *Achillêis* to take up that of the more comprehensive *Iliad*: the *Achillêis* reappears in book viii.—again disappears in book x.—and is resumed from book xi. to the end of the poem.

¹ This tendency to insert new homogeneous matter by new poets into poems already existing, is noticed by M. Fauriel in reference



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



in the Homeric Gens, though doubtless very different among themselves in respect of mental capacity, were yet homogeneous in respect of training, means of observation and instruction, social experience, religious feelings and theories, &c., to a degree much greater than individuals in modern times. Fallible as our inferences are on this point, where we have only internal evidence to guide us, without any contemporary points of comparison, or any species of collateral information respecting the age, the society, the poets, the hearers, or the language—we must nevertheless in the present case take coherence of structure, together with consistency in the tone of thought, feeling, language, customs, &c., as presumptions of one author; and the contrary as presumptions of severalty; allowing as we can for that inequality of excellence which the same author may at different times present.

Now the case made out against single-headed authorship of the *Odyssey* appears to me very weak; and those who dispute it are guided more by their *à priori* rejection of ancient epical unity than by any positive evidence which *Odyssey* all the poem itself affords. It is otherwise with *Iliad* regard to the *Iliad*. Whatever presumptions a disjointed structure, several apparent inconsistencies of parts, and large excrescence of actual matter beyond the opening promise, can sanction—may reasonably be indulged against the supposition that this poem all proceeds from a single author. There is a difference of opinion on the subject among the best critics which is probably not destined to be adjusted, since so much depends partly upon critical feeling, partly upon the general reasonings, in respect to ancient epical unity, with which a man sits down to the study. For the champions of unity, such as Mr. Payne Knight, are very ready to strike out numerous and often considerable passages as interpolations, aised against unity of author-

telligetur, ubi gentis civilis Homeridarum propriam et peculiarem Homericam poesin fuisse, veteribus ipsis si non testibus, at certe ducibus, concedetur Quæ quum ita sint, non erit adeo difficile ad intelligendum, quomodo, post prima initia ab egregio vate acta, in gente sacrorum et artis

communione sociatâ, multas rhapsodiæ ad unum potuerint consilium dirigi." (Index Lection. 1834. p. 12.)

I transcribe this passage from Giese (*Ueber den Æolischen Dialekt*, p. 157), not having been able to see the essay of which it forms a part.

ship on the ground of special inconsistencies. Hermann and Boeckh, though not going the length of Lachmann in maintaining the original theory of Wolf, agree with the latter in recognising diversity of authors in the poem, to an extent overpassing the limit of what can fairly be called interpolation. Payne Knight and Nitzsch are equally persuaded of the contrary. Here then is a decided contradiction among critics, all of whom have minutely studied the poems since the Wolfian question was raised. And it is such critics alone who can be said to constitute authority; for the cursory reader, who dwells upon the parts simply long enough to relish their poetical beauty, is struck only by that general sameness of colouring which Wolf himself admits to pervade the poem.¹

Having already intimated that, in my judgement, no theory of the structure of the poem is admissible which does not admit an original and preconcerted Achillêis—a stream which begins at the first book and ends with the death of Hector in the twenty-second, although the higher parts of it now remain only in the condition of two detached lakes, the first book and the eighth—I reason upon the same basis with respect to the authorship. Assuming continuity of structure as a presumptive proof, the whole of this Achillêis must be treated as composed by one author. Wolf indeed affirmed, that he never read the poem continuously through without being painfully impressed with the inferiority² and altered style of the last six books—and Lachmann carries this feeling further back, so as to commence with the seventeenth book. If I could enter fully into this sentiment, I should then be compelled, not to deny the existence of a precon-

Difference of style in the last six books—may be explained without supposing difference of authorship.

¹ Wolf, Prolegom. p. cxxxviii. "Quippe in universum idem sonus est omnibus libris; idem habitus sententiarum, orationis, numerorum," &c.

² Wolf, Prolegom. p. cxxxvii. "Equidem certe quoties in continenti lectione ad istas partes (i. e. the last six books) deveni, nunquam non in iis talia quædam sensi, quæ nisi illæ tam mature cum ceteris coaluissent, quovis

pignore contendam, dudum ab eruditis detecta et animadversa fuisse, immo multa ejus generis, ut cum nunc Ὀμηρικώτατα habeantur, si tantummodo in Hymnis legerentur, ipsa sola eos suspicionibus νοθείας adspersura essent." Compare the sequel, p. cxxxviii. "ubi nervi deficient et spiritus Homericus—jejunum et frigidum in locis multis," &c.

ceived scheme, but to imagine that the books from the eighteenth to the twenty-second, though forming part of that scheme or Achillêis, had yet been executed by another and an inferior poet. But it is to be remarked, first, that inferiority of poetical merit to a certain extent is quite reconcileable with unity of authorship; and secondly, that the very circumstances upon which Wolf's unfavourable judgement is built, seem to arise out of increased difficulty in the poet's task, when he came to the crowning cantoes of his designed Achillêis. For that which chiefly distinguishes these books is, the direct, incessant, and manual, intervention of the gods and goddesses, formally permitted by Zeus—and the repetition of vast and fantastic concep-

omitting the battle of Achilles against Skamander and Simois, and the burning up of these rivers by Hephæstus. Now looking at this vein of ideas with the eyes of a modern reader, or even with those of a Grecian critic of the literary ages, it is certain that the effect is displeasing: the gods, sublime elements of poetry when kept in due proportion, are here somewhat vulgarised. But though the poet here has not succeeded, and probably success was impossible, in the task which he has prescribed to himself—yet the mere fact of his undertaking it, and the manifest distinction between his employment of divine agency in these latter cantoes as compared with the preceding, seems explicable only on the supposition that they *are* the latter cantoes and come in designed sequence, as the continuance of a previous plan. The poet wishes to surround the coming forth of Achilles with the maximum of glorious and terrific circumstance: no Trojan enemy can for a moment hold out against him:¹ the gods must descend to the plain of Troy

¹ Iliad, xx. 25. Zeus addresses the agora of the gods,—

Ἄμφοτέροισι δ' ἀρήγεται, ὅπη νόος
ἔστιν ἑκάστου.

Δεῖδω μὴ καὶ τεῖχος ὑπὲρ μόρον
ἔξαλαπάξῃ.

The formal restriction put upon the gods by Zeus at the beginning



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



The last two books of the *Iliad* may have formed part of the original *Achillêis*. But the probability rather is, that they are additions; for the death of Hector satisfies the exigencies of a coherent scheme, and we are not entitled to extend the oldest poem beyond the limit which such necessity prescribes. It has been argued on one side by Nitzsch and O. Müller, that the mind could not leave off with satisfaction at the moment in which Achilles sates his revenge, and while the bodies of Patroclus and Hector are lying unburied—also, that the more merciful temper which he exhibits in the twenty-fourth book must always have been an indispensable sequel, in order to create proper sympathy with his triumph. Other critics, on the contrary, have taken special grounds of exception against the last book, and have endeavoured to set it aside as different from the other books both in tone and language. To a certain extent the peculiarities of the last book appear to me undeniable, though it is plainly a designed continuance and not a substantive poem. Some weight also is due to the remark about the twenty-third book, that Odysseus and Diomêdês, who have been wounded and disabled during the fight, now re-appear in perfect force, and contend in the games: here is no case of miraculous healing, and the inconsistency is more likely to have been admitted by a separate enlarging poet than by the schemer of the *Achillêis*.

The splendid books from the second to v. 322 of the seventh¹ are equal in most parts to any portions of the *Achillêis*, and are pointedly distinguished from the latter by the broad view which they exhibit of the general Trojan war, with all its principal

would have saved his countrymen: "If I enter the town, Polydamus will be the first to reproach me as having brought destruction upon Troy on that fatal night when Achilles came forth, and when I resisted his better counsel" (compare xviii. 250—315; xxii. 100—110; and Aristot. *Ethic.* iii. 8).

In a discussion respecting the structure of the *Iliad*, and in reference to arguments which deny

all designed concatenation of parts, it is not out of place to notice this affecting touch of poetry, belonging to those books which are reproached as the feeblest.

¹ The latter portion of the seventh book is spoiled by the very unsatisfactory addition introduced to explain the construction of the wall and ditch: all the other incidents (the agora and embassy of the Trojans, the truce

personages, localities, and causes—yet without advancing the result promised in the first book, or indeed any final purpose whatever. Even the desperate wound inflicted by Tlepolemus on Sarpedôn is forgotten, when the latter hero is called forth in the subsequent *Achillêis*.¹ The arguments of Lachmann, who dissects these six books into three or four separate songs,² carry no conviction to my mind; and I see no reason why we should not consider all of them to be by the same author, bound together by the common purpose of giving a great collective picture which may properly be termed an *Iliad*. The tenth book, Book X. or *Doloneia*, though adapted specially to the place in which it stands, agrees with the books between the first and eighth in belonging only to the general picture of the war, without helping forward the march of the *Achillêis*; yet it seems conceived in a lower vein, in so far as we can trust our modern ethical sentiment. One is unwilling to believe that the author of the fifth book (or *Aristeia* of Diomêdês) would condescend to employ the hero whom he there so brightly glorifies—the victor even over Arês himself—in slaughtering newly-arrived Thracian sleepers, without any large purpose or necessity.³ The

for burial, the arrival of wine-ships from Lemnos, &c.) suit perfectly with the scheme of the poet of these books, to depict the Trojan war generally.

¹ Unless indeed we are to imagine the combat between Tlepolemus and Sarpedôn, and that between Glaukus and Diomêdês, to be separate songs; and they are among the very few passages in the *Iliad* which are completely separable, implying no special antecedents.

² Compare also Heyne, *Excursus* II. sect. ii. ad *Iliad*. xxiv. vol. viii. p. 783.

³ Subsequent poets, seemingly thinking that the naked story (of Diomêdês slaughtering Rhêsus and his companions in their sleep) as it now stands in the *Iliad*, was too displeasing, adopted different ways of dressing it up. Thus ac-

ording to Pindar (ap. Schol. *Iliad*. x. 435), Rhêsus fought one day as the ally of Troy, and did such terrific damage, that the Greeks had no other means of averting total destruction from his hand on the next day, except by killing him during the night. And the Euripidean drama called *Rhêsus*, though representing the latter as a new-comer, yet puts into the mouth of Athênê the like overwhelming predictions of what he would do on the coming day if suffered to live; so that to kill him in the night is the only way of saving the Greeks (Eurip. *Rhês*. 602): moreover Rhêsus himself is there brought forward as talking with such overweening insolence, that the sympathies of man, and the envy of the gods, are turned against him (*ib.* 458).

But the story is best known in

ninth book, of which I have already spoken at length, belongs to a different vein of conception, and seems to me more likely to have emanated from a separate composer.

While intimating these views respecting the authorship of the Iliad as being in my judgement the most probable, I must repeat, that though the study of the poem carries to my mind a sufficient conviction respecting its structure, the question between unity and plurality of authors is essentially less determinable. The poem consists of a part original and other parts superadded; yet it is certainly not impossible that the author of the former may himself have composed the latter: and such would be my belief, if I regarded plurality of composers as an inadmissible idea. On this supposition we must conclude that the poet, while anxious for the addition of new and for the most part highly interesting matter, has not thought fit to recast the parts and events in such manner as to impart to the whole a pervading thread of *consensus* and organisation, such as we see in the Odyssey.

That the Odyssey is of later date than the Iliad, and by a different author, seems to be now the opinion of most critics, especially of Payne Knight¹ and Nitzsch; though O. Müller leans to a contrary conclusion, at the same time adding that he thinks the arguments either way not very decisive. There are considerable differences of statement in the two poems in regard to some of the gods: Iris is messenger of the gods in the Iliad, and Hermês in the Odyssey; Æolus, the dispenser of the winds in the Odyssey, is not noticed in the twenty-third book of the Iliad, but on the contrary, Iris invites the winds as independent gods to come and kindle the funeral pile of Patroclus; and unless

the form and with the addition (equally unknown to the Iliad) which Virgil has adopted. It was decreed by fate that if the splendid horses of Rhêsus were permitted once either to taste the Trojan provender, or to drink of the river Xanthus, nothing could preserve the Greeks from ruin (*Æneid.* i. 408, with Servius *ad loc.*):—

"Nec procul hinc Rhesi niveis
tentoria velis
Agnoscit lacrymans; primo quæ
proditâ sommo

Tydides multâ vastabat cæde
cruentus:

Ardentesque avertit equos in
castra, priusquam

Pahula gustassent Trojæ, Xan-
thumque bibissent."

All these versions are certainly improvements upon the story as it stands in the Iliad.

¹ Mr. Knight places the Iliad about two centuries, and the Odyssey one century, anterior to Hesiod: a century between the two poems (*Prolegg.* c. lxi.).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



civilisation which some critics affirm the *Odyssey* to present: Mr. Knight, who is of this opinion, nevertheless admits that the mutilation of Melanthius, and the hanging up of the female slaves by Odysseus, in that poem, indicate greater barbarity than any incidents in the fights before Troy.¹ The more skilful and compact structure of the *Odyssey* has been often considered as a proof of its juniority in age: and in the case of two poems by the same author, we might plausibly contend that practice would bring with it improvement in the combining faculty. But in reference to the poems before us, we must recollect, first, that in all probability the *Iliad* (with which the comparison is taken) is not a primitive but an enlarged poem, and that the primitive *Achillêis* might well have been quite as coherent as the *Odyssey*;—secondly, that between different authors, superiority in structure is not a proof of subsequent composition, inasmuch as on that hypothesis we should be compelled to admit that the later poem of Arktinus would be an improvement upon the *Odyssey*;—thirdly, that even if it were so, we could only infer that the author of the *Odyssey* had *heard* the *Achillêis* or the *Iliad*; we could not infer that he lived one or two generations afterwards.²

On the whole, the balance of probabilities seems in favour of distinct authorship of the two poems, but the same age—and that age a very early one, anterior to the first Olympiad. And they may thus be used as evidences, and contemporary evidences, for the phænomena of primitive Greek civilisation; while they also shew that the power

¹ Knight. Prolegg. l. c. *Odyss.* xxii. 465—478.

² The arguments, upon the faith of which Payne Knight and other critics have maintained the *Odyssey* to be younger than the *Iliad*, are well stated and examined in Bernhard Thiersch—*Quæstio de Diversâ Iliadis et Odysseæ Ætate*—in the *Anhang* (p. 306) to his work *Ueber das Zeitalter und Vaterland des Homer*.

He shows all such arguments to be very inconclusive; though the grounds upon which he himself maintains identity of age between the two appear to me not at all

more satisfactory (p. 327): we can infer nothing to the point from the mention of Telemachus in the *Iliad*.

Welcker thinks that there is a great difference of age, and an evident difference of authorship, between the two poems (*Der Epische Cyclus*, p. 295).

O. Müller admits the more recent date of the *Odyssey*, but considers it “difficult and hazardous to raise upon this foundation any definite conclusions as to the person and age of the poet” (*History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*, ch. v. s. 13).

¹ Dr. Thirlwall has added to the second edition of his *History of Greece* a valuable Appendix, on the early history of the Homeric poems (vol. i. p. 500—516); which contains copious information respecting the discrepant opinions of German critics, with a brief comparative examination of their reasons. I could have wished that so excellent a judge had super-added, to his enumeration of the views of others, an ampler exposition of his own. Dr. Thirlwall seems decidedly convinced upon that which appears to me the most important point in the Homeric controversy: "That before the appearance of the earliest of the poems of the Epic Cycle, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, even if they did not exist precisely in their present form, had at least reached their present compass, and were regarded each as a complete and well-defined whole, not as a fluctuating aggregate of fugitive pieces" (p. 509).

This marks out the Homeric poems as ancient both in the items and in the total, and includes negation of the theory of Wolf and Lachmann, who contend that as a total they only date from the age of Peisistratus. It is then safe to treat the poems as unquestionable evidences of Grecian antiquity (meaning thereby 776 B.C.), which we could not do if we regarded all congruity of parts in the poems as brought about through alterations of Peisistratus and his friends.

There is also a very just admonition of Dr. Thirlwall (p. 516) as to the difficulty of measuring what degree of discrepancy or inaccuracy might or might not have escaped the poet's attention, in an age so imperfectly known to us.

² There are just remarks on this point in Heyne's *Excursus* ii. sect 2 and 4. ad *Il.* xxiv. vol. viii. p. 771—800.

³ "Wenig Deutsche, und vielleicht nur wenige Menschen aller

the mechanism of a long poem, and many feel the beauty of the separate parts, who have no sentiment for the aggregate perfection of the whole.

Nor were the Homeric poems originally addressed to minds of the rarer stamp. They are intended for those feelings which the critic has in common with the unlettered mass, not for that enlarged range of vision and peculiar standard which he has acquired to himself. They are of all poems the most absolutely and unreservedly popular: had they been otherwise they could not have lived so long in the mouth of the rhapsodes, and the ear and memory of the people: and it was *then* that their influence was first acquired, never afterwards to be shaken. Their beauties belong to the parts taken separately, which revealed themselves spontaneously to the listening crowd at the festival—far more than to the whole poem taken together, which could hardly be appreciated unless the parts were dwelt upon and suffered to expand in the mind. The most unlettered hearer of those times could readily seize, while the most instructed reader can still recognise the characteristic excellence of Homeric narrative—its straightforward, unconscious, unstudied simplicity—its concrete forms of speech¹ and happy alternation of action with

neuern Nationen, haben Gefühl für ein ästhetisches Ganzes: sie loben und tadeln nur stellenweise, sie entzücken sich nur stellenweise." (Goethe, Wilhelm Meister: I transcribe this from Welcker's *Æschyl. Trilogie*, p. 306.)

What ground there is for restricting this proposition to *modern* as contrasted with *ancient* nations, I am unable to conceive.

¹ The *κινούμενα ὀνόματα* of Homer were extolled by Aristotle: see Schol. ad *Iliad*. i. 481; compare Dionys. Halicarn. *De Compos. Verbor.* c. 20. ὥστε μηδὲν ἡμῖν διαφέρειν γινόμενα τὰ πράγματα ἢ λεγόμενα ὀρᾶν. Respecting the undisguised bursts of feeling by the heroes, the Scholiast ad *Iliad*. i. 349 tells us—ἔτσιμον τὸ ἡρωϊκὸν πρὸς δάκρυα—compare Euripid. *Helen.* 959, and the severe censures of

Plato, ii. p. 388.

The Homeric poems were the best understood, and the most widely popular of all Grecian composition, even among the least instructed persons, such (for example) as the semibarbarians who had acquired the Greek language in addition to their own mother tongue. (Dio Chrysost. *Or.* xviii. vol. i. p. 478; *Or.* liii. vol. ii. p. 277, Reisk.) Respecting the simplicity and perspicuity of the narrative style, implied in this extensive popularity, Porphyry made a singular remark: he said that the sentences of Homer *really* presented much difficulty and obscurity, but that ordinary readers fancied they understood him, "because of the general clearness *which* appeared to run through the poems". (See the *Prolegomena* of Villoison's edition



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



and circumstances under which that influence was first, and most powerfully felt, preclude the possibility of explaining it by comprehensive and elaborate comparisons, such as are implied in Aristotle's remarks upon the structure of the poems. The critic who seeks the explanation in the right place will not depart widely from the point of view of those rude auditors to whom the poems were originally addressed, or from the susceptibilities and capacities common to the human bosom in every stage of progressive culture. And though the refinements and delicacies of the poems, as well as their general structure, are a subject of highly interesting criticisms—yet it is not to these that Homer owes his wide-spread and imperishable popularity. Still less is it true, as the well-known observations of Horace would lead us to believe, that Homer is a teacher of ethical wisdom akin and superior to Chrysippus or Crantor.¹ No didactic

¹ Horat. Epist. i. 2, v. 1-26:—

“Sirenum voces, et Circes pocula
nosti:

Quæ si cum sociis stultus cupidus-
que bibisset,
Vixisset canis immundus, vel amica
luto sus.”

Horace contrasts the folly and greediness of the companions of Ulysses in accepting the refreshments tendered to them by Circe, with the self-command of Ulysses himself in refusing them. But in the incident as described in the original poem, neither the praise, nor the blame here implied, finds any countenance. The companions of Ulysses follow the universal practice in accepting hospitality tendered to strangers, the fatal consequences of which, in their particular case, they could have no grounds for suspecting; while Ulysses is preserved from a similar fate, not by any self-command of his own, but by a previous divine warning and a special antidote, which had not been vouchsafed to the rest (see *Odyss.* x. 285). And the incident of the Sirens, if it is to be taken as evidence of anything, indicates

rather the absence, than the presence, of self-command on the part of Ulysses.

Of the violent mutations of text, whereby the *Grammatici* or critics tried to efface from Homer bad ethical tendencies (we must remember that many of these men were lecturers to youth), a remarkable specimen is afforded by the Venet. Schol. ad *Iliad.* ix. 453; compare Plutarch, de *Audien-
dis Poetis*, p. 95. Phœnix describes the calamitous family tragedy in which he himself had been partly the agent, partly the victim. Now that an Homeric hero should confess guilty proceedings and still more guilty designs, without any expression of shame or contrition, was insupportable to the feelings of the critics. One of them, Aristodemus, thrust two negative particles into one of the lines; and though he thereby ruined not only the sense but the metre, his emendation procured for him universal applause, because he had maintained the innocence of the hero (*καὶ οὐ μόνον ηὐδοκίμησεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐτιμήθη, ὡς εὐσεβῆ τήρησας τὸν*

but the ethical doctrine which he applies must emanate from his own reflection. The Homeric hero manifests virtues or infirmities, fierceness or compassion, with the same straightforward and simple-minded vivacity, unconscious of any ideal standard by which his conduct is to be tried;¹ nor can we trace in the poet any ulterior function beyond that of the inspired organ of the Muse, and the nameless, but eloquent, herald of lost adventures out of the darkness of the past.

ἦρωα). And Aristarchus thought the case so alarming, that he struck out from the text four lines which have only been preserved to us by Plutarch (Ὁ μὲν Ἀριστάρχος ἔξειλε τὰ ἔπη ταῦτα, φοβηθεὶς). See the Fragment of Dioscorides (περὶ τῶν παρ' Ὁμήρω Νόμων) in Didot's *Fragmenta Historicor. Græcor.* vol. ii. p. 193.

¹ "C'est un tableau idéal, à coup sûr, que celui de la société Grecque dans les chants qui portent le nom d'Homère: et pourtant cette société y est toute entière reproduite, avec la rusticité, la férocité de ses mœurs, ses bonnes et ses mauvaises passions, sans dessein de faire particulièrement ressortir, de célébrer tel ou tel de ses mérites, de ses avantages, ou

de laisser dans l'ombre ses vices et ses maux. Ce mélange du bien et du mal, du fort et du faible—cette simultanéité d'idées et de sentimens en apparence contraires—cette variété, cette incohérence, ce développement inégal de la nature et de la destinée humaine—c'est précisément là ce qu'il y a de plus poétique, car c'est le fond même des choses, c'est la vérité sur l'homme et le monde: et dans les peintures idéales qu'en veulent faire la poésie, le roman et même l'histoire, cet ensemble, si divers et pourtant si harmonieux, doit se retrouver: sans quoi l'idéal véritable y manque aussi bien que la réalité." (Guizot, *Cours d'histoire Moderne*, Leçon 7^{me}, vol. i p. 285.)



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



PART II.

HISTORICAL GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL GEOGRAPHY AND LIMITS OF GREECE.

GREECE Proper lies between the 36th and 40th parallels of north latitude, and between the 21st and 26th degrees of east longitude. Its greatest length from Mount Olympus to Cape Tæuarus may be stated at 250 English miles; its greatest breadth, from the western coast of Akarnania to Marathôn in Attica, at 180 miles; and the distance eastward from Ambrakia across Pindus to the Magnesian mountain Homolê and the mouth of the Peneius is about 120 miles. Altogether its area is somewhat less than that of Portugal.¹ In regard however to all attempts at determining the exact limits of Greece proper, we may remark, first, that these limits seem not to have been very precisely defined even among the Greeks themselves; and next, that so large a proportion of the Hellenes were distributed among islands and colonies, and so much of their influence upon the world in general produced through their colonies, as to render the extent of their original domicile a matter of comparatively little moment to verify.

The chain called Olympus and the Cambunian mountains, ranging east and west and commencing with the Ægean Sea or the Gulf of Therma near the fortieth degree of north latitude, is prolonged under the name of Mount Lingon until it touches the Adriatic at the Akrokeraunian promontory. The country south of this chain comprehended all that in

Northern
boundary of
Greece—
Olympus.

¹ Compare Strong, *Statistics of the Kingdom of Greece*, p. 2; and Kruse, *Hellas*, vol. 1. ch. 3, p. 196.

ancient times was regarded as Greece or Hellas proper, but it also comprehended something more. Hellas proper¹ (or continuous Hellas, to use the language of Skylax and Dikæarchus) was understood to begin with the town and Gulf of Ambrakia: from thence northward to the Akroker-aunian promontory lay the land called by the Greeks Epirus—occupied by the Chaonians, Molossians, and Thesprotians, who were termed Epirots and were not esteemed to belong to the Hellenic aggregate. This at least was the general understanding, though Ætolians and Akarnanians in their more distant sections seem to have been not less widely removed from the full type of Hellenism than the Epirots were; while Herodotus is inclined to treat even Molossians and Thesprotians as Hellens.²

At a point about midway between the Ægean and Scardus Ionian seas, Olympus and Lingon are traversed and Pindus, nearly at right angles by the still longer and vaster chain called Pindus, which stretches in a line rather west of north from the northern side of the range of Olympus. The system to which these mountains belong seems to begin with the lofty masses of greenstone comprised under the name of Mount Scardus or Scordus (Schardagh),³ which is divided only by the narrow cleft containing the river Drin from the limestone of the Albanian

¹ Dikæarch. 31, p. 460, ed. Fuhr: —

Ἡ δ' Ἑλλάς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀμβρακίας
εἶναι δοκεῖ

Μάλιστα συνεχῆς τὸ πέρασ' αὐτῆ δ'
ἔργεται

Ἐπὶ τὸν πόταμον Πηνειὸν, ὡς Φι-
λέας γράφει,

Ὅρος τε Μαγνήτων Ὀμόλην κεκλη-
μένον.

Skylax, c. 35.—Ἀμβρακία—ἐντεῦθεν
ἄρχεται ἡ Ἑλλάς συνεχῆς εἶναι μέχρι
Πηνειοῦ ποτάμου, καὶ Ὀμολίου Μαγ-
νητικῆς πόλεως, ἣ ἐστὶ παρὰ τὸν
πόταμον.

² Herod. i. 146; ii. 56. The Mo-
lossian Alkôn passes for a Hellen
(Herod. vi. 127).

³ The mountain systems in an-
cient Macedonia and Illyricum,
north of Olympus, have been yet
but imperfectly examined: see
Dr. Griesebach, Reise durch Ru-

melicu und nach Brussa im Jahre
1839, vol. ii. ch. 13, p. 112 *seqq.*
(Götting. 1841), which contains
much instruction respecting the
real relations of these mountains
as compared with the different
ideas and representations of them.
The words of Strabo (lib. vii. Ex-
cerpt. 3, ed. Tzchucke), that Scar-
dus, Orbêlus, Rhodopê, and
Hæmus extend in a straight line
from the Adriatic to the Euxine,
are incorrect.

See Leake's Travels in Northern
Greece, vol. i. p. 335: the pass of
Tschangon near Castoria (through
which the river Devol passes from
the eastward to fall into the
Adriatic on the westward) is the
only cleft in this long chain from
the river Drin in the north down
to the centre of Greece.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



the Isthmus of Corinth, and then rises again to spread itself in Peloponnesus. One of its branches tends westward along the north of Arkadia, comprising the Akrokorinthus or citadel of Corinth, the high peak of Kyllêne, the mountains of Aroanii and Lampeia, and ultimately joining Erymanthus and Pholoê—while the other branch strikes southward towards the south-eastern cape of Peloponnesus, the formidable Cape Malea or St. Angelo,—and exhibits itself under the successive names of Apesas, Artemisium, Parthenium, Parnôn, Thornax, and Zarêx.

From the eastern extremity of Olympus, in a direction rather to the eastward of south, stretches the range of mountains first called Ossa and afterwards Pelion, down to the south-eastern corner of Thessaly. The long, lofty, and naked backbone of the island of Eubœa may be viewed as a continuance both of this chain and of the chain of Othrys: the line is farther prolonged by a series of islands in the Archipelago, Andros, Tênos, Mykonos, and Naxos, belonging to the group called the Cyclades or islands encircling the sacred centre of Delos. Of these Cyclades others are in like manner a continuance of the chain which reaches to Cape Sunium—Keôs, Kythnos, Seriphos, and Siphnos join on to Attica, as Andros does to Eubœa. And we might even consider the great island of Krête as a prolongation of the system of mountains which breasts the winds and waves at Cape Malea, the island of Kythêra forming the intermediate link between them. Skiathus, Skopelus, and Skyrus, to the north-east of Eubœa, also mark themselves out as outlying peaks of the range comprehending Pelion and Eubœa.¹

By this brief sketch, which the reader will naturally compare with one of the recent maps of the country, it will be seen that Greece proper is among the most mountainous territories in Europe. For although it is convenient, in giving a systematic view of the face of the country, to group the multiplicity of mountains into certain chains or ranges,

¹ For the general sketch of the mountain system of Hellas, see Kruse, *Hellas*, vol. i. ch. 4, p. 280—290; Dr. Cramer, *Geography of Ancient Greece*, vol. i. p. 3—8.

Respecting the northern regions, Epirus, Illyria, and Macedonia,

O. Müller, in his short but valuable treatise *Ueber die Makedoner*, p. 7 (Berlin, 1825), may be consulted with advantage. This treatise is annexed to the English translation of his *History of the Dorians* by Sir G. C. Lewis.

founded upon approximative uniformity of direction; yet in point of fact there are so many ramifications and dispersed peaks—so vast a number of hills and crags of different magnitude and elevation—that a comparatively small proportion of the surface is left for level ground. Not only few continuous plains, but even few continuous valleys, exist throughout all Greece proper. The largest spaces of level ground are seen in Thessaly, in Ætolia, in the western portion of Peloponnesus, and in Bœotia; but irregular mountains, valleys, frequent but isolated, land-locked basins and declivities, which often occur but seldom last long, form the character of the country.¹

The islands of the Cyclades, Eubœa, Attica, and Læonia, consist for the most part of micaceous schist, combined with and often covered by crystalline granular limestone.² The centre and west of Peloponnesus, as well as the country north of the Corinthian Gulf from the Gulf of Ambrakia to the strait of Eubœa, present a calcareous formation, varying in different localities as to colour, consistency, and hardness, but generally belonging or approximating to the chalk: it is often very compact, but is distinguished in a marked manner from the crystalline limestone above-mentioned. The two loftiest summits in Greece³ (both however lower than Olympus, estimated at 9700 feet) exhibit this formation—Parnassus which attains 8000 feet, and the point of St. Elias in Taygetus, which is

¹ Out of the 47,600,000 stremas (=12,000,000 English acres) included in the present kingdom of Greece, 26,500,000 go to mountains, rocks, rivers, lakes and forests—and 21,000,000 to arable land, vineyards, olive and currant grounds, &c. By arable land is meant land of cultivation; for a comparatively small portion of it is actually cultivated at present. (Strong, *Statistics of Greece*, p. 2, London 1842.)

The modern kingdom of Greece does not include Thessaly. The epithet *κοιλός* (hollow) is applied to several of the chief Grecian states—*κοιλὴ Ἑλίας*, *κοιλὴ Λακεδαιμῶν*, *κοιλὸς Ἀργός*, &c.

Κόρινθος ὀρθρὰ τε καὶ κοιλαίνεται, Strabo, viii. p. 381.

The fertility of Bœotia is noticed in Strabo, ix. p. 400, and in the valuable fragment of Dikæarchus, *Βίος Ἑλλάδος*, p. 140, ed. Fulr.

² For the geological and mineralogical character of Greece, see the survey undertaken by Dr. Fiedler, by orders of the present government of Greece, in 1834 and the following years (*Reise durch alle Theile des Königreichs Griechenland, im Auftrag der K. G. Regierung in den Jahren 1834 bis 1837*, especially vol. ii. p. 512—530).

³ Griesebach, *Reisen durch Rumelien*, vol. ii. ch. 13, p. 124.

not less than 7800 feet. Clay-slate and conglomerates of sand, lime and clay are found in many parts: a close and firm conglomerate of lime composes the Isthmus of Corinth: loose deposits of pebbles, and calcareous breccia, occupy also some portions of the territory. But the most important and essential elements of the Grecian soil consist of the diluvial and alluvial formations, with which the troughs and basins are filled up, resulting from the decomposition of the older adjoining rocks. In these reside the productive powers of the country, and upon these the grain and vegetables for the subsistence of the people depend. The mountain regions are to a great degree barren, destitute at present of wood or any useful vegetation, though there is reason to believe that they were better wooded in antiquity: in many parts, however, and especially in Ætolia and Akarnania, they afford plenty of timber, and in all parts pasture for the cattle during summer, at a time when the plains are thoroughly burnt up.¹ For other articles of food, dependence must be had on the valleys, which are occasionally of singular fertility. The low grounds of Thessaly, the valley of the Kephisus and the borders of the lake Kopais in Bœotia, the western portion of Elis, the plains of Stratus on the confines of Akarnania and Ætolia, and those near the river Pamisus in Messenia, both are now and were in ancient times remarkable for their abundant produce.

Besides the scarcity of wood for fuel, there is another serious inconvenience to which the low grounds of Greece are exposed,—the want of a supply of water at once adequate and regular.² Abundance of rain falls during the autumnal and winter months, little or none during the summer;

Irregularity of the Grecian waters—rivers dry in summer.

¹ In passing through the valley between Ceta and Parnassus, going towards Elateia, Fiedler observes the striking change in the character of the country: "Romelia (i. e. Akarnania, Ætolia, Ozolian Lokris, &c.), woody, well-watered, and covered with a good soil, ceases at once and precipitously; while craggy limestone mountains of a white grey colour exhibit the cold character of Attica and the Morea." (Reise, i. p. 213.)

conceives even the *πεδῖον πυρρῶρον* of Thebes as having in its primitive state been covered with wood (v. 227).

The best timber used by the ancient Greeks came from Macedonia, the Euxine, and the Propontis: the timber of Mount Parnassus and of Eubœa was reckoned very bad; that of Arcadia better (Theophrast. v. 2, 1; iii. 9).

² See Fiedler, *Reise, &c.* vol. i. pp. 84, 219, 362, &c.

The Homeric Hymn to Apollo

Both Fiedler and Strong (Sta-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



in Ætolia, between the Achelôus and Euênus, Strabo mentions the lake of Trichônis, besides several other lakes, which it is difficult to identify individually, though the quantity of ground covered by lake and marsh is as a whole very considerable. In Bœotia are situated the lakes Kopais, Hylikê, and Harma; the first of the three formed chiefly by the river Kephisus, flowing from Parnassus on the north-west, and shaping for itself a sinuous course through the mountains of Phokis. On the north-east and east, the lake Kopais is bounded by the high land of Mount Ptôon, which intercepts its communication with the Strait of Eubœa. Through the limestone of this mountain the water has either found or forced several subterraneous cavities, by which it obtains a partial egress on the other side of the rocky hill and then flows into the strait. The Katabothra, as they were termed in antiquity, yet exist, but in an imperfect and half-obstructed condition. Even in antiquity however they never fully sufficed to carry off the surplus waters of the Kephisus; for the remains are still found of an artificial tunnel, pierced through the whole breadth of the rock, and with perpendicular apertures at proper intervals to let in the air from above. This tunnel—one of the most interesting remnants of antiquity, since it must date from the prosperous days of the old Orchomenus, anterior to its absorption into the Bœotian league, as well as to the preponderance of Thebes—is now choked up and rendered useless. It may perhaps have been designedly obstructed by the hand of an enemy. The scheme of Alexander the Great who commissioned an engineer from Chalkis to reopen it, was defeated first by discontents in Bœotia, and ultimately by his early death.¹

The Katabothra of the lake Kopais are a specimen of the phænomenon so frequent in Greece—lakes and rivers finding for themselves subterranean passages through the cavities in the limestone rocks, and even pursuing their unseen course for a considerable distance before they emerge to the light of day. In Arcadia, especially, several remarkable examples of subterranean water-communication occur: this central region of Peloponnesus presents a cluster of such completely enclosed valleys or basins.²

Subter-
ranean
course of
rivers, out
of land-
locked
basins.

¹ Strabo, ix. p. 407.

in Morea, vol. iii. pp. 45, 153—

² Colonel Leake observes (Travels 155), "the plain of Tripolitza

It will be seen from these circumstances, that Greece, considering its limited total extent, offers but little motive

(anciently that of Tegea and Mantinea) is by far the greatest of that cluster of valleys in the centre of Peloponnesus, each of which is so closely shut in by the intersecting mountains, that no outlet is afforded to the waters except through the mountains themselves," &c. Respecting the Arcadian Orchomenus and its enclosed lake with Katabothra, see the same work, p. 103: and the mountain plains near Corinth, p. 263.

This temporary disappearance of the rivers was familiar to the ancient observers—οἱ καταπινόμενοι τῶν ποταμῶν (Aristot. Meteorolog. i. 13. Biodôr. xv. 49. Strabo, vi. p. 217; viii. p. 389, &c.).

Their familiarity with this phenomenon was in part the source of some geographical suppositions, which now appear to us extravagant, respecting the long subterranean and submarine course of certain rivers, and their reappearance at very distant points. Sophoklês said that the Inachus of Akarnania joined the Inachus of Argolis; Ibykus the poet affirmed that the Asôpus near Sikyon had its source in Phrygia; the river Inôpus of the little island of Delos was alleged by others to be an effluent from the mighty Nile; and the rhetor Zôilus, in a panegyric oration to the inhabitants of Tenedos, went the length of assuring them that the Alpheius in Elis had its source in their island (Strabo, vi. p. 271). Not only Pindar and other poets (Antigon. Caryst. c. 155), but also the historian Timæus (Timæi Frag. 127, ed. Göller), and Pausanias also with the greatest confidence (v. 7, 2), believed that the fountain

Arethusa at Syracuse was nothing also but the reappearance of the river Alpheius from Peloponnesus: this was attested by the actual fact that a goblet or cup (φιάλη) thrown into the Alpheius had come up at the Syracusan fountain, which Timæus professed to have verified,—but even the arguments by which Strabo justifies his disbelief of this tale, show how powerfully the phenomena of the Grecian rivers acted upon his mind. "If (says he, *l. c.*) the Alpheius, instead of flowing into the sea, fell into some chasm in the earth, there would be some plausibility in supposing that it continued its subterranean course as far as Sicily without mixing with the sea: but since its junction with the sea is matter of observation, and since there is no aperture visible near the shore to absorb the water of the river (στόμα τὸ καταπινον τὸ ῥεῦμα τοῦ ποταμοῦ), so it is plain that the water cannot maintain its separation and its sweetness, whereas the spring Arethusa is perfectly good to drink." I have translated here the sense rather than the words of Strabo; but the phenomena of "rivers falling into chasms and being drunk up" for a time is exact'y what happens in Greece. It did not appear to Strabo impossible that the Alpheius might traverse so great a distance underground; nor do we wonder at this when we learn that a more able geographer than he (Eratosthenês) supposed that the marshes of Rhinokolura, between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, were formed by the Euphratês and Tigris, which flowed underground for the length of 6000 stadia or furlongs (Strabo, xvi. p. 741;

and still less of convenient means, for internal communication among its various inhabitants.¹ Each village or township occupying its plain with the enclosing mountains,² supplied its own main wants, whilst the transport of commodities by land was sufficiently difficult to discourage greatly any regular commerce with neighbours. In so far as the face of the interior country was concerned, it seemed as if nature had been disposed from the beginning to keep the

Difficulty
of land-
communi-
cation and
transport
in Greece.

Seidel, *Fragm. Eratosth.* p. 194): compare the story about the Euphrates passing underground and reappearing in Ethiopia as the river Nile (*Pausan.* ii. 5, 3). This disappearance and reappearance of rivers connected itself, in the minds of ancient physical philosophers, with the supposition of vast reservoirs of water in the interior of the earth, which were protruded upwards to the surface by some gaseous force (see Seneca, *Nat. Quæst.* vi. 8). Pomponius Mela mentions an idea of some writers, that the source of the Nile was to be found, not in our (*οἰκουμένη*) habitable section of the globe, but in the Antichthon, or southern continent, and that it flowed under the ocean to rise up in Ethiopia (*Mela*, i. 9, 55).

These views of the ancients, evidently based upon the analogy of Grecian rivers, are well set forth by M. Letronne in a paper on the situation of the Terrestrial Paradise as represented by the Fathers of the Church; cited in A. von Humboldt, *Examen Critique de l'Histoire de la Géographie*, &c., vol. iii. p. 118–130.

¹ "Upon the arrival of the king and regency in 1833 (observes Mr. Strong), no carriage roads existed in Greece; nor were they indeed much wanted previously, as down to that period not a carriage, waggon, or cart, or any other description of vehicles, was to be

found in the whole country. The traffic in general was carried on by means of boats, to which the long indented line of the Grecian coast and its numerous islands afforded every facility. Between the seaports and the interior of the kingdom, the communication was effected by means of beasts of burden, such as mules, horses, and camels." (*Statistics of Greece*, p. 33.)

This exhibits a retrograde march to a point lower than the description of the *Odyssey*, where Telemachus and Peisistratus drive their chariot from Pylus to Sparta. The remains of the ancient roads are still seen in many parts of Greece (*Strong*, p. 34).

² Dr. Clarke's description deserves to be noticed, though his warm eulogies on the fertility of the soil, taken generally, are not borne out by later observers:—"The physical phenomena of Greece, differing from those of any other country, present a series of beautiful plains, successively surrounded by mountains of limestone; resembling, although upon a larger scale, and rarely accompanied by volcanic products, the craters of the Phlegræan fields. Everywhere their level surfaces seem to have been deposited by water, gradually retired or evaporated, they consist for the most part of the richest soil, and their produce is yet proverbially abun-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



The shape of Peloponnesus, with its three southern gulfs (the Argolic, Laconian and Messenian), was compared by the ancient geographers to the leaf of a plane-tree: the Pagasæan Gulf on the eastern side of Greece, and the Ambrakian Gulf on the western, with their narrow entrances and considerable area, are equivalent to internal lakes: Xenophôn boasts of the double sea which embraces so large a proportion of Attica, Ephorus of the triple sea by which Bœotia was accessible from west, north, and south—the Eubœan Strait opening a long line of country on both sides to coasting navigation.¹ But the most important of all Grecian gulfs are the Corinthian and the Saronic, washing the northern and north-eastern shores of Peloponnesus and separated by the narrow barrier of the Isthmus of Corinth. The former, especially, lays open Ætolia, Phokis, and Bœotia, as well as the whole northern coast of Peloponnesus, to water approach. Corinth in ancient times served as an entrepôt for the trade between Italy and Asia Minor—goods being unshipped at Lechæum, the port on the Corinthian Gulf, and carried by land across to Kenchreæ, the port on the Saronic: indeed even the merchant vessels themselves, when not very large,² were

tollitur.” (Plin. H. N. iv. 6.)

Strabo touches, in a striking passage (ii. p. 121—122), on the influence of the sea in determining the shape and boundaries of the land: his observations upon the great superiority of Europe over Asia and Africa in respect of intersecution and interpenetration of land by the sea-water are remarkable: ἡ μὲν οὖν Εὐρώπη πολυσχημονεστάτη πασῶν ἐστι, &c. He does not especially name the coast of Greece, though his remarks have a more exact bearing upon Greece than upon any other country. And we may copy a passage out of Tacitus (Agricol. c. 10), written in reference to Britain, which applies far more precisely to Greece: “nusquam latius dominari mare . . . nec litore tenus accrescere aut resorberi, sed influere penitus et

ambire, et jugis etiam atque montibus inseri velut in suo.”

¹ Xenophon, De Vectigal. c. 1; Ephor. Frag. 67, ed. Marx; Stephan. Byz. Βοιωτία.

² Pliny, H. N. iv. 5, about the Isthmus of Corinth: “Lechææ hinc, Cenchreæ illinc, angustiarum termini, longo et ancipitnavium ambitu (i. e. round Cape Malea), quas magnitudo plaustris transvehi prohibet: quam ob causam perfodere navigabili alveo angustias eas tentavere Demetrius rex, dictator Cæsar, Caius princeps, Domitius Nero—infausto (ut omnium exitu patuit) incepto.”

The ἑσιολχός, less than four miles across, where ships were drawn across, if their size permitted, stretched from Lechæum on the Corinthian Gulf, to Schœnus, a little eastward of Kenchreæ, on

conveyed across by the same route. It was accounted a prodigious advantage to escape the necessity of sailing round Cape Malea: and the violent winds and currents which modern experience attests to prevail around that formidable promontory, are quite sufficient to justify the apprehensions of the ancient Greek merchant, with his imperfect apparatus for navigation.¹

It will thus appear that there was no part of Greece Proper which could be considered as out of reach of the sea, while most parts of it were convenient and easy of access: in fact, the Arcadians were the only large section of the Hellenic name (we may add the Doric Tetrapolis and the mountaineers along the chain of Pindus and Tymphrêstus) who were altogether without a seaport.² But Greece Proper constituted only a fraction of the entire Hellenic world, during the historical age; there were the numerous islands, and still more numerous continental colonies, all located as independent intruders on distinct points of the coast,³ in the Euxine, the Ægean, the Mediterranean and the Adriatic;

Sea-com-
munication
essential
for the
islands and
colonies.

the Saronic Gulf (Strabo, viii. p. 380). Strabo (viii. p. 335) reckons the breadth of the *διολκός* at forty stadia (about $4\frac{3}{4}$ English miles); the reality, according to Leake, is $3\frac{1}{2}$ English miles (Travels in Morea, vol. ii. ch. xxix. p. 297).

¹ The north wind, the Etesian wind of the ancients, blows strong in the Ægean nearly the whole summer, and with especially dangerous violence at three points,—under Karystos, the southern cape of Eubœa, near Cape Malea, and in the narrow strait between the islands of Tênos, Mykonos, and Dêlos (Ross, *Reisen auf den Griechischen Inseln*, vol. i. p. 20). See also Colonel Leake's account of the terror of the Greek boatmen from the gales and currents round Mount Athos: the canal cut by Xerxes through the isthmus was justified by sound reasons (Travels in Northern Greece, vol. iii. c. 24, p. 145).

² The *Periplus* of Skylax enu-

merates every section of the Greek name, with the insignificant exceptions noticed in the text, as partaking of the line of coast; it even mentions Arcadia (c. 45), because at that time Lepreum had shaken off the supremacy of Elis, and was confederated with the Arcadians (about 360 B.C.): Lepreum possessed about twelve miles of coast, which therefore count as Arcadian.

³ Cicero (*De Republicâ*, ii. 2—4, in the fragments of that lost treatise, ed. Maii) noticed emphatically both the general maritime accessibility of Grecian towns, and the effects of that circumstance on Grecian character:—"Quod de Corintho dixi, id haud scio an liceat de cunctâ Græciâ verissime dicere. Nam et ipsa Peloponnesus fere tota in mari est: nec præter Phliuntios ulli sunt, quorum agri non contingant mare: et extra Peloponnesum Ænïanes et Dores et Dolopes soli absunt a mari.

and distant from each other by the space which separates Trebizond from Marseilles. All these various cities were comprised in the name Hellas, which implied no geographical continuity: all prided themselves on Hellenic blood, name, religion and mythical ancestry. As the only communication between them was maritime, so the sea, important even if we look to Greece Proper exclusively, was the sole channel for transmitting ideas and improvements, as well as for maintaining sympathies, social, political, religious, and literary, throughout these outlying members of the Hellenic aggregate.

The ancient philosophers and legislators were deeply impressed with the contrast between an inland and a maritime city: in the former, simplicity and uniformity of life, tenacity of ancient habits and dislike of what is new or foreign, great force of exclusive sympathy and narrow range both of objects and ideas; in the latter, variety and novelty of sensations, expansive imagination, toleration, and occasional preference for extraneous customs, greater activity of the individual and corresponding mutability of the state. This distinction stands prominent in the many comparisons instituted between the Athens of Periklês and the Athens of the earlier times down to Solên. Both Plato and Aristotle dwell upon it emphatically—and the former especially, whose genius conceived the comprehensive scheme of prescribing beforehand and ensuring in practice the whole course of individual thought and feeling in his imaginary community, treats maritime communication, if pushed beyond the narrowest limits, as fatal to the success and permanence of any wise scheme of education. Certain it is that a great difference of charac-

Quid dicam insulas Græciæ, quæ fluctibus cinctæ natant pæne ipsæ simul cum civitatum institutis et moribus? Atque hæc quidem, ut supra dixi, veteris sunt Græciæ. Coloniarum vero quæ est deducta a Graiis in Asiam, Thraciam, Italiam, Siciliam, Africam, præter unam Magnesium, quam unda non alluat? Ita barbarorum agris quasi adtexta quædam videtur ora esse Græciæ."

Compare Cicero, *Epistol. ad Attic.* vi. 2, with the reference to Dikæarchus, who agreed to a great extent in Plato's objections against a maritime site (*De Legg.* iv. p. 705; also *Aristot. Politic.* vii. 5-6). The sea (says Plato) is indeed a salt and bitter neighbour (μᾶλα γε μὴν ὄντως ἀλμυρὸν καὶ πικρὸν γειτόνημα), though convenient for purposes of daily use.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



time rendered each fraction more difficult to be attacked by the rest, so as to exercise a certain conservative influence in assuring the tenure of actual possessors: for the pass of Thermopylæ between Thessaly and Phokis, that of Kithærôn between Bœotia and Attica, or the mountainous range of Oneion and Geraneia along the Isthmus of Corinth, were positions which an inferior number of brave men could hold against a much greater force of assailants. But, in the next place, while it tended to protect each section of Greeks from being conquered, it also kept them politically disunited and perpetuated their separate autonomy. It fostered that powerful principle of repulsion, which disposed even the smallest township to constitute itself a political unit apart from the rest, and to resist all idea of coalescence with others, either amicable or compulsory. To a modern reader, accustomed to large political aggregations, and securities for good government through the representative system, it requires a certain mental effort to transport himself back to a time when even the smallest town clung so tenaciously to its right of self-legislation. Nevertheless such was the general habit and feeling of the ancient world, throughout Italy, Sicily, Spain, and Gaul. Among the Hellenes it stands out more conspicuously, for several reasons—first, because they seem to have pushed the multiplication of autonomous units to an extreme point, seeing that even islands not larger than Peparêthos and Amorgos had two or three separate city communities:¹ secondly, because they produced, for the first time in the history of mankind, acute systematic thinkers on matters of government, amongst all of whom the idea of the autonomous city was accepted as the indispensable basis of political speculation; thirdly, because this incurable subdivision proved finally the cause of their ruin, in spite of pronounced intellectual superiority over their conquerors; and lastly, because incapacity of political coalescence did not preclude a powerful and extensive sympathy between the inhabitants of all the separate cities, with a constant tendency to fraternise for numerous purposes, social, religious, recreative, intellectual, and æsthetical. For these reasons, the indefinite multiplication of self-governing towns, though in truth a phænomenon common to ancient Europe as contrasted with the large monarchies of Asia, appears more

¹ Skylax, Peripl. 59.

marked among the ancient Greeks than elsewhere: and there cannot be any doubt that they owe it, in a considerable degree, to the multitude of insulating boundaries which the configuration of their country presented.

Nor is it rash to suppose that the same causes may have tended to promote that unborrowed intellectual development for which they stand so conspicuous. Effects upon their intel-lectual de-velopment. General propositions respecting the working of climate and physical agencies upon character are indeed treacherous; for our knowledge of the globe is now sufficient to teach us that heat and cold, mountain and plain, sea and land, moist and dry atmosphere, are all consistent with the greatest diversities of resident men: moreover the contrast between the population of Greece itself, for the seven centuries preceding the Christian æra, and the Greeks of more modern times, is alone enough to inculcate reserve in such speculations. Nevertheless we may venture to note certain improving influences, connected with their geographical position, at a time when they had no books to study, and no more advanced predecessors to imitate. We may remark, first, that their position made them at once mountaineers and mariners, thus supplying them with great variety of objects, sensations, and adventures; next, that each petty community, nestled apart amidst its own rocks,¹ was sufficiently severed from the rest to possess an individual life and attributes of its own, yet not so far as to subtract it from the sympathies of the remainder; so that an observant Greek, commercing with a great diversity of half-countrymen, whose language he understood, and whose idiosyncrasies he could appreciate, had access to a larger mass of social and political experience than any other man in so unadvanced an age could personally obtain. The Phœnician, superior to the Greek on ship-board, traversed wider distances and saw a greater number of strangers, but had not the same means of intimate communion with a multiplicity of fellows in blood and language. His relations, confined to purchase and sale, did not comprise that mutuality of action and reaction which pervaded the crowd at a Grecian festival. The scene which here presented itself was a mixture of uniformity and variety highly stimulating to the observant faculties of a man of

¹ Cicero, de Orator. i. 44, "Ithacam illam in asperrimis saxulis, sicut nidulum, affixam."

genius,—who at the same time, if he sought to communicate his own impressions, or to act upon this mingled and diverse audience, was forced to shake off what was peculiar to his own town or community, and to put forth matter in harmony with the feelings of all. It is thus that we may explain in part that penetrating apprehension of human life and character, and that power of touching sympathies common to all ages and nations, which surprises us so much in the unlettered authors of the old epic. Such periodical intercommunion, of brethren habitually isolated from each other, was the only means then open of procuring for the bard a diversified range of experience and a many-coloured audience; and it was to a great degree the result of geographical causes. Perhaps among other nations such facilitating causes might have been found, yet without producing any result comparable to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But Homer was nevertheless dependent upon the conditions of his age, and we can at least point out those peculiarities in early Grecian society without which Homeric excellence would never have existed,—the geographical position is one, the language another.

In mineral and metallic wealth Greece was not distinguished. Gold was obtained in considerable abundance in the island of Siphnos, which, throughout the sixth century B.C., was among the richest communities of Greece, and possessed a treasure-chamber at Delphi distinguished for the richness of its votive offerings. At that time gold was so rare in Greece, that the Lacedæmonians were obliged to send to the Lydian Cræsus in order to provide enough of it for the gilding of a statue.¹ It appears to have been more abundant in Asia Minor, and the quantity of it in Greece was much multiplied by the opening of mines in Thrace, Macedonia, Epirus, and even some parts of Thessaly. In the island of Thasos, too, some mines were re-opened with profitable result, which had been originally begun, and subsequently abandoned, by Phœnician settlers of an earlier century. From these same districts also was procured a considerable amount of

¹ Herodot. i. 52; iii. 57; vi. 46—125. Bocckh, *Public Economy of Athens*, B. i. ch. 3.

The gold and silver offerings sent to the Delphian temple, even from the Homeric times (Il. ix. 405)

downwards, were numerous and valuable; especially those dedicated by Cræsus, who (Herodot. i. 17—52) seems to have surpassed all predecessors.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



to have been more generally eaten than the wheaten loaf:¹ but one or other of them, together with vegetables and fish (sometimes fresh, but more frequently salt), was the common food of the population; the Arcadians fed much upon pork, and the Spartans also consumed animal food, but by the Greeks generally fresh meat seems to have been little eaten, except at festivals and sacrifices. The Athenians, the most commercial people in Greece Proper, though their light, dry, and comparatively poor soil produced excellent barley, nevertheless did not grow enough corn for their own consumption: they imported considerable supplies of corn from Sicily, from the coasts of the Euxine, and the Tauric Chersonese, and salt fish both from the Propontis and even from Gades:² the distance from whence these supplies came, when we take into consideration the extent of fine corn-land in Bœotia and Thessaly, proves how little internal trade existed between the various regions of Greece Proper. The exports of Athens consisted in her figs and other fruit, olives, oil—for all of which she was distinguished—together with pottery, ornamental manufactures, and the silver from her mines at Laureion. Salt-fish doubtless found its way more or less throughout all Greece;³ but the population of other states in Greece lived more exclusively upon their own produce than the Athenians, with less of purchase and

¹ At the repast provided at the public cost for those who dined in the Prytaneium of Athens, Solon directed barley-cakes for ordinary days, wheaten bread for festivals (Athenæus, iv. p. 137).

The milk of ewes and goats was in ancient Greece preferred to that of cows (Aristot. Hist. Animal. iii. 15, 5–7); at present also cow's-milk and butter is considered unwholesome in Greece, and is seldom or never eaten (Kruse, Hellas, vol. i. ch. 4. p. 368).

² Theophrast. Caus. Pl. ix. 2, Demosthen adv. Leptin. c. 9. That salt-fish from the Propontis and from Gades was sold in the markets of Athens during the Peloponnesian war, appears from a fragment of the Marikas of Eupolis (Fr. 23, ed. Meineke; Stephan.

Byz. v. Γάδειρα):—

Πότερ' ἦν τὸ τάριχος, Φρύγιον ἢ
Γαδειρικόν;

The Phœnician merchant who brought the salt-fish from Gades, took back with them Attic pottery for sale among the African tribes of the coast of Morocco (Skylax, Peripl. c. 109).

³ Simonidês, Fragm. 109, Gaisford.—

Πρόσθε μὲν ἀμφ' ὤμοισιν ἔχων τρη-
χειῖαν ἄσιλλαν
'Ιχθῦς ἐξ Ἄργους εἰς Τεγέαν
ἔφερρον, &c.

The Odyssey mentions certain inland people who knew nothing either of the sea, or of ships, or the taste of salt: Pausanias looks for them in Epirus (Odys. xi. 121; Pausan. i. 12, 3).

sale¹—a mode of life assisted by the simple domestic economy universally prevalent, in which the women not only carded and spun all the wool, but also wove out of it the clothing and bedding employed in the family. Weaving was then considered as much a woman's business as spinning, and the same feeling and habits still prevail to the present day in modern Greece, where the loom is constantly seen in the peasants' cottages, and always worked by women.²

The climate of Greece appears to be generally described by modern travellers in more favourable terms than it was by the ancients, which is easily explicable from the classical interest, picturesque beauties, and transparent atmosphere, so vividly appreciated by an English or a German eye. Herodotus³, Hippokratês, and Aristotle, treat the climate of Asia as far more genial and favourable both to animal and vegetable life, but at the same time more enervating than that of Greece: the latter they speak of chiefly in reference to its changeful character and diversities of local temperature, which they consider as highly stimulant to the energies of the inhabitants. There is reason to conclude that ancient Greece was much more healthy than the same territory is at present, inasmuch as it was more industriously cultivated, and the towns both more carefully administered and better supplied with water. But the differences in respect of healthiness, between one portion of Greece and another, appear always to have been considerable, and this, as well as the diversities of climate, affected the local habits and character of the particular sections. Not merely were there great differences between the mountaineers and the inhabitants of the plains⁴—between Lokrians, Ætoli-
ans, Phokians, Dorians, Cætæans and Arca-

Climate—
better and
more
healthy
in ancient
times than
it is now.

Great dif-
ference
between
one part of
Greece and
another.

¹ Ἀποουργοὶ τε γὰρ εἰσι Πελοποννηῖοι (says Perikles in his speech to the Athenians at the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, Thucyd. i. 141) καὶ οὔτε ἰδία οὔτε ἐν κοινῷ χρήματά ἐστιν αὐτοῖς, &c. —ἄνδρες γεωργοὶ καὶ οὐ θαλάσσιοι, &c. (ib. c. 142).

² In Egypt the men sat at home and wove, while the women did out-door business; both the one and the other excite the surprise

of Herodotus and Sophoklês (Herod. ii. 35; Soph. Œd. Col. 340).

For the spinning and weaving of the modern Greek peasant women, see Leake, Trav. Morea, vol. i. pp. 13, 18, 223, &c.; Strong, Stat. p. 285.

³ Herodot. i. 142; Hippokrat. De Aëre, Loc. et Aq. c. 12-13; Aristot. Polit. xii. 6, 1.

⁴ The mountaineers of Ætolia

dians, on one hand, and the inhabitants of Attica, Bœotia, and Elis, on the other—but each of the various tribes which went to compose these categories had its peculiarities; and the marked contrast between Athenians and Bœotians was supposed to be represented by the light and heavy atmosphere which they respectively breathed. Nor was this all: for even among the Bœotian aggregate, every town had its own separate attributes, physical as well as moral and political: ¹ Orôpus, Tanagra, Thespiæ, Thebes, Anthêdôn, Haliartus, Korôneia, Onchêstus, and Plataea, were known to Bœotians each by its own characteristic epithet: and Dikæarchus even notices a marked distinction between the inhabitants of the city of Athens and those in the country of Attica. Sparta, Argos, Corinth, and Sikyôn, though all called Doric, had each its own dialect and peculiarities. All these differences, depending in part upon climate, site, and other physical considerations, contributed to nourish antipathies, and to perpetuate that imperfect cohesion, which has already been noticed as an indelible feature in Hellas.

The Epirotic tribes, neighbours of the Ætolians and Akarnanians, filled the space between Pindus and the Ionian Sea until they joined to the northward the territory inhabited by the powerful and barbarous Illyrians. Of these Illyrians the native Macedonian tribes appear to have been an outlying section, dwelling northward of Thessaly and Mount Olympus, eastward of the chain by which Pindus is continued, and westward of the river Axius. The Epirots were comprehended under the various denominations of Chaonians, Molossians, Thesprotians, Kassopæans, Amphilocheians, Athamānes, the Æthikes, Tymphæi, Orestæ, Paroræi, and Atintānes ²

are, at this time, unable to come down into the marshy plain of Wrachori, without being taken ill after a few days (Fiedler, Reise in Griech. i. p. 184).

¹ Dikæarch. Fragm. p. 145, ed. Fuhr—Βίος Ἑλλάδος. Ἱστοροῦσι δ' οἱ Βοιωτοὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχοντα ἴδια ἀκληρήματα λέγοντες ταῦτα— Τὴν μὲν αἰσχροκέρδειαν κατοικεῖν ἐν Ὀρώπῳ, τὸν δὲ φθόνον ἐν Ταναγραῖ, τὴν φιλορρεινίαν ἐν Θεσπιαῖς,

τὴν ὄψριν ἐν Θήβαις, τὴν πλεονεξίαν ἐν Ἀνθῆδονι, τὴν περιεργίαν ἐν Κορωνείᾳ, ἐν Πλαταίαις τὴν ἀλαζόμενιαν, τὸν πυρετὸν ἐν Ὀγγήστῳ, τὴν ἀναισθησίαν ἐν Ἀλιάρτῳ.

About the distinction between Ἀθηναῖοι and Ἀττικοί, see the same work p. 11.

² Strabo, vii. pp. 323, 324, 326; Thucyd. ii. 68. Theopompus (ap. Strab. l. c.) reckoned 14 Epirotic ἔθνη.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



(from which it was only separated by a strait narrow enough to be bridged over) than as an island. But the last five islands named in the Catalogue are all either wholly or partially Doric: no Ionic or Æolic island appears in it: these latter, though it was among them that the poet sung, appear to be represented by their ancestral heroes who come from Greece Proper.

The last element to be included, as going to make up the Greece of 776 B.C., is the long string of Doric, Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor. Ionic and Æolic settlements on the coast of Asia Minor—occupying a space bounded on the north by the Troad and the region of Ída, and extending southward as far as the peninsula of Knidus. Twelve continental cities, over and above the islands of Lesbos and Tenedos, are reckoned by Herodotus as ancient Æolic foundations—Smyrna, Kymê, Larissa, Neon-Teichos, Têmenos, Killa, Notium, Ægircœssa, Pitana, Ægæ, Myrina, and Gryneia. Smyrna, having been at first Æolic, was afterwards acquired through a stratagem by Ionic inhabitants, and remained permanently Ionic. Phokœa, the northernmost of the Ionic settlements, bordered upon Æolis: Klazomenæ, Erythræ, Teês, Lebedos, Kolophôn, Friênê, Myus, and Milêtus, continued the Ionic name to the southward. These, together with Samos and Chios, formed the Panionic federation.¹ To the south of Milêtus, after a considerable interval, lay the Doric establishments of Myndus, Halikarnassus, and Knidus: the two latter, together with the island of Kôs and the three townships in Rhodes, constituted the Doric Hexapolis, or communion of six cities, concerted primarily with a view to religious purposes, but producing a secondary effect analogous to political federation.

Such then is the extent of Hellas, as it stood at the commencement of the recorded Olympiads. To draw a

¹ Herodot. i. 143—150.

earlier.

THE HELLENIC PEOPLE GENERALLY, IN THE EARLY HISTORICAL TIMES.

THE territory indicated in the last chapter—south of Mount Olympus, and south of the line which connects the city of Ambrakia with Mount Pindus,—was occupied during the historical period by the central stock of the Hellenes or Greeks, from which their numerous outlying colonies were planted out.

Both metropolitans and colonists styled themselves Hellenes, and were recognised as such by each other: all glorying in the name as the prominent symbol of fraternity,—all describing non-Hellenic men or cities by a word which involved associations of repugnance. Our term *barbarian*, borrowed from this latter word, does not express the same idea; for the Greeks spoke thus indiscriminately of the extra-Hellenic world with all its inhabitants,¹ whatever might be the gentleness of their character, and whatever might be their degree of civilization. The rulers and people of Egyptian Thebes with their ancient and gigantic monuments, the wealthy Tyrians and Carthaginians, the phil-Hellene Arganthonius of Tartêssus, and the well-disciplined patricians of Rome (to the indignation of old Cato),² were all comprised in it. At first it seemed to have expressed more of repugnance than of contempt, and repugnance especially towards the sound of a foreign

¹ See the protest of Eratosthenês against the continuance of the classification into Greek and Barbarian, after the latter word had come to imply rudeness (ap. Strabo. ii. p. 66; Eratosth. Fragm. Seidel. p. 85).

² Cato, Fragment. ed. Lion. p. 46: ap. Plin. H. N. xxii. 1. A remarkable extract from Cato's letter to his son, intimating his strong antipathy to the Greeks; he pro-

scribes their medicine altogether, and admits only a slight taste of their literature:—"quod bonum sit eorum literas inspicere, non perdiscere. . . . Jurarunt inter se, Barbaros necare omnes medicinâ, sed hoc ipsum mercede faciunt, ut fides iis sit et facile disperdant. Nos quoque dictitant Barbaros et spurios, nosque magis quam alios, Opicos appellatione fœdant."



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Hekataëus, Herodotus, and Thucydidês,¹ all believed that there had been an ante-Hellenic period, when different languages, mutually unintelligible, were spoken between Mount Olympus and Cape Malea. However this may be, during the historical times the Greek language was universal throughout these limits—branching out however into a great variety of dialects, which were roughly classified by later literary men into Ionic, Doric, Æolic, and Attic. But the classification presents a semblance of regularity, which in point of fact does not seem to have been realised; each town, each smaller subdivision of the Hellenic name, having peculiarities of dialect belonging to itself. Now the lettered men who framed the quadruple division took notice chiefly, if not exclusively, of the written dialects,—those which had been ennobled by poets or other authors; the mere spoken idioms were for the most part neglected.² That there was no such thing as one Ionic dialect in the speech of the people called Ionic Greeks, we know from the indisputable testimony of Herodotus,³ who tells us that there were four capital varieties of speech among the twelve Asiatic towns especially known as Ionic. Of course the varieties would have been much more numerous if he had given us the impressions of his ear in Eubœa, the Cyclades, Massalia, Rhegium, and Olbia,—all numbered as Greeks and as Ionians. The Ionic dialect of the grammarians was an extract from Homer, Hekataëus, Herodotus, Hippokratês, &c.; to what living speech it made the nearest approach, amidst those divergencies which the historian has made known to us, we cannot tell. Sapphô and Alkæus in Lesbos, Myrtis and Korinna in Bœotia, were the great sources of reference for the Lesbian and Bœotian varieties of the Æolic dialect—of which there was a third variety, untouched by the poets, in Thessaly.⁴ The analogy between the different manifestations

¹ Hekataë. Fragm. 356, ed Klausen: compare Strabo, vii. p. 321; Herod. i. 57; Thucyd. i. 3—κατὰ πόλεις τε, ἕσσι ἀλλήλων συνίεσαν &c.

² "Antiqui grammatici eas tantum dialectos spectabant, quibus scriptores usi essent: ceteras, quæ non vigeant nisi in ore populi, non notabant." (Ahrens, De Dialecto Æolicâ, p. 2.) The same has been

the case, to a great degree, even in the linguistic researches of modern times, though printing now affords such increased facility for the registration of popular dialects.

³ Herod. i. 142.

⁴ Respecting the three varieties of the Æolic dialect, differing considerably from each other, see the

of Doric and Æolic, as well as that between the Doric generally and the Æolic generally, contrasted with the Attic, is only to be taken as rough and approximative.

But all these different dialects are nothing more than dialects, distinguished as modifications of one and the same language, and exhibiting evidence of certain laws and principles pervading them all. They seem capable of being traced back to a certain ideal mother-language, peculiar in itself and distinguishable from, though cognate with, the Latin; a substantive member of what has been called the Indo-European family of languages. This truth has been brought out in recent times by the comparative examination applied to the Sanscrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, German, and Lithuanian languages, as well as by the more accurate analysis of the Greek language itself to which such studies have given rise, in a manner much more clear than could have been imagined by the ancients themselves.¹ It is needless to dwell upon the importance of this uniformity of language in holding together the race, and in rendering the genius of its most favoured members available to the civilization of all. Except in the rarest cases, the divergencies of dialect were not such as to prevent every Greek from understanding, and being understood by, every other Greek,—a fact remarkable when we consider how many of their outlying colonists, not having taken out women in their emigration, intermarried, with non-Hellenic wives. And the perfection and popularity of their early epic poems was here of inestimable value for the diffusion of a common type of language, and for thus keeping together the sympathies of the Hellenic world.² The Homeric dialect became the standard followed by all Greek poets for the Hexameter, as may be seen particularly from the example of Hesiod—who adheres to it in the main, though his father was a native of the Æolic Kymê, and he himself resident at Askra,

Greek language essentially one with a variety of dialects.

valuable work of Ahrens, *De Dial. Æol.* sect. 2, 32, 50.

¹ The work of Albert Giese, *Ueber den Æolischen Dialekt* (unhappily not finished, on account of the early death of the author), presents an ingenious specimen of such analysis.

Dio Chrysostom on the attachment of the inhabitants of Olbia (or Borysthenes) to the Homeric poems: most of them, he says, could repeat the *Iliad* by heart, though their dialect was partially barbarised, and the city in a sad state of ruin (Dio Chrysost. *Orat.* xxxvi. p. 78, Reisk.).

² See the interesting remarks of

in Æolic Bœotia—and the early Iambic and Elegiac compositions are framed on the same model. Intellectual Greeks in all cities, even the most distant outcasts from the central hearth, became early accustomed to one type of literary speech, and possessors of a common stock of legends, maxims, and metaphors.

That community of religious sentiments, localities, and sacrifices, which Herodotus names as the third bond of union among the Greeks, was a phœnomenon not (like the race and the language) interwoven with their primitive constitution but of gradual growth. In the time of Herodotus, and even a century earlier, it was at its full maturity, but there had been a period when no religious meetings common to the whole Hellenic body existed. What are called the Olympic, Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian games (the four most conspicuous amidst many others analogous) were in reality great religious festivals—for the gods then gave their special sanction, name, and presence, to recreative meetings—the closest association then prevailed between the feelings of common worship and the sympathy in common amusement.¹ Though this association is now no longer recognised, it is nevertheless essential that we should keep it fully before us, if we desire to understand the life and proceedings of the Greek. To Herodotus and his contemporaries, these great festivals, then frequented by crowds from every part of Greece, were of overwhelming importance and interest; yet they had once been purely local, attracting no visitors except from a very narrow neighbourhood. In the Homeric poems much is said about the common gods, and about special places con-

¹ Plato, *Legg.* ii. 1. p. 653; *Kratylus*, p. 406; and *Dionys. Hal. Ars Rhetoric.* c. 1—2. p. 226—θεός μὲν γέ που πάντως πάσης ἡστυνοσοῦν πανηγύρεως ἡγεμῶν καὶ ἐπώνυμος οἶον Ἰδαμπίων μὲν, Ὀλύμπιος Ζεὺς τοῦ δ' ἐν Πυθοῖ, Ἀπολλῶν.

Apollo, the Muses, and Dionysus are ξυνεορτασταὶ καὶ ξυγχορευταὶ (*Homer, Hymn. to Apoll.* 146). The same view of the sacred games is given by Livy in reference to the Romans and the Volsci (ii.

36—37):—“Se, ut consceleratos contaminatosque, ab ludis, festis diebus, cœtu quodammodo hominum Deorumque, abactos esse . . . ideonos ab sede piorum, cœtu, concilioque abigi.” It is curious to contrast this with the dislike and repugnance of Tertullian:—“Idololatria omnium ludorum mater est—quod enim spectaculum sine idolo, quis ludus sine sacrificio?” (*De Spectaculis*, p. 369.)



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



proclaimed the large reward of 500 drachms for every Athenian who gained an Olympic prize, and the lower sum of 100 drachms for an Isthmiac prize. He counts the former as Pan-Hellenic rank and renown, an ornament even to the city of which the victor was a member—the latter as partial and confined to the neighbourhood.

Of the beginnings of these great solemnities we cannot presume to speak, except in mythical language: we know them only in their comparative maturity. But the habit of common sacrifice, on a small scale and between near neighbours, is a part of the earliest habits of Greece. The sentiment of fraternity, between two tribes or villages, first manifested itself by sending a sacred legation or *Theôria*¹ to offer sacrifices at each other's festivals and to partake in the recreations which followed; thus establishing a truce with solemn guarantee, and bringing themselves into direct connexion each with the god of the other under his appropriate local surname. The pacific communion so fostered, and the increased assurance of intercourse, as Greece gradually emerged from the turbulence and pugnacity of the heroic age, operated especially in extending

established by Theseus as funeral games for Skeirôn, and Pliny gives the same story (H. N. vii. 57). According to Hellanikus, the Athenian *Theôrs* at the Isthmian games had a privileged place (Plutarch, *l. c.*).

There is therefore good reason why Solôn should single out the Isthmionikæ as persons to be specially rewarded, not mentioning the Pythionikæ and Nemeonikæ—the Nemean and Pythian games not having then acquired Hellenic importance. Diogenes Laërt. (i. 55) says that Solôn provided rewards, not only for victories at the Olympic and Isthmian, but also ἀνάλογον ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων, which Krause (Pythien, Nemeen und Isthmien, sect. 3. p. 13) supposes to be the truth; I think, very probably. The sharp invective of

Timokreon against Themistoclês, charging him among other things with providing nothing but cold meat at the Isthmian games (Ἴσθμοῖ δ' ἐπαυδόχους γελοῖως ψυχρὰ κρέα παρέχων, Plutarch, Themistoc. c. 21), seems to imply that the Athenian visitors, whom the *Theôrs* were called upon to take care of at those games, were numerous.

¹ In many Grecian states (as at Ægina, Mantinea, Trœzen, Thasos, &c.) these *Theôrs* formed a permanent college, and seem to have been invested with extensive functions in reference to religious ceremonies: at Athens they were chosen for the special occasion (see Thucyd. v. 47; Aristotel. Polit. v. 8, 3; O. Müller, Æginetica. p. 135; Demosthen. de Fals. Leg. p. 380).

ancient habit: the village festivals became town festivals, largely frequented by the citizens of other towns, and sometimes with special invitations sent round to attract Theôrs from every Hellenic community,—and thus these once humble assemblages gradually swelled into the pomp and immense confluence of the Olympic and Pythian games. The city administering such holy ceremonies enjoyed inviolability of territory during the month of their occurrence, being itself under obligation at that time to refrain from all aggression, as well as to notify by heralds ¹ the commencement of the truce to all other cities not in avowed hostility with it. Elis imposed heavy fines upon other towns—even on the powerful Lacedæmon—for violation of the Olympic truce, on pain of exclusion from the festival in case of non-payment.

Sometimes this tendency to religious fraternity took a form called an Amphiktyony, different from the common festival. A certain number of towns entered into an exclusive religious partnership, for the celebration of sacrifices periodically to the god of a particular temple, which was supposed to be the common property and under the common protection of all, though one of the number was often named as permanent administrator; while all other Greeks were excluded. That there were many religious partnerships of this sort, which have never acquired a place in history, among the early Grecian villages, we may perhaps gather from the etymology of the word (Amphiktyons ² designates residents around, or neighbours, considered in the point of view of fellow-religionists), as well as from the indications preserved to us in reference to various parts of the country. Thus there was an Amphikytony ³ of seven cities at the holy island of Kalauria, close to the harbour of Trœzen. Hermionê, Epidaurus, Ægina, Athens, Frasiæ, Nauplia, and Orchomenus, jointly maintained the temple and sanctuary of Poseidôn in that island (with which it would seem

Amphiktyonies—exclusive religious partnerships.

¹About the sacred truce, Olympian, Isthmian, &c, formally announced by two heralds crowned with garlands sent from the administering city, and with respect to which many tricks were played, see Thucyd. v. 49; Xenophon, Hellen. iv. 7. 1—7; Plutarch,

Lycurg. 23; Pindar, Isthm. ii. 35. —σπονδοφόροι—χάρυκες ὡρᾶν—Thucyd. viii. 9—10 is also peculiarly instructive in regard to the practice and the feeling.

² Pindar, Isthm. iii. 26 (iv. 14); Nem. vi. 40.

³ Strabo, viii. p. 374.

that the city of Trœzen, though close at hand, had no connexion), meeting there at stated periods, to offer formal sacrifices. These seven cities indeed were not immediate neighbours, but the speciality and exclusiveness of their interest in the temple is seen from the fact, that when the Argeians took Nauplia, they adopted and fulfilled these religious obligations on behalf of the prior inhabitants: so also did the Lacedæmonians when they had captured Prasiæ. Again in Triphylia,¹ situated between the Pisatid and Messenia in the western part of Peloponnesus, there was a similar religious meeting and partnership of the Triphylians on Cape Samikon, at the temple of the Samian Poseidôn. Here the inhabitants of Makiston were entrusted with the details of superintendence, as well as with the duty of notifying beforehand the exact time of meeting (a precaution essential amidst the diversities and irregularities of the Greek calendar), and also of proclaiming what was called the Samian truce—a temporary abstinence from hostilities which bound all Triphylians during the holy latter custom discloses the salutary

facial in-
fluence in
creating

men's minds a common object of reverence, common duties, and common enjoyments; thus generating sympathies and feelings of mutual obligation amidst petty communities not less fierce than suspicious.²

¹ Strabo, viii. p. 343; Pausan. v. 6, 1.

² At Iolkos, on the north coast of the Gulf of Pagasæ, and at the borders of the Magnètes, Thessalians, and Achæans of Phthiôtis, was celebrated a periodical religious festival or panegyris, the title of which we are prevented from making out by the imperfection of Strabo's text (Strabo, ix. 436). It stands in the text as printed in Tzschocke's edition, Ἐνταῦθα δὲ καὶ τὴν Πυλαϊκὴν πανήγυριν συνετέλουν. The mention of Πυλαϊκὴ πανήγυρις, which conducts us only to the Amphiktyonic convocations of Thermopylæ and Delphi, is here unsuitable; and the best or Parisian MS. of Strabo

presents a gap (one among the many which embarrass the ninth book) in the place of the word Πυλαϊκὴν. Duthel conjectures τὴν Πελαϊκὴν πανήγυριν, deriving the name from the celebrated funeral games of the old epic celebrated by Akastus in honour of his father Pelias. Grosskurd (in his note on the passage) approves the conjecture, but it seems to me not probable that a Grecian panegyris would be named after Pelias. Πηλῖακὴν, in reference to the neighbouring mountain and town of Pelion, might perhaps be less objectionable (see Dikæarch. Fragm. p. 407—409, ed Fuhr.), but we cannot determine with certainty.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



subordinates called the Pylagoræ, attended at these meetings from each of the twelve races: a crowd of volunteers seem to have accompanied them, for purposes of sacrifice, trade, or enjoyment. Their special, and most important function, consisted in watching over the Delphian temple, in which all the twelve sub-races had a joint interest, and it was the immense wealth and national ascendancy of this temple which enhanced to so great a pitch the dignity of its acknowledged administrators.

The twelve constituent members were as follow:—Thessalians, Bœotians, Dorians, Ionians, Perrhæbians, Magnêtes, Lokrians, Cætæans, Achæans, Phokians, Dolopes, and Malians.¹ All are counted as *races* (if we treat the Hellenes as a race, we must call these *sub-races*), no mention being made of cities:² all count equally in respect to voting, two votes being given by the deputies from each of the twelve: moreover, we are told that in determining the deputies to be sent or the manner in which the votes of each race should be given, the powerful Athens, Sparta, and Thebes, had no more influence than the humblest Ionian, Dorian, or Bœotian city. This latter fact is distinctly stated by Æschinês, himself a Pylagore sent to Delphi by Athens. And so, doubtless, the theory of the case stood: the votes of the Ionic races counted for neither more nor less than two, whether given by deputies from Athens, or from the small towns of Erythræ and Priênê; and in like manner the Dorian votes were as good in the division, when given by deputies from Bœon and Kytinion in the little territory

¹ The list of the Amphiktyonic constituency is differently given by Æschines, by Harpokration, and by Pausanias. Tittmann (Ueber den Amphiktyonischen Bund, sect. 3, 4, 5) analyses and compares their various statements, and elicits the

catalogue given in the text.

² Æschines, de Fals. Legat. p. 280. c. 36.—Κατηριθμησάμην δὲ ἔθνη δώδεκα, τὰ μετέχοντα τοῦ ἱεροῦ . . . καὶ τούτων ἔδειξα ἕκαστον ἔθνος, ἰσόψηρον γεγόμενον, τὸ μέγιστον τῶν ἐλάττωνι, &c.

of Doris, as if the men delivering them had been Spartans. But there can be as little question that in practice the little Ionic cities and the little Doric cities pretended to no share in the Amphiktyonic deliberations. As the Ionic vote came to be substantially the vote of Athens, so, if Sparta was ever obstructed in the management of the Doric vote, it must have been by powerful Doric cities like Argos or Corinth, not by the insignificant towns of Doris. But the theory of Amphiktyonic suffrage as laid down by Æschinês, however little realised in practice during his day, is important inasmuch as it shows in full evidence the primitive and original constitution. The first establishment of the Amphiktyonic convocation dates from a time when all the twelve members were on a footing of equal independence, and when there were no overwhelming cities (such as Sparta and Athens) to cast in the shade the humbler members—when Sparta was only one Doric city, and Athens only one Ionic city, among various others of consideration not much inferior.

There are also other proofs which show the high antiquity of this Amphiktyonic convocation. Æschines gives us an extract from the oath which had been taken by the sacred deputies who attended on behalf of their respective races, ever since its first establishment, and which still apparently continued to be taken in his day. The antique simplicity of this oath, and of the conditions to which the members bind themselves, betrays the early age in which it originated, as well as the humble resources of those towns to which it was applied.¹ “We will not destroy any Amphiktyonic town—we will not cut off any Amphiktyonic town from running water”—such are the two prominent obligations which Æschines specifies out of the old oath. The second of the two carries us back to the simplest state of society, and to towns of the smallest size, when the maidens went out with their basins to fetch water from the spring, like the daughters of Keleos at Eleusis, or those of Athens from the fountain Kallirrhoê.² We may even conceive that the

Antiquity of the Council—simplicity of the old oath.

¹ Æschin. Fals. Legat. p. 279, c. 35:—Ἄμα δὲ ἐξ ἀρχῆς διεξῆλθον τὴν κτίσιν τοῦ ἱεροῦ, καὶ τὴν πρώτην σύνοδον γενομένην τῶν Ἀμφικτυόνων, καὶ τοὺς ὄρκους αὐτῶν ἀνέγνω, ἐν οἷς ἔνορχον ἦν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις μηδε-

μίαν τῶν Ἀμφικτυονίδων ἀνάστατον ποιῆσειν μηδ' ὕδάτων ναματιαίων εἰρξίν, &c.

² Homer, Iliad, vi. 457. Homer, Hymn to Dēmâtêr, 100, 107, 170. Herodot. vi. 137. Thucyd. ii. 15.

special mention of this detail, in the covenant between the twelve races, is borrowed literally from agreements still earlier, among the villages or little towns in which the members of each race were distributed. At any rate, it proves satisfactorily the very ancient date to which the commencement of the Amphiktyonic convocation must be referred. The belief of Æschines (perhaps also the belief general in his time) was, that it commenced simultaneously with the first foundation of the Delphian temple—an event of which we have no historical knowledge; but there seems reason to suppose that its original establishment is connected with Thermopylæ and Dêmêtêr Amphiktyonis, rather than with Delphi and Apollo. The special surname

Amphiktyonic meeting originally at Thermopylæ.

by which Dêmêtêr and her temple at Thermopylæ was known¹—the temple of the hero Amphiktyon which stood at its side—the word Pylæa, which obtained footing in the language to designate the half-yearly meeting of the deputies both at Thermopylæ and at Delphi—these indications point to Thermopylæ (the real central point for all the twelve) as the primary place of meeting, and to the Delphian half-year as something secondary and superadded. On such a matter, however, we cannot go beyond a conjecture.

The hero Amphiktyon, whose temple stood at Thermopylæ, passed in mythical genealogy for the brother of Hellên. And it may be affirmed, with truth, that the habit of forming Amphiktyonic unions, and of frequenting each other's religious festivals, was the great means of creating and fostering the primitive feeling of brotherhood among the children of Hellên, in those early times when rudeness, insecurity, and pugnacity did so much to isolate them. A certain number of salutary habits and sentiments, such as that which the Amphiktyonic oath embodies, in regard to abstinence from injury as well as to mutual protection,² gradually found their way into

Valuable influence of these Amphiktyonies and festivals in promoting Hellenic union.

¹ Herodot. vii. 200; Livy, xxxi. 32.

² The festival of the Amarynthia in Eubœa, held at the temple of Artemis of Amarynthus, was frequented by the Ionic Chalkis and Eretria as well as by the Dryopic Karystus. In a combat proclaimed between Chalkis and Eretria, to

settle the question about the possession of the plain of Lelantum, it was stipulated that no missile weapons should be used by either party; this agreement was inscribed and recorded in the temple of Artemis (Strabo, x. p. 448; Livy, xxxv. 38).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



find the Amphiktyons also about half a century afterwards undertaking the duty of collecting subscriptions throughout the Hellenic world, and making the contract with the Alkmæonids for rebuilding the temple after a conflagration.¹ But the influence of this council is essentially of a fluctuating and intermittent character. Sometimes it appears forward to decide, and its decisions command respect; but such occasions are rare, taking the general course of known Grecian history; while there are other occasions, and those too especially affecting the Delphian temple, on which we are surprised to find nothing said about it. In the long and perturbed period which Thucydidês describes, he never once mentions the Amphiktyons, though the temple and the safety of its treasures form the repeated subject² as well of dispute as of express stipulation between Athens and Sparta. Moreover, among the twelve constituent members of the council, we find three—the Perrhæbians, the Magnêtes, and the Achæans of Phthia—who were not even independent, but subject to the Thessalians; so that its meetings, when they were not matters of mere form, probably expressed only the feelings of the three or four leading members. When one or more of these great powers had a party purpose to accomplish against others—when Philip of Macedon wished to extrude one of the members in order to procure admission for himself—it became convenient to turn this ancient form into a serious reality: and we shall see the Athenian Æschinês providing a pretext for Philip to meddle in favour of the minor Bœotian cities against Thebes, by alleging that these cities were under the protection of the old Amphiktyonic oath.³

It is thus that we have to consider the council as an element in Grecian affairs—an ancient institution, one amongst many instances of the primitive habit of religious

¹ Herodot. ii. 180, v. 62.

² Thucyd. i. 112, iv. 118, v. 18. The Phokians in the Sacred War (B.C. 354) pretended that they had an ancient and prescriptive right to the administration of the Delphian temple, under accountability to the general body of Greeks for the proper employment

of its possessions — thus setting aside the Amphiktyons altogether (Diodor. xvi. 27).

³ Æschin. de Fals. Legat. p. 280. c. 36. The party intrigues which moved the council in regard to the Sacred War against the Phokians (B.C. 355) may be seen in Diodorus, xvi. 23—28 seq.

fraternisation, but wider and more comprehensive than the rest—at first purely religious, then religious and political at once, lastly more the latter than the former—highly valuable in the infancy, but unsuited to the maturity of Greece, and called into real working only on rare occasions, when its efficiency happened to fall in with the views of Athens, Thebes, or the king of Macedon. In such special moments it shines with a transient light which affords a partial pretence for the imposing title bestowed on it by Cicero—"commune Græciæ concilium;"¹ but we should completely misinterpret Grecian history if we regarded it as a federal council habitually directing or habitually obeyed. Had there existed any such "commune concilium" of tolerable wisdom and patriotism, and had the tendencies of the Hellenic mind been capable of adapting themselves to it, the whole course of later Grecian history would probably have been altered; the Macedonian kings would have remained only as respectable neighbours, borrowing civilization from Greece and expending their military energies upon Thracians and Illyrians; while united Hellas might even have maintained her own territory against the conquering legions of Rome.

The twelve constituent Amphiktyonic races remained unchanged until the Sacred War against the Phokians (B.C. 355), after which, though the number twelve was continued, the Phokians were disfranchised, and their votes transferred to Philip of Macedon. It has been already mentioned that these twelve did not exhaust the whole of Hellas. Arcadians, Eleans, Pisans, Minyæ, Dryopes, Ætolians, all genuine Hellenic states had no participation in it. are not comprehended in it; but all of them had a right to make use of the temple of Delphi, and to contend in the Pythian and Olympic games. The Pythian games, celebrated near Delphi, were under the superintendence of the Amphiktyons,² or of some acting magistrate chosen by and presumed to represent them. Like the Olympic games, they came round every four years (the interval

¹ Cicero, *De Invention.* ii. 23. The representation of Dionysius of Halikarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* iv. 25) overshoots the reality still more.

About the common festivals and Amphuktyonies of the Hellenic

world generally, see Wachsmuth, *Hellenische Alterthumskunde*, vol. i. sect. 22, 24, 25; also C. F. Hermann, *Lehrbuch der Griech. Staatsalterthümer*, sect. 11—13.

² Plutarch, *Sympos.* vii. 5, 1.

between one celebration and another being four complete years, which the Greeks called a *Pentaetêris*): the Isthmian and Nemean games recurred every two years. In its first humble form of a competition among bards to sing a hymn in praise of Apollo, this festival was doubtless of immemorial antiquity;¹ but the first extension of it into Pan-Hellenic notoriety (as I have already remarked), the first multiplication of the subjects of competition, and the first introduction of a continuous record of the conquerors, date only from the time when it came under the presidency of the Amphiktyons, at the close of the Sacred War against Kirrha. What is called the first Pythian contest coincides with the third year of the 48th Olympiad, or 585 B.C. From that period forward the games become crowded and celebrated: but the date just named, nearly two centuries after the first Olympiad, is a proof that the habit of periodical frequentation of festivals, by numbers and from distant parts, grew up but slowly in the Grecian world.

The foundation of the temple of Delphi itself reaches far beyond all historical knowledge, forming one of the aboriginal institutions of Hellas. It is a sanctified and wealthy place even in the *Iliad*: the legisla-

¹ In this early phase of the Pythian festival, it is said to have been celebrated every eight years, marking what we should call an *Octaetêris*, and what the early Greeks called an *Ennaetêris* (Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, c. 18). This period is one of considerable importance in reference to the principle of the Grecian calendar, for 99 lunar months coincide very nearly with eight solar years. The discovery of this coincidence is ascribed by Censorinus to Kleostratus of Tenedos, whose age is not directly known; he must be anterior to Meton, who discovered the cycle of nineteen solar years, but (I imagine) not much anterior. In spite of the authority of Ideler, it seems to me not proved, nor can I believe, that this octennial period with its solar and lunar coincidence was known to

the Greeks in the earliest times of their mythical antiquity, or before the year 600 B.C. See Ideler, *Handbuch der Chronologie*, vol. i. p. 366; vol. ii. p. 607. The practice of the Eleians to celebrate the Olympic games alternately after forty-nine and fifty lunar months, though attested for a later time by the Scholiast on Pindar, is not proved to be old. The fact that there were ancient octennial recurring festivals does not establish a knowledge of the properties of the octaeteric or enneateric period: nor does it seem to me that the details of the Bœotian *δαφνηφορία*, described in Proclus ap. Photium, sect. 239, are very ancient. See on the old mythical *Octaetêris*, O. Müller, *Orchomenos*, p. 218 *seqq.*, and Krause, *Die Pythien, Nemeen, und Isthmien*, sect. 4. p. 22.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



most serious believer, with all anxiety to interpret and obey them, often found himself ruined by the result. Yet the general faith in the oracle was noway shaken by such painful experience. For as the unfortunate issue always admitted of being explained upon two hypotheses—either that the god had spoken falsely, or that his meaning had not been correctly understood—no man of genuine piety

Oracles generally—habit of the Greek mind to consult them.

ever hesitated to adopt the latter. There were many other oracles throughout Greece besides Delphi and Dodona: Apollo was open to the inquiries of the faithful at Ptôon in Bœotia, at Abæ in Phokis, at Branchidæ near Miletus, at Patara in Lykia, and other places: in like manner Zeus gave answers at Olympia, Poseidôn at Tænarus, Amphiaraus at Thebes, Amphilochus at Mallus, &c. And this habit of consulting the oracle formed part of the still more general tendency of the Greek mind to undertake no enterprise without having first ascertained how the gods viewed it, and what measures they were likely to take. Sacrifices were offered, and the interior of the victim carefully examined, with the same intent: omens, prodigies, unlooked-for coincidences, casual expressions, &c. were all construed as significant of the divine will. To sacrifice with a view to this or that undertaking, or to consult the oracle with the same view, are familiar expressions¹ embodied in the language. Nor could any man set about a scheme with comfort until he had satisfied himself in some manner or other that the gods were favourable to it.

The disposition here adverted to is one of those mental analogies pervading the whole Hellenic nation, which Herodotus indicates. And the common habit among all Greeks of respectfully listening to the oracle of Delphi will be found on many occasions useful in maintaining unanimity among men not accustomed to obey the same political superior. In the numerous colonies especially, founded by mixed multitudes from distant parts of Greece, the minds of the emigrants were greatly determined towards cordial co-operation by their knowledge that the expedition had been directed, the Ækist indicated, and the spot either

¹ Xenophon, *Anab.* vii. 8. 20: —'Ο δὲ Ἀσιδᾶτης ἀκούσας ὅτι πάλιν ἐπ' αὐτὸν τεθυμένος εἶη Ξενοφῶν, ἐξαυλίζεται, &c. Xenophon. *Hellen.*

iii. 2, 22:—μή χρηστηριάζεσθαι τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐφ' Ἑλλήνων πολέμῳ—compare *Iliad*, vii. 450.

chosen or approved, by Apollo of Delphi. Such in most cases was the fact: that god, according to the conception of the Greeks, "takes delight always in the foundation of new cities, and himself in person lays the first stone."¹

These are the elements of union—over and above the common territory, described in the last chapter—with which the historical Hellenes take their start: community of blood, language, religious point of view, legends, sacrifices, festivals,² and also (with certain allowances) of manners and character. The analogy of manners and character between the rude inhabitants of the Arcadian Kynætha³ and the polite Athens, was indeed accompanied with wide differences: yet if we compare the two with foreign contemporaries, we shall find certain negative characteristics, of much importance, common to both. In no city of historical Greece did there prevail either human sacrifices⁴—or deliberate mutilation, such as cutting off the nose, ears, hands, feet, &c.—or castration—or selling of children into slavery—or polygamy—or the feeling of unlimited obedience towards one man: all customs which might be pointed out as existing among the contemporary Carthaginians, Egyptians, Persians, Thracians,⁵ &c. The habit of running, wrestling, boxing, &c.

General analogy of manners among the Greeks.

¹ Callimach. Hymn. Apoll. 55, with Spanheim's note; Cicero, De Divinat. i. 1.

² See this point strikingly illustrated by Plato, *Repub.* v. p. 470—471 (c. 16), and Isokrates, *Panegy.* p. 102.

³ Respecting the Arcadian Kynætha, see the remarkable observations of Polybius, iv. 17—23.

⁴ See vol. i. ch. vi. of this History.

⁵ For examples and evidences of these practices, see Herodot. ii. 162; the amputation of the nose and ears of Patarbêmis by Apries king of Egypt (Xenophon, *Anab.* i. 9—13). There were a large number of men deprived of hands, feet, or eyesight, in the satrapy of Cyrus the younger, who had inflicted all these severe punishments for the prevention of crime—he did not

(says Xenophon) suffer criminals to scoff at him (εἶα καταγελαῖν). The ἐκτομή was carried on at Sardis (Herodot. iii. 49)—500 παῖδες ἐκτόμια formed a portion of the yearly tribute paid by the Babylonians to the court of Susa (Herod. iii. 92). Selling of children for exportation by the Thracians (Herod. v. 6); there is some trace of this at Athens prior to the Solonian legislation (Plutarch, *Solôn*, 23), arising probably out of the cruel state of the law between debtor and creditor. For the sacrifice of children to Kronus by the Carthaginians, in troubled times (according to the language of Ennius "Pœni soliti suos sacrificare puellos"), Diodor. xx. 14; xiii. 86. Porphy. *de Abstin.* ii. 56: the practice is abundantly

in gymnastic contests, with the body perfectly naked—was common to all Greeks, having been first adopted as a Lacedæmonian fashion in the fourteenth Olympiad: Thucydîs and Herodotus remark, that it was not only not practised, but even regarded as unseemly, among Non-Hellens.¹ Of such customs, indeed, at once common to all the Greeks, and peculiar to them as distinguished from others, we cannot specify a great number; but we may see enough to convince ourselves that there did really exist, in spite of local differences, a general Hellenic sentiment and character, which counted among the cementing causes of a union apparently so little assured.

For we must recollect, that in respect to political sovereignty, complete disunion was among their most cherished principles. The only source of supreme authority to which a Greek felt respect and attachment, was to be sought within the walls of his own city. Authority seated in another city might operate upon his fears—might procure for him increased security and advantages, as we shall have occasion hereafter to show with regard to Athens and her subject allies—might even be mildly exercised, and inspire no special aversion: but still the principle of it was repugnant to the rooted sentiment of his mind, and he is always found gravitating towards the distinct sovereignty of his own Boulê or Ekklêsia. This is a disposition common both to democracies and oligarchies, and operative even among the different towns belonging to the same subdivision of the Hellenic name—Achæans, Phokians, Bœotians, &c. The twelve Achæan cities are harmonious allies, with a periodical festival which partakes of the character of a congress,—but equal and independent political communities. The Bœotian towns, under the presidency of Thebes, their reputed metropolis, recognise certain common obligations, and obey, on various particular matters, chosen officers named Bœotarchs,—but we shall see, in this as in other cases, the centrifugal ten-

illustrated in Movers' *Die Religion der Phönizier*, p. 298—304.

Arrian blames Alexander for cutting off the nose and ears of the satrap Bêssus, saying that it was an act altogether *barbaric* (*i. e.*

non-Hellenic), (*Exp. Al. iv. 7, 6*). About the *σεβασμὸς θεοπρεπῆς περὶ τὸν βασιλέα* in Asia, see Strabo, xi. p. 526.

¹ Thucyd. i. 6; Herodot. i. 10.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



a word such as *interpolitical*, to describe the transactions between separate Greek cities, so numerous in the course of this history.

As, on the one hand, a Greek will not consent to look for sovereign authority beyond the limits of his own city, so, on the other hand, he must have a city to look to: scattered villages will not satisfy in his mind the exigences of social order, security, and dignity. Though the coalescence of smaller towns into a larger is repugnant to his feelings, that of villages into a town appears to him a manifest advance in the scale of civilization.

Such at least is the governing sentiment of Greece throughout the historical period; for there was always a certain portion of the Hellenic aggregate—the rudest and least advanced among them—who dwelt in unfortified villages, and upon whom the citizen of Athens, Corinth, or Thebes looked down as inferiors. Such village residence was the character of the Epirots¹ universally, and prevailed throughout Hellas itself in those very early and even ante-Homeric times upon which Thucydides looked back as deplorably barbarous;—times of universal poverty and insecurity,—absence of pacific intercourse,—petty warfare and plunder, compelling every man to pass his life armed,—endless migration without any local attachments. Many of the considerable cities of Greece are mentioned as aggregations of pre-existing villages, some of them in times comparatively recent. Tegea and Mantinea in Arcadia represent in this way the confluence of eight villages and five villages respectively; Dymê in Achaia was brought together out of eight villages, and Elis in the same manner, at a period even later than the Persian invasion;² the like seems to have happened with Megara and Tanagra. A large proportion of the Arcadians continued their village life down to the time of the battle of Leuktra, and it suited the purposes of Sparta to keep them thus disunited; a policy which we shall see hereafter illustrated by the dismemberment of Mantinea (into its primitive component villages) which the Spartan contemporaries of Agesilaus carried into effect,

¹ Skylax, Periplus, c. 28-33; Thucyd. ii. 80. See Dio Chrysostom, Or. xlvii. p. 225. vol. ii. ed Reisk. —μᾶλλον ἠροῦντο διοικεῖσθαι κατὰ κώμας, τοῖς βαρβάροις ὁμοίους, ἢ

σχῆμα πόλεως καὶ ὄνομα ἔχειν.

² Strabo, viii. p. 337, 342, 386; Pausan. viii. 45, 1; Plutarch. Quæst. Græc. c. 17-37.

but which was reversed as soon as the power of Sparta was no longer paramount,—as well as by the foundation of Megalopolis out of a large number of petty Arcadian towns and villages, one of the capital measures of Epameinondas.¹ As this measure was an elevation of Arcadian importance, so the reverse proceeding—the breaking up of a city into its elementary villages—was not only a sentence of privation and suffering, but also a complete extinction of Grecian rank and dignity.

The Ozolian Lokrians, the Ætolians, and the Akarnanians maintained their separate village residence down to a still later period, preserving along with it their primitive rudeness and disorderly pugnacity.² Their villages were unfortified, and defended only by comparative inaccessibility; in case of need they fled for safety with their cattle into the woods and mountains. Amidst such inauspicious circumstances, there was no room for that expansion of the social and political feelings to which protected intra-mural residence and increased numbers gave birth; there was no consecrated acropolis or agora—no ornamented temples and porticos, exhibiting the continued offerings of successive generations³—no theatre for music or recitation, no gymnasium for athletic exercises—none of those fixed arrangements, for transacting public business

Village residents—numerous in early Greece—many of them coalesced into cities.

¹ Pausan. vii. 27, 2-5; Diod. xv. 72; compare Arist. Polit. ii. 1, 5.

The description of the διοίκισις of Mantinea is in Xenophon, Hellen. v. 2, 6-8: it is a flagrant example of his philo-Laconian bias. We see by the case of the Phokians after the Sacred War (Diodor. xvi. 60; Pausan. x. 3, 2) how heavy a punishment this διοίκισις was. Compare also the instructive speech of the Akanthian envoy Kleigenês at Sparta, when he invoked the Lacedæmonian interference for the purpose of crushing the incipient federation, or junction of towns into a common political aggregate, which was growing up round Olynthus (Xen. Hellen. v. 2, 11, 2). The wise and admirable conduct of Olynthus, and the reluctance

of the lesser neighbouring cities to merge themselves in this union, are forcibly set forth; also the interest of Sparta in keeping all the Greek towns disunited. Compare the description of the treatment of Capua by the Romans (Livy, xxvi. 16).

² Thucyd. i. 5; iii. 94. Xenoph. Hellen. iv. 6, 5.

³ Pausanias, x. 4, 1; his remarks on the Phokian πόλις Panopeus indicate what he included in the idea of a πόλις:—εἶγε ὀνομάσαι τις πόλιν καὶ τούτους, οἷς γε οὐκ ἀρχεῖα, οὐ γυμνάσιόν ἐστιν· οὐ θέατρον, οὐκ ἀγορὰν ἔχουσιν, οὐχ ὕδωρ κατερχόμενον ἐς κρήνην· ἀλλὰ ἐν στέγαις κοίλαις κατὰ τὰς καλύβας μάλιστα τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὕρσι, ἐνταῦθα οἰκοῦσιν ἐπὶ χαράδρῳ. ἕμως δὲ ὕροι γε τῆς

with regularity and decorum, which the Greek citizen, with his powerful sentiment of locality, deemed essential to a dignified existence. The village was nothing more than a fraction and a subordinate, appertaining as a limb to the organised body called the City. But the City and the State are in his mind and in his language one and the same. While no organisation less than the City can satisfy the exigences¹ of an intelligent freeman, the City is itself a perfect and self-sufficient whole, admitting no incorporation into any higher political unity. It deserves notice that Sparta even in the days of her greatest power was not (properly speaking) a city, but a mere agglutination of five adjacent villages, retaining unchanged its old-fashioned trim: for the extreme defensibility of its frontier and the military prowess of its inhabitants supplied the absence of walls, while the discipline imposed upon the Spartan exceeded in rigour and minuteness anything known in Greece. And thus Sparta, though less than a city in respect to external appearance, was more than a city in respect to perfection of drilling and fixity of political routine. The contrast between the humble appearance and the mighty reality is pointed out by Thucydides.² The inhabitants of the small territory of Pisa, wherein Olympia is situated, had once enjoyed the honourable privilege of administering the Olympic festival. Having been robbed of it and subjected by the more powerful Eleians, they took advantage of various movements and tendencies among the larger Grecian powers to try and regain it; and on one of these occasions we find their claim repudiated because they were villagers, and unworthy of so great a distinction.³ There was nothing to be called a city in the Pisatid territory.

Sparta—
retained its
old village
trim even
at the
height of
its power.

χώρας εἰσὶν αὐτοῖς εἰς τοὺς ὁμόρους,
καὶ ἐς τὸν σύλλογον συνέδρους καὶ
οὗτοι πέμπουσι τὸν Φωκικόν.

The μικρὰ πολισμάτα of the Pelasgians on the peninsula of Mount Athos (Thucyd. iv. 109) seem to have been something between villages and cities. When the Phocians, after the Sacred War, were deprived of their cities and forced into villages by the Amphiktyons, the order was that no village should contain more than fifty houses, and that no village should be within

the distance of a furlong of any other (Diodor. xvi. 60).

¹ Aristot. Polit. i. 1, 8. ἡ δ' ἐκ πλειόνων κωμῶν κοινωνία τέλειος πόλις, ἡ δὲ πάσης ἔχουσα πέρας τῆς αὐταρχείας. Compare also iii. 6, 14; and Plato, Legg. vii. p. 848.

² Thucyd. i. 10. οὔτε ξυνοικισθείσης πόλεως, οὔτε ἱεροῖς καὶ κατασκευαῖς πολυτελέσι χρησαμένης, κατὰ κώμας δὲ τῶ παλαιῷ τῆς Ἑλλάδος τρόπῳ οἰκισθείσης, φάνοιτ' ἂν ὑποδεεστέρα.

³ Xenophon, Hellen. iii. 2, 31.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



be displeased with my resolution to decline so insoluble a problem. No attested facts are now present to us—none were present to Herodotus and Thucydidês even in their age—on which to build trustworthy affirmations respecting the ante-Hellenic Pelasgians. And where such is the case, we may without impropriety apply the remark of Herodotus respecting one of the theories which he had heard for explaining the inundation of the Nile by a supposed connexion with the circumfluous Ocean—that “the man who carries up his story into the invisible world, passes out of the range of criticism.”¹

As far as our knowledge extends, there were no towns or villages called Pelasgian, in Greece Proper, since 776 B.C. But there still existed in two different places, even in the age of Herodotus, people whom he believed to be Pelasgians. One portion of these occupied the towns of Plakia and Skylakê near Kyzikus, on the Propontis; another dwelt in a town called Krêstôn, near the Thermaic Gulf.² There were moreover certain other Pelasgian townships which he does not specify—it seems indeed, from Thucydidês, that there were some little Pelasgian townships on the peninsula of Athos.³

leitung, ch. ii. p. 75—100); Dr. Thirlwall, *History of Greece*, vol. i. ch. ii. p. 36—64. The dissentient opinions of Kruse and Mannert may be found in Kruse, *Hellas*, vol. i. p. 398—425; Mannert, *Geographie der Griechen und Römer*, Part viii. *introduc.* p. 4. *seqq.*

Niebuhr puts together all the mythical and genealogical traces, many of them in the highest degree vague and equivocal, of the existence of Pelasgi in various localities; and then, summing up their cumulative effect, asserts (“not as an hypothesis, but with full historical conviction,” p. 54) “that there was a time when the Pelasgians, perhaps the most extended people in all Europe, were spread from the Po and the Arno to the Rhyndakus” (near Kyzikus), with only an interruption in Thrace. What is perhaps the most remark-

able of all, is the contrast between his feeling of disgust, despair and aversion to the subject, when he begins the inquiry (“*the name Pelasgi*,” he says, “*is odious to the historian, who hates the spurious philology out of which the pretences to knowledge on the subject of such extinct people arise*,” p. 28), and the full confidence and satisfaction with which he concludes it.

¹ Herodot. ii. 23:—‘Ο δὲ περὶ τοῦ Ὠκεάνου εἶπας, ἐς ἀφανὲς τὸν μῦθον ἀνερείχας, οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεγχον.

² That Krêstôn is the proper reading in Herodotus there seems every reason to believe—not Krotôn, as Dionys. Hal. represents it (*Ant. Rom.* i. 26)—in spite of the authority of Niebuhr in favour of the latter.

³ Thucyd. iv. 109. Compare the new *Fragmenta of Strabo*, lib. vii. edited from the Vatican MS. by

Now Herodotus acquaints us with the remarkable fact, that the people of Krêstôn, those of Plakia and Skylakê, and those of the other unnamed Pelasgian townships, all spoke the same language, and each of them respectively, a different language from their neighbours around them. He informs us, moreover, that their language was a barbarous (*i. e.* a non-Hellenic) language; and this fact he quotes as an evidence to prove that the ancient Pelasgian language was a barbarous language, or distinct from the Hellenic. He at the same time states expressly that he has no positive knowledge what language the ancient Pelasgians spoke—one proof, among others, that no memorials nor means of distinct information concerning that people could have been open to him.

This is the one single fact, amidst so many conjectures concerning the Pelasgians, which we can be said to know upon the testimony of a competent and contemporary witness: the few townships—scattered and inconsiderable, but all that Herodotus in his day knew as Pelasgian—spoke a barbarous language. And upon such a point he must be regarded as an excellent judge. If then (infers the historian) all the early Pelasgians spoke the same language as those of Krêstên and Plakia, they must have changed their language at the time when they passed into the Hellenic aggregate, or became Hellens. Now Herodotus conceives that aggregate to have been gradually enlarged to its great actual size by incorporating with itself not only the Pelasgians, but several other nations once barbarians;¹ the Hellens having been originally an inconsiderable people. Among those other nations once barbarian whom Herodotus supposes to have become hellenised, we may probably number the Leleges; and with respect to them as well as to the Pelasgians, we have contemporary testimony proving the existence of barbarian Leleges in later times. Philippus the Karian historian attested the present existence, and believed in the past existence, of Leleges in his country as serfs or dependent cultivators under the Karians, analogous to the Helots

Historical
Pelasgians
—spoke a
barbarous
language.

Kramer, and since by Tafel (Tübingen, 1844), sect. 34. p. 26,—
ῥήθησαν δὲ τὴν Χερρόνησον ταύτην
τῶν ἐκ Λήμνου Πελασγῶν τινες, εἰς
πέντε διηρημένοι πολισμάτα· Κλεω-

νάς, Ὀλόφυξον, Ἀχροθῶους, Δῖον,
Θύσσον.

¹ Herod. i. 57. προσκεχωρηχότων
αὐτῶ καὶ ἄλλων ἐθνέων βαρβάρων
συχνῶν.

in Laconia or the Penestæ in Thessaly.¹ We may be very sure that there were no Hellens—no men speaking the Hellenic tongue—standing in such a relation to the Karians. Among those many barbaric-speaking nations whom Herodotus believed to have changed their language and passed into Hellens, we may therefore fairly consider the Leleges to have been included. For next to the Pelasgians and Pelasgus, the Leleges and Lelex figure most conspicuously in the legendary genealogies; and both together cover the larger portion of the Hellenic soil.

Confining myself to historical evidence and believing that no assured results can be derived from the attempt to transform legend into history, I accept the statement of Herodotus with confidence as to the barbaric language spoken by the Pelasgians of his day, and I believe the same with regard to the historical Leleges—but without presuming to determine anything in regard to the legendary Pelasgians and Leleges, the supposed ante-Hellenic inhabitants of Greece. And I think this course more consonant to the laws of historical inquiry than that which comes recommended by the high authority of Dr. Thirlwall, who softens and explains away the statement of Herodotus until it is made to mean only that the Pelasgians of Plakia and Krêstôn spoke a very bad Greek. The affirmation of Herodotus is distinct, and twice repeated, that the Pelasgians of these towns and of his own time spoke a barbaric language; and that word appears to me to admit of but one interpretation.² To suppose that a

¹ Athenæ. vi. p. 271. Φίλιππος ἐν τῷ περὶ Καρῶν καὶ Λελέγων συγγράμματι, καταλέξας τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίων Εἰλωτας καὶ τοὺς Θετταλικούς πενέστας, καὶ Κᾶράς φησι τοῖς Λελέξιν ὡς οἰκέταις χρήσασθαι πάλαι τε καὶ νῦν.

² Herod. i. 57. Ἦντινα δὲ γλῶσσαν ἴεσαν οἱ Πελασγοί, οὐκ ἔχω ἀτρεχέως εἶπαι. εἰ δὲ χρεῶν ἐστὶ τεχμαιρομένοις λέγειν τοῖσι νῦν ἔτι ἐοῦσι Πελασγῶν, τῶν ὑπὲρ Τυρσηνῶν Κρηστώνη πόλιν οἰκεόντων. . . καὶ τὴν Πλακίην τε καὶ Σκυλάκην Πελασγῶ,

οἰκισάντων ἐν Ἑλλησπόντῳ . . . καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα Πελασγικά ἐόντα πολισματα τὸ οὐνομα μετέβαλε· εἰ τοῖσι δεῖ λέγειν, ἦσαν οἱ Πελασγοὶ βάρβαρον γλῶσσαν ἰέντες. Εἰ τοίνυν ἦν καὶ πᾶν τοιοῦτο τὸ Πελασγικόν, τὸ Ἀττικόν ἔθνος, ἐὸν Πελασγικόν ἅμα τῇ μεταβολῇ τῇ ἐς Ἑλληνας καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν μετέμαθε· καὶ γὰρ δὴ οὔτε οἱ Κρηστωνιῆται οὐδάμοισι τῶν νῦν σφέας περιτοιχεόντων εἰσὶ ὁμόγλωσσοι, οὔτε οἱ Πλακιηνοί· σφίσι δὲ, ὁμόγλωσσοι. δηλοῦσι δὲ, ὅτι τὸν ἠνεῖκαντο γλώσσης χαρακτῆρα με-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



tian, Phœnician, Assyrian, Lydian, and other languages, did not know how to distinguish bad Hellenic from non-Hellenic, is in my judgement inadmissible; at any rate the supposition is not to be adopted without more cogent evidence than any which is here found.

As I do not presume to determine what were the antecedent internal elements out of which the Hellenic aggregate was formed, so I confess myself equally uninformed with regard to its external constituents. Kadmus, Danaus, Kekrops—the eponyms of the Kadmeians, of the Danaans, and of the Attic Kekropia—present themselves to my vision as creatures of legend, and in that character I have already adverted to them. That there may have been very early settlements in continental Greece from Phœnicia and Egypt, is nowise impossible; but I see neither positive proof, nor ground for probable inference, that there were any such, though traces of Phœnician settlements in some of the islands may doubtless be pointed out. And if we examine the character and aptitude of Greeks, as compared either with Egyp-

Alleged ante-Hellenic colonies from Phœnicia and Egypt—neither verifiable nor probable.

of the twelve Ionic cities in Asia, he might properly point out the differences of speech among them as so many different *χαρακτήρες γλώσσης*: the limits of difference were fixed by the knowledge which his hearers possessed of the persons about whom he was speaking; the Ionians being all notoriously Hellenic. So an author describing Italy might say that Bolognese, Romans, Neapolitans, Genoese, &c., had different *χαρακτήρες γλώσσης*, it being understood that the difference was such as might subsist among persons all Italians.

But there is also a *χαρακτήρ γλώσσης* of Greek generally (abstraction made of its various dialects and diversities) as contrasted with Persian, Phœnician, or Latin—and of Italian generally, as contrasted with German or English. It is this comparison which Herodotus is taking when he describes the language spoken by the people of Krê-

stôn and Plakia, and which he notes by the word *βάρβαρον* as opposed to *Ἑλληνικόν*: it is with reference to this comparison that *χαρακτήρ γλώσσης* in the fifty-seventh chapter is to be construed. The word *βάρβαρος* is the usual and recognised antithesis of *Ἕλλην* or *Ἑλληνικός*.

It is not the least remarkable part of the statement of Herodotus, that the language spoken at Krêstôn and at Plakia was the same, though the places were so far apart from each other. This identity of itself shows that he meant to speak of a substantive language, not of a "strange jargon."

I think it therefore certain that Herodotus pronounces the Pelasgians of his day to speak a substantive language different from Greek; but whether differing from it in a greater or less degree (e. g. in the degree of Latin or of Phœnician) we have no means of deciding.

tians or Phœnicians, it will appear that there is not only no analogy, but an obvious and fundamental contrast: the Greek may occasionally be found as a borrower from these ultramarine contemporaries, but he cannot be looked upon as their offspring or derivative. Nor can I bring myself to accept an hypothesis which implies (unless we are to regard the supposed foreign immigrants as very few in number, in which case the question loses most of its importance) that the Hellenic language—the noblest among the many varieties of human speech, and possessing within itself a pervading symmetry and organization—is a mere confluence of two foreign barbaric languages (Phœnician and Egyptian) with two or more internal barbaric languages—Pelasgian, Lelegian, &c. In the mode of investigation pursued by different historians into this question of early foreign colonies, there is great difference (as in the case of the Pelasgi) between different authors—from the acquiescent Eumerism of Raoul Rochette to the refined distillation of Dr. Thirlwall in the third chapter of his History. It will be found that the amount of positive knowledge which Dr. Thirlwall guarantees to his readers in that chapter is extremely inconsiderable; for though he proceeds upon the general theory (different from that which I hold) that historical matter may be distinguished and elicited from the legends, yet when the question arises respecting any definite historical result, his canon of credibility is too just to permit him to overlook the absence of positive evidence, even when all intrinsic incredibility is removed. That which I note as Terra Incognita, is in his view a land which may be known up to a certain point; but the map which he draws of it contains so few ascertained places as to differ very little from absolute vacuity.

The most ancient district called Hellas is affirmed by Aristotle to have been near Dôdôna and the river Achelôus—a description which would have been unintelligible (since the river does not flow near Dôdôna), if it had not been qualified by the remark, that the river had often in former times changed its course. He states moreover that the deluge of Deukaliôn took place chiefly in this district, which was in those early days inhabited by the Selli, and by the people then called Græci, but now Hellenes.¹ The Selli (called by Pindar Helli) are

¹ Aristotel. Meteorol. 1.14.

mentioned in the Iliad as the ministers of the Dodonæan Zeus—"men who slept on the ground and never washed their feet," and Hesiod in one of the lost poems (the Eoiai) speaks of the fat land and rich pastures of the land called Hellopia wherein Dôdôna was situated.¹ On what authority Aristotle made his statement, we do not know; but the general feeling of the Greeks was different, connecting Deukaliôn, Hellen, and the Hellenes, primarily and specially with the territory called Achaia Phthiôtis, between Mount Othrys and Æta. We can neither affirm nor deny his assertion that the people in the neighbourhood of Dôdôna were called Græci before they were called Hellenes.

a people called Græci in any author earlier than this Aristotelian treatise; for the allusions to Alkman and Sophoklês prove nothing to the point.² Nor can we explain how it came to pass that the Hellenes were known to the Romans only under the name of Græci or Graii. But the name by which a people is known to foreigners is often completely different from its own domestic name, and we are not less at a loss to assign the reason, how the Rasena of Etruria came to be known to the Romans by the name of Tuscans or Etruscans.

¹ Homer, Iliad, xvi. 234; Hesiod, Fragm. 149, ed. Marktscheffel; Sophokl. Trachin. 1174; Strabo, vii. p. 328.

² Stephan. Byz. v. Γραικός.—Γραικες δὲ παρὰ τῷ Ἀλκμᾶνι αἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων μητέρες, καὶ παρὰ Σοφοκλεῖ ἐν Ποίμεσιν. ἐστὶ δὲ ἡ μεταπλασμός, ἢ τῆς Γραιξ εὐθείας κλίσις ἐστίν.

The word Γραικες in Alkman, meaning "the mothers of the Hel-

lenes," may well be only a dialectic variety of γρᾶες, analogous to κλάξ and ὄρνιξ, for κλείς, ὄρνις, &c. (Ahrens, De Dialecto Doricâ, sect. 11, p. 91; and sect. 31, p. 242), perhaps declined like γυναῖκες.

The term used by Sophoklês, if we may believe Photius, was not Γραικός, but Παικός (Photius, p. 480, 15; Dindorf, Fragment. Soph. 933; compare 455). Eustathius (p. 890) seems undecided between the two.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



invasion of Xerxes in 480 B.C. Until the year 560 B.C. (the epoch of Crœsus in Asia Minor, and of Peisistratus at Athens), the history of the Greeks presents hardly anything of a collective character: the movements of each portion of the Hellenic world begin and end apart from the rest. The destruction of Kirrha by the Amphiktyons is the first historical incident which brings into play, in defence of the Delphian temple, a common Hellenic feeling of active obligation.

But about 560 B.C., two important changes are seen to come into operation which alter the character of Grecian history—extricating it out of its former chaos of detail, and centralising its isolated phenomena:—1. The subjugation of the Asiatic Greeks by Lydia and by Persia, followed by their struggles for emancipation—wherein the European Greeks became implicated, first as accessories, and afterwards as principals. 2. The combined action of the large mass of Greeks under Sparta, as their most powerful state and acknowledged chief, succeeded by the rapid and extraordinary growth of Athens, the complete development of Grecian maritime power, and the struggle between Athens and Sparta for the headship. These two causes, though distinct in themselves, must nevertheless be regarded as working together to a certain degree—or rather the second grew out of the first. For it was the Persian invasions of Greece which first gave birth to a wide-spread alarm and antipathy among the leading Greeks (we must not call it Pan-Hellenic, since more than half of the Amphiktyonic constituency gave earth and water to Xerxes) against the barbarians of the East, and impressed them with the necessity of joint active operations under a leader. The idea of a leadership or hegemony of collective Hellas, as a privilege necessarily vested in some one state for common security against the barbarians, thus became current—an idea foreign to the mind of Solôn, or any one of the same age. Next came the miraculous development of Athens, and the violent contest between her and Sparta which should be the leader; the larger portion of Hellas taking side with one or the other, and the common quarrel against the Persian being for the time put out of sight. Athens is put down, Sparta acquires the undisputed hegemony, and again the anti-barbaric feeling manifests itself, though faintly, in the Asiatic expedi-

Second
period—
from 560-
300 B.C.

tions of Agesilaus. But the Spartans, too incompetent either to deserve or maintain this exalted position, are overthrown by the Thebans—themselves not less incompetent, with the single exception of Epameinôndas. The death of that single man extinguishes the pretensions of Thebes to the hegemony. Hellas is left, like the deserted Penelopê in the *Odyssey*, worried by the competition of several suitors, none of whom is strong enough to stretch the bow on which the prize depends.¹ Such a manifestation of force, as well as the trampling down of the competing suitors, is reserved, not for any legitimate Hellenic arm, but for a semi-hellenised² Macedonian, “brought up at Pella,” and making good his encroachments gradually from the north of Olympus. The hegemony of Greece thus passes for ever out of Grecian hands; but the conqueror finds his interest in reviving, as a name and pretext, the old miso-Persian banner, after it had ceased to represent any real or earnest feeling, and had given place to other impulses of more recent growth. The desolation and sacrilege once committed by Xerxes at Athens is avenged by annihilation of the Persian empire. And this victorious consummation of the once powerful Pan-Hellenic antipathy—the dream of Xenophon³ and the Ten Thousand Greeks after the battle of Kunaxa—the hope of Jason of Pheræ—the exhortation of Isokratês⁴—the project of Philip and the achievement of Alexander,—while it manifests the irresistible might of Hellenic and Macedonian arms in the then existing state of the world, is at the same time the closing scene of substantive Grecian life. The citizen-feelings of Greece become afterwards merely secondary forces, subordinate to the preponderance of Greek mercenaries under Macedonian order, and to the rudest of all native Hellen—the Ætolian mountaineers. Some few individuals are indeed

¹ Xenophon, *Hellen.* vii. 5, 27; Demosthenes, *De Coron.* c. 7, p. 231.—ἀλλά τις ἦν ἀκριτος καὶ παρὰ τούτοις καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἕλλησιν ἕρις καὶ ταραχὴ.

² Demosthen. *de Coron.* c. 21. p. 247.

³ Xenophon, *Anabas.* iii. 2, 25—26.

⁴ Xenophon, *Hellen.* vi. 1, 12; Isokratês, *Orat. ad Philipp.*, *Orat.*

v. p. 107. This discourse of Isokratês is composed expressly for the purpose of calling on Philip to put himself at the head of united Greece against the Persians: the *Oratio* iv., called *Panegyrica*, recommends a combination of all Greeks for the same purpose, but under the hegemony of Athens, putting aside all intestine differences: see *Orat.* iv. p. 45—68.

found, even in the third century B.C., worthy of the best times of Hellas, and the Achæan confederation of that century is an honourable attempt to contend against irresistible difficulties: but on the whole, that free, social, and political march, which gives so much interest to the earlier centuries, is irrevocably banished from Greece after the generation of Alexander the Great.

The foregoing brief sketch will show that, taking the period from Cræsus and Peisistratus down to the generation of Alexander (560-300 B.C.), the phænomena of Hellas generally, and her relations both foreign and inter-political, admit of being grouped together in masses with continued dependence on one or a few predominant circumstances. They may be said to constitute a sort of historical epopee, analogous to that which Herodotus has constructed out of the wars between Greeks and barbarians from the legends of Iô and Eurôpa down to the repulse of Xerxes. But when we are called back to the period between 776 and 560 B.C., the phænomena brought to our knowledge are scanty in number—exhibiting few common feelings or interests, and no tendency towards any one assignable purpose. To impart attraction to this first period so obscure and unpromising, we shall be compelled to consider it in its relation with the second; partly as a preparation, partly as a contrast.

Of the extra-Peloponnesian Greeks north of Attica, during these two centuries, we know absolutely nothing; but it will be possible to furnish some information respecting the early condition and struggles of the great Dorian states in Peloponnesus, and respecting the rise of Sparta from the second to the first place in the comparative scale of Grecian powers. Athens becomes first known to us at the legislation of Drako and the attempt of Kylôn (620 B.C.) to make himself despot; and we gather some facts concerning the Ionic citiês in Eubœa and Asia Minor during the century of their chief prosperity, prior to the reign and conquests of Cræsus. In this way we shall form to ourselves some idea of the growth of Sparta and Athens,—of the short-lived and energetic development of the Ionic Greeks—and of the slow working of those causes which tended to bring about increased Hel-

Important differences between the two—the first period preparatory and very little known.

Extra-Peloponnesian Greeks (north of Attica) not known at all during the first period.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



the territory between the lower course of the river Peneius and Mount Olympus. The Magnètes¹ dwelt along the eastern coast, between Mount Ossa and Pelion on one side and the Ægean on the other, comprising the south-eastern cape and the eastern coast of the Gulf of Pagasæ as far as Iôlkos. The Achæans occupied the territory called Phthiôtis, extending from near Mount Pindus on the west to the Gulf of Pagasæ on the east²—along the mountain chain of Othrys with its lateral projections northerly into the Thessalian plain, and southerly even to its junction with Cæta. The three tribes of the Malians dwelt between Achæa Phthiôtis and Thermopylæ, including both Trachin and Herakleia. Westward of Achæa Phthiôtis, the lofty region of Pindus or Tymphrêtus, with its declivities both westward and eastward, was occupied by the Dolopes.

All these five tribes or subdivisions—Perrhæbians, Magnètes, Achæans of Phthiôtis, Malians, and Dolopes, together with certain Epirotic and Macedonian tribes besides, beyond the boundaries of Pindus and Olympus—were in a state of irregular dependence upon the Thessalians, who occupied the central plain or basin drained by the Peneius. That river receives the streams from Olympus, from Pindus, and from Othrys—flowing through a region which was supposed by its inhabitants to have been once a lake, until Poseidôn cut open the defile of Tempê, through which the waters found an efflux. In travelling northward from Thermopylæ, the commencement of this fertile region—the amplest space of land continuously productive which Hellas presents—is strikingly marked by the steep rock and ancient fortress of Thaumaki³; from whence the traveller, passing over the mountains of Achæa Phthiôtis and Othrys, sees before him the plains and low declivities which reach north-

which Xerxes and his army passed out of Macedonia into Perrhæbia: see the description of the pass and the neighbouring country in Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece*, ch. xxviii. vol. iii. p. 338—348; compare Livy, xlii. 53.

¹ Skylax, *Periplus*, c. 66; Herodot vii. 183—188.

² Skylax, *Peripl.* c. 64; Strabo,

ix. p. 433—434. Sophoklês included the territory of Trachin in the limits of Phthiôtis (Strabo, *l. c.*). Herodotus considers Phthiôtis as terminating a little north of the river Spercheius (vii. 198).

³ See the description of Thaumaki in Livy, xxxii. 4. and in Dr. Holland's *Travels*, ch. xvii. vol. ii. p. 112—now Thomoko.

ward across Thessaly to Olympus. A narrow strip of coast—in the interior of the Gulf of Pagasæ, between the Magnètes and the Achæans, and containing the towns of Amphanæum and Pagasæ¹—belonged to this proper territory of Thessaly, but its great expansion was inland: within it were situated the cities of Pheræ, Pharsalus, Skotussa, Larissa, Krannôn, Atrax, Pharkadôn, Triikka, Metropolis, Pelinna, &c.

The abundance of corn and cattle from the neighbouring plains sustained in these cities a numerous population, and above all a proud and disorderly noblesse, whose manners bore much resemblance to those of the heroic times. They were violent in their behaviour, eager in armed feud, but unaccustomed to political discussion or compromise; faithless as to obligations, yet at the same time generous in their hospitalities, and much given to the enjoyments of the table.² Breeding the finest horses in Greece they

¹ Skylax, Peripl. c. 65. Hesychius (v. Παγασίτης Ἀπόλλων) seems to reckon Pagasæ as Achæan.

About the towns in Thessaly and their various positions, see Mannert, Geograph. der Gr. und Römer, Part vii. book iii. ch. 8. and 9.

There was an ancient religious ceremony, celebrated by the Delphians every ninth year (Ennaëtêris): a procession was sent from Delphi to the pass of Tempê, consisting of well-born youths under an archi-theôr, who represented the proceeding ascribed by an old legend to Apollo; that god was believed to have gone thither to receive expiation after the slaughter of the serpent Pytho: at least this was one among several discrepant legends. The chief youth plucked and brought back a branch from the sacred laurel at Tempê, as a token that he had fulfilled his mission: he returned by "the sacred road," and broke his fast at a place called Δειπνιάς near Larissa. A solemn festival, frequented by a large concourse of

people from the surrounding regions, was celebrated on this occasion at Tempê, in honour of Apollo Tempeitês (Ἀμπλοῦνι Τεμπείτῃ in the Æolic dialect of Thessaly: see Inscript. in Boeckh, Corp. Ins. No. 1767). The procession was accompanied by a flute-player.

See Plutarch, Quæst. Græc. ch. xi. p. 292; De Musicâ, ch. xiv. p. 1136; Ælian, V. H. iii. 1; Stephan. Byz. v. Δειπνιάς.

It is important to notice these religious processions as establishing intercourse and sympathies between the distant members of Hellas: but the inferences which O. Müller (Dorians, B. ii. 1, p. 222) would build upon them, as to the original seat of the Dorians and the worship of Apollo, are not to be trusted.

² Plato, Krito, c. 15, p. 53. - ἐκεῖ γὰρ δὴ πλείστη ἀταξία καὶ ἀκολασία (compare the beginning of the Menôn)—a remark the more striking, since he had just before described the Bœotian Thebes as a well-regulated city, though both Dikæarchus and Polybius represent

were distinguished for their excellence as cavalry; but their infantry is little noticed, nor do the Thessalian cities seem to have possessed that congregation of free and tolerably equal citizens, each master of his own arms, out of whom the ranks of hoplites were constituted. The warlike nobles, such as the Aleuadæ at Larissa, the Skopadæ at Krannôn, despising everything but equestrian service for themselves, furnished, from their extensive herds on the plain, horses for the poorer soldiers. These Thessalian cities exhibit the extreme of turbulent oligarchy, occasionally trampled down by some one man of great vigour, but little tempered by that sense of political communion and reverence for established law, which was found among the better cities of Hellas. Both in Athens and Sparta, so different in many respects from each other, this feeling will be found, if not indeed constantly predominant, yet constantly present and operative. Both of them exhibit a contrast with Larissa or Pheræ not unlike that between Rome and Capua—the former with her endless civil disputes constitutionally conducted, admitting the joint action of parties against a common foe; the latter with her abundant soil enriching a luxurious oligarchy, and impelled according to the feuds of her great proprietors, the Magii, Blossii, and Jubellii.¹

The Thessalians are indeed in their character and capacity as much Epirotic or Macedonian as Hellenic, forming a sort of link between the two. For the Macedonians, though trained in aftertimes upon Grecian principles by the genius of Philip and Alexander, so as to constitute the celebrated heavy-armed phalanx, were originally (even in the Peloponnesian war) distinguished chiefly for the excellence of their cavalry, like the Thessalian;² while the broad-brimmed hat or kausia, and the short spreading mantle or chlamys, were common to both.

We are told that the Thessalians were originally

it in their times as so much the contrary.

See also Demosthen. Olynth. i. c. 9, p. 16, cont. Aristocrat. c. 29, p. 657; Schol. Eurip. Phœniss. 1466; Theopomp. Fragment. 54—178, ed. Didot; Aristophanês, Plut. 521.

The march of political affairs in Thessaly is understood from Xe-

noph. Hellen. vi. 1; compare Anab. i. 1, 10, and Thucyd. iv. 78.

¹ See Cicero, Orat. in Pison. c. 11; De Leg. Agrar. cont. Rullum, c. 34—35.

² Compare the Thessalian cavalry as described by Polybius, iv. 8, with the Macedonian as described by Thucydides, ii. 100.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



served as their followers in the cavalry, and were in a condition of villenage,—yet with the important reserve that they could not be sold out of the country,¹ that they had a permanent tenure in the soil, and that they maintained among one another the relations of family and village. This last-mentioned order of men, in Thessaly called the Penestæ,

Condition
of the pc-
pulation of
Thessaly—
a villein
race—the
Penestæ.

is assimilated by all ancient authors to the Helots of Laconia, and in both cases the danger attending such a social arrangement is noticed by Plato and Aristotle. For the Helots as well as the Penestæ had their own common language and mutual sympathies, a separate residence,

arms, and courage; to a certain extent, also, they possessed the means of acquiring property, since we are told that some of the Penestæ were richer than their masters.² So many means of action, combined with a degraded social position, gave rise to frequent revolt and incessant apprehensions. As a general rule, indeed, the cultivation of the soil by slaves or dependents, for the benefit of proprietors in the cities, prevailed throughout most parts of Greece. The rich men of Thebes, Argos, Athens or Elis, must have derived their incomes in the same manner; but it seems that there was often in other places a larger intermixture

¹ The words ascribed by Xenophon (Hellen. vi. 1, 11) to Jason of Pheræ, and the lines of Theocritus (xvi. 34), attest the numbers and vigour of the Thessalian Penestæ, and the great wealth of the Aleuadæ and Skopadæ. Both these families acquired celebrity from the verses of Simonides; he was patronised and his muse invoked by both of them; see Ælian, V. H. xii. 1; Ovid, Ibis, 512; Quintilian, xi. 2, 15. Pindar also boasts of his friendship with Thorax the Aleuad (Pyth. x. 99).

The Thessalian ἀνδραποδισταὶ alluded to in Aristophanês (Plutus, 521) must have sold men out of the country for slaves—either refractory Penestæ, or Perrhæbian, Magnetic, and Achæan freemen, seized by violence: the Athenian comic poet Mnêsimachus, in jest-

ing on the voracity of the Pharsalians, exclaims, ap. Athenæ. x. p. 418—

ἄρα που

ὀπτήν κατεσθίουσι πόλιν Ἀχαϊκήν.

Pagasæ was celebrated as a place of export for slaves (Hermippus ap. Athenæ. i. 49).

Menôn of Pharsalus assisted the Athenians against Amphipolis with 200 or 300, "Penestæ on horseback, of his own"—(Πενέσταις ἰδίοις) Demosthen. περὶ Συνταξ. c. 9, p. 173, cont. Aristocrat. c. 51, p. 687.

² Archemachus ap. Athenæ. vi. p. 264; Plato, Legg. vi. p. 777; Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 3, vii. 9, 9; Dionys. Halic. A. R. ii. 84.

Both Plato and Aristotle insist on the extreme danger of having numerous slaves, fellow-countrymen and of one language—(ὁμόφυλοι, ὁμόφωνοι, πατριῶται ἀλλήλων).

of bought foreign slaves, and also that the number, fellow-feeling and courage of the degraded village population was nowhere so great as in Thessaly and Laconia. Now the origin of the Penestæ in Thessaly is ascribed to the conquest of the territory by the Thesprotians, as that of the Helots in Laconia is traced to the Dorian conquest. The victors in both countries are said to have entered into a convention with the vanquished population, whereby the latter became serfs and tillers of the land for the benefit of the former, but were at the same time protected in their holdings, constituted subjects of the state, and secured against being sold away as slaves. Even in the Thessalian cities, though inhabited in common by Thessalian proprietors and their Penestæ, the quarters assigned to each were to a great degree separated: what was called the Free Agora could not be trodden by any Penest except when specially summoned.¹

Who the people were, whom the conquest of Thessaly by the Thesprotians reduced to this predial villenage, we find differently stated. According to Theopompus, they were Perrhæbians and Magnètes; according to others, Pelasgians; while Archemachus alleged them to have been Bœotians of the territory of Arnê²—some emigrating to escape the conquerors, others remaining and accepting the condition of serfs. But the conquest, assuming it as a fact, occurred at far too early a day to allow of our making out either the manner in which it came to pass or the state of things which preceded it. The Pelasgians whom Herodotus saw at Krêstôn are affirmed by him to have been the descendants of those who quitted Thessaly to escape³ the invading Thesprotians; though others held that the Bœotians, driven on this occasion from their habitations on the Gulf of Pagasæ near the Achæans of Phthiôtis, precipitated them-

Who the Penestæ were—doubtful.

¹ Aristot. Polit. vii. 11, 2.

² Theopompus and Archemachus ap. Athenæ. vi. p. 264—266; compare Thucyd. ii. 12; Steph. Byz. v. Ἀρνῆ—the converse of this story in Strabo, ix. p. 401—411, of the Thessalian Arnê being settled from Bœotia. That the villeins or Penestæ were completely distinct from the circumjacent dependents—Achæans, Magnètes, Perrhæ-

bians, we see by Arist. Polit. ii. 6, 3. They had their eponymous hero Penestês, whose descent was traced to Thessalus son of Hé-raklês: they were thus connected with the mythical father of the nation (Schol. Aristoph. Vesp. 1271).

³ Herodot. i. 57; compare vii. 176.

selves on Orchomenus and Bœotia, and settled in it, expelling the Minyæ and the Pelasgians.

Passing over the legends on this subject, and confining ourselves to historical time, we find an established quadruple division of Thessaly, said to have been introduced in the time of Aleuas, the ancestor (real or mythical) of the powerful Aleuadae,—Thessaliôtis, Pelasgiôtis, Histiaëtis, Phthiôtis.¹ In Phthiôtis were comprehended the Achæans, whose chief towns were Melitæa, Itônus, Thebæ Phthiôtides, Alos, Larissa Kremastê and Pteleon, on or near the western coast of the Gulf of Pagasæ. Histiaëtis, to the north of the Peneius, comprised the Perrhæbians with numerous towns strong in situation, but of no great size or importance; they occupied the passes of Olympus² and are sometimes considered as extending westward across Pindus. Pelasgiôtis included the Magnêtes, together with that which was called the Pelasgic plain bordering on the western side of Pelion and Ossa.³ Thessaliôtis comprised the central plain of Thessaly and the upper course of the river Peneius. This was the political classification of the Thessalian power, framed to suit a time when the separate cities were maintained in harmonious action by favourable circumstances or by some energetic individual ascendancy; for their union was in general interrupted and disorderly, and we find certain cities standing aloof while the rest went to war.⁴ Though a certain political junction, and obligations of some kind towards a common authority, were recognised in theory by all, and a chief or Tagus⁵ was nominated to enforce obedience,

¹ Hellanikus, Fragm. 28, ed. Didot; Harpocraton, v. Τετραρχία: the quadruple division was older than Hekataeus (Steph. Byz. v. Κρῆνων).

Hekataeus connected the Perrhæbians with the genealogy of Æolus through Tyrô the daughter of Salmôneus: they passed as Αἰολεῖς (Hekataeus, Frag. 334, ed. Didot; Stephan. Byz. v. Φάλασσα and Γόννοι).

The territory of the city of Histiaæa (in the north part of the island of Eubœa) was also called Histiaëtis. The double occur-

rence of this name (no uncommon thing in ancient Greece) seems to have given rise to the statement, that the Perrhæbi had subdued the northern parts of Eubœa, and carried over the inhabitants of the Eubœan Histiaæa captive into the north-west of Thessaly (Strabo, ix. p. 437, x. p. 446).

² Pliny, H. N. iv. 1; Strabo, ix. p. 440.

³ Strabo, ix. p. 443.

⁴ Diodor. xviii. 11; Thucyd. ii. 22.

⁵ The inscription No. 1770 in Boeckh's Corpus Inscript. contains



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



harbours of the Pagasæan gulf, imposed for the benefit of the confederacy, were then enforced with strictness; but the observation shows that while unanimous Thessaly was very powerful, her periods of unanimity were only occasional.¹ Among the nations which thus paid tribute to the Great power of Thessaly, when in a state of unanimity. fulness of Thessalian power, we may number not merely the Perrhæbi, Magnêtes, and Achæans of Phthiôtis, but also the Malians and Dolopes, and various tribes of Epirots extending to the westward of Pindus.² We may remark that they were all (except the Malians) javelin-men or light-armed troops, not serving in rank with the full panoply; a fact which in Greece counts as presumptive evidence of a lower civilization; the Magnêtes, too, had a peculiar close-fitting mode of dress, probably suited to movements in a mountainous country.³ There was even a time when the Thessalian power threatened to extend southward of Thermopylæ, and subjugate the Phokians, Dorians and Lokrians. So much were the Phokians alarmed at this danger, that they had built a wall across the pass of Thermopylæ for the purpose of more easily defending it against Thessalian invaders, who are reported to have penetrated more than once into the Phokian valleys, and to have sustained some severe defeats.⁴ At what precise time these events happened, we find no information; but it must have been considerably earlier than the invasion of Xerxes, since the defensive wall which had been built at Thermopylæ by the Phokians was found by Leonidas in a state of ruin. But the Phokians, though they no longer felt the necessity of keeping up this wall, had not ceased to fear and hate the Thessalians—an antipathy which will be found to manifest itself palpably in connexion with the Persian invasion. On the whole the resistance of the Phokians was successful, for the power of the Thessalians never reached southward of the pass.⁵

¹ Demosthen. Olynth. i. c. 3. p. 15, ii. c. 5. p. 21. The orator had occasion to denounce Philip as having got possession of the public authority of the Thessalian confederation, partly by intrigue, partly by force, and we thus hear of the λιμένες and the ἀγοραὶ which formed the revenue of the confederacy.

² Xenophon (Hellen. vi. 1, 7)

numbers the Μαραχολ among these tributaries along with the Dolopes: the Maraccs are named by Pliny (H. N. iv. 3) also along with the Dolopes, but we do not know where they dwelt.

³ Xenophon. Hellen. vi. 1, 9; Pindar. Pyth. iv. 80.

⁴ Herodot. vii. 176; viii. 27—28.

⁵ The story of invading Thessalians at Kerêssus near Leuktra in

It will be recollected that these different ancient races, —Perrhæbi, Magnêtes, Achæans, Malians, Dolopes,—though tributaries of the Thessalians, still retained their Amphiktyonic franchise, and were considered as legitimate Hellenes: all except the Malians are indeed mentioned in the Iliad. We shall rarely have occasion to speak much of them in the course of this history: they are found siding with Xerxes (chiefly by constraint) in his attack of Greece, and almost indifferent in the struggle between Sparta and Athens. That the Achæans of Phthiôtis are a portion of the same race as the Achæans of Peloponnesus it seems reasonable to believe, though we trace no historical evidence to authenticate it. Achæa Phthiôtis is the seat of Hellên, the patriarch of the entire race,—of the primitive Hellas, by some treated as a town, by others as a district of some breadth,—and of the great national hero Achilles. Its connexion with the Peloponnesian Achæans is not unlike that of Doris with the Peloponnesian Dorians.¹

Achæans,
Perrhæbi,
Magnêtes,
Malians,
Dolopes,
&c., all
tributaries
of the Thes-
salians, but
all Am-
phiktyonic
races.

We have also to notice another ethnical kindred, the date and circumstances of which are given to us only in a mythical form, but which seems nevertheless to be in itself a reality,—that of the Magnêtes on Pelion and Ossa, with the two divisions of Asiatic Magnêtes, or Magnesia on Mount Sipylus and Magnesia on the river Mæander. It is said that these two Asiatic homonymous towns were founded by migrations of the Thessalian Magnêtes, a body of whom became consecrated to the Delphian god, and chose a new abode under his directions. According to one story, these emigrants were warriors returning from the siege of Troy; according to another, they sought fresh seats to escape from the Thesprotian conquerors of Thessaly. There was a third story, according to which the Thessalian Magnêtes themselves were represented as colonists³ from Delphi. Though we can

Asiatic
Magnêtes.

Bœotia (Pausan. ix. 13, 1) is not at all probable.

¹ One story was, that these Achæans of Phthia went into Peloponnesus with Pelops, and settled in Laconia (Strabo, viii. p. 365).

² Aristoteles ap. Athenæ. iv. p.

173; Conon, Narrat. 29; Strabo, xiv. p. 647.

Hoeck (Kreta, b. iii. vol. ii. p. 409) attempts (unsuccessfully, in my judgement) to reduce these stories into the form of substantial history.

elicit no distinct matter of fact from these legends, we may nevertheless admit the connexion of race between the Thessalian and the Asiatic Magnètes as well as the reverential dependence of both, manifested in this supposed filiation, on the temple of Delphi. Of the Magnètes in Krete, noticed by Plato as long extinct in his time, we cannot absolutely verify even the existence.

Of the Malians, Thucydidês notices three tribes (γένη) as existing in his time—the Paralii, the Hierês (Priests), and the Trachinii, or men of Trachin:¹ it is possible that the second of the two may have been possessors of the sacred spot on which the Amphiktyonic meetings were held. The prevalence of the hoplites or heavy-armed infantry among the Malians indicates that we are stepping from Thessalian to more southerly Hellenic habits: the Malians recognized every man as a qualified citizen who either had served, or was serving, in the ranks with his full panoply.² Yet the panoply was probably not perfectly suitable to the mountainous regions by which they were surrounded; for at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, the aggressive mountaineers of the neighbouring region of Œta had so harassed and overwhelmed them in war, that they were forced to throw themselves on the protection of Sparta, and the establishment of the Spartan colony of Herakleia near Trachin was the result of their urgent application. Of these mountaineers, des-

¹ Thucyd. iii. 92. The distinction made by Skylax (c. 61) and Diodorus (xviii. 11) between Μηλιεῖς and Μαλιεῖς—the latter adjoining the former on the north—appears inadmissible, though Letronne still defends it (Périphe de Marcien d'Héraclée, &c., Paris, 1839, p. 212.

Instead of Μαλιεῖς, we ought to read Λαμιεῖς, as O. Müller observes (Dorians, i. 6, p. 48).

It is remarkable that the important town of Lamia (the modern Zeitun) is not noticed either by Herodotus, Thucydidês or Xenophon; Skylax is the first who mentions it. The route of Xerxes towards Thermopylæ lay along the coast from Alos.

The Lamieis (assuming that to

be the correct reading) occupied the northern coast of the Maliac Gulf, from the north bank of the Spercheius to the town of Echinus; in which position Dr. Cramer places the Μηλιεῖς Παράλιοι—an error, I think (Geography of Greece, vol. i. p. 436).

It is not improbable that Lamia first acquired importance during the course of those events towards the close of the Peloponnesian war, when the Lacedæmonians, in defence of Herakleia, attacked the Achæans of Phthiôtis, and even expelled the Œtæans for a time from their seats (see Thucyd. viii. 3; Biond. xiv. 38).

² Aristot. Polit. iv. 10, 10.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



was, however, one narrow strip of Phokis—the town of Daphnus, where the Phokians also touched the Eubœan sea—which broke this continuity and divided the Lokrians into two sections,—Lokrians of Mount Knêmis, or Epiknemidian Lokrians, and Lokrians of Opus, or Opuntian Lokrians. The mountain called Knêmis, running southward parallel to the coast from the end of Æta, divided the former section from the inland Phokians and the upper valley of the Kephissus: farther southward, joining continuously with Mount Ptôn by means of an intervening mountain which is now called Chlomo, it separated the Lokrians of Opus from the territories of Orchomenus, Thebes, and Anthêdôn, the north-eastern portions of Bœotia. Besides these two sections of the Lokrian name, there was also a third, completely separate, and said to have been colonised out from Opus,—the Lokrians surnamed Ozolæ,—who dwelt apart on the western side of Phokis, along the northern coast of the Corinthian Gulf. They reached from Amphissa—which overhung the plain of Krissa, and stood within seven miles of Delphi—to Naupaktus, near the narrow entrance of the Gulf; which latter town was taken from these Lokrians by the Athenians a little before the Peloponnesian war. Opus prided itself on being the mother-city of the Lokrian name, and the legends of Deukaliôn and Pyrrha found a home there as well as in Phthiôtis. Alpeni, Nikæa, Thronium, and Skarpheia, were towns, ancient but unimportant of the Epiknemidian Lokrians; but the whole length of this Lokrian coast is celebrated for its beauty and fertility, both by ancient and modern observers.¹

The Phokians were bounded on the north by the little

¹ Strabo, ix. p. 425; Forchhammer, *Hellenika*, p. 11–12. Kynus is sometimes spoken of as the harbour of Opus, but it was a city of itself as old as the Homeric Catalogue, and of some moment in the later wars of Greece, when military position came to be more valued than legendary celebrity (Livy, xxviii. 6; Pausan. x. 1, 1; Skylax, c. 61–62); the latter counts Thronium and Knêmis or Knêmidēs as being Phokian, not Lokrian; which

they were for a short time during the prosperity of the Phokians at the beginning of the Sacred War, though not permanently (*Æschin. Fals. Legat.* c. 42, p. 46). This serves as one presumption about the age of the *Periplus* of Skylax (see the notes of Klausen ad Skyl. p. 269). These Lokrian towns lay along the important road from Thermopylæ to Elateia and Bœotia (Pausan. vii. 15, 2; Livy, xxxiii. 3).

territories called Doris and Dryopis, which separated them from the Malians,—on the north-east, east and south-west by the different branches of Lokrians,—and on the south-east by the Bœotians. They touched the Eubœan sea (as has been mentioned) at Daphnus, the point where it approaches nearest to their chief town Elateia; their territory also comprised most part of the lofty and bleak range of Parnassus as far as its southerly termination, where a lower portion of it, called Kirphis, projects into the Corinthian Gulf, between the two bays of Antikyra and Krissa; the latter, with its once fertile plain, was in proximity to the sacred rock of the Delphian Apollo. Both Delphi and Krissa originally belonged to the Phokian race. But the sanctity of the temple, together with Lacedæmonian aid, enabled the Delphians to set up for themselves, disavowing their connexion with the Phokian brotherhood. Territorially speaking, the most valuable part of Phokis¹ consisted in the valley of the river Kephisus, which takes its rise from Parnassus not far from the Phokian town of Lilæa, passes between Œta and Knêmis on one side and Parnassus on the other, and enters Bœotia near Chæroneia, discharging itself into the lake Kôpais. It was on the projecting mountain ledges and rocks on each side of this river that the numerous little Phokian towns were situated. Twenty-two of them were destroyed and broken up into villages by the Amphiktyonic order after the second Sacred War; Abæ (one of the few, if not the only one, that was spared) being protected by the sanctity of its temple and oracle. Of these cities the most important was Elateia, situated on the left bank of the Kephisus, and on the road from Lokris into Phokis, in the natural march of an army from Thermopylæ into Bœotia. The Phokian towns² were embodied in an ancient con-

¹ Pausan. x. 33, 4.

² Pausan. x. 5. 1; Demosth. Fals. Leg. c. 22—28; Diodor. xvi. 60, with the note of Wesseling.

The tenth book of Pausanias, though the larger half of it is devoted to Delphi, tells us all that we know respecting the less important towns of Phokis. Compare also Dr. Cramer's Geography of Greece, vol. ii. sect. 10; and

Leake's Travels in Northern Greece, vol. ii. ch. 13.

Two funeral monuments of the Phokian hero Schedius (who commands the Phokian troops before Troy and is slain in the Iliad) marked the two extremities of Phokis,—one at Daphnus on the Eubœan sea, the other at Antikyra on the Corinthian Gulf (Strabo, ix. p. 425; Pausan. x. 36, 4).

federacy, which held its periodical meetings at a temple between Daulis and Delphi.

The little territory called Doris and Dryopis occupied the southern declivity of Mount C̄eta, dividing Doris— Phokis on the north and north-west from the Dryopis. Ætolians, Ænians, and Malians. That which was called Doris in the historical times, and which reached, in the time of Herodotus, nearly as far eastward as the Maliac Gulf, is said to have formed a part of what had been once called Dryopis; a territory which had comprised the summit of C̄eta as far as the Spercheius northward, and which had been inhabited by an old Hellenic tribe called Dryopes. The Dorians acquired their settlement in Dryopis by gift from H̄erakl̄ês, who along with the Malians (so ran the legend) had expelled the Dryopes, and compelled them to find for themselves new seats at Hermionê and Asinê, in the Argolic peninsula of Peloponnesus—at Styra and Karystus in Eubœa—and in the island of Kythnos;¹ it is only in these five last-mentioned places that history recognises them. The territory of Doris was distributed into four little townships—Pindus or Akyphas, Bœon, Kytinion, and Erineon—each of which seems to have occupied a separate valley belonging to one of the feeders of the river Kephisus—the only narrow spaces of cultivated ground which this “small and sad” region presented.² In itself this tetrapolis is so insignificant, that we shall rarely find occasion to mention it: but it acquired a factitious consequence by being regarded as the metropolis of the great Dorian cities in Peloponnesus, and receiving on that ground special protection from Sparta. I do not here touch upon that string of antehistorical migrations—stated by Herodotus and illustrated by the ingenuity as well as decorated by the fancy of O. Müller—through which the Dorians are affiliated with the patriarch of the Hellenic race—moving originally out of Phthiôtis to Histiaëôtis, then to Pindus, and lastly to Doris. The residence of Dorians in Doris is a fact which meets

¹ Herodot. viii. 31, 43, 46; Diodor. iv. 57; Aristot. ap. Strabo. viii. p. 373.

O. Müller (History of the Dorians, book i. ch. ii.) has given all that can be known about Doris and

Dryopis, together with some matters which appear to me very inadequately authenticated.

² Πόλεις μικραὶ καὶ λυπρόχωροι Strabo, ix. p. 427.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



partly legendary renown, partly ethnical kindred (publicly acknowledged on both sides) with the Eleans in Peloponnesus, which authenticated the title of the Ætoliāns to rank as Hellenes. But the great mass of the Apodôti, Eurytanes, and Ophioneis, in the inland mountains, were so rude in their manners and so unintelligible¹ in their speech (which, however, was not barbaric, but very bad Hellenic), that this title might well seem disputable—in point of fact it was disputed in later times, when the Ætoliān power and depredations had become obnoxious nearly to all Greece. And it is probably to this difference of manners between the Ætoliāns on the sea-coast and those in the interior, that we are to trace a geographical division mentioned by Strabo into Ancient Ætoliā, and Ætoliā Epiktêtus (or acquired). When or by whom this division was introduced, we do not know. It cannot be founded upon any conquest, for the inland Ætoliāns were the most unconquerable of mankind; and the affirmation which Ephorus applied to the whole Ætoliān race—that it had never been reduced to subjection by any one—is most of all beyond dispute concerning the inland portion of it.²

Adjoining the Ætoliāns were the Akarnanians, the westernmost of extra-Peloponnesian Greeks. They extended to the Ionian Sea, and seem, in the time of Thucydidês, to have occupied both banks of the river Achelôus in the lower part of its course—though the left bank appears afterwards as belonging to the Ætoliāns, so that the river came to constitute the boundary, often disputed and decided by arms, between them. The principal Akarnanian towns, Stratus and Cœniadæ, were

Strabo, p. 463. The situation of Thermus, "the acropolis as it were of all Ætoliā," and placed on a spot almost unapproachable by an army, is to a certain extent, though not wholly, capable of being determined by the description which Polybius gives of the rapid march of Philip and the Macedonian army to surprise it. The maps, both of Kruse and Kiepert, place it too much on the north of the lake Trichônis: the map of Fiedler

notes it more correctly to the east of that lake (Polyh. v. 7-8; compare Brandstätter, Geschichte des Aetol. Landes, p. 133).

¹ Thucyd. iii. 102.—ἀγνωστότατοι δὲ γλωσσάν εἰσι, καὶ ὠμοφάγοι ὡς λέγονται. It seems that Thucydidês had not himself seen or conversed with them, but he does not call them βάρβαροι.

² Ephorus, Fragment. 29, ed. Marx.; Skymn. Chius, v. 471; Strabo, x. p. 450.

both on the right bank; the latter on the marshy and overflowed land near its mouth. Near the Akarnanians, towards the Gulf of Ambrakia, were found barbarian or non-Hellenic nations—the Agræans and the Amphilocheians: in the midst of the latter, on the shores of the Ambrakian Gulf, the Greek colony called Argos Amphilocheicum was established.

Of the five Hellenic subdivisions now enumerated—Lokrians, Phokians, Dorians (of Doris), Ætolians, and Akarnanians (of whom Lokrians, Phokians and Ætolians are comprised in the Homeric catalogue)—we have to say the same as of those north of Thermopylæ: there is no information respecting them from the commencement of the historical period down to the Persian war. Even that important event brings into action only the Lokrians of the Eubœan Sea, the Phokians, and the Dorians: we have to wait until near the Peloponnesian war before we require information respecting the Ozolian Lokrians, the Ætolians, and the Akarnanians. These last three were unquestionably the most backward members of the Hellenic aggregate. Though not absolutely without a central town, they lived dispersed in villages, retiring, when attacked, to inaccessible heights, perpetually armed and in readiness for aggression and plunder wherever they found an opportunity.¹ Very different was the condition of the Lokrians opposite Eubœa, the Phokians, and the Dorians. These were all orderly town communities, small indeed and poor, but not less well-administered than the average of Grecian townships, and perhaps exempt from those individual violences which so frequently troubled the Bœotian Thebes or the great cities of Thessaly. Timæus affirmed (contrary, as it seems, to the supposition of Aristotle) that in early times there were no slaves either among the Lokrians or Phokians, and that the work required to be done for proprietors was performed by poor freemen;² a habit which is alleged to have been continued until the temporary prosperity of the Sacred War, when the plunder of the Delphian temple so greatly enriched the Phokian leaders. But this

Ozolian Lokrians, Ætolians, and Akarnanians, were the rudest of all Greeks.

¹ Thucyd. i. 6; iii. 94. Aristotle, however, included in his large collection of Πολιτεῖαι, an Ἀκαρνάνων Πολιτεία as well as an Αἰτωλῶν Πολιτεία (Aristotelis Rerum

Publicarum Reliquiæ, ed. Neumann, p. 102; Strabo, vii. p. 321).

² Timæus, Fragm. xvii. ed. Göller; Polyb. xii. 6-7; Athenæus, vi. p. 264.

statement is too briefly given, and too imperfectly authenticated, to justify any inferences.

We find in the poet Alkman (about 610 B.C.) the Erysichæan or Kalydonian shepherd named as a type of rude rusticity—the antithesis of Sardis, where the poet was born.¹ And among the suitors who are represented as coming forward to claim the daughter of the Sikyonian Kleisthenês in marriage, there appears both the Thessalian Diaktoridês from Krannôn, a member of the Skopad family—and the Ætolian Malês, brother of that Titormus who in muscular strength surpassed all his contemporary Greeks, and who had seceded from mankind into the inmost recesses of Ætolia: this Ætolian seems to be set forth as a sort of antithesis to the delicate Smindyridês of Sybaris, the most luxurious of mankind. Herodotus introduces these characters into his dramatic picture of this memorable wedding.²

Between Phokis and Lokris on one side, and Attica
The Bœo. (from which it is divided by the mountains Kith-
tians. ærôn and Parnês) on the other, we find the im-
portant territory called Bœotia, with its ten or twelve
autonomous cities, forming a sort of confederacy under the
presidency of Thebes, the most powerful among them.
Even of this territory, destined during the second period
of this history to play a part so conspicuous and effective,
we know nothing during the first two centuries after 776
B.C. We first acquire some insight into it on occasion of
the disputes between Thebes and Plataea about the year
520 B.C. Orchomenus, on the north-west of the lake Kôpaïs,
forms throughout the historical times one of the cities of
the Bœotian league, seemingly the second after Thebes.
But I have already stated that the Orchomenian legends,
the Catalogue and other allusions in Homer, and the traces
of vast power and importance yet visible in the historical
age, attest the early political existence of Orchomenus and
its neighbourhood apart from Bœotia.³ The Amphiktyony

¹ This brief fragment of the Παρθενεία of Alkman is preserved by Stephan. Byz. (Ἐρυσίχην), and alluded to by Strabo, x. p. 460: see Welcker, Alkm. Fragm. xi. and Bergk, Alk. Fr. xii.

² Herodot. vi. 127.

³ See an admirable topographical description of the north part of

Bœotia—the lake Kôpaïs and its environs, in Forchhammer's Hellenika, p. 159—186, with an explanatory map. The two long laborious tunnels constructed by the old Orchomenians for the drainage of the lake, as an aid to the insufficiency of the natural Katabothra, are there very clearly



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



it comprehended Akraëphia and Mount Ptôon, and probably touched the Eubœan Sea at the village of Salganeus south of Anthêdôn. South-west of Thebes, bordering on the south-eastern extremity of Phokis with the Phokian town of Bulis, stood the city of Thespiæ. Southward of the Asôpus, but northward of Kithærôn and Parnês, were Plataæa and Tanagra: in the south-eastern corner of Bœotia stood Orôpus, the frequent subject of contention between Thebes and Athens; and in the road between the Eubœan Chalkis and Thebes, the town of Mykalêssus.

From our first view of historical Bœotia downward, there appears a confederation which embraces the whole territory; and during the Peloponnesian war the Thebans invoke "the ancient constitutional maxims of the Bœotians" as a justification of extreme rigour, as well as of treacherous breach of the peace, against the recusant Plataæans.¹ Of this confederation the greater cities were primary members, while the lesser were attached to one or other of them in a kind of dependent union. Neither the names nor the number of these primary members can be certainly known: there seem grounds for including Thebes, Orchomenus, Lebadeia, Korôneia, Haliartus, Kôpæ, Anthêdôn, Tanagra, Thespiæ, and Plataæa before its secession.² Akraëphia with the neighbouring Mount Ptôon and its oracle, Skôlus, Glisas and other places, were dependencies of Thebes: Chæroneia, Asplêdôn, Holmônes and Hyêttus, of Orchomenus: Siphæ, Leuktra, Kerêssus and Thisbê, of Thespiæ.³ Certain generals or magistrates called Bœotarchs were chosen annually to manage the common affairs of the confederation. At the time of the battle of Delium in the Peloponnesian war, they were eleven in number, two of them from Thebes; but whether this number was always maintained, or in what proportions the choice was made by the different cities, we find no distinct information. There were likewise during the Peloponnesian war four different senates, with

¹ Thucyd. ii. 2—κατὰ τὰ πατρία τῶν πάντων Βοιωτῶν: compare the speech of the Thebans to the Lacedæmonians after the capture of Plataæa, iii. 61, 65, 66.

² Thucyd. iv. 91; C. F. Hermann, Griechische Staatsalterthümer, sect. 279; Herodot. v. 79; Boeckh,

Commentat. ad Inscriptt. Bœotic. ap. Corp. Ins. Gr. part v. p. 726.

³ Herodot. viii. 135; ix. 15—43. Pausan. ix. 13, 1; ix. 23, 3; ix. 24, 3; ix. 32, 1—4. Xenophon, Hellen. vi. 4, 3—4: compare O. Müller, Orchomenos, cap. xx. p. 403.

whom the Bœotarchs consulted on matters of importance; a curious arrangement, of which we have no explanation. Lastly, there was the general concilium and religious festival—the Pambœotia—held periodically at Korôncia. Such were the forms, as far as we can make them out, of the Bœotian confederacy; each of the separate cities possessing its own senate and constitution, and having its political consciousness as an autonomous unit, yet with a certain habitual deference to the federal obligations. Substantially, the affairs of the confederation will be found in the hands of Thebes, managed in the interests of Theban ascendancy, which appears to have been sustained by no other feeling except respect for superior force and bravery. The discontents of the minor Bœotian towns, harshly repressed and punished, form an uninviting chapter in Grecian history.

One piece of information we find, respecting Thebes singly and apart from the other Bœotian towns, anterior to the year 700 B.C. Though brief and incompletely recorded, it is yet highly valuable, as one of the first incidents of solid and positive Grecian history. Dioklês the Corinthian stands enrolled as Olympic victor in the 13th Olympiad, or 728 B.C., at a time when the oligarchy called Bacchiadæ possessed the government of Corinth. The beauty of his person attracted towards him the attachment of Philolaus, one of the members of this oligarchical body,—a sentiment which Grecian manners did not proscribe; but it also provoked an incestuous passion on the part of his own mother Halkyonê, from which Dioklês shrunk with hatred and horror. He abandoned for ever his native city and retired to Thebes, whither he was followed by Philolaus, and where both of them lived and died. Their tombs were yet shown in the time of Aristotle, close adjoining to each other, yet with an opposite frontage; that of Philolaus being so placed that the inmate could command a view of the lofty peak of his native city, while that of Dioklês was so disposed as to block out all prospect of the hateful spot. That which preserves to us the memory of so remarkable an incident, is, the esteem entertained for Philolaus by the Thebans—a feeling so pronounced, that they invited him to make laws for them. We shall have occasion to point out one or two similar cases in which Grecian cities invoked the aid of an

Early legis-
lation of
Thebes—
Philolaus
and
Dioklês.

intelligent stranger; and the practice became common, among the Italian republics in the middle ages, to nominate a person not belonging to their city either as Podesta or as arbitrator in civil dissensions. It would have been highly interesting to know at length what laws Philolaus made for the Thebans; but Aristotle, with his usual conciseness, merely alludes to his regulations respecting the adoption of children and respecting the multiplication of offspring in each separate family. His laws were framed with the view to maintain the original number of lots of land, without either subdivision or consolidation; but by what means the purpose was to be fulfilled we are not informed.¹ There existed a law at Thebes, which perhaps may have been part of the scheme of Philolaus, prohibiting exposure of children, and empowering a father under the pressure of extreme poverty to bring his new-born infant to the magistrates, who sold it for a price to any citizen-purchaser,—taking from him the obligation to bring it up, but allowing him in return to consider the adult as his slave.² From these brief allusions, coming to us without accompanying illustration, we can draw no other inference, except that the great problem of population—the relation between the well-being of the citizens and their more or less rapid increase in numbers—had engaged the serious attention even of the earliest Grecian legislators. We may however observe that the old Corinthian legislator Pheidôn

¹ Aristot. Polit. ii. 9, 6—7. Νομοθέτης δ' αὐτοῖς (to the Thebans) ἐγένετο Φιλόλαος περί τ' ἄλλων τινῶν καὶ περί τῆς παιδοποιΐας, οὗς καλοῦσιν ἐκεῖνοι νόμους θετικούς· καὶ τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἰδίως ὑπ' ἐκείνου νενομοθετημένον, ὅπως ὁ ἀριθμὸς σώζεται τῶν γλῆρων. A perplexing passage follows within three lines of this—Φιλολάου δὲ ἰδίον ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν οὐσιῶν ἀνομάλωσις—which raises two questions: first, whether Philolaus can really be meant in the second passage, which talks of what is ἰδίον to Philolaus, while the first passage had already spoken of something ἰδίως νενομοθετημένον by the same person. Accordingly Götting and M. Bar-

thélemy St. Hilaire follow one of the MSS. by writing Φαλέου in place of Φιλολάου. Next, what is the meaning of ἀνομάλωσις? O. Müller (Dorians, ch. x. 5, p. 209) considers it to mean a “fresh equalisation, just as ἀναδασμός means a fresh division,” adopting the translation of Victorius and Schlösser.

The point can hardly be decisively settled; but if this translation of ἀνομάλωσις be correct, there is good ground for preferring the word Φαλέου to Φιλολάου; since the proceeding described would harmonise better with the ideas of Phaleas (Aristot. Pol. ii. 4, 8).

² Ælian, V. H. ii. 7.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



CHAPTER IV.

EARLIEST HISTORICAL VIEW OF PELOPONNESUS.
DORIANS IN ARGOS AND THE NEIGHBOURING CITIES.

WE now pass from the northern members to the heart and head of Greece—Peloponnesus and Attica, taking the former first in order, and giving as much as can be ascertained respecting its early historical phænomena.

The traveller who entered Peloponnesus from Bœotia during the youthful days of Herodotus and Thucydidês, found an array of powerful Doric cities conterminous to each other, and beginning at the Isthmus of Corinth. First came Megara, stretching across the isthmus from sea to sea, and occupying the high and rugged mountain-ridge called Geraneia: next Corinth, with its strong and conspicuous acropolis, and its territory including Mount Oneion as well as the portion of the isthmus at once most level and narrowest, which divided its two harbours called Lechæum and Kenchreæ. Westward of Corinth, along the Corinthian Gulf, stood Sikyôn, with a plain of uncommon fertility, between the two towns: southward of Sikyôn and Corinth were Phlius and Kleonæ, both conterminous, as well as Corinth, with Argos and the Argolic peninsula. The inmost bend of the Argolic Gulf, including a considerable space of flat and marshy ground adjoining to the sea, was possessed by Argos; the Argolic peninsula was divided by Argos with the Doric cities of Epidaurus and Trœzen, and the Dryopian city of Hermionê, the latter possessing the southwestern corner. Proceeding southward along the western coast of the gulf, and passing over the little river called Tanos, the traveller found himself in the dominion of Sparta, which comprised the entire southern region of the peninsula from its eastern to its western sea, where the river Neda flows into the latter. He first passed from Argos across the difficult mountain range called Parnôn

Distribu-
tion of
Peloponne-
sus about
450 B.C.

Continuous
Dorian
states.

found—belonged to Sparta; together with the cold and high mountain range to the eastward which projects into the promontory of Malea—and the still loftier chain of Taygetus to the westward, which ends in the promontory of Tænarus. On the other side of Taygetus, on the banks of the river Pamisus, which there flows into the Messenian Gulf, lay the plain of Messênê, the richest land in the peninsula. This plain had once yielded its ample produce to the free Messenian Dorians, resident in the towns of Stenyklêrus and Andania. But in the time of which we speak, the name of Messenians was borne only by a body of brave but homeless exiles, whose restoration to the land of their forefathers overpassed even the exile's proverbially sanguine hope. Their land was confounded with the western portion of Laconia, which reached in a south-westerly direction down to the extreme point of Cape Akritas, and northward as far as the river Neda.

Throughout his whole journey to the point last-mentioned from the borders of Bœotia and Megaris, ^{Western} the traveller would only step from one Dorian ^{Pelopon-} ^{nese} state into another. But on crossing from the south to the north bank of the river Neda, at a point near to its mouth, he would find himself out of Doric land altogether: first in the territory called Triphylia—next in that of Pisa or the Pisatid—thirdly in the more spacious and powerful state called Elis; these three comprising the coast-land of Peloponnesus from the mouth of the Neda to that of the Larissus. The Triphylians, distributed into a number of small townships, the largest of which was Lepreon—and the Pisatans, equally destitute of any centralising city—had both, at the period of which we are now speaking, been conquered by their more powerful northern neighbours of

Elis, who enjoyed the advantage of a spacious territory united under one government: the middle portion, called the Hollow Elis, being for the most part fertile. The Eleians were a section of Ætolian immigrants into Peloponnesus, but the Pisatans and Triphylians had both been originally independent inhabitants of the peninsula—the latter being affirmed to belong to the same race as the Minyæ who had occupied the ante-Bœotian Orchomenus: both too bore the ascendancy of Elis with perpetual murmur and occasional resistance.

Crossing the river Larissus, and pursuing the northern coast of Peloponnesus south of the Corinthian Gulf, the traveller would pass into Achaia—a name which designated the narrow strip of level land, and the projecting spurs and declivities, between that gulf and the northernmost mountains of the peninsula—Skollis, Erymanthus, Aroania, Krathis, and the towering eminence called Kyllênê. Achæan cities—twelve in number at least, if not more—divided this long strip of land amongst them, from the mouth of the Larissus and the northwestern Cape Araxus on one side, to the western boundary of the Sikyonian territory on the other. According to the accounts of the ancient legends and the belief of Herodotus, this territory had been once occupied by Ionian inhabitants, whom the Achæans had expelled.

In making this journey, the traveller would have finished the circuit of Peloponnesus; but he would still have left untrodden the great central region, enclosed between the territories just enumerated—approaching nearest to the sea on the borders of Triphylia, but never touching it anywhere. This region was Arcadia, possessed by inhabitants who are uniformly represented as all of one race, and all aboriginal. It was high and bleak, full of wild mountain, rock and forest, and abounding, to a degree unusual even in Greece, with those land-locked basins from whence the water finds only a subterraneous issue. It was distributed among a large number of distinct villages and cities. Many of the village tribes—the Mænalii, Parrhasii, Azanes, &c., occupying the central and the western regions, were numbered among the rudest of the Greeks: but along its eastern frontier there were several Arcadian cities which ranked deservedly among the more civilised Peloponnesians.

Northern
Pelopon-
nesus—
Achaia.

Central
region—
Arcadia.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



of Messênê along the river Pamisus to its mouth in the Messenian Gulf: it is to be noted that Messênê was then the name of the plain generally, and that no town so called existed until after the battle of Leuktra. Again, eastward of the valley of the Eurotas, the mountainous region and the western shores of the Argolic Gulf down to Cape Malea are also independent of Sparta; belonging to Argos, or rather to Dorian towns in union with Argos. All the great Dorian towns, from the borders of the Megarid to the eastern frontier of Arcadia, as above enumerated, appear to have existed in 776 B.C.; Achaia was in the same condition, so far as we are able to judge, as well as Arcadia, except in regard to its southern frontier conterminous with Sparta, of which more will hereafter be said. In respect to the western portion of Peloponnesus, Elis (properly so called) appears to have embraced the same territory in 776 B.C. as in 550 B.C.: but the Pisatid had been recently conquered, and was yet imperfectly subjected by the Eleians; while Triphylia seems to have been quite independent of them. Respecting the southwestern promontory of Peloponnesus down to Cape Akritas, we are altogether without positive information: reasons will hereafter be given for believing that it did not at that time for

Portions of the population which were believed to be indigenous: Arcadians, Kynurians, Achæans.

in Peloponnesus, he believed three to be original —the Arcadians, the Achæans, and the Kynurians. The Achæans, though belonging indigenously to the peninsula, had yet removed from the southern portion of it to the northern, expelling the previous Ionian tenants: this is a part of the legend respecting the Dorian conquest or Return of the Herakleids, and we can neither verify nor contradict it. But neither the Arcadians nor the Kynurians had ever changed their abodes. Of the latter I have not before spoken, because they were never (so far as history knows them) an independent population. They occupied the larger portion¹ of the terri-

¹ This is the only way of reconciling Herodotus (viii. 73) with Thucydides (iv. 56, and v. 41). The original extent of the Kynurian territory is a point on which

neither of them had any means of very correct information; but there is no occasion to reject the one in favour of the other.

tory of Argolis, from Orneæ, near the northern¹ or Phliasian border, to Thyrea and the Thyreatis, on the Laconian border: and though belonging originally (as Herodotus imagines rather than asserts) to the Ionic race—they had been so long subjects of Argos in his time that almost all evidence of their ante-Dorian condition had vanished.

But the great Dorian states in Peloponnesus—the capital powers in the peninsula—were all originally immigrants according to the belief not only of Herodotus, but of all the Grecian world: so also were the Ætoli-
Immigrant portions—Dorians, Ætolo-Eleians, Dryopes, Triphylians.

Immigrants of Elis, the Triphylians, and the Dryopes at Hermionê and Asinê. All these immigrations are so described as to give them a root in the Grecian legendary world: the Triphylians are traced back to Lemnos, as the offspring of the Argonautic heroes,² and we are too unformed about them to venture upon any historical guesses. But respecting the Dorians, it may perhaps be possible, by examining the first historical situation in which they are presented to us, to offer some conjectures as to the probable circumstances under which they arrived. The legendary narrative of it has already been given in the first chapter of this volume—that great mythical event called the Return of the Children of Hêraklês, by which the first establishment of the Dorians in the promised land of Peloponnesus was explained to the full satisfaction of Grecian faith. One single armament and expedition, acting by the special direction of the Delphian god, and conducted by three brothers, lineal descendants of the principal Achæo-Dorian hero through Hyllus (the eponymus of the principal tribe)—the national heroes of the pre-existing population vanquished and expelled, and the greater part of the peninsula both acquired and partitioned at a stroke—the circumstances of the partition adjusted to the historical relations of Laconia and Messenia—the friendly power of Ætolian Elis, with its Olympic games as the bond of union in Peloponnesus, attached to this event as an appendage in the person of Oxylus—all these particulars compose a narrative well-calculated to impress the retrospective imagination of a Greek. They

¹ Herod. viii. 73. Οἱ δὲ Κυνοῦριοι, αὐτόχθονες ἔόντες, δοκέουσι μόνον εἶναι Ἴωνες· ἐχθροὶ δὲ, ὑπὸ

τε Ἀργείων ἀρχόμενοι καὶ τοῦ χρόνου, εἰσὶτες Ὀρνέηται καὶ Περίοιοι.

² Herodot. iv. 145—146.

SPARTAN KINGS.

<i>Line of Eurysthenês.</i>				<i>Line of Proklês.</i>			
Eurysthenês	....	reigned	42 years.	Proklês	.....	reigned	51 years.
Agis	.....	"	31 "	Soüs	.....	"	— "
Echestratus	....	"	35 "	Eurypôn	.....	"	— "
Labôtas	.....	"	37 "	Prytanis	.....	"	49 "
Doryssus	.....	"	29 "	Eunomus	.....	"	45 "
Agesilaus	.....	"	44 "	Charilaus	.....	"	60 "
Archelaus	.....	"	60 "	Nikander	.....	"	38 "
Teleklus	.....	"	40 "	Theopompus	....	"	10 "
Alkamenês	.....	"	10 "				

328

Both Theopompus and Alkamenês reigned considerably longer, but the chronologists affirm that the year 776 B.C. (or the first Olympiad) occurred in the tenth year of each of their reigns. It is necessary to add, with regard to this list, that there are some material discrepancies between different authors even as to the names of individual kings, and still more as to the duration of their reigns, as may be seen both in Mr. Clinton's chronology and in Müller's Appendix to the History of the Dorians.¹ The alleged

¹ Herodotus omits Soüs between Proklês and Eurypôn, and inserts Polydektês between Prytanis and Eunomus: moreover the accounts



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Such was the celebrity of Bacchis, we are told, that those who succeeded him took the name of Bacchiads in place of Aletiads or Herakleids. One year after the accession of Automenês, the family of the Bacchiads generally, amounting to 200 persons, determined to abolish royalty, to constitute themselves a standing oligarchy, and to elect out of their own number an annual Prytanis. Thus commenced the oligarchy of the Bacchiads, which lasted for ninety years, until it was subverted by Kypselus in 657 B.C.¹ Reckoning the thirty years previous to the beginning of the reign of Alêtês, the chronologists thus provide an interval of 447 years between the Return of the Herakleids and the accession of Kypselus, and 357 years between the same period and the commencement of the Bacchiad oligarchy. The Bacchiad oligarchy is unquestionably historical; the conquest of the Herakleids belongs to the legendary world; while the interval between the

chiadæ had slain the holy man Karnus, and had been punished for it by long banishment and privation—leads to the conjecture, that the Corinthians did not celebrate the festival of the Karneia, common to the Dorians generally.

Herodotus tells us, with regard to the Ionic cities, that all of them celebrated the festival of Apaturia, except Ephesus and Kolophon; and that these two cities did not celebrate it, "because of a certain reason of murder committed,"—οὔτοι γὰρ μούνοι Ἰώνων οὐκ ἄγουσιν Ἀπατούρια καὶ οὔτοι κατὰ φόνον τινὰ σκηψίην (Herod. i. 147).

The murder of Karnus by Hipopotês was probably the φόνον σκηψίην which forbade the Corinthians from celebrating the Karneia; at least this supposition gives to the legend a special pertinence which is otherwise wanting to it. Respecting the Karneia and Hyacinthia see Schoell *De Origine Græci Dramatis*, p. 70—78. Tübingen, 1828.

There were various singular cus-

toms connected with the Grecian festivals, which it was usual to account for by some legendary tale. Thus no native of Elis ever entered himself as a competitor, or contended for the prize, at the Isthmian games. The legendary reason given for this was, that Hêraklês had waylaid and slain (at Kleônæ) the two Molionid brothers, when they were proceeding to the Isthmian games as Theôrs or sacred envoys from the Eleian king Augeas. Redress was in vain demanded for the outrage, and Molionê, mother of the slain envoys, imprecated a curse upon the Eleians generally if they should ever visit the Isthmian festival. This legend is the φόνον σκηψίην, explaining why no Eleian runner or wrestler was ever known to contend there (Pausan. ii. 15, 1; v. 2, 1—4. Ister, *Fragment*. 46; ed. Didot).

¹ Diodor. *Fragm.* lib. vii. p. 14, with the note of Wesseling. Strabo (viii. p. 378) states the Bacchiad oligarchy to have lasted nearly 200 years.

two is filled up, as in so many other cases, by a mere barren genealogy.

When we jump this vacant space, and place ourselves at the first opening of history, we find that although ultimately Sparta came to hold the first place, not only in Peloponnesus, but in all Hellas, this was not the case at the earliest moment of which we have historical cognizance. Argos, and the neighbouring towns connected with her by a bond of semi-religious, semi-political union,—Sikyôn, Phlius, Epidaurus, and Trœzên,—were at first of greater power and consideration than Sparta; a fact which the legend of the Herakleids seems to recognise by making Têmenus the eldest brother of the three. And Herodotus assures us that at one time all the eastern coast of Peloponnesus down to Cape Malea, including the island of Kythêra, all which came afterwards to constitute a material part of Laconia, had belonged to Argos.¹ Down to the time of the first Messenian war, the comparative importance of the Dorian establishments in Peloponnesus appears to have been in the order in which the legend placed them, —Argos first,² Sparta second, Messênê third. It will be seen hereafter that the Argeians never lost the recollection of this early pre-eminence, from which the growth of Sparta had extruded them; and the liberty of entire Hellas was more than once in danger from their disastrous jealousy of a more fortunate competitor.

Argos and the neighbouring Dorians greater than Sparta in 776 B.C.

At a short distance of about three miles from Argos, and at the exact point where that city approaches nearest to the sea,³ was situated the isolated hillock called Temenion,

¹ Herodot. i. 82. The historian adds, besides Kythêra, καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ τῶν νήσων. What other islands are meant I do not distinctly understand.

² So Plato (Legg. iii. p. 692), whose mind is full of the old mythe and the tripartite distribution of Peloponnesus among the Herakleids,—ἡ δ' αὖ, πρωτεύουσα ἐν τοῖς τότε χρόνοις τοῖς περὶ τὴν διανομήν, ἢ περὶ τὸ Ἄργος, &c.

³ Pausan. ii. 38, 1; Strabo, viii. p. 368. Professor Ross observes respecting the line of coast near

Argos, "The seaside is thoroughly flat and for the most part marshy: only at the single point where Argos comes nearest to the coast —between the mouth, now choked by sand, of the united Inachus and Charadrus, and the efflux of the Erasinus, overgrown with weeds and bulrushes,—stands an eminence of some elevation and composed of firmer earth, upon which the ancient Temenion was placed." (Reisen im Peloponnes, vol. i. sect. 5. p. 149, Berlin, 1811.)

noticed both by Strabo and Pausanias. It was a small village deriving both its name and its Early settle- ments of the Dorians at Argos and Corinth —Temenion— Hill of Solygeius. celebrity from the chapel and tomb of the hero Têmenus, who was there worshipped by the Dorians; and the statement which Pausanias heard was, that Têmenus with his invading Dorians had seized and fortified the spot, and employed it as an armed post to make war upon Tisamenus and the Achæans. What renders this report deserving of the greater attention is, that the same thing is affirmed with regard to the eminence called Solygeius near Corinth: this too was believed to be the place which the Dorian assailants had occupied and fortified against the pre-existing Corinthians in the city. Situated close upon the Sarônic Gulf, it was the spot which invaders landing from that gulf would naturally seize upon, and which Nikias with his powerful Athenian fleet did actually seize and occupy against Corinth in the Peloponnesian war.¹ In early days the only way of overpowering the inhabitants of a fortified town, generally also planted in a position itself very defensible, was—that the invaders, entrenching themselves in the neighbourhood, harassed the inhabitants and ruined their produce until they brought them to terms. Even during the Peloponnesian war, when the art of besieging had made some progress, we read of several instances in which this mode of aggressive warfare was adopted with efficient results.² We may readily believe that the Dorians obtained admittance both into Argos and Corinth in this manner. And it is remarkable that, except Sikyôn (which is affirmed to have been surprised by night), these were the only towns in the Argolic region which are said to have resisted them; the story being, that Phlius, Epidaurus, and Trœzên had admitted the Dorian intruders without opposition, although a certain portion of the previous inhabitants seceded. We shall hereafter see that the non-Dorian population of Sikyôn and Corinth still remained considerable.

The separate statements which we thus find, and the position of the Temenion and the Solygeius, lead to two conjectures—first, that the acquisitions of the Dorians in Peloponnesus were also isolated and gradual, not at all conformable to the Dorian settlers arrived by sea.

¹ Thucyd. iv. 42.

² Thucyd. i. 122; iii. 85; vii. 18.27; viii. 38-40.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



certain it is that the difficulties of a long land march, along such a territory as Greece, are still more serious.

The supposition of Dorian emigrations by sea, from the Maliac Gulf to the north-eastern promontory of Peloponnesus, is farther borne out by the analogy of the Dryopes or Dryopians. During the historical times, this people occupied several detached settlements in various parts of Greece, all maritime and some insular:—they were found at Hermionê, Asinê, and Eiôn, in the Argolic peninsula (very near to the important Dorian towns constituting the Amphiktyony of Argos¹)—at Styra and Karystus in the island of Eubœa—in the island of Kythnus, and even at Cyprus. These dispersed colonies can only have been planted by expeditions over the sea. Now we are told that the original Dryopis, the native country of this people, comprehended both the territory near the river Spercheius, and north of Cœta, afterwards occupied by the Malians, as well as the neighbouring district south of Cœta, which was afterwards called Doris. From hence the Dryopians were expelled—according to one story, by the Dorians—according to another, by Hêraklês and the Malians: however this may be, it was from the Maliac Gulf that they started on shipboard in quest of new homes, which some of them found on the headlands of the Argolic peninsula.² And it was from this very country, according to Herodotus,³ that the Dorians also set forth, in order to reach Peloponnesus. Nor does it seem unreasonable to imagine, that the same means of conveyance, which bore the Dryopians from the Maliac Gulf to Hermionê and Asinê, also carried the Dorians from the same place to the Temenion and the hill Solygeius.

The legend represents Sikyôn, Epidaurus, Trœzên, Phlius, and Kleônæ, as all occupied by Dorian colonists from Argos, under the different sons of Têmenus: the first three are on the sea, and fit places for the occupation of maritime invaders. Argos and the Dorian towns in and near the Argolic peninsula are to be regarded as a cluster of settlements by themselves, com-

¹ Herod. viii. 43.46; Biond. iv. 23 and 38, ed. Didot. Steph. Byz. 37; Pausan. iv. 34, 6. v. Δρυόπη. Apollodor. ii. 7, 7.

² Strabo, viii. p. 373; ix. p. 434. Schol. Apollon. Rhod. i. 1213.

Herodot. viii. 43. Pherekydês, Fr. ³ Herodot. i. 56.—ἐνθῆσαν δὲ αὐτίς

pletely distinct from Sparta and the Messenian Stenyklêrus, which appear to have been formed under totally different conditions. First, both of them are very far inland—Stenyklêrus not easy, Sparta very difficult of access from the sea; next, we know that the conquests of Sparta were gradually made down the valley of the Eurotas seaward. Both these acquisitions present the appearance of having been made from the land-side, and perhaps in the direction which the Herakleid legend describes—by warriors entering Peloponnesus across the narrow mouth of the Corinthian Gulf through the aid or invitation of those Ætolian settlers who at the same time colonised Elis. The early and intimate connexion (on which I shall touch presently) between Sparta and the Olympic games as administered by the Eleians, as well as the leading part ascribed to Lykurgus in the constitution of the solemn Olympic truce, tend to strengthen such a persuasion.

How Sparta came constantly to gain upon Argos will be matter for future explanation:¹ at present it is sufficient to remark, that the ascendancy of Argos was derived not exclusively from her own territory, but came in part from her position as metropolis of an alliance of autonomous neighbouring cities, all Dorian and all colonised from herself—and this was an element of power essentially fluctuating. What Thêbes was to the cities of Bœotia, of which she either was, or professed to have been, the founder²—the same was Argos in reference to Kleônæ, Phlius, Sikyôn, Epidaurus, Trœzên, and Ægina. These towns formed, in mythical language, “the lot of Têmenus,”³

Early position of Argos—metropolis of the neighbouring Dorian cities.

ἐς τὴν Δρυοπόδα μετέβη, καὶ ἐκ τῆς Δρυοπίδος οὕτως ἐς Πελοπόννησον ἐλθὼν, Δωρικὸν ἐκλήθη—to the same purpose, viii. 31—43.

¹ See Herodot. vii. 148. The Argæians say to the Lacedæmonians, in reference to the chief command of the Greeks—καίτοι κατὰ γὰρ τὸ δίκαιον γίνεσθαι τὴν ἡγεμονίην ἐωυτῶν, &c. Schweighäuser and others explain the point by reference to the command of Agamemnôn; but this is at best only a part of the foundation of their claim: they had a more recent historical reality

to plead also: compare Strabo, viii. p. 376.

² Ἡμῶν κτισάντων (so runs the accusation of the Theban orators against the captive Plataeans, before their Lacedæmonian judges, Thucyd. iii. 61.) Πλάταιαν ὕστερον τῆς ἄλλης Βοιωτίας—οὐκ ἠξίουσιν αὐτοὶ, ὥσπερ ἐτάχθη τὸ πρῶτον, ἡγεμονεῦσθαι ὑπ’ ἡμῶν, ἔξω δὲ τῶν ἄλλων Βοιωτῶν παραβσίνοντες τὰ πάτρια, ἐπειδὴ προσηναγκάζοντο, προσεχωρησαν πρὸς Ἀθηναίους καὶ μετ’ αὐτῶν πολλὰ ἡμᾶς ἔβλαπτον.

³ Respecting Pheidôn, king of

—in real matter of fact the confederated allies or subordinates of Argos: the first four of them were said to have been *dorised* by the sons or immediate relatives of Têmenus, and the kings of Argos, as acknowledged descendants of the latter, claimed and exercised a sort of *suzeraineté* over them. Hermionê, Asinê, and Nauplia seem also to have been under the supremacy of Argos, though not colonies.¹ But this supremacy was not claimed directly and nakedly: agreeably to the ideas of the time, the ostensible purposes of the Argeian confederacy or Amphiktyony were religious, though its secondary, and not less real effects, were political. The great patron-god of the league was Apollo Pythaëus, in whose name the obligations incumbent on the members of the league were imposed. While in each of the confederated cities there was a temple to this god, his most holy and central sanctuary was on the Larissa or acropolis of Argos. At this central Argeian sanctuary solemn sacrifices were offered by Epidaurus as well as by other members of the confederacy, and as it should seem, accompanied by money-payments²—which the Argeians, as chief administrators on behalf of the common god, took upon them to enforce against defaulters, and actually tried to enforce during the Peloponnesian war against Epidaurus. On another occasion, during the 66th Olympiad (B.C. 514), they imposed the large fine of 500 talents upon each of the two states Sikyôn and Ægina, for

Argos, Ephorus said—τὴν λῆξιν ἑλὴν ἀνέλαβε τὴν Τημένου διεσπασμένην εἰς πλείω μέρη (ap. Strabo. viii. p. 358).

¹ The worship of Apollo Pythaëus, adopted from Argos both at Hermionê and Asinê, shows the connexion between them and Argos (Pausan. ii. 35, 2; ii. 36, 5): but Pausanias can hardly be justified in saying that the Argeians actually *dorised* Hermionê; it was Dryopian in the time of Herodotus, and seemingly for a long time afterwards (Herodot. viii. 43). The Hermionian Inscription, No. 1193, in Boeckh's Collection, recognises their old Dryopian connexion with Asinê in Laconia: that town had once been neighbour of Hermionê,

but was destroyed by the Argeians, and the inhabitants received a new home from the Spartans. The dialect of the Hermionians (probably that of the Dryopians generally) was Doric. See Ahrens, *De Dialecto Doricâ*, p. 2—12.

² Thucyd. v. 53. Κυριώτατοι τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἦσαν οἱ Ἀργεῖοι. The word εἰσπραξίς, which the historian uses in regard to the claim of Argos against Epidaurus, seems to imply a money-payment withheld: compare the offerings exacted by Athens from Epidaurus (Herod. v. 82).

The peculiar and intimate connexion between the Argeians, and Apollo with his surname of Pythaëus, was dwelt upon by the Argeian poetess Telesilla (Pausan. ii. 36, 2).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



we hear little; one of them, Eratus, is said to have expelled the Dryopian inhabitants of Asinê from their town on the Argolic peninsula, in consequence of their having co-operated with the Spartan king Nikander when he invaded the Argeian territory, seemingly during the generation preceding Pheidôn; there is another, Damokratidas, whose date cannot be positively determined, but he appears rather as subsequent than as anterior to Pheidôn.¹ We are informed however that these anterior kings, even beginning with Medôn, the grandson of Têmenus, had been forced to submit to great abridgement of their power and privileges, and that a form of government substantially popular, though nominally regal, had been established.² Pheidôn, breaking through the limits imposed, made himself despot of Argos. He then re-established the power of Argos over all the cities of her confederacy, which had before been so nearly dissolved as to leave all the members practically independent.³ Next, he is said to have acquired dominion over Corinth, and to have endeavoured to assure it by treacherously entrapping 1000 of her warlike citizens: but his artifice was divulged and frustrated by Abrôn, one of his confidential friends.⁴ He is farther reported to have

His claims aimed at extending his sway over the greater and projects part of Peloponnesus,—laying claim, as the representative of Hêraklês through the eldest son of Hêraklês. Hyllus, to all the cities which that restless and

than 600 B.C.: but his arguments do not appear to me very forcible, and certainly not sufficient to justify so grave an alteration in the number of Pausanias (*Beiträge zur Griechischen Alterthumskunde*, p. 18, Jena, 1844). Mr. Clinton (*Fasti Hellenici*, vol. i. App. 1. p. 249) places Pheidôn between 783 and 744 B.C.: also Boeckh ad Corp. Inscript. No. 2374, p. 335, and Müller, *Æginetica*, p. 63.

¹ Pausan. ii. 36, 5; iv. 35, 2.

² Pausan. ii. 19, 1. Ἄργεῖοι δὲ, ἅτε ἰσηγορίαν καὶ τὸ αὐτόνομον ἀγαπῶντες ἐκ παλαιότητας, τὰ τῆς ἐξουσίας τῶν βασιλέων ἐς ἐλάχιστον προήγαγον, ὡς Μῆδωνι τῷ Κείσου καὶ τοῖς ἀπογόνοις τὸ ὄνομα λειψῆναι τοῦ βασιλεως μόνον. This passage has

all the air of transferring back to the *early* government of Argos feelings which were only true of the *later*. It is curious, that in this chapter, though devoted to the Argeian regal line and government, Pausanias takes no notice of Pheidôn: he mentions him only with reference to the disputed Olympic ceremony.

³ Ephorus, *ut supra*. Φεῖδωνα τὸν Ἄργεῖον, δέκατον ὄντα ἀπὸ Τημένου, δυνάμει δὲ ὑπερβεβλημένον τοὺς κατ' αὐτὸν, ἀφ' ἧς τὴν τε λῆξιν ὅλην ἀνέλαβε τὴν Τημένου διεσπασμένην εἰς πλείω μέρη, &c. What is meant by *the lot of Têmenus* has been already explained.

⁴ Plutarch, *Narrat. Amator.* p. 772; Schol. Apollon. Rhod. iv. 1212;

irresistible hero had ever taken.¹ According to Grecian ideas, this legendary title was always seriously construed and often admitted as conclusive; though of course, where there were strong opposing interests, reasons would be found to elude it. Pheidôn would have the same ground of right as that which, 250 years afterwards, determined the Herakleid Dôrieus, brother of Kleomenês king of Sparta, to acquire for himself the territory near Mount Eryx in Sicily, because his progenitor² Hêraklês had conquered it before him. So numerous however were the legends respecting the conquests of Hêraklês, that the claim of Pheidôn must have covered the greater part of Peloponnesus, except Sparta and the plain of Messêne, which were already in the hands of Herakleids.

Nor was the ambition of Pheidôn satisfied even with these large pretensions. He farther claimed the right of presiding at the celebration of those religious games or Agônes which had been instituted by Hêraklês,—and amongst these was numbered the Olympic Agên, then, however, enjoying but a slender fraction of the lustre which afterwards came to attach to it. The presidency of any of the more celebrated festivals current throughout Greece was a privilege immensely prized. It was at once dignified and lucrative, and the course of our history will present more than one example in which blood was shed to determine what state should enjoy it. Pheidôn marched to Olympia, at the epoch of the 8th recorded Olympiad, or 747 B.C.; on the occasion of which event we are made acquainted with the real state of parties in the peninsula.

He claims the right of presiding at the Olympic games.

The plain of Olympia—now ennobled only by immortal recollections, but once crowded with all the decorations of religion and art, and forming for many centuries the brightest centre of attraction known in the ancient world—was situated on the river Alpheius in the territory called the Pisatid, hard by the borders of Arcadia. At what time its

Relations of Pisa with Pheidôn, and of Sparta with Elis.

compare Didymus, ap. Schol. Pindar. Olymp. xiii. 27.

I cannot, however, believe that Pheidôn, the ancient Corinthian lawgiver mentioned by Aristotle, is the same person as Pheidôn the king of Argos (Polit. ii. 6, 4).

¹ Ephor. *ut supra*. Πρὸς τούτοις, ἐπιθέσθαι καὶ ταῖς ὑφ' Ἡρακλέους αἰρεθείσαις πόλεσι, καὶ τοὺς ἀγῶνας ἀξιοῦν τιθέναι αὐτὸν, οὗς ἐκεῖνος ἔθηξε· τούτων δὲ εἶναι καὶ τὸν Ὀλυμπιακὸν, &c.

² Herodot. v. 43.

agonistic festival, recurring every fourth year at the first full moon after the summer solstice, first began or first acquired its character of special sanctity, we have no means of determining. As with so many of the native waters of Greece—we follow the stream upward to a certain point, but the fountain-head and the earlier flow of history are buried under mountains of unsearchable legend. The first celebration of the Olympic contests was ascribed by Grecian legendary faith to Hêraklês—and the site of the place, in the middle of the Pisatid with its eight small townships, is quite sufficient to prove that the inhabitants of that little territory were warranted in describing themselves as the original administrators of the ceremony.¹ But this state of things seems to have been altered by the Ætolian settlement in Elis, which is represented as having been conducted by Oxylus and identified with the Return of the Herakleids. The Ætolo-Eleians, bordering upon the Pisatid to the north, employed their superior power in subduing their weaker neighbours,² who thus lost their autonomy and became annexed to the territory of Elis. It was the general rule throughout Greece, that a victorious state undertook to perform³ the current services of the conquered people towards the gods—such services being conceived as attaching to the soil. Hence the celebration of the Olympic games became numbered among the incumbrances of Elis, just in the same way as the worship of the Eleusinian Dêmêtêr, when Eleusis lost its autonomy, was included among the religious obligations of Athens. The Pisatans however never willingly acquiesced in this absorption of what had once been their separate privilege. They long maintained their conviction that the celebration of the games was their right, and strove on several occasions to regain it. Of those occasions the earliest, so far as we hear, was connected with the intervention of Pheidôn. It was at their invitation that the king of Argos went to Olympia, and celebrated the games himself, in conjunction with the Pisatans, as the lineal successor of Hêraklês; while the Eleians, being thus forcibly dispossessed, refused to include the 8th Olympiad in their register of the victorious runners. But their humiliation

Conflict
between
Pheidôn
and the
Spartans,
at or about
the 8th
Olympiad,
748 B.C.

¹ Xenoph. Hellen. vii. 4, 28; Diodor. xv. 78.

² Strabo, viii. p. 354.

³ Thucyd. iv. 98.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



temporaneous currency in different parts of the Persian empire; the divisions and denominations of the scale being the same in both, 100 drachmæ to a mina, and 60 minæ to a talent. The Babylonian talent, mina, and drachma are identical with the Æginæan: the word mina is of Asiatic origin; and it has now been rendered highly probable, that the scale circulated by Pheidôn was borrowed immediately from the Phœnicians, and by them originally from the Babylonians. The Babylonian, Hebraic, Phœnician, Egyptian, and Grecian scales of weight (which were subsequently followed wherever coined money was introduced) are found to be so nearly conformable, as to warrant a belief that they are all deduced from one common origin; and that origin the Chaldæan priesthood of Babylon. It is to Pheidôn, and to his position as chief of the Argeian confederacy, that the Greeks owe the first introduction of the Babylonian scale of weight, and the first employment of coined and stamped money.

If we maturely weigh the few, but striking acts of Pheidôn which have been preserved to us, and which there is no reason to discredit, we shall find ourselves introduced to an early historical state of Peloponnesus very different from that to which another century will bring us. That

Argos, with the federative cities attached to her, was at this early time decidedly the commanding power in that peninsula, is sufficiently shown by the establishment and reception of the Pheidonian weights, measures, and monetary system—

while the other incidents mentioned completely harmonise with the same idea. Against the oppression of Elis, the Pisatans invoked Pheidôn—partly as exercising a primacy in Peloponnesus, just as the inhabitants of Lepreum in Triphylia,¹ three centuries afterwards, called in the aid of Sparta for the same object, at a time when Sparta possessed the headship—and partly as the lineal representative of Hêraklês, who had founded those games from the management of which they had been unjustly extruded. On the other hand, Sparta appears as a second-rate power. The Æginæan scale of weight and measure was adopted there as elsewhere²—the Messenian Dorians were still equal and

1844, vol. i.) I endeavoured to set forth both the new and interesting points established by the author, and the various others in which he appeared to me to have failed.

¹ Thucyd. v. 31.

² Plutarch, Apophthegm. Laconic. p. 226; Dikæarchus ap. Athenæ. iv. p. 141.

The Æginæan mina, drachma and

independent—and we find Sparta interfering to assist Elis by virtue of an obligation growing (so the legend represents it) out of the common *Ætolo-Dorian* immigration: not at all from any acknowledged primacy, such as we shall see her enjoying hereafter. The first coinage of copper and silver money is a capital event in Grecian history, and must be held to imply considerable commerce as well as those extensive views which belong only to a conspicuous and leading position. The ambition of Pheidôn to resume all the acquisitions made by his ancestor Hêraklês, suggests the same large estimate of his actual power. He is characterised as a despot, and even as the most insolent of all despots: how far he deserved such a reputation, we have no means of judging. We may remark, however, that he lived before the age of despots or tyrants, properly so called, and before the Herakleid lineage had yet lost its primary, half-political, half-religious character. Moreover, the later historians have invested his actions with a colour of exorbitant aggression, by applying them to a state of things which belonged to their time, and not to his. Thus Ephorus represents him as having deprived the Lacedæmonians of the headship of Peloponnesus, which they never possessed until long after him—and also as setting at nought the sworn inviolability of the territory of the Eleians, enjoyed by the latter as celebrators of the Olympic games; whereas the Agonothesia, or right of superintendence claimed by Elis, had not at that time acquired the sanction of prescription—while the conquest of Pisa by the Eleians themselves had proved that this sacred function did not protect the territory of a weaker people.

How Pheidôn fell, and how the Argeians lost that supremacy which they once evidently possessed, we have no positive details to inform us: with respect to the latter points, however, we can discern a sufficient explanation. The Argeians stood predominant as an entire and unanimous confederacy, which required a vigorous and able

Her subsequent decline, from the relaxation of her confederacy of cities.

obolus were the denominations employed in stipulations among the Peloponnesian states (Thucyd. v. 47).

¹ Herodot. vi. 127. Φειδῶνος τοῦ Ἀργείων τυράννου—τοῦ ὑβρίσαντος μέ-

γιστα δὴ Ἑλλήνων ἀπάντων. Pausanias (vi. 22, 2) copies the expression.

Aristotle cites Pheidôn as a person who, being a βασιλεὺς, made himself a τύραννος (Politic. viii. 8, 5).

hand to render its internal organisation effective or its ascendancy respected without. No such leader afterwards appeared at Argos, the whole history of which city is destitute of eminent individuals: her line of kings continued at least down to the Persian war,¹ but seemingly with only titular functions, for the government had long been decidedly popular. The statements, which represent the government as popular anterior to the time of Pheidôn, appear unworthy of trust. That prince is rather to be taken as wielding the old, undiminished prerogatives of the Herakleid kings, but wielding them with unusual effect—enforcing relaxed privileges, and appealing to the old heroic sentiment in reference to Hêraklês, rather than revolutionising the existing relations either of Argos or of Peloponnesus. It was in fact the great and steady growth of Sparta, for three centuries after the Lykurgean institutions, which operated as a cause of subversion to the previous order of command and obedience in Greece.

The assertion made by Herodotus—that in earlier times the whole eastern coast of Laconia, as far as Cape Malea, including the island of Kythêra and several other islands, had belonged to Argos—is referred by O. Müller to about the 50th Olympiad, or 580 B.C. Perhaps it had ceased to be true at that period; but that it was true in the age of Pheidôn, there seem good grounds for believing. What is probably meant is, that the Dorian towns on this coast, Prasiæ, Zarêx, Epidaurus Limêra, and Bœæ, were once autonomous, and members of the Argeian confederacy—a fact highly probable, on independent evidence, with respect to Epidaurus Limêra, inasmuch as that town was a settlement from Epidaurus in the Argolic peninsula: and Bœæ too had its own œkist and eponymus, the Herakleid Bœus,² noway connected with Sparta—perhaps derived from the same source as the name of the town Bœon in Doris. The Argeian confederated towns would thus comprehend the whole coast of the Argolic and Saronic gulfs, from Kythêra as far as Ægina, besides other islands which we do not know: Ægina had received a colony of Dorians from Argos and Epidaurus, upon which latter town it continued for some time in a state of dependence.³

¹ Herodot. vii. 149.

² Herodot. v. 83; Strabo, viii. p.

³ Pausan. iii. 22, 9; iii. 23, 4.

375.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



The view here given of the early ascendancy of Argos, as the head of the Peloponnesian Dorians and the metropolis of the Asiatic Dorians, enables us to understand the capital innovation of Pheidôn — the first coinage, and the first determinate scale of weight and measure known in Greece. Of the value of such improvements, in the history of Grecian civilization, it is superfluous to speak, especially when we recollect that the Hellenic states, having no political unity, were only held together by the aggregate of spontaneous uniformities, in language, religion, sympathies, recreations, and general habits. We see both how Pheidôn came to contract the wish, and how he acquired the power, to introduce throughout so much of the Grecian world a uniform scale. We also see that the Asiatic Dorians form the link between him and Phœnicia, from whence the scale was derived, just as the Euboic scale came in all probability, through the Ionic cities in Asia, from Lydia. It is asserted by Ephorus, and admitted even by the ablest modern critics, that Pheidôn first coined money "in Ægina:"¹ other authors (erroneously believing that his scale was the Euboic scale) alleged that his coinage had been carried on "in a place of Argos called Eubœa."² Now both these statements appear highly improbable, and both are traceable to the same mistake—of supposing that the title, by which the scale had come to be commonly known, must necessarily be derived from the place in which the coinage had been struck. There is every reason to conclude, that what Pheidôn did was done in Argos, and nowhere else: his coinage and scale were the earliest known in Greece, and seem to have been known by his own name, "the Pheidonian measures," under which designation they were described by Aristotle in his account of the constitution of Argos.³ They probably did not come to bear the specific epithet of *Æginæan* until there was another scale in vogue,

¹ Ephorus ap. Strabo. viii. p. 378; Boeckh, Metrologie, Abschn. 7, 1: see also the Marmor Parium, Epoch. 30.

² Etymologicon Magn. Εὐβοϊκὸν νόμισμα.

³ Pollux, Onomastic. π. 179. Εἴη

δ' ἂν καὶ Φεῖδων τι ἀγγεῖον ἐλαιηρὴν, ἀπὸ τῶν Φεῖδωνίων μέτρων ὠνομασμένον, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἐν Ἀργείων πολιτείᾳ Ἀριστοτέλης λέγει.

Also Ephorus ap. Strab. viii. p. 358. καὶ μέτρα ἐξεῦρε τὰ Φεῖδώνεια καλούμενα καὶ σταθμοὺς, καὶ νόμισμα

that we are to look upon the Pheidonian measures as emanating from Argos, and as having no greater connexion, originally, with Ægina, than with any other city dependent upon Argos.

There is moreover another point which deserves notice. What was known by the name of the Æginæan scale, as contrasted with and standing in a definite ratio (6 : 5) with the Euboic scale, related only to weight and money, so far as our knowledge extends:¹ we have no evidence to show that the same ratio extended either to measures of length or measures of capacity. But there seems ground for believing that the Pheidonian regulations, taken in their full comprehension, embraced measures of capacity as well as weights: Pheidôn, at the same time when he determined the talent, mina, and drachm, seems also to have fixed the dry and liquid measures—the medimnus and metrêtês, with their parts and multiples: and there existed² Pheidonian measures of capacity, though not of length, so far as we know. The Æginæan scale may thus have comprised only a portion of what was established by Pheidôn, namely that which related to weight and money.

μεγαρεγμάνον, &c.

¹ This differs from Boeckh's opinion: see the note in page 319.

² Theophrast. Character. c. 13;

Pollux. x. 179.

CHAPTER V.

ÆTOLO-DORIAN IMMIGRATION INTO PELOPONNESUS—
ELIS, LACONIA, AND MESSENIA.

It has already been stated that the territory properly called Elis, apart from the enlargement which it acquired by conquest, included the westernmost land in Peloponnesus, south of Achaia, and west of Mount Pholoê and Olenus in Arcadia—but not extending so far southward as the river Alpheius, the course of which lay along the southern portion of Pisatis and on the borders of Triphylla. This territory, which appears in the *Odyssey* as “the divine Elis, where the Epeians hold sway,”¹ is in the historical times occupied by a population of Ætolian origin. The connexion of race between the historical Eleians and the historical Ætolians was recognised by both parties, nor is there any ground for disputing it.²

That Ætolian invaders or immigrants into Elis would cross from Naupaktus or some neighbouring point in the Corinthian Gulf, is in the natural course of things—and such is the course which Oxylus, the conductor of the invasion, is represented by the Herakleid legend as taking. That legend (as has been already recounted) introduces Oxylus as the guide of the three Herakleid brothers—Têmenus, Kresphontês, and Aristodêmus—and as stipulating with them that in the new distribution about to take place of Peloponnesus, he shall be allowed to possess the Eleian territory, coupled with many holy privileges as to the celebration of the Olympic games.

In the preceding chapter, I have endeavoured to show that the settlements of the Dorians in and near the Argolic peninsula, so far as the probabilities of the case enable us to judge, were not accomplished by any inroad in this direction. But the localities occupied by the Dorians of

¹ *Odyss.* xv. 297.

² *Strabo*, x. p. 479.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



this important fact there seems no reason to doubt—that Amyklæ, though only twenty stadia or two miles and a half distant from Sparta, retained both its independence and its Achæan inhabitants long after the Dorian immigrants had acquired possession of the latter place, and was only taken by them under the reign of Téléklus, one generation before the first Olympiad.¹ Without presuming to fill up by conjecture incurable gaps in the statements of our authorities, we may from hence reasonably presume that

Causes
which fa-
voured the
settlement.

the Dorians were induced to invade, and enabled to acquire, Sparta, by the invitation and assistance of a party in the interior of the country. Again, with respect to the Messenian Dorians, a different, but not less effectual temptation was presented by the alliance of the Arcadians in the south-western portion of that central region of Peloponnesus. Kresphontês the Herakleid leader, it is said, espoused the daughter² of the Arcadian king Kypselus, which procured for him the support of a powerful section of Arcadia. His settlement at Stenyklêrus was a considerable distance from the sea, at the north-east corner of Messenia,³ close to the Arcadian frontier; and it will be seen hereafter that this Arcadian alliance is a constant and material element in the disputes of the Messenian Dorians with Sparta.

We may thus trace a reasonable sequence of events, showing how two bodies of Dorians, having first assisted the Ætolo-Eleians to conquer the Pisatid, and thus finding themselves on the banks of the Alpheius, followed the upward course of that river, the one to settle at Sparta, the other at Stenyklêrus. The historian Ephorus, from whom our scanty fragments of information respecting these early settlements are derived—it is important to note that he lived in the age immediately succeeding the first foundation of Messênê as a city, the restitution of the long-exiled Messenians, and the amputation of the fertile western half of Laconia for their benefit, by Epameinôndas—imparts to these proceedings an immediate decisiveness of effect

Settlements
confined at
first to
Sparta and
Steny-
klêrus.

¹ Strabo, viii. pp. 364, 365; Pausan. iii. 2, 5: compare the story of Krius, Pausan. iii. 13, 3.

² Pausan. iv. 3, 3; viii. 29, 4.

³ Strabo (viii. p. 366) blames

Euripidês for calling Messênê an inland country; but the poet seems to have been quite correct in doing so.

really united under the Spartan power.

At what date the Dorian settlements at Sparta and Stenyklêrus were effected we have no means of determining. Yet that there existed between them in the earliest times a degree of fraternity which did not prevail between Lacedæmon and Argos, we may fairly presume from the common temple, with joint religious sacrifices, of Artemis Limnatis (or Artemis on the Marsh) erected on the confines of Messenia and Laconia.¹ Our first view of the two, at all approaching to distinctness, seems to date from a period about half a century earlier than the first Olympiad (776 B.C.),—about the reign of king Têleklus of the Eurystheneidor Agid line, and the introduction of the Lykurgean discipline. Têleklus stands in the list as the eighth king dating from Eurysthenês. But how many of the seven kings before him are to be considered as real persons—or how much, out of the brief warlike expeditions ascribed to them, is to be treated as authentic history—I pretend not to define.

First view
of histori-
cal Sparta.

The earliest determinable event in the *internal* history of Sparta is the introduction of the Lykurgean discipline; the earliest *external* events are the conquest of Amyklæ, Pharis, and Geronthræ, effected by king Têleklus, and the first quarrel with the Messenians, in which that prince was slain. When we come to see how deplorably great was the confusion and ignorance which reigned with reference to a matter so pre-eminently important as Lykurgus and

¹ Pausan. iv. 2, 2. μετεῖχον δὲ αὐτοῦ μόνοι Δωριέων οἳ τε Μεσσηνιοὶ καὶ Λακεδαιμόνιοι.

his legislation, we shall not be inclined to think that facts much less important and belonging to an earlier epoch, can have been handed down upon any good authority. And in like manner when we learn that Amyklæ, Pharis, and Geronthræ (all south of Sparta, and the first only two and a half miles distant from that city) were independent of the Spartans until the reign of Têleklus, we shall require some decisive testimony before we can believe that a community, so small and so hemmed in as Sparta must then have been, had in earlier times undertaken expeditions against Helos on the sea-coast, against Kleitor on the extremenothern side of Arcadia, against the Kynurians, or against the Argeians. If Helos and Kynuria were conquered by these early kings, it appears that they had to be conquered a second time by kings succeeding Têleklus. It would be more natural that we should hear when and how they conquered the places nearer to them,—Sellasia, or Belemina, the valley of the Cœnus or the upper valley of the Eurotas. But these seem to be assumed as matters of course; the proceedings ascribed to the early Spartan kings are such only as might beseem the palmy days when Sparta was undisputed mistress of all Laconia.

The succession of Messenian kings, beginning with
 Messenian Kresphontês, the Herakleid brother, and con-
 kings. tinuing from father to son,—Æpytus, Glaukus, Isthmius, Dotadas, Subotas, Phintas, the last being contemporary with Têleklus,—is still less marked by incident than that of the early Spartan kings. It is said that the reign of Kresphontês was troubled, and himself ultimately slain by mutinies among his subjects; Æpytus, then a youth, having escaped into Arcadia, was afterwards restored to the throne by the Arcadians, Spartans, and Argeians.¹ From Æpytus the Messenian line of kings are stated to have been denominated Æpytiûs in preference to Herakleids—which affords another proof of their intimate connexion with the Arcadians, since Æpytus was a very ancient name in Arcadian heroic antiquity.²

There is considerable resemblance between the alleged behaviour of Kresphontês on first settling at Stenyklêrus, and that of Eurysthenês and Proklês at Sparta

¹ Pausan. iv. 3, 5—6.

² Homer, Iliad. ii. 604.—

Οἱ δ' ἔχον Ἀρχαδίην, ὑπὸ Κυλλή-
 νης ὄφ' ἰς αἰπύ,

Αἰπύτιον παρὰ τὸ μβον.

Schol. ad loc. ὁ δ' Αἰπυτος ἀρχαϊό-
 τatos ἦρως, Ἀρχὰς τὸ γένος.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



the whole of Laconia, so too does Kresphontês over the whole of Messenia,—over the entire south-western region of Peloponnesus, westward of Mount Taygetus and Cape Tænarus, and southward of the river Neda. He sends an envoy to Pylus and Rhium, the western and southern portions of the south-western promontory of Peloponnesus, treating the entire territory as if it were one sovereignty, and inviting the inhabitants to submit under equal laws.¹ But it has already been observed, that this supposed oneness and indivisibility is not less uncertified in regard to Messenia than in regard to Laconia. How large a proportion of the former territory these kings of Stenyklêrus may have ruled, we have no means of determining, but there were certainly portions of it which they did not rule—not merely during the reign of Têleklus at Sparta, but still later, during the first Messenian war. For not only we are informed that Têleklus established three townships, Poiêessa, Echeiæ² and Tragium, near the Messenian Gulf and on the course of the river Nedon, but we read also a farther matter of evidence in the roll of Olympic victors. Every competitor for the prize at one of these great festivals was always entered as member of some autonomous Hellenic community, which constituted his title to approach the lists: if successful, he was proclaimed with the name of the com-

The kings of Stenyklêrus did not possess all Messenia.

¹ Ephorus ap. Strabo. viii. p. 361. Dr. Thirlwall observes (Hist. of Greece, ch. vii. p. 300, 2nd edit.), "The Messenian Pylus seems long to have retained its independence, and to have been occupied for several centuries by one branch of the family of Neleus; for descendants of Nestor are mentioned as allies of the Messenians in their struggle with Sparta in the latter half of the seventh century B.C."

For this assertion Dr. Thirlwall cites Strabo (viii. p. 355). I agree with him as to the matter of fact: I see no proof that the Dorians of Stenyklêrus ever ruled over what is called the Messenian Pylus; for, of course, if they did not rule over it before the second Messenian war, they never acquired it

at all. But on reference to the passage in Strabo, it will not be found to prove anything to the point; for Strabo is speaking, not of the Messenian Pylus, but of the *Triphylian Pylus*: he takes pains to show that Nestor had nothing to do with the *Messenian Pylus*,—*Νέστορος ἀπόγονοι* means the inhabitants of Triphylia near Lepreum: compare p. 350.

² Strabo, viii. p. 360. Concerning the situation of Korônê in the Messenian Gulf, see Pausanias, iv. 34, 2; Strabo, viii. p. 361; and the observations of Colonel Leake, Travels in Morea, ch. x. vol. i. p. 439–448. He places it near the modern Petalidhi, seemingly on good grounds.

grounds: 1. The occurrence of a Bœotian competitor in that early day at the Olympic games. The first eleven victors (I put aside Oxythemis, because he is the subject of the argument) are all from western and southern Peloponnesus: then come victors from Corinth, Megara, and Epidaurus; then from Athens; there is one from Thebes in the 41st Olympiad. I infer from hence that the celebrity and frequentation of the Olympic games increased only by degrees, and had not got beyond Peloponnesus in the eighth century B.C. 2. The name Koronæus, Κορωνάιος, is the proper and formal title for a citizen of Korônê, not for a citizen of Korôncia; the latter styles himself Κορωνεύς. The ethnical name Κορωνεύς as belonging to Korôncia in Bœotia is placed beyond doubt by several inscriptions in Boeckh's collection; especially No. 1583, in which a citizen of that town is proclaimed as victorious at the festival of the Charitesia at Orchomenus: compare Nos. 1587—1593, in which the same ethnical name occurs. The Bœotian Inscriptions attest in like manner the prevalence of the same etymological law in forming ethnical names, for the towns near Korôncia: thus, *Chærôneia* makes Χαιρωνεύς; *Leba-*

proclaimed at the Olympic games; better than the evidence of Herodotus and Thucydidês, who both call them Κορωνάιοι (Herodot. v, 79; Thucyd. iv. 93): Polybius agrees with the Inscription, and speaks of the Κορωνεῖς, Λεβαδεῖς, Χαιρωνεῖς (xxvii. 1). O. Müller himself admits in another place (Orchomenos, p. 480) that the proper ethnical name is Κορωνεύς. The reading of Strabo (ix. p. 411) is not trustworthy: see Grosskurd *ad loc.*; compare Steph. Byz. Κορώνεια and Κορώνη.

In regard to the formation of ethnical names, it seems the general rule, that a town ending in η or αι preceded by a consonant had its ethnical derivative in αιος; such as Σχιώνη, Τορώνη, Κύμη, Θῆβαι, Ἀθῆναι; while names ending in εια had their ethnicon in ευς, as Ἀλεξάνδρεια, Ἀμάσεια, Σελεύχεια, Λυσιμάχεια (the recent cities thus founded by the successors of Alexander are perhaps the best evidences that can be taken of the analogies of the language), Μελάμπεια, Μελίτεια, in addition to the Bœotian names of towns above quoted. There is however great irregularity in particular cases, and the number of towns called by the same name created an anxiety to vary the ethnicon for each: see Stephan. Byz. v. Ἡράκλεια.

miles on the right bank of the Pamisus, and a considerable distance to the north of the modern Coron. Now if Korônê had then been comprehended in Messenia, Oxythemis would have been proclaimed as a Messenian like the seven winners who preceded him; and the fact of his being proclaimed as a Korônæan proves that Korônê was then an independent community, not under the dominion of the Dorians of Stenyklêrus. It seems clear therefore that the latter did not reign over the whole territory commonly known as Messenia, though we are unable to assign the proportion of it which they actually possessed.

The Olympic festival, in its origin doubtless a privilege of the neighbouring Pisatans, seems to have derived its great and gradually expanding importance from the Ætolo-Eleian settlement in Peloponnesus, combined with the Dorians of Laconia and Messenia. Lykurgus of Sparta and Iphitus of Elis are alleged to have joined their efforts for the purpose of establishing both the sanctity of the Olympic truce and the inviolability of the Eleian territory. Hence, though this tale is not to be construed

garded the Olympic games as a portion of their own antiquities. Moreover, it is certain both that the dignity of the festival increased simultaneously with their ascendancy,¹ and that their peculiar fashions were very early introduced into the practice of the Olympic competitors. Probably the three bands of co-operating invaders, Ætolians and Spartan and Messenian Dorians, may have adopted this festival as a periodical renovation of mutual union and fraternity; from which cause the games became an attractive centre for the western portion of Peloponnesus, before they were much frequented by people from the eastern, or still more from extra-Peloponnesian Hellas. For it cannot be altogether accidental, when we read the names of the first twelve proclaimed Olympic victors (occupying nearly half a century from 776 B.C. downwards), to find that seven of them are Messenians, three Eleians, one

¹ The entire nakedness of the competitors at Olympia was adopted from the Spartan practice, seemingly in the 14th Olympiad, as is testified by the epigram on

Orsippus the Megarian. Previous to that period, the Olympic competitors had διαζώματα περί τὰ αἰδοῖα (Thucyd. i. 6).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ponnesus—the Dryopic inhabitants of Hermionê¹—and the Eleuthero-Lacones, or Laconian townships (compounded of Perioëki and Helots), emancipated by the Romans in the second century B.C. Concerning the speech of that population whom the invading Dorians found in Laconia, we have no means of judging: the presumption would rather be that it did not differ materially from the Doric. Thucydidês designates the Corinthians, whom the invading Dorians attacked from the hill Solygeius, as being Æolians, and Strabo speaks both of the Achæans as an Æolic nation and of the Æolic dialect as having been originally preponderant in Peloponnesus.² But we do not readily see what means of information either of these authors possessed respecting the speech of a time which must have been four centuries anterior even to Thucydidês.

Of that which is called the Æolic dialect there are three marked and distinguishable varieties—the Lesbian, the Thessalian, and the Bœotian; the Thessalian forming a mean term between the other two. Ahrens has shown that the ancient grammatical critics are accustomed to affirm peculiarities, as belonging to the only to the Lesbian variety of it, or to the poems of Alkæus and Sappho, which these critics attentively studied. Lesbian Æolic, Thessalian Æolic, and Bœotian Æolic, are all different: and if, abstracting from these differences, we confine our attention to that which is common to all three, we shall find little to distinguish this abstract Æolic from the abstract Doric, or that which is common to the many varieties of the Doric dialect.³ These two are sisters,

¹ Corpus Inscriptt. Boeckh. Nos. 1771, 1772, 1773; Ahrens, De Dialecto Doricâ, sect. i.-ii. 48.

² Thucyd. iv. 42; Strabo, viii. p. 333.

³ See the valuable work of Ahrens, De Dialecto Æolicâ, sect. 51. He observes, in reference to the Lesbian, Thessalian, and Bœotian dialects:—"Tres illas dialectos, quæ optimo jure Æolicæ vocari videntur—quia, qui illis usi sunt, Æoles erant—comparantem mirum habere oportet, quod Asianorum

Æolum et Bœotorum dialecti tantum inter se distant, quantum vix ab aliâ quâvis Græcæ linguæ dialecto." (He then enumerates many points of difference:) "Contra tot tantasque differentias pauca reperiuntur eaque fere levia, quæ utrique dialecto, neque simul Doricæ, communia sint. . . Vides his comparatis tantum interesse inter utramque dialectum, ut dubitare liceat, an Æoles Bœoti non magis cum Æolibus Asianis conjuncti fuerint, quam qui hodie

presenting both of them more or less the Latin side of the Greek language, while the relationship of either of them to the Attic and Ionic is more distant. Now it seems that (putting aside Attica) the speech of all Greece,¹ from Perrhæbia and Mount Olympus to Cape Malea and Cape Akritas, consisted of different varieties either of the Doric or of the Æolic dialect; this being true (as far as we are able to judge) not less of the aboriginal Arcadians than of the rest. The Laconian dialect contained more specialties of its own, and approached nearer to the Æolic, and to the Eleian, than any other variety of the Dorian: it stands at the extreme of what has been classified as the strict Dorian—that is, the farthest removed from Ionic and Attic. The Kretan towns manifest also a strict Dorism; as well as the Lacedæmonian colony of Tarentum, and seemingly most of the Italiotic Greeks, though some of them are called Achæan colonies. Most of the other varieties of the Doric dialect (Phokian, Lokrian, Delphian, Achæan of Phthiôtis) exhibit a form departing less widely from the Ionic and Attic: Argos and the towns in the Argolic peninsula seem to form a stepping-stone between the two.

These positions represent all our scanty information respecting those varieties of Grecian speech which are not known to us by written works. The little presumption which can be raised upon them favours the belief that the Dorian invaders of Laconia and Messenia found there a dialect little different from that which they brought with them—a conclusion which it is the more necessary to state distinctly, since the work of O. Müller has caused an exaggerated estimate to be formed of the distinctive peculiarities whereby Dorism was parted off from the rest of Hellas.

miro quodam casu Saxones vocantur antiquis Saxonibus. Nilominus Thessalicâ dialecto in comparationem vocatâ, diversissima quæ videntur aliquo vinculo conjungere licet. Quamvis enim pauca de eâ comperta habeamus, hoc tamen certum est, alia Thessalis cum Lesbiis, alia cum solis Bœotis communia esse." (P. 222—223.)

Perrhæbians see Stephanus Byz. v. Γόννος, and ap. Eustath. ad Iliad. p. 335.

The Attic judgement in comparing these different varieties of Greek speech is expressed in the story of a man being asked—Whether the Bœotians or the Thessalians were most barbaric in speech? He answered—the Eleians (Eustath. ad Iliad. p. 304).

¹ About the Æolic dialect of the

CHAPTER VI.

LAWS AND DISCIPLINE OF LYKURGUS AT SPARTA.

PLUTARCH begins his biography of Lykurgus with the following ominous words:—

Lykurgus—
authorities
of Plutarch
respecting
him. “Concerning the lawgiver Lykurgus we can assert absolutely nothing which is not controverted: there are different stories in respect to his birth, his travels, his death, and also his mode of proceeding, political as well as legislative: least of all is the time in which he lived agreed upon.”

And this exordium is but too well borne out by the unsatisfactory nature of the accounts which we read, not only in Plutarch himself, but in those other authors out of whom we are obliged to make up our idea of the memorable Lykurgean system. If we examine the sources from which Plutarch's life of Lykurgus is deduced, it will appear that—excepting the poets Alkman, Tyrtæus, and Simonidês, from whom he has borrowed less than we could have wished—he has no authorities older than Xenophon and Plato: Aristotle is cited several times, and is unquestionably the best of his witnesses, but the greater number of them belong to the century subsequent to that philosopher. Neither Herodotus nor Ephorus is named, though the former furnishes some brief but interesting particulars—and the latter also (as far as we can judge from the fragments remaining) entered at large into the proceedings of the Spartan lawgiver.¹

Lykurgus is described by Herodotus as uncle and guardian to king Labôtas, of the Eurystheneid or Agid line of Spartan kings; and this would place him, according to the received chronology, about 220 years before the first recorded Olympiad (about B.C. 996).² All the other accounts, on the con-

¹ See Heeren, *Dissertatio de Herodotus* gives this as the statement of the Lacedæmonians themselves.

² Herodot. i. 65. Moreover, selves.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



other hand they meant the first recorded Olympiad (B.C. 776), they would be found not much removed from the opinion of Aristotle. An unequivocal proof of the inextricable confusion in ancient times respecting the epoch of the great Spartan lawgiver is indirectly afforded by Timæus, who supposed that there had existed two persons named Lykurgus, and that the acts of both had been ascribed to one. It is plain from hence that there was no certainty attainable, even in the third century before the Christian æra, respecting the date or parentage of Lykurgus.

Thucydidês, without mentioning the name of Lykurgus, informs us that it was "400 years and somewhat more" anterior to the close of the Peloponnesian war,¹ when the Spartans emerged from their previous state of desperate internal disorder, and entered upon "their present polity." We may fairly presume that this alludes to the Lykurgean discipline and constitution, which Thucydidês must thus have conceived as introduced about B.C. 830-820—coinciding with something near the commencement of the reign of king Têleklus. In so far as it is possible to form an opinion, amidst evidence at once so scanty and so discordant, I incline to adopt the opinion of Thucydidês as to the time at which the Lykurgean constitution was introduced at Sparta. The state of "eunomy" and good order which that constitution brought about—combined with the healing of great previous internal sedition, which had tended much to enfeeble them—is represented (and with great plausibility) as the grand cause of the victorious career beginning with king Têleklus, the conqueror of Amyklæ, Pharis, and Geronthræ. Therefore it would seem, in the absence of better evidence, that a date, connecting the fresh stimulus of the new discipline with the reign of Têleklus, is more probable than any epoch either later or earlier.²

¹ Thucyd. i. 18.

² Mr. Clinton fixes the legislation of Lykurgus, "in conformity with Thucydidês," at about 817 B.C., and his regency at 852 B.C., about thirty-five years previous (Fasti Hellen. v. i. c. 7, p. 141): he also places the Olympiad of Iphitus B.C. 828 (F. H. vol. ii. p. 410;

App. c. 22).

In that chapter, Mr. Clinton collects and discusses the various statements respecting the date of Lykurgus: compare also Larcher ad Herodot. i. 67, and Chronologie, p. 486—492.

The differences in these statements must, after all, be taken as

O. Müller,¹ after glancing at the strange and improbable circumstances handed down to us respecting Lykurgus, observes "that we have absolutely no account of him as an individual person." This remark is perfectly just; but another remark made by the same distinguished author, respecting the Lykurgean system of laws, appears to me erroneous—and requires more especially to be noticed, inasmuch as the corollaries deduced from it pervade a large portion of his valuable history of the Dorians. He affirms that the laws of Sparta were considered the true Doric institutions, and that their origin was identical with that of the people: Sparta is, in his view, the full type of Dorian

Opinion of O. Muller (that Sparta is the perfect type of Dorian character and tendencies) is incorrect. Peculiarity of Sparta.

they stand, for they cannot be reconciled except by the help of arbitrary suppositions, which only mislead us by producing a show of agreement where there is none in reality. I agree with Mr. Clinton in thinking that the assertion of Thucydidēs is here to be taken as the best authority. But I altogether dissent from the proceeding which he (in common with Larcher, Wesseling, Sir John Marsham, and others) employs with regard to the passage of Herodotus where that author calls Lykurgus the guardian and uncle of Labōtas (of the Eurystheneid line). Mr. Clinton says—"From the notoriety of the fact that Lykurgus was ascribed to the other house (the Prokleids), it is manifest that *the passage must be corrupted*" (p. 144); and he then goes on to correct the text of Herodotus, agreeably to the proposition of Sir J. Marsham.

This proceeding seems to me inadmissible. The text of Herodotus reads perfectly well, and is not contradicted by anything to be found elsewhere in *Herodotus himself*: moreover, we have here a positive guarantee of its accu-

racy, for Mr. Clinton himself admits that it stood in the days of Pausanias just as we now read it (Pausan. iii. 2, 3). By what right then do we alter it? or what do we gain by doing so? Our only right to do so, is the assumption that there must have been uniformity of belief, and means of satisfactory ascertainment, (respecting facts and persons of the ninth and tenth centuries before the Christian æra,) existing among Greeks of the fifth and succeeding centuries; an assumption which I hold to be incorrect. And all we gain is, an illusory unanimity produced by gratuitously putting words into the mouth of one of our witnesses.

If we can prove Herodotus to have been erroneously informed, it is right to do so; but we have no ground for altering his deposition. It affords a clear proof that there were very different stories as to the mere question, to which of the two lines of Herakleids the Spartan lawgiver belonged—and that there was an enormous difference as to the time in which he lived.

¹History of the Dorians, i. 7, 6.

principles, tendencies, and sentiments—and is so treated throughout his entire work.¹ But such an opinion is at once gratuitous (for the passage of Pindar cited in support of it is scarcely of any value) and contrary to the whole tenor of ancient evidence. The institutions of Sparta were not Dorian, but peculiar to herself;² distinguishing her not less from Argos, Corinth, Megara, Epidaurus, Sikyôn, Korkyra, or Knidus, than from Athens or Thebes. Krête was the only other portion of Greece in which there prevailed institutions in many respects analogous, yet still dissimilar in those two attributes which form the real mark and pinch of Spartan legislation, viz. the military discipline and the rigorous private training. There were doubtless Dorians in Krête, but we have no proof that these peculiar institutions belonged to them more than to the other inhabitants of the island. That the Spartans had an original organization and tendencies, common to them with the other Dorians, we may readily conceive; but the Lykurgean constitution impressed upon them a peculiar tendency which took them out of the general march, and rendered them the least fit of all states to be cited as an example of the class-attributes of Dorism. One of the essential causes, which made the Spartan institutions work so impressively upon the Grecian mind, was their perfect singularity, combined with the conspicuous ascendancy of the state in which they were manifested; while the Kretan communities, even admitting their partial resemblance (which was chiefly in the institution of the Syssitia, and was altogether more in form than in spirit) to Sparta, were too insignificant to attract notice except from speculative observers. It is therefore a mistake on the part of O. Müller, to treat Sparta as the type and representative of Dorians generally, and very many of the positions advanced in his *History of the Dorians* require to be modified when this mistake is pointed out.

The first capital fact to notice respecting the institutions ascribed to Lykurgus, is the very early period at which they had their commencement: it seems impossible to place this period later

¹ *History of the Dorians*, iii. 1, 8. Alf. Kopstadt recognizes this as an error in Müller's work: see his recent valuable Dissertation "De

Rerum Laconicarum Constitutionis Lycurgeæ Origine et Indole," *Gryphiæ*, 1849, sect. 3, p. 18.

² Among the many other eviden-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



mediately conducted them to prosperity and success.¹ Hellanikus, whose writings a little preceded those of Herodotus, not only did not (any more than Thucydides) make mention of Lykurgus, but can hardly be thought to have attached any importance to the name; since he attributed the constitution of Sparta to the first kings, Eurysthenes and Prokles.²

But those later writers, from whom Plutarch chiefly
Copious details of Plutarch. compiled his biography, profess to be far better informed on the subject of Lykurgus, and enter more into detail. His father, we are told, was

elder brother Polyarchus, leaving a pregnant widow, who made to Lykurgus propositions that he should marry her and become king. But Lykurgus, repudiating the offer with indignation, awaited the birth of his young nephew Charilaus, held up the child publicly in the agora as the future king of Sparta, and immediately relinquished the authority which he had provisionally exercised. However, the widow and her brother Leonidas raised slanderous
Regency of Lykurgus—his long absence from Sparta. accusations against him, of designs menacing to the life of the infant king,—accusations which he deemed it proper to obviate by a temporary absence. Accordingly he left Sparta and went to Krête, where he studied the polity and customs of the different cities; next he visited Ionia and Egypt, and (as some authors affirmed) Libya, Iberia, and even India. While in Ionia, he is reported to have obtained from the descendants of Kreophylus a copy of the Homeric poems, which had not up to that time become known in Peloponnesus: there were not wanting authors, indeed, who said that he had conversed with Homer himself.³

¹ Herodot. i. 65-66; Thucyd. i. 18. ² Strabo, viii. p. 363.

³ Plutarch, Lykurg. 3, 4, 5.

Meanwhile the young king Charilaus grew up and assumed the sceptre, as representing the Prokleid or Eury-pontid family. But the reins of government had become more relaxed, and the disorders worse than ever, when Lykurgus returned. Finding that the two kings as well as the people were weary of so disastrous a condition, he set himself to the task of applying a corrective, and with this view consulted the Delphian oracle; from which he received strong assurances of the divine encouragement, together with one or more special injunctions (the primitive Rhetraë of the constitution) which he brought with him to Sparta.¹

He is sent by the Delphian oracle to reform the state.

He then suddenly presented himself in the agora, with thirty of the most distinguished Spartans, all in arms, as his guards and partisans. King Charilaus, though at first terrified, when informed of the designs of his uncle, stood forward willingly to second them; while the bulk of the Spartans respectfully submitted to the venerable Herakleid who came as reformer and missionary from Delphi.² Such were the steps by which Lykurgus acquired his ascendancy: we have now to see how he employed it.

His first proceeding, pursuant to the Rhetra or Compact brought from Delphi, was to constitute the Spartan Senate, consisting of twenty-eight ancient men; making an aggregate of thirty in conjunction with the two kings, who sat and voted in it. With this were combined periodical assemblies of the Spartan people, in the open air, between the river Knakiôn and the bridge Babyka. Yet no discussion was permitted in these assemblies,—their functions were limited to the simple acceptance or rejection of that which had previously been determined in the se-

His institutions ascribed to him—senate and popular assembly—ephors.

¹ For an instructive review of the text as well as the meaning of this ancient Rhetra, see Urlich's, Ueber die Lycurgischen Rhetraë, published since the first edition of this History. His refutation of the changes of Götting seems to me complete: but his own conjectures are not all equally plausible: nor can I subscribe to his explanation of ἀφιστάσθαι.

² Plutarch, Lycurg. c. 5-6. Hermippus, the scholar of Aristotle, professed to give the names of twenty out of these thirty devoted partisans.

There was however a different story, which represented that Lykurgus, on his return from his travels, found Charilaus governing like a despot (Heraclid. Pontic. c. 2).

nate. † Such was the Spartan political constitution as fixed by Lykurgus; but a century afterwards (so Plutarch's account

¹The words of the old Rhetra—*Διὸς Ἑλλανίου καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς Ἑλλανίας ἱερὸν ἰδρυσάμενον, φυλάς φυλάξαντα, καὶ ὠβὰς ὠβάξαντα, τριάκοντα, γερουσίαν σὺν ἀρχαγέταις, καταστήσαντα, ὥρας ἐξ ὥρας ἀπελλάζειν μεταξὺ Βαβύκας καὶ Κναχίωνος, οὕτως εἰσφέρειν τε καὶ ἀφίστασθαι· δάμω δ' ἀγορὰν εἶμεν καὶ κράτος.* (Plutarch, *ib.*)

The reading *ἀγορὰν* (last word but three) is that of Coray's edition: other readings proposed are *κυρίαν*, *ἀνωγὰν*, *ἀγορίαν*, &c. The MSS. however are incurably corrupt, and none of the conjectures can be pronounced certain.

The Rhetra contains various remarkable archaisms,—*ἀπελλάζειν*—*ἀφίστασθαι*—the latter word in the sense of putting the question for decision, corresponding to the function of the *Ἀφιστήρ* at Knidus (Plutarch, *Quæst. Græc.* c. 4; see Schneider, *Lexicon*, *ad voc.*).

O. Müller connects *τριάκοντα* with *ὠβὰς*, and lays it down that there were thirty Obes at Sparta: I rather agree with those critics who place the comma after *ὠβάξαντα*, and refer the number thirty to the senate. Urlichs, in his *Dissertation über die Lykurgisch. Rhetren* (published in the *Rheinisches Museum* for 1847, p. 204), introduces the word *πρεσβυγενέας* after *τριάκοντα*, which seems a just conjecture when we look to the addition afterwards made by Theopompus. The statements of Müller about the Obes seem to me to rest on no authority.

The word Rhetra means a solemn compact, either originally emanating from, or subsequently sanctioned by the gods, who are always parties to such agreements; see the old Treaty between the

Eleians and Heræans,—*Ἄ Φράτρα*, between the two,—commemorated in the valuable inscription still preserved,—as ancient, according to Boeckh, as *Olymp.* 40-60 (Boeckh, *Corp. Inscript.* No. II p. 26, Part I.). The words of Tyrtæus imply such a compact between contracting parties: first the kings, then the senate, lastly the people—*εὐθείαις ῥήτραις ἀνταπαμειβομένους*—where the participle last occurring applies not to the people alone, but to all the three. The Rhetra of Lykurgus emanated from the Delphian god; but the kings, senate and people all bound themselves, both to each other and to the gods, to obey it. The explanations given of the phrase by Nitzsch and Schömann (in Dr. Thirlwall's note, ch. viii. 334) seem to me less satisfactory than what appears in C. F. Hermann (*Lehrbuch der Griech. Staatsalterthümer*, s. 23).

Nitzsch (*Histor. Homer.* sect. xiv. p. 50-55) does not take sufficient account of the distinction between the meaning of *ῥήτρα* in the early and in the later times. In the time of the Ephor Epitadeus, or of Agis III., he is right in saying that *ῥήτρα* is equivalent to *scitum*—still however, with an idea of greater solemnity and unchangeability than is implied in the word *νόμος*, analogous to what is understood by a fundamental or organic enactment in modern ideas. The old ideas of a mandate from the Delphian god, and a compact between the kings and the citizens, which had once been connected with the word, gradually dropped away from it. There is no contradiction in Plutarch, therefore, such as that to which Nitzsch alludes (p. 54).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



change, perhaps intended as a sort of compensation for this bridle on the popular assembly, introduced into the constitution a new executive Directory of five men, called the Ephors. This Board—annually chosen, by some capricious method the result of which could not well be foreseen, and open to be filled by every Spartan citizen,—either originally received, or gradually drew to itself, functions so extensive and commanding, in regard to internal administration and police, as to limit the authority of the kings to little more than the exclusive command of the military force. Herodotus was informed at Sparta that the ephors as well as the senate had been constituted by Lykurgus; but the authority of Aristotle as well as the internal probability of the case, sanctions the belief that they were subsequently added.¹

Constitu-
tion as-
cribed to
Lykurgus
agrees with
that which
we find in
Homer.

Taking the political constitution of Sparta ascribed to Lykurgus, it appears not to have differed materially from the rude organization exhibited in the Homeric poems, where we always find a council of chiefs or old men and occasional meetings of a listening agora. It is hard to suppose that the Spartan kings can ever have governed without

If we judge by these analogies, we shall see that the words of Tyrtæus, εὐθείαις ῥήτραις, mean “straightforward, honest, statutes or conventions”—not *propositions adopted without change*, as Nitzsch supposes. And so the words σχολιᾶν ἔλοιτο, mean, “adopt a *wrong or dishonest determination*”—not a determination different from what was proposed to them.

These words gave to the kings and senate power to cancel any decision of the public assembly which they disapproved. It retained only the power of refusing assent to some substantive propositions of the authorities, first of the kings and senate, afterwards of the ephors. And this limited power it seems always to have preserved.

Kopstadt explains well the expression σχολιᾶν, as the antithesis

to the epithet of Tyrtæus, εὐθείαις ῥήτραις (Dissertat. sect. 15. p. 124).

¹ Herod. i. 65; compare Plutarch, Lycurg. c. 7; Aristot. Polit. v. 9, 1 (where he gives the answer of king Theopompus).

Aristotle tells us that the ephors were chosen, but not *how* they were chosen; only that it was in some manner excessively puerile, —παιδαριώδης γὰρ ἐστὶ λίσαν (ii. 6, 16).

M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire in his note to the passage of Aristotle, presumes that they were of course chosen in the same manner as the senators; but there seems no sufficient ground in Aristotle to countenance this. Nor is it easy to reconcile the words of Aristotle respecting the election of the senators, where he assimilates it to an αἵρεσις δυναστευτικῇ (Polit. v.

some formalities of this sort; so that the innovation (if innovation there really was) ascribed to Lykurgus, must have consisted in some new details respecting the senate and the agora,—in fixing the number¹ thirty, and the life-tenure of the former—and the special place of meeting of the latter as well as the extent of privilege which it was to exercise; consecrating the whole by the erection of the temples of Zeus Hellanius and Athênê Hellania. The view of the subject presented by Plutarch as well as by Plato,² as if the senate were an entire novelty, does not consist with the pictures of the old epic. Hence we may more naturally imagine that the Lykurgean political constitution, apart from the ephors who were afterwards tacked to it, presents only the old features of the heroic government of Greece, defined and regularised in a particular manner. The presence of two co-existent and co-ordinate kings, indeed, succeeding in hereditary descent and both belonging to the gens of Herakleids, is something peculiar to Sparta—the origin of which receives no other explanation than a reference to the twin sons of Aristodêmus, Eurysthenês and Proklês. These two primitive ancestors are a type of the two lines of Spartan kings; for they are said to have passed their lives in perpetual dissensions, which was the habitual state of the two contemporaneous kings at Sparta. While the co-existence of the pair of kings, equal in power and constantly thwarting each other, had often a baleful effect upon the course of public measures, it was nevertheless a security to the state against successful violence,³ ending in the establishment of a despotism, on the part of any ambitious individual among the regal line.

Pair of kings at Sparta—their constant dissensions—a security to the state against despotism.

During five successive centuries of Spartan history, from Polydôrus and Theopompus downward, no such violence was attempted by any of the kings,⁴ until the times of

5, 8; ii. 6, 18), with the description which Plutarch (*Lycurg.* 26) gives of that election.

¹ Kopstadt agrees in this supposition, that the number of the senate was probably not peremptorily fixed before the Lykurgean reform (*Dissertat. ut sup. sect. 13, p. 109*).

² Plato, *Legg.* iii. p. 691; Plato, *Epist.* viii. 354, B.

³ Plato, *Legg.* iii. p. 691; *Aristot. Polit.* ii. 6, 20.

⁴ The conspiracy of Pausanias, after the repulse of Xerxes, was against the liberty of combined Hellas, to constitute himself

Agis III. and Kleomenês III. (240 B.C. to 220 B.C.) The importance of Greece had at this last-mentioned period irretrievably declined, and the independent political action which she once possessed had become subordinate to the more powerful force either of the Ætolian mountaineers (the rudest among her own sons) or to Epirotic, Macedonian, and Asiatic foreigners, preparatory to the final absorption by the Romans. But amongst all the Grecian states, Sparta had declined the most; her ascendancy was totally gone, and her peculiar training and discipline (to which she had chiefly owed it) had degenerated in every way. Under these untoward circumstances, two young kings, Agis and Kleomenês—the former a generous enthusiast, the latter more violent and ambitious—conceived the design of restoring the Lykurgean constitution in its supposed pristine purity, with the hope of reviving both the spirit of the people and the ascendancy of the state. But the Lykurgean constitution had been, even in the time of Xenophon,¹ in part, an *idéal*, not fully realised in practice—much less was it a reality in the days of Kleomenês and Agis; moreover it was an *idéal* which admitted of being coloured according to the fancy or feelings of those reformers who professed, and probably believed, that they were aiming at its genuine restoration. What the reforming kings found most in their way, was, the uncontrolled authority, and the conservative dispositions, of the ephors—which they naturally contrasted with the original fullness of the kingly power, when kings and senate stood alone. Among the various ways in which men's ideas of what the primitive constitution *had* been, were modified by the feelings of their own time (we shall presently see some other instances of this), is probably to be reckoned the assertion of Kleomenês respecting the first appointment of the ephors. Kleomenês affirmed that the ephors had originally been nothing more than subordinates and deputies of the kings, chosen by the latter to perform for a time their duties during the long absence of the Messenian

satrap of Hellas under the Persian monarch, rather than against the established Lacedæmonian government; though undoubtedly one portion of his project was to excite the Helots to revolt, and Aristotle

treats him as specially aiming to put down the power of the ephors (Polit. v. 5, 6; compare Thucyd. i. 128-134; Herodot. v. 32).

¹ Xenophon, Republic. Laced. c. 14.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



the kings had long been subordinate in power to the ephors. But it evidently began first as a reality—when the king was predominant and effective chief of the state, and when the ephors, clothed with functions chiefly defensive, served as guarantees to the people against abuse of the regal authority. Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero,¹ all interpret the original institution of the ephors as designed to protect the people and restrain the kings: the latter assimilates them to the tribunes at Rome.

Such were the relations which had once subsisted between the kings and the ephors: though in later times these relations had been so completely reversed, that Polybius considers the former as essentially subordinate to the latter—reckoning it as a point of duty in the kings to respect the ephors “as their fathers.”² And such is decidedly the state of things throughout all the better-known period of history which we shall hereafter traverse. The ephors are the general directors of public affairs³ and the supreme controlling board holding in check every other authority in the state, without any assignable limit to their powers. The extraordinary ascendancy of these magistrates is particularly manifested in the fact stated by Aristotle, that they exempted themselves from the public discipline, so that their self-indulgent year of office stood in marked contrast with the toilsome exercises and soberness common to rich and poor alike. The kings are reduced to a certain number of special functions, combined with privileges partly religious, partly honorary: their most important political attribute is, that they are *ex officio* generals of the military force on foreign expeditions. But even here we trace the sensible decline of their power. For whereas Herodotus was informed, and it probably had been the old privilege, that the king could levy war against

¹ Plato, Legg. iii. p. 692; Aristot. Polit. v. 11, 1; Cicero de Republic. Fragm. ii. 33, ed. Maii—“Ut consulare imperium tribuni plebis, sic illi (ephor) contra vim regiam constituti;”—also De Legg. iii. 7, and Valer. Max. iv. i.

Compare Plutarch, Lycurg. c. 7;

Tittmann, Griechisch. Staatsverfassung, p. 108, *seqq.*

² Polyh. xxiv. 8.

³ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 14—16: ‘Ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ἡ διαίτα τῶν Ἐφόρων οὐχ ὁμολογουμένη τῷ βουλήματι τῆς πόλεως. αὐτὴ μὲν γὰρ ἀνειμένη λίαν ἐστὶ ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις μᾶλλον ὑπερβάλλει ἐπὶ τὸ σκληρόν, &c.

whomsoever he chose, and that no Spartan could impede him on pain of committing sacrilege¹—we shall see throughout the best known periods of this history that it is usually the ephors (with or without the senate and public assembly) who determine upon war—the king only takes the command when the army is put on the march. Aristotle seems to treat the Spartan king as a sort of hereditary general; but even in this privilege, shackles were put upon him—for two out of the five ephors accompanied the army, and their power seems to have been not seldom invoked to ensure obedience to his orders.²

The direct political powers of the kings were thus greatly curtailed; yet importance in many ways was still left to them. They possessed large royal domains, in many of the townships of the Pericœki: they received frequent occasional presents, and when victims were offered to the gods, the skins and other portions belonged to them as perquisites;³ they had their votes in the senate, which, if they were absent, were given on their behalf by such of the other senators as were most nearly related to them: the adoption of children received its formal accomplishment in their presence—and conflicting claims at law, for the hand of an unbequeathed orphan heiress, were adjudicated by them. But above all, their root was deep in the religious feelings of the people. Their pre-eminent lineage connected the entire state with a divine paternity. They, the chiefs of the Herakleids, were the special grantees of the soil of Sparta from the gods—the occupation of the Dorians being only sanctified and blest by Zeus for the purpose of establishing the children of Hêraklês in the valley of the Eurotas.⁴ They

Position
and pri-
vileges of
the kings.

¹ Herodot. vi. 56.

² Aristot. ii. 7, 4; Xenoph. Republ. Laced. c. 13. Παισαυίας, πείσας τῶν Ἐφόρων τρεῖς, ἐξάγει φρουράν, Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 4, 29; φρουράν ἔφηναν οἱ Ἐφοροί, iii. 2, 23.

A special restriction was put on the functions of the king, as military commander-in-chief, in 417, B.C., after the ill-conducted expedition of Agis son of Archidamus against Argos. It was then provided that ten Spartan counsellors

king in every expedition (Thucyd. v. 63).

³ The hide-money (δερματικόν) arising from the numerous victims offered at public sacrifices at Athens, is accounted for as a special item of the public revenue in the careful economy of that city: see Boeckh, Public Econ. of Athens, iii. 7. p. 333; Eng. Trans. Corpus Inscription. No. 157.

⁴ Tyrtaeus, Fragm. 1, ed. Bergk; Strabo, xviii. p. 362:—

represented the state in its relations with the gods, being by right, priests of Zeus Lacedæmon (the ideas of the god and the country coalescing into one) and of Zeus Uranius, and offering the monthly sacrifices necessary to ensure divine protection to the people. Though individual persons might sometimes be put aside, nothing short of a new divine revelation could induce the Spartans to step out of the genuine lineage of Eurysthenês and Proklês. Moreover, the remarkable mourning ceremony which took place at the death of every king, seems to indicate that the two kingly families—which counted themselves Achæan,¹ not Dorian—were considered as the great common bond of union between the three component parts of the population of Laconia—Spartans, Pericæki, and Helots. Not merely was it required, on this occasion, that two members of every house in Sparta should appear in sackcloth and ashes—but the death of the king was formally made known throughout every part of Laconia; and deputies from the townships of the Pericæki and the villages of the Helots, to the number of several thousand, were summoned to Sparta to take their share in the profuse and public demonstrations of sorrow,² which lasted for ten days, and which imparted to the funeral obsequies a superhuman solemnity. Nor ought we to forget, in enumerating the privileges of the Spartan king, that he (conjointly with two officers called Pythii nominated by him) carried on the communications between the state and the temple of Delphi, and had the custody of oracles and prophecies generally. In most of the Grecian states, such inspired declarations were treasured up, and consulted in cases of public emergency: but the intercourse of Sparta with the Delphian oracle was peculiarly frequent and intimate, and the responses of the Pythian priestess met with more reverential atten-

Αὐτός γὰρ Κρονίων καλλιστεράνου
πόσις Ἡρῆς

Ζεὺς Ἡρακλείδαις τήνδε δέδωκε
πόλιν·

Οἷσιν ἅμα προλιπόντες Ἐρίνεον
ἤνεμόεντα

Εὐρεΐαν Πέλοπος νῆσον ἀφικόμεθα.

Compare Thucyd. v. 16; Herodot. v. 39; Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 3, 3; Plutarch, Lysand. c. 22.

¹ Herod. v. 72. See the account in Plutarch of the abortive stratagem of Lysander to make the kingly dignity elective by putting forward a youth who passed for the son of Apollo (Plutarch, Lysand. c. 25—26).

² Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 3, 1. Ἄγιε—ἔτυχε σεμνοτέρας ἢ κατ' ἀνθρώπων ταφῆς.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



with Lykurgus himself, but at any rate ancient. On certain occasions of peculiar moment they take the sense of the senate and the public assembly¹—such seems to have been the habit on questions of war and peace. It appears however that persons charged with homicide, treason, or capital offences generally, were tried before the senate. We read of several instances in which the kings were tried and severely fined, and in which their houses were condemned to be razed to the ground, probably by the senate on the proposition of the ephors: in one instance,

the title of "The Three Rhetræ," as if they were either the only genuine Lykurgian Rhetræ, or at least stood distinguished by some peculiar sanctity from all others (Plutarch, *Quæst. Roman.* c. 87. *Agesilaus*, c. 26).

These three were (Plutarch. *Lycurg.* c. 13; comp. *Apophth. Lacon.* p. 227),—1. Not to resort to written laws. 2. Not to employ in house-building any other tools than the axe and the saw. 3. Not to undertake military expeditions often against the same enemies.

I agree with Nitzsch (*Histor. Homer.* p. 61—65) that these Rhetræ, though doubtless not actually Lykurgian, are nevertheless ancient (that is, probably dating somewhere between 650-550 B.C.) and not the mere fictions of recent writers, as Schömann (*Ant. Jur. Pub.* iv. 1; xiv. p. 132) and Urlichs (p. 241) seem to believe. And though Plutarch specifies the number *three*, yet there seem to have been still more, as the language of Tyrtæus must be held to indicate; out of which, from causes which we do not now understand, the three which Plutarch dis'inguishes excited particular notice.

These maxims or precepts of state were probably preserved along with the dicta of the Delphian oracle, from which authority doubtless many of them may have emanated

—such as the famous ancient prophecy 'Α φιλοχρηματία Σπάρταν ὀλεῖ ἄλλο δὲ οὐδὲν (Krebs, *Lectiones Diodoreæ*, p. 140. *Aristotel. Περὶ Πολιτειῶν*, ap. Schol. ad *Eurip. Andromach.* 446. Schömann, *Comm. ad Plutarch. Ag. et Cleomen.* p. 123).

Nitzsch has good remarks in explanation of the prohibition against "using written laws." This prohibition was probably called forth by the circumstance that other Grecian states were employing lawgivers like Zaleukus, Drako, Charondas, or Solon—to present them at once with a series of written enactments or provisions. Some Spartans may have proposed that an analogous lawgiver should be nominated for Sparta; upon which proposition a negative was put in the most solemn manner possible, by a formal Rhetra, perhaps passed after advice from Delphi. There is no such contradiction therefore (when we thus conceive the event) as some authors represent, in forbidding the use of written laws by a Rhetra itself put into writing. To employ a phrase in greater analogy with modern controversies—"The Spartans, on the direction of the oracle, resolve to retain their unwritten common law, and not to codify."

¹ Ἐδοξε τοῖς Ἐφόροις καὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (Xen. *Hellen.* iii. 2, 23).

it seems that the ephors inflicted by their own authority a fine even upon Agesilaus.¹

War and peace appear to have been submitted, on most, if not on all occasions, to the senate and the public assembly; no matter could reach the latter until it had passed through the former. And we find some few occasions on which the decision of the public assembly was a real expression of opinion, and operative as to the result—as for example, the assembly which immediately preceded and resolved upon the Peloponnesian war. Here, in addition to the serious hazard of the case and the general caution of a Spartan temperament, there was the great personal weight and experience of king Archidamus opposed to the war, though the ephors were favourable to it.² The public assembly, under such peculiar circumstances, really manifested an opinion and came to a division. But for the most part, it seems to have been little better than an inoperative formality. The general rule permitted no open discussion, nor could any private citizen speak except by special leave from the magistrates. Perhaps even the general liberty to discuss, if given, might have been of no avail, for not only was there no power of public speaking, but no habit of canvassing public measures, at Sparta: nothing was more characteristic of the government than the extreme secrecy of its proceedings.³ The propositions brought forward by the magistrates were either accepted or rejected, without any licence of amending. There could be no attraction to invite the citizen to be present at such an assembly; and we may gather from the language of Xenophon that in his time it consisted only of a certain number of notables specially summoned in addition to the senate, which latter body is

¹ The case of *Leotychides*, Herod. vi. 72; of *Pleistoanax*, Thucyd. ii. 21—v. 16; *Agis II.*, Thucyd. v. 63; *Agis III.*, Plutarch, *Agis*, c. 19: see Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, c. 5.

Respecting the ephors generally, see Wachsmuth, *Hellen. Alterthumskunde*, v. 4, 42, vol. i. p. 223; Cragius, *Rep. Lac.* ii. 4, p. 121.

Aristotle distinctly marks the ephors as ἀνυπεύθυνοι: so that the story alluded to briefly in the Rhe-

toric (iii. 18) is not easy to be understood.

² Thucyd. i. 67, 80, 87. ἐύλλογον σφῶν σὺτῶν τὸν εἰωθότα.

³ Thucyd. iv. 68. τῆς πολιτείας τὸ κρυπτόν: compare iv. 74; also his remarkable expression about so distinguished a man as Brasidas, ἦν δὲ οὐκ ἀδύνατος, ὡς Λακεδαιμόνιος, εἰπεῖν, and iv. 24, about the Lacedæmonian envoys to Athens. Compare Schömann, *Antiq.*

itself called "the lesser Ekklesia."¹ Indeed the constant and formidable diminution in the number of qualified citizens was alone sufficient to thin the attendance of the assembly, as well as to break down any imposing force which it might once have possessed.

An assembly thus circumstanced—though always retained as a formality, and though its consent on considerable matters and for the passing of laws (which however seems to have been a rare occurrence at Sparta) was indispensable—could be very little of a practical check upon the administration of the ephors. The Senate, a permanent body with the kings included in it, was the only real check upon them, and must have been to a certain extent a concurrent body in the government—though the large and imposing language in which its political supremacy is spoken of by Demosthenês and Isokratês exceeds greatly the reality of the case. Its most important function was that of a court of criminal justice, before whom every man put on trial for his life was arraigned.² But both in this and in their other duties, we find the senators as well as the kings and the ephors charged with corruption and venality.³ As they were not appointed until sixty years of age and then held their

Jur. Pub. Græc. iv. 1, 80, p. 122.
Aristotel. Polit. ii. 8, 3.

¹ Τὴν μικρὰν καλουμένην ἐκκλησίαν (Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 3, 8), which means the γέροντες or senate, and none besides, except the ephors, who convoked it. (See Lachmann, Spart. Verfass. sect. 12 p. 216.) What is still more to be noted, is the expression οἱ ἔκκληστοι as the equivalent of ἡ ἐκκλησία (compare Hellen. v. 2, 11; vi. 3, 3), evidently showing a special and limited number of persons convened: see also ii. 4, 38; iv. 6, 3; v. 2, 33; Thucyd. v. 77.

The expression οἱ ἔκκληστοι could never have got into use as an equivalent for the Athenian ecclesia.

² Xenoph. Repub. Laced. 10; Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 17; iii. 1, 7; Demosthen. cont. Leptin. c. 23. p.

489; Isokratês, Or. xii. (Panathenæic.) p. 266. The language of Demosthenês. seems particularly inaccurate.

Plutarch (Agesilaus, c. 32), on occasion of some suspected conspirators who were put to death by Agesilaus and the ephors, when Sparta was in imminent danger from the attack of Epameinôndas, asserts, that this was the first time that any Spartan had ever been put to death without trial.

³ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 18. Compare also Thucyd. i. 131 about the guilty Pausanias,—πιστεύων χρήμασι διαλύσειν τὴν διαβολήν: Herodot. v. 72; Thucyd. v. 16—about the kings Leotychides and Pleistoanax; the brave and able Gylippus—Plutarch, Lysand. c. 16.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



or supposed founder. Now this was one of the main circumstances (among others which will hereafter be mentioned) of the astonishing ascendancy which the Spartans acquired over the Hellenic mind, and which they will not be found at all to deserve by any superior ability in the conduct of affairs. The steadiness of their political sympathies—exhibited at one time by putting down the tyrants or despots, at another by overthrowing the democracies—stood in the place of ability, and even the recognised failings of their government were often covered by the sentiment of respect for its early commencement and uninterrupted continuance. If such a feeling acted on the Greeks generally,¹ much more powerful was its action upon the Spartans themselves in inflaming that haughty exclusiveness for which they stood distinguished. And it is to be observed that the Spartan mind continued to be cast on the old fashioned scale, and unsusceptible of modernizing influences, longer than that of most other people of Greece. The ancient legendary faith, and devoted submission to the Delphian oracle, remained among them unabated, at a time when various influences had considerably undermined it among their fellow-Hellens and neighbours. But though the unchanged title and forms of the government thus contributed to its imposing effect, both at home and abroad, the causes of internal degeneracy were not the less really at work, in undermining its efficiency. It has been already stated that the number of qualified citizens went on continually diminishing, and even of this diminished number a larger proportion than before were needy, since the landed property tended constantly to concentrate itself in fewer hands. There grew up in this way a body of discontent, which had not originally existed, both among the poorer citizens, and among those who had lost their franchise as citizens; thus aggravating the danger arising from Pericæki and Helots, who will be presently noticed.

We pass from the political constitution of Sparta to the civil ranks and distribution, economical relations, and lastly the peculiar system of habits, education and discipline, said to have been established among the Lacedæmonians by Lykurgus. Here again we shall find ourselves imper-

see Plato, Legg. iv. p. 712; Aristot. Polit. ii. 3, 10; iv. 7, 4, 5.

which this antiquity was lauded, may be seen in Isokratês, Or. xii.

¹ A specimen of the way in (Panathenaic.) p. 288.

fectly informed as to the existing institutions, and surrounded by confusion when we try to explain how those institutions arose.

It seems however ascertained that the Dorians in all their settlements were divided into three tribes —the Hylleis, the Pamphyli, and the Dymanes: in all Dorian cities moreover, there were distinguished Herakleid families from whom œkists were chosen when new colonies were formed. These three tribes can be traced at Argos, Sikyôn, Epidaurus, Trœzên, Megara, Korkyra, and seemingly also at Sparta.¹ The Hylleis recognised, as their eponym and progenitor, Hyllus the son of Hêraklês, and were therefore in their own belief descended from Hêraklês himself: we may suppose the Herakleids, specially so called, comprising the two regal families, to have been the Elder Brethren of the tribe of Hylleis, the whole of whom are sometimes spoken of as Herakleids or descendants of Hêraklês.² But there seem to have been also at Sparta, as in other Dorian towns, non-Dorian inhabitants, apart from these three tribes and embodied in tribes of their own. One of these, the Ægeids, said to have come from Thebes as allies of the Dorian invaders, is named by Aristotle, Pindar, and Herodotus³—while the Ægialeis at Sikyôn, the tribe Hyrnêthia at Argos and Epidaurus, and others whose titles we do not know at Corinth, represent in like manner the non-Dorian portions of their respective com-

Dorians
divided into
three tribes
—Hylleis,
Pamphyli,
and Dy-
manes.

¹ Herodot. v. 68; Stephan. Byz. v. Ἰλλέες and Δυμῶν; O. Müller, Dorians, iii. 5, 2; Boeckh ad Corp. Inscip. No. 1123.

Thucyd. i. 24, about Phalius the Herakleid at Corinth.

² See Tyrtaeus, Fragm. 8, 1, ed. Schneidewin, and Pindar, Pyth. i. 61. v. 71, where the expressions “descendants of Hêraklês” plainly comprehend more than the two kingly families, Plutarch. Lysand. c. 22; Biond. xi. 58.

³ Herodot. iv. 149; Pindar, Pyth. v. 67; Aristot. Λακων. Πολιτ. p. 127, Fragm. ed. Neuman. The Talthybiadæ, or heralds at Sparta, formed a family or caste apart (Herod. vii. 134).

O. Müller supposes, without any proof, that the Ægeids *must* have been adopted into one of the three Dorian tribes; this is one of the corollaries from his fundamental supposition, that Sparta is the type of pure Dorism (vol. ii. p. 78). Kopstadt thinks (Dissertat. p. 67) that I have done injustice to O. Müller in not assenting to his proof: but on studying the point over again, I can see no reason for modifying what is here stated in the text. The section of Schömann's work (Antiq. Jur. Publ. Græc., iv. 1, 6. p. 115) on this subject asserts a great deal more than can be proved.

munities.¹ At Corinth the total number of tribes is said to have been eight.² But at Sparta, though we seem to make out the existence of the three Dorian tribes, we do not know how many tribes there were in all; still less do we know what relation the Obæ or Obês, another subordinate distribution of the people, bore to the tribes. In the ancient Rhetra of Lykurgus, the Tribes and Obês are directed to be maintained unaltered: but the statement of O. Müller and Boeckh³—that there were thirty Obês in all, ten to each tribe—rests upon no other evidence than a peculiar punctuation of this Rhetra, which various other critics reject; and seemingly with good reason. We are thus left without any information respecting the Obê, though we know that it was an old, peculiar, and lasting division among the Spartan people, since it occurs in the oldest Rhetra of Lykurgus, as well as in late inscriptions of the date of the Roman empire. In similar inscriptions and in the account of Pausanias, there is however recognised a classification of Spartans distinct from and independent of the three old Dorian tribes, and founded upon the different quarters of the city—Limnæ, Mesoia, Pitane and Kynosura;⁴ from one of these four was derived the usual description of a Spartan in the days of Herodotus. There is reason to suppose that the old Dorian tribes became antiquated at Sparta (as the four old Ionian tribes did at Athens), and that the topical classification derived from the quarters of the city super-

¹ Herod. v. 68—92; Boeckh, Corp. Inscript. Nos. 1130, 1131; Stephan. Byz. v. Ὑπνθιον; Pausan, ii. 28, 3.

² Photius Πάντα ὀκτώ; also Proverb. Vatic. Suidas, xi. 64; compare Hesychius v. Κυνόφαλοι.

³ Müller, Dorians, iii. 5, 3—7; Boeckh ad Corp. Inscript. Part. iv. sect. 3. p. 609.

⁴ Pausan. iii. 16, 6; Herodot. iii. 55; Boeckh, Corp. Inscript. Nr. 1241, 1338, 1347, 1425; Steph. Byz. v. Μεσόα; Strabo, viii. p. 364; Hesych. v. Πιτάνη.

There is much confusion and discrepancy of opinion about the Spartan tribes. Cragius admits six (De Republ. Lacon. i. 6);

Meursius, eight (Rep. Lacon. i. 7); Barthélemy (Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis, iv. p. 185) makes them five. Manso has discussed the subject at large, but I think not very satisfactorily, in the eighth Beilage to the first book of his History of Sparta (vol. ii. p. 125); and Dr. Thirlwall's second Appendix (vol. i. p. 517) both notices all the different modern opinions on this obscure topic, and adds several useful criticisms. Our scanty stock of original evidence leaves much room for divergent hypotheses, and little chance of any certain conclusion.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



petent to them to resume their qualification, should any favourable accident enable them to make their contributions to the public mess.

The Pericœkus was also a freeman and a citizen, not of Sparta, but of some one of the hundred townships of Laconia.¹ Both he and the community to which he belonged received their orders only from Sparta, having no political sphere of their own, and no share in determining the movements of the Spartan authorities. In the island of Kythêra,² which formed one of the Pericœkic townships, a Spartan bailiff resided as administrator. But whether the same was the case with others, we cannot affirm: nor is it safe to reason from one of these townships to all—there may have been considerable differences in the mode of dealing with one and another. For they were spread through the whole of Laconia, some near and some distant from Sparta: the free inhabitants of Amyklæ must have been Pericœki, as well as those of Kythêra, Thuria, Ætheia, or Aulôn: nor can we presume that the feeling on the part of the Spartan authorities towards all of them was the same. Between the Spartans and their neighbours, the numerous Pericœki of Amyklæ, there must have subsisted a degree of intercourse and mutual relation in which the more distant Pericœki did not partake—besides that both the religious edifices and the festivals of Amyklæ were most reverentially adopted by the Spartans and exalted into a national dignity: and we seem to perceive, on some occasions, a degree of consideration manifested for the Amyklæan hoplites,³ such as perhaps other Pericœki might not have

¹ Strabo viii. p. 362. Stephanus Byz. alludes to this total of 100 townships in his notice of several different items among them—'Ανθάνα—πόλις Λακωνική μία τῶν ἑκατον; also v. Ἀφροδισιάς, Βοῖαι, Δυρράχιον, &c.; but he probably copied Strabo, and therefore cannot pass for a distinct authority. The total of 100 townships belongs to the maximum of Spartan power, after the conquest and before the severance of Messenia; for Aulôn, Boiæ and Methônê (the extreme places) are included among them.

Mr. Clinton (Fast. Hellen. ii. p.

491) has collected the names of above 60 out of the 100.

² Thucyd. iv. 53.

³ Xenophon, Hellen. iv. 5, 11; Herod. ix. 7; Thucyd. v. 18—23. The Amyklæan festival of the Hyacinthia, and the Amyklæan temple of Apollo, seem to stand foremost in the mind of the Spartan authorities. Αὐτοὶ καὶ οἱ ἐγγύτατα τῶν περιόλων (Thucyd. iv. 8), who are ready before the rest and march against the Athenians at Pylus, probably include the Amyklæans.

Laconia generally is called by

ii. 7, 1.

But the more usual employment of it is, to mean, the unprivileged or less privileged members of the same political aggregate living without the city, in contrast with the full privileged burghers who lived within it. Aristotle uses it to signify in Krête the class corresponding to the Lacedæmonian Helots (Pol. ii. 7, 3): there did not exist in Krête any class corresponding to the Lacedæmonian Perioeki. In Krête there were not two stages of inferiority—there was only one, and that one is marked by the word *περίοικοι*; while the Lacedæmonian Perioekus had the Helot below him. To an Athenian the word conveyed the idea of undefined degradation.

To understand better the *status* of the Perioekus, we may contrast him with the Metoekus or Metic. The latter resides in the city, but he is an alien resident on sufferance, not a native: he pays a special tax, stands excluded from all political functions, and cannot even approach the magistrate except through a friendly citizen or Prostatês (*ἐπὶ προστατῆτος οἰκεῖν*—Lycurgus cont. Leocrat. c. 21-53): he bears arms for the defence of the state. The situation of a Metic was however very different in different cities of Greece. At Athens that class were well protected in person and property, numerous and domiciliated: at

M. Kopstadt (in his Dissertation above cited on Lacedæmonian affairs, sect. 7. p. 60) expresses much surprise at that which I advance in this note respecting Krête and Lacedæmon—that in Krête there was no class of men analogous to the Lacedæmonian Perioeki, but only two classes—i. e. free citizens and Helots. He thinks that this position is “*prorsus falsum*.”

But I advance nothing more here than what is distinctly stated by Aristotle, as Kopstadt himself admits (p. 60, 71). Aristotle calls the subject class in Krête by the name of *Περίοικοι*. And in this case, the general presumptions go far to sustain the authority of Aristotle. For Sparta was a dominant or capital city, including in its dependence not only a considerable territory, but a considerable number of inferior, distinct, organised townships. In Krête, on the contrary, each autonomous state included only a town with its circumjacent territory, but without any annexed townships. There was therefore no basis for the intermediate class called in Laconia Perioeki: just as Kopstadt himself remarks (p. 78) about the Dorian city of Megara. There were only the two classes of free Krétau citizens, and serf-cultivators in various modifications and subdivisions.

Kopstadt (following Hoeck, *Krêta*, B. III. vol. iii, p. 23) says that

the full-privileged burghers who lived in the city, but it did not mark any precise or uniform degree of inferiority. It is sometimes so used by Aristotle as to imply a condition no better than that of the Helots, so that in a large sense, all the inhabitants of Laconia (Helots as well as the rest) might have been included in it. But when used in reference to Laconia, it bears a technical sense whereby it is placed in contraposition with the Spartan on one side, and with the Helot on the other: it means native freemen and proprietors, grouped in subordinate communities¹ with more or less power of local management, but (like the subject towns belonging to Bern, Zurich, and most of the old thirteen cantons of Switzerland) embodied in the Lacedæmonian aggregate, which was governed exclusively by the kings, senate, and citizens of Sparta.

When we come to describe the democracy of Athens after the revolution of Kleisthenês, we shall find the demes, or local townships and villages of Attica, incorporated as equal and constituent fractions of the integer called The Deme (or The City) of Athens, so that a demot of Acharnæ or Sphêttus is at the same time a full Athenian citizen. But the relation of the Perioëkic townships to Sparta is one of inequality and obedience, though both belong to the same political

the authority of Aristotle on this point is overborne by that of Dosiadas and Sosikratês—authors who wrote specially on Krêtau affairs. Now if we were driven to make a choice, I confess that I should prefer the testimony of Aristotle—considering that we know little or nothing respecting the other two. But in this case I do not think that we are driven to make a choice: Dosiadas (ap. Athenæ. xiv. p. 143) is not cited in terms, so that we cannot affirm him to contradict Aristotle; and Sosikratês (upon whom Hoeck and Kopstadt rely) says something which does not necessarily contradict him, but admits of being explained so as to place the two witnesses in harmony with each other.

Sosikratês says (ap. Athenæ. vi. p. 263), Τὴν μὲν κοινὴν δουλείαν οἱ Κρηταὶ καλοῦσι μνοίαν, τὴν δὲ ἰδίαν ἀφαμίωτας, τοὺς δὲ περιόικους ὑπηκόους. Now the word περιόικους seems to be here used just as Aristotle would have used it, to comprehend the Krêtan serfs universally: it is not distinguished from μνώται and ἀφαμιώται, but comprehends both of them as different species under a generic term. The authority of Aristotle affords a reason for preferring to construe the passage in this manner, and the words appear to me to admit of it fairly.

¹ The πόλεις of the Lacedæmonian Perioëki are often noticed: see Xenophon (Agesilaus, ii. 24; Laced. Repub. xv. 3; Hellenic. vi. 5, 21).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Sparta. According to him, the period immediately succeeding the conquest was one of fierce intestine warfare in newly-conquered Sparta, between the Few and the Many,—the oligarchy and the demus. The former being victorious, two important measures were the consequences of their victory. They banished the defeated Many from Sparta into Laconia, retaining the residence in Sparta exclusively for themselves; they assigned to them the smallest and least fertile half of Laconia, monopolising the larger and better for themselves; and they disseminated them into many very small townships, or subordinate little communities, while they concentrated themselves entirely at Sparta. To these precautions for ensuring dominion they added another not less important. They established among their own Spartan citizens equality of legal privilege and democratical government, so as to take the greatest securities for internal harmony; which harmony, according to the judgement of Isokratês, had been but too effectually perpetuated, enabling the Spartans to achieve their dominion over oppressed Greece,—like the accord of pirates¹ for the spoliation of the peaceful. The Pericœkic townships (he tells us), while deprived of all the privileges of freemen, were exposed to all the toils, as well as to an unfair share of the dangers of war. The Spartan authorities put them in situations and upon enterprises which they deemed too dangerous for their own citizens; and what was still worse, the ephors possessed the power of putting to death, without any form of preliminary trial, as many Pericœki as they pleased.²

The statement here delivered by Isokratês, respecting the first origin of the distinction of Spartans and Pericœki, is nothing better than a conjecture, nor is it even a probably conjecture, since it is based on the historical truth of the Herakleid legend, and transports the disputes of

viii. p. 180—181); Oratio Panegyri. (Or. iv. p. 64—67).

¹ Isokratês, Panathenaic. Or. xii. p. 280. ὥστε οὐδεὶς ἂν αὐτοὺς διὰ γε τὴν ὁμόνοιαν δικαίως ἐπαινέσειεν, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἢ τοὺς καταποντιστάς καὶ λήστας καὶ τοὺς περὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἀδικίας ὄντας· καὶ γὰρ ἐξεῖνοι σφίσι, αὐτοῖς ὁμονοοῦντες τοὺς ἄλλους ἀπολύουσι.

² Isokratês, Orat. xii. (Panathenaic.) p. 270—271. The statement in the same oration (p. 246), that the Lacedæmonians “had put to death without trial more *Greeks* (πλείους τῶν Ἑλλήνων) than had ever been tried at Athens since Athens was a city,” refers to their allies or dependants out of Laconia.

early period to which such disputes do not belong. Nor is there anything, as far as our knowledge of Grecian history extends, to bear out his assertion that the Spartans took to themselves the least dangerous post in the field, and threw undue peril upon their Pericæki. Such dastardly temper was not among the sins of Sparta; but it is undoubtedly true, that as the number of citizens continually diminished, so the Pericæki came to constitute, in the later times, a larger and larger proportion of the Spartan force. Yet the power which Isokratês represents to have been vested in the ephors, of putting to death Pericæki without preliminary trial, we may fully believe to be real, and to have been exercised as often as the occasion seemed to call for it. We shall notice presently the way in which these magistrates dealt with the Helots, and shall see ample reason from thence to draw the conclusion, that whenever the ephors believed any man to be dangerous to the public peace—whether an inferior Spartan, a Pericækus, or a Helot,—the most summary mode of getting rid of him would be considered as the best. Towards Spartans of rank and consideration they were doubtless careful and measured in their application of punishment, but the same necessity for circumspection did not exist with regard to the inferior classes: moreover the feeling, that the exigences of justice required a fair trial before punishment was inflicted, belongs to Athenian associations much more than to Spartan. How often any such summary executions may have taken place, we have no information.

We may remark that the account which Isokratês has here given of the origin of the Laconian Pericæki is not essentially irreconcilable with that of Ephorus,¹ who recounted that Eurysthenês and Proklês, on first conquering Laconia, had granted to the pre-existing population equal rights with the Dorians—but that Agis, son of Eurysthenês, had deprived them of this equal position, and degraded them into dependent subjects of the latter. At least the two narratives both agree in presuming that the Pericæki had once enjoyed a better position, from which they had been extruded by violence. And the policy which Isokratês ascribes to the victorious Spartan oligarchs,—of driving

Statement of Ephorus —different from Isokratês, yet not wholly irreconcilable.

¹ Ephorus, Fragm. 18, ed. Marx; ap. Strabo. viii. p. 365.

out the demus from concentrated residence in the city to disseminated residence in many separate and insignificant townships,—seems to be the expression of that proceeding which in his time was numbered among the most efficient precautions against refractory subjects,—the *Diœkisis*, or breaking up of a town-aggregate into villages. We cannot assign to the statement any historical authority.¹ Moreover the division of Laconia into six districts, together with its distribution into townships, (or the distribution of settlers into pre-existing townships) which Ephorus ascribed to the first Dorian kings, are all deductions from the primitive legendary account, which described the Dorian conquest as achieved at one stroke, and must all be dismissed, if we suppose it to have been achieved gradually. This gradual conquest is admitted by O. Müller and by many of the ablest subsequent inquirers—who nevertheless seem to have the contrary supposition involuntarily present to their minds when they criticise the early Spartan history, and always unconsciously imagine the Spartan as masters of all Laconia. We cannot even assert that Laconia was ever under one government before the consummation of the successive conquests of Sparta.

Of the assertion of O. Müller—repeated by Schömann²—that the difference of races was strictly preserved, and that

¹ Dr. Arnold (in his Dissertation on the Spartan Constitution, appended to the first volume of his Thucydidês, p. 643) places greater confidence in the historical value of this narrative of Isokratês than I am inclined to do. On the other hand, Sir G. C. Lewis, in his Review of Dr. Arnold's Dissertation (Philological Museum, vol. ii. p. 45), considers the "account of Isokratês as completely inconsistent with that of Ephorus:" which is saying rather more, perhaps, than the tenor of the two strictly warrants. In Sir G. Lewis's excellent article, most of the difficult points respecting the Spartan constitution will be found raised and discussed in a manner highly instructive.

Another point in the statement

of Isokratês is, that the Dorians at the time of the original conquest of Laconia were only 2000 in number (Or. xii. Panath. p. 286). Mr. Clinton rejects this estimate as too small, and observes, "I suspect that Isokratês, in describing the numbers of the Dorians at the original conquest, has adapted to the description the actual numbers of the Spartans in his own time" (Fast. Hellen. ii. p. 408).

This seems to me a probable conjecture, and it illustrates as well the absence of data under which Isokratês or his informants laboured, as the method which they took to supply the deficiency.

² Schömann, *Antiq. Jurisp. Græcorum*. iv. 1, 5, p. 112.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Talthybiads, all of whom belong to Sparta, seem to be the only examples of separate races (partially distinguishable from Dorians) known after the beginning of authentic history. The Spartans and the Pericæki constitute one political aggregate, and that too so completely melted together in the general opinion (speaking of the times before the battle of Leuktra), that the peace of Antalkidas, which guaranteed autonomy to every separate Grecian city, was never so construed as to divorce the Pericækic towns from Sparta. Both are known as Laconians or Lacedæmonians, and Sparta is regarded by Herodotus only as the first and bravest among the many and brave Lacedæmonian cities.¹ The victors at Olympia are proclaimed not as Spartans, but as Laconians,—a title alike borne by the Pericæki. And many of the numerous winners whose names we read in the Olympic lists as Laconians, may probably have belonged to Amyklæ or other Pericækic towns.

The Pericækic hoplites constituted always a large—in later times a preponderant—numerical proportion of the Lacedæmonian army, and must undoubtedly have been trained, more or less perfectly, in the peculiar military tactics of Sparta; since they were called upon to obey the same orders as the Spartans in the field,² and to perform the same evolutions. Some cases appear, though rare, in which a Pericækus has high command in a foreign expedition. In the time of Aristotle, the larger proportion of Laconia (then meaning only the country eastward of Taygetus, since the foundation of Messênê by Epameinôndas had been consummated) belong to Spartan citizens,³ but the remaining

the north-west of Peloponnesus which was afterwards called Achaia, —expelling from it the Ionians. Whatever may be the truth about this legendary statement—and whatever may have been the original proportions of Dorians and Achæans in Laconia—these two races had (in the fifth century B.C.) become confounded in one undistinguishable ethnical and political aggregate called Laconian or Lacedæmonian—comprising both Spartans and Pericæki, though with very unequal political franchises and very material

differences in individual training and habits. The case was different in Thessaly, where the Thessalians held in dependence Magnètes, Perrhæbi, and Achæans: the separate nationality of these latter was never lost.

¹ Herod. vii. 234.

² Thucyd. viii. 6—22. They did not however partake in the Lykurgian discipline; but they seem to be named οἱ ἐκ τῆς γῶρας παλῶς as contrasted with οἱ ἐκ τῆς ἀγωγῆς (Sosibius ap. Athenæ, xv. p. 674).

³ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 23, διὰ γὰρ

τὸ τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν εἶναι τὴν πλει-
στην γῆν, οὐκ ἐξετάζουσιν ἀλλήλων
τὰς εἰσφοράς.

Sir 'G. C. Lewis, in the article
above alluded to (Philolog. Mus.
ii. p. 54), says about the Pericæki:
—"They lived in the country or in
small towns of the Laconian terri-
tory, and cultivated the land, which
they did not hold of any indivi-
dual citizen, but paid for it a tri-
bute or rent to the state; being
exactly in the same condition as
the *possessores* of the Roman do-
main, or the Ryots in Hindostan
before the introduction of the Per-
manent Settlement." It may be
doubted, I think, whether the
Pericæki paid any such rent or tri-
bute as that which Sir G. Lewis
here supposes. The passage just
cited from Aristotle seems to show
that they paid direct taxation in-
dividually, and just upon the same
principle as the Spartan citizens,
who are distinguished only by being
larger landed proprietors. But
though the principle of taxation

be the same, there was practical
injustice (according to Aristotle)
in the mode of assessing it. "The
Spartan citizens (he observes) being
the largest landed-proprietors, take
care not to canvass strictly *each
other's payment of property-tax*"--
i. e. they wink mutually at each
other's evasions. If the Spartans
had been the *only* persons who
paid εἰσφορά or property-tax, this
observation of Aristotle would have
had no meaning. In principle, the
tax was assessed both on their
larger properties, and on the smal-
ler properties of the Pericæki: in
practice, the Spartans helped each
other to evade the due proportion.

² The village-character of the
Helots is distinctly marked by
Livy, xxxiv. 27, in describing the
inflictions of the despot Nabis:—
"Ilotarum quidam (hi sunt jam
inde antiquitus *castellani*, agreste
genus) transfugere voluisse insi-
mulati, per omnes *vicos* sub ver-
beribus acti uecantur."

who lived in Sparta and other towns, and did the work of domestic slaves—but such was not the general character of the class. We cannot doubt that the Dorian conquest from Sparta found this class in the condition of villagers and detached rustics; but whether they were dependent upon pre-existing Achæan proprietors, or independent like much of the Arcadian village population, is a question which we cannot answer. In either case, however, it is easy to conceive that the village

upon them) were the most easy to appropriate for the benefit of masters resident at Sparta; while the towns, with the district immediately around them, furnished both dwelling and maintenance to the outgoing detachments of Dorians. If the Spartans had succeeded in their attempt to enlarge their territory by the conquest of Arcadia, they might very probably have converted Tegea and Mantinea into Pericæic towns, with a diminished territory inhabited (either wholly or in part) by Dorian settlers—while they would have made over to proprietors in Sparta much of the village lands of the Mænalii, Azanes, and Parrhasii, helotising the inhabitants. The distinction between a town and a village population seems the main ground of the different treatment of Helots and Pericæi in Laconia. A considerable proportion of the Helots were of genuine Dorian race, being the Dorian Messenians west of Mount Taygetus, subsequently conquered and aggregated to this class of dependent cultivators, who, as a class, must have begun to exist from the very first establishment of the invading Dorians in the district round Sparta. From whence the name of Helots arose we do not clearly make out: Ephorus deduced it from the town of Helus, on the southern coast, which the Spartans are said to have taken after a resistance so obstinate as to provoke them to deal

They were
serfs—ad-
scripti
glebæ—
their
condition
and treat-
ment.

very rigorously with the captives. There are many reasons for rejecting this story, and another etymology has been proposed according to which Helot is synonymous with *captive*: this is more plausible, yet still not convincing.² The

Helots lived in the rural villages as *adscripti glebæ*, cultivating their lands and paying over their rent

¹ Herodot. i. 66. ἐχρηστηριάζοντο ἐν Δέλφοισι ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ Ἀρχαδῶν χώρῃ.

² See O. Müller, Dorians iii. 8, 1; Ephorus ap. Strabo. vii. p. 365; Harpocratien, v. Ἐλωτες.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



of the state army. The Helots commonly served as light-armed, in which capacity the Spartan hoplites could not dispense with their attendance. At the battle of Platæa, every Spartan hoplite had seven Helots,¹ and every Periœkic hoplite one Helot to attend him:² but even in camp, the Spartan arrangements were framed to guard against any sudden mutiny of these light-armed companions, while at home, the citizen habitually kept his shield disjoined from its holding-ring to prevent the possibility of its being snatched for the like purpose. Sometimes select Helots were clothed in heavy armour, and thus served in the ranks, receiving manumission from the state as the reward of distinguished bravery.³

Bravery
and energy
of the
Helots—
fear and
cruelt
of they
Spartans.

But Sparta, even at the maximum of her power, was more than once endangered by the reality, and always beset with the apprehension, of Helotic revolt. To prevent or suppress it, the ephors submitted to insert express stipulation for aid in their treaties with Athens—to invite Athenian troops into the heart of Laconia—and to practise combinations of cunning and atrocity which even yet stand without parallel in the long list of precautions for fortifying unjust dominion. It was in the eighth year of the Peloponnesian war, after the Helots had been called upon for signal military efforts in various ways, and when the Athenians and Messenians were in possession of Pylus, that the ephors felt especially apprehensive of an outbreak. Anxious to single out the most forward and

¹ Herod. ix. 29. The Spartans at Thermopylæ seem to have been attended each by only one Helot (vii. 229).

O. Müller seems to consider that the light-armed who attended the Periœkic hoplites at Platæa were not Helots (Dor. iii. 3, 6). Herodotus does not distinctly say that they were so, but I see no reason for admitting two different classes of light-armed in the Spartan military force.

The calculation which Müller gives of the Number of Periœki and Helots altogether proceeds upon very untrustworthy data.

Among them is to be noticed his supposition that πολιτικὴ χώρα means the district of Sparta as distinguished from Laconia, which is contrary to the passage in Polybius (vi. 45): πολιτικὴ χώρα in Polybius means the territory of the state generally.

² Xenophon, Rep. Lac. c. 12, 4. Kritias, De Lacedæm. Repub. ap. Libanium, Orat. de Servitute, t. ii. p. 85, Reisk. ὡς ἀπιστίας εἶνεκα τῆς πρὸς τοὺς Εἰλωτας ἐξαιρεῖ μὲν Σπαρτιατῆς οἴχοι τῆς ἄσπιδος τὴν πόρπακα, &c.

³ Thucyd. i. 101; iv. 80; v. 14—23.

fated regiment of brave men, a large number of auxiliaries and instruments must have been concerned; yet Thucydidês with all his inquiries could not find out how any of them perished: he tells us, that no man knew. We see here a fact which demonstrates unequivocally the impenetrable mystery in which the proceedings of the Spartan government were wrapped,—the absence not only of public discussion, but of public curiosity,—and the perfection with which the ephors reigned over the will, the hands, and the tongues, of their Spartan subjects. The Venetian Council of Ten, with all the facilities for nocturnal drowning which their city presented, could hardly have accomplished so vast a *coup d'état* with such invisible means. And we may judge from hence, even if we had no other evidence, how little the habits of a public assembly could have suited either the temper of mind, or the march of government, at Sparta.

Other proceedings, ascribed to the ephors against the Helots, are conceived in the same spirit as the incident just recounted from Thucydidês, though they do not carry

¹ Thucyd. iv. 20. οἱ δὲ οὐ πολλῶ οὐδεὶς ᾔσθετο ὅτι τῶ τρόπῳ ἔκτιστος ὄσπερον ἠφάνισάν τε αὐτοὺς, καὶ διεφθάρη.

with them the same certain attestation. It was a part of the institutions of Lykurgus (according to a statement which Plutarch professes to have borrowed from Aristotle) that the ephors should every year declare war against the Helots, in order that the murder of them might be rendered innocent; and that active young Spartans should be armed with daggers and sent about Laconia, in order that they might, either in solitude or at night, assassinate such of the Helots as were considered formidable.¹ This last measure passes by the name of the *Krypteia*, yet we find some difficulty in determining to what extent it was ever realised. That the ephors, indeed, would not be restrained by any scruples of justice or humanity, is plainly shown by the murder of the 2000 Helots above noticed. But this latter incident really answered its purpose; while a standing practice such as that of the *Krypteia*, and a formal notice of war given before hand, would provoke the reaction of despair rather than enforce tranquillity. There seems indeed good evidence that the *Krypteia* was a real practice,²—that the ephors kept up a system of police or espionage throughout Laconia by the employment of active young citizens, who lived a hard and solitary life, and suffered their motions to be as little detected as possible. The ephors might naturally enough take this method of keeping watch both over the *Periœkic* townships and the Helot villages, and the assassination of individual Helots by these policemen or *Krypts* would probably pass unnoticed. But it is impossible to believe in any standing murderous order, or deliberate annual assassination of Helots, for the purpose of intimidation, as Aristotle is alleged to have represented—for we may well doubt whether he really did make such a representation, when we see that he takes no notice of this measure in his *Politics*, where he speaks at some length both of the Spartan constitution and of the Helots. The well-known hatred and fear, entertained by the Spartans towards their Helots, has probably coloured Plutarch's description of the *Krypteia*, so as to exaggerate those

¹ Plutarch, *Lycurg.* c. 28; *Heraclides Pontic.* p. 504, ed. Crag.

² Plato, *Legg.* i. p. 633: the words of the Lacedæmonian Megillus designate an existing Spartan

custom. Compare the same treatise, vi. p. 763, where Ast suspects, without reason, the genuineness of the word *κρυπταί*.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ployment either in various trades or in the service of the government.

It has been necessary to give this short sketch of the orders of men who inhabited Laconia, in order to enable us to understand the statements given about the legislation of Lykurgus. The arrangements ascribed to that lawgiver, in the way that Plutarch describes them, presuppose, and do not create, the three orders of Spartans, Pericæki, and Helots. We are told by Plutarch that the disorders which Lykurgus found existing in the state arose in a great measure from the gross inequality of property, and from the luxurious indulgence and unprincipled rapacity of the rich—who had drawn to themselves the greater portion of the lands in the country, leaving a large body of poor, without any lot of land, in hopeless misery and degradation. To this inequality (according to Plutarch) the reforming legislator applied at once a stringent remedy. He redistributed the whole territory belonging to Sparta, as well as the remainder of Laconia; the former in 9000 equal lots, one to each Spartan citizen; the latter in 30,000 equal lots, one to each Pericækus: of this alleged distribution I shall speak farther presently. Moreover he banished the use of gold and silver money, tolerating nothing in the shape of circulating medium but pieces of iron, heavy and scarcely portable; and he forbade¹ to the Spartan citizen every species of industrious or money-seeking occupation, agriculture included. He farther constituted—though not without strenuous opposition, during the course of which his eye is said to have been knocked out by a violent youth, named Alkander—the Syssitia or public mess. A certain number of joint tables were provided, and every citizen was required to belong to some one of them and habitually to take his meals at it²—no new member being admissible without a unanimous ballot in his favour by the previous occupants. Each provided from his lot of land a specified quota of barley-meal, wine, cheese and figs, and a small contribution of money for condiments: game was obtained in addition by hunting in the public forests of the state, while every one who sacrificed

Economic and social regulations ascribed to Lykurgus.

Partition of lands.

Syssitia or public mess.

¹ Xenophon, Rep. Lac. c. 7.

stantially confirmed by Xenophon,

² Plutarch, Lykurg. c. 15; sub-

Rep. Lac. c. 1, 5.

the state.

These public Syssitia, under the management of the Polemarchs, were connected with the military distribution, the constant gymnastic training, and the rigorous discipline of detail, enforced by Lykurgus. From the early age of seven years, throughout his whole life, as youth and man no less than as boy, the Spartan citizen lived habitually in public, always either himself under drill, gymnastic and military, or a critic and spectator of others—always under the fetters and observances of a rule partly military, partly monastic—estranged from the independence of a separate home—seeing his wife, during the first years after marriage, only by stealth, and maintaining little peculiar relation with his children. The supervision not only of his fellow-citizens, but also of authorised censors or captains nominated by the state, was perpetually acting upon him: his day was passed in public exercises and meals, his nights in the public barrack to which he belonged. Besides the particular military drill, whereby the complicated movements, required from a body of Lacedæmonian hoplites in the field, were made familiar to him from his youth—he also became subject to severe bodily discipline of other kinds calculated to impart strength, activity, and endurance. To manifest a daring and pugnacious spirit—to sustain the greatest bodily torture unmoved—to endure hunger and thirst, heat, cold and fatigue—to tread the worst ground barefoot, to wear the same garment winter and summer—to suppress external manifestations of feeling, and to exhibit in public, when action was not called for, a bearing shy, silent, and motionless as a statue—all these were the virtues of the accomplished Spartan youth.² Two squadrons were often matched

Public
training or
discipline.

¹ See the authors quoted in Athenæus, iv. p. 141.

² Xenoph. Rep. Lac. 2—3, 3—5, 4—6. The extreme pains taken to enforce *xapτερα* (fortitude and endurance) in the Spartan system is especially dwelt upon by Aristotle

(Politica, ii. 6, 5—16); compare Plato, De Legibus, i. p. 633; Xenophon, De Laced. Repub. ii. 9—with the references in Schneider's note—likewise Cragius, de Republica Laced. iii. 8. p. 325.

against each other to contend (without arms) in the little insular circumscription called the Platanistûs, and these contests were carried on, under the eye of the authorities, with the utmost extremity of fury. Nor was the competition among them less obstinate, to bear without murmur the cruel scourgings inflicted before the altar of Artemis Orthia, supposed to be highly acceptable to the goddess, though they sometimes terminated even in the death of the uncomplaining sufferer.¹ Besides the various descriptions of gymnastic contests, the youths were instructed in the choric dances employed in festivals of the god, which contributed to impart to them methodized and harmonious movements. Hunting in the woods and mountains of Laconia was encouraged, as a means inuring them to fatigue and privation. The nourishment supplied to the youthful Spartans was purposely kept insufficient, but they were allowed to

¹ It is remarkable that these violent contentions of the youth, wherein kicking, biting, gouging out each other's eyes, was resorted to—as well as the διαμαστιγώσεις or scourging-match before the altar of Artemis—lasted down to the closing days of Sparta, and were actually seen by Cicero, Plutarch, and even Pausanias. Plutarch had seen several persons die under the suffering (Plutarch, Lykurg. c. 16, 18—30; and Instituta Laconica, p. 239; Pausan. iii. 14, 9, 16, 7; Cicero, Tuscul. Disp. ii. 15).

The voluntary tortures, undergone by the young men among the Mandan tribe of Indians at their annual religious festival, in the presence of the elders of the tribe,—afford a striking illustration of the same principles and tendencies as this Spartan διαμαστιγώσεις. They are endured partly under the influence of religious feelings, as an acceptable offering to the Great Spirit—partly as a point of emulation and glory on the part of the young men, to show themselves worthy and unconquerable in the eyes of their seniors. The intensity of these tortures is indeed

frightful to read, and far surpasses in that respect anything ever witnessed at Sparta. It would be incredible, were it not attested by a trustworthy eye-witness.

See Mr. Catlin's Letters on the North American Indians, Letter 22, vol. i. p. 157 *seqq.*

“These religious ceremonies are held, in part, for the purpose of conducting all the young men of the tribe, as they annually arrive at manhood, through an ordeal of privation and torture; which, while it is supposed to harden their muscles and prepare them for extreme endurance—enables the chiefs who are spectators of the scene, to decide upon their comparative bodily strength and ability, to endure the extreme privations and sufferings that often fall to the lot of Indian warriors; and that they may decide who is the most hardy and best able to lead a war-party in case of emergency.”—Again, p. 173, &c.

The καρτερίη or power of endurance (Aristot. Pol. ii. 6, 2—16) which formed one of the prominent objects of the Lycurgean training, dwindles into nothing compared to that of the Mandan Indians.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



While the Spartan husband went through the hard details of his ascetic life, and dined on the plainest fare at the Pheidition or mess, the wife (it appears) maintained an ample and luxurious establishment at home, and the desire to provide for such outlay was one of the causes of that love of money which prevailed among men forbidden to enjoy it in the ordinary ways. To explain this antithesis between the treatment of the two sexes at Sparta, Aristotle was informed that Lykurgus had tried to bring the women no less than the men under a system of discipline, but that they made so obstinate a resistance as to compel him to desist.¹

The view here given by the philosopher, and deserving of course careful attention, is not easy to reconcile with that of Xenophon and Plutarch, who look upon the Spartan women from a different side, and represent them as worthy and homogeneous companions to the men. The Lykurgean system (as these authors describe it), considering the women as a part of the state, and not as a part of the house, placed them under training hardly less than the men. Its grand purpose, the maintenance of a vigorous breed of citizens, determined both the treatment of the younger women, and the regulations as to the intercourse of the sexes. "Female slaves are good enough (Lykurgus thought) to sit at home spinning and weaving—but who can expect a splendid offspring, the appropriate mission and duty of a free Spartan woman towards her country, from mothers brought up in such occupations?"² Pursuant to these views, the Spartan damsels underwent a bodily training analogous to that of the Spartan youth—being formally exercised, and contending with each other in running, wrestling and boxing, agreeably to the forms of the Grecian agônes. They seem to have worn a light tunic, cut open at the skirts, so as to leave the limbs both free and exposed to view—hence Plutarch speaks of them as completely uncovered, while other critics in different quarters of Greece heaped similar reproach upon the practice, as if it had been perfect nakedness.³ The

Statement
of Xeno-
phon and
Plutarch.

slaves are good enough (Lykurgus thought) to sit at home spinning and weaving—but who can expect a splendid offspring, the appropriate mission and duty of a free Spartan woman towards

her country, from mothers brought up in such occupations?"² Pursuant to these views, the Spartan damsels underwent a bodily training analogous to that of the Spartan youth—being formally exercised, and contending with each other in running, wrestling and boxing, agreeably to the forms of the Grecian agônes. They seem to have worn a light tunic, cut open at the skirts, so as to leave the limbs both free and exposed to view—hence Plutarch speaks of them as completely uncovered, while other critics in different quarters of Greece heaped similar reproach upon the practice, as if it had been perfect nakedness.³ The

¹ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 5, 8, 11.

² Xenoph. Rep. Lac. i. 3—4; Plutarch, Lycurg. c. 13—14.

³ Eurip. Androm. 598; Cicero, Tuscul. Quæst. ii. 15. The epithet

φαυνομηρίδες, as old as the poet Ibykus, shows that the Spartan women were not uncovered (see Julius Pollux, vii. 55).

It is scarcely worth while to

presence of the Spartan youths, and even of the kings and the body of citizens, at these exercises, lent animation to the scene. In like manner, the young women marched in the religious processions, sung and danced at particular festivals, and witnessed as spectators the exercises and contentions of the youths; so that the two sexes were perpetually intermingled with each other in public, in a way foreign to the habits, as well as repugnant to the feelings, of other Grecian states. We may well conceive that such an education imparted to the women both a demonstrative character and an eager interest in masculine accomplishments, so that the expression of their praise was the strongest stimulus, and that of their reproach the bitterest humiliation, to the youthful troop who heard it.

The age of marriage (which in some of the unrestricted cities of Greece was so early as to deteriorate visibly the breed of citizens)¹ was deferred by the Spartan law, both in women and men, until the period supposed to be most consistent with the perfection of the offspring. And when we read the restriction which Spartan custom imposed upon the intercourse even between married persons, we shall conclude without hesitation that the public intermixture of the sexes in the way just described led to no such liberties, between persons not married, as might be likely to arise from it under other circumstances.² Marriage was almost universal among the citizens, enforced by general opinion at least, if not by law. The young Spartan carried away his bride by a simulated abduction, but she still seems, for some time at least, to have continued to reside with her family, visiting her husband in his barrack in the disguise of male attire and on short and stolen occasions.³

notice the poetical allusions of Ovid and Propertius.

How completely the practice of gymnastic and military training for young women, analogous to that of the other sex, was approved by Plato, may be seen from the injunctions in his Republic.

¹ Aristot. Polit, vii. 14, 4.

² "It is certain (observes Dr. Thirlwall, speaking of the Spartan unmarried women) that in this respect the Spartan morals were

as pure as those of any ancient, perhaps of any modern, people." (History of Greece, ch. viii. vol. i. p. 371.)

³ Plutarch, Lycurg. c. 14; Xenoph. Rep. Lac. i. 5. Xenophon does not make any allusion to the abduction as a general custom. There occurred cases in which it was real and violent: see Herod. v. 65. Demaratus carried off and married the betrothed bride of Leotychidas.

To some married couples, according to Plutarch, it happened, that they had been married long enough to have two or three children, while they had scarcely seen each other apart by daylight. Secret intrigue on the part of married women was unknown at Sparta; but to bring together the finest couples was regarded by the citizens as desirable, and by the lawgiver as a duty. No personal feeling or jealousy on the part of the husband found sympathy from any one—and he permitted without difficulty, sometimes actively encouraged, compliances on the part of his wife consistent with this generally acknowledged object. So far was such toleration carried, that there were some married women who were recognised mistresses of two houses,¹ and mothers of two distinct families,—a sort of bigamy strictly forbidden to the men, and never permitted except in the remarkable case of king Anaxandridês, when the royal Herakleidan line of Eurysthenês was in danger of becoming extinct. The wife of Anaxandridês being childless, the ephors strongly urged him, on grounds of public necessity, to repudiate her and marry another. But he refused to dismiss a wife who had given him no cause of complaint; upon which, when they found him inexorable, they desired him to retain her, but to marry another wife besides, in order that at any rate there might be issue to the Eurystheneid line. “He thus (says Herodotus) married two wives, and inhabited two family-hearths, a proceeding unknown at Sparta;”² yet the same privilege which, according to Xenophon, some Spartan women enjoyed without reproach from any one, and with perfect harmony between the inmates of both their houses. O. Müller³ remarks—

¹ Xenoph. Rep. Lac. i. 9. Εἰ δὲ τις αὐτῶν γυναικὶ μὲν συνοικεῖν μὴ βούλοιοτο, τέχνων δὲ ἀξιολόγων ἐπιθυμοίη, καὶ τοῦτω νόμον ἐποίησεν, ἥτινα ἂν εὐτεχνον καὶ γενναίαν ὀρέσθην, πείσαντα τὸν ἔχοντα, ἐκ ταύτης τεκνοποιεῖσθαι. Καὶ πολλὰ μὲν τοιαῦτα συνεχώρει. Αἱ τε γὰρ γυναῖκες δίττους οἴκους βούλονται κοστέχειν, οἳ τε ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὺς τοῖς παισὶ προσλαμβάνειν, οἳ τοῦ μὲν γένους καὶ τῆς δυνάμεως κοινωνοῦσι, τῶν δὲ χρημάτων οὐκ ἀντιποιοῦνται.

ταῦτα, γυναῖκας ἔχων δύο, διξίας ἰστίας οἴχεε, ποιέων οὐδαμᾶ Σπαρτιητικά.

³ Müller, Hist. of Dorians, iv. 4, 1. The stories recounted by Plutarch (Agis, c. 20; Kleomenês, c. 37—38) of the conduct of Agesistrata and Kratesikleia, the wives of Agis and Kleomenês, and of the wife of Panteus (whom he does not name) on occasion of the deaths of their respective husbands, illustrate powerfully the strong conjugal affection of a Spartan woman, and her devoted adherence

² Herodot. v. 39—40. Μετὰ δὲ



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ation, if we suppose on the part of a wealthy Spartan father the simple disposition to treat sons and daughters alike as to bequest,—nearly one half of the inherited mass of property would naturally be found in the hands of the daughters, since on an average of families the number of the two sexes born is nearly equal. In most societies, it is the men who make new acquisitions: but this seldom or never happened with Spartan men, who disdained all money-getting occupations.

Xenophon, a warm panegyrist of Spartan manners points with some pride to the tall and vigorous breed of citizens which the Lykurgic institutions had produced. The beauty of the Lacedæmonian women was notorious throughout Greece, and Lampitô, the Lacedæmonian woman introduced in the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes, is made to receive from the Athenian women the loudest compliments upon her fine shape and masculine vigour.¹ We may remark that, on this as well as on the other points, Xenophon emphatically insists on the peculiarity of Spartan institutions, contradicting thus the views of those who regard them merely as something a little Hyper-Dorian. Indeed such

peculiarity seems never to have been questioned in antiquity, either by the enemies or by the admirers of Sparta. And those who censured the public masculine exercises of the Spartan maidens, as well as the liberty tolerated in married women, allowed at the same time that the feelings of both were actively identified with the state to a degree hardly known in Greece; that the patriotism of the men greatly depended upon the sympathy of the other sex, which manifested itself publicly, in a manner not compatible with the recluse life of Grecian women generally, to the exaltation of the brave as well as to the abasement of the recreant; and that the dignified bearing of the Spartan matrons under private family loss seriously assisted the state in the task of bearing up against public reverses. "Return either with your shield or upon it," was their exhortation to their sons when departing for foreign service: and after the fatal day of Leuktra, those mothers who had to welcome home their surviving sons in dishonour and defeat, were the bitter sufferers; while those whose sons had perished, maintained a bearing comparatively cheerful.²

Earnest
and lofty
patriotism
of the
Spartan
women.

¹ Aristophan. *Lysistr.* 80.

² See the remarkable account in

Such were the leading points of the memorable Spartan discipline, strengthened in its effect on the mind by the absence of communication with strangers. For no Spartan could go abroad without leave, nor were strangers permitted to stay at Sparta; they came thither, it seems, by a sort of sufferance, but the uncourteous process called *xenêlasy*¹ was always available to remove them, nor could there arise in Sparta that class of resident metics or aliens who constituted a large part of the population of Athens, and seem to have been found in most other Grecian towns. It is in this universal schooling, training and drilling, imposed alike upon boys and men, youths and virgins, rich and poor, that the distinctive attribute of Sparta is to be sought—not in her laws or political constitution.

Lykurgus (or the individual to whom this system is owing, whoever he was) is the founder of a war-like brotherhood rather than the lawgiver of a political community; his brethren live together like bees in a hive (to borrow a simile from Plutarch), with all their feelings implicated in the commonwealth, and divorced from house and home.² Far from contemplating the society as a whole, with its multifarious wants and liabilities, he interdicts beforehand, by one of the three primitive *Rhetræ*, all written laws, that is to say, all formal and pre-meditated enactments on any special subject. When disputes are to be settled or judicial interference is required, the magistrate is to decide from his own sense of equity; that the magistrate will not depart from the established customs and recognized purposes of the city, is presumed from the personal discipline which he and the select body to whom he belongs, have undergone. It is this select body,

Lykurgus is the trainer of a military brotherhood, more than the framer of a political constitution.

Xenophon, *Hellen.* iv. 16; Plutarch, *Agesilaus*, c. 29; one of the most striking incidents in Grecian history. Compare also the string of sayings ascribed to Lacedæmonian women, in Plutarch, *Lac. Apophth.* p. 241 *seq.*

¹ How offensive the Lacedæmonian *xenêlasy* or expulsion of strangers appeared in Greece, we may see from the speeches of Periklês in Thucydidês (i. 144; ii.

39). Compare Xenophon, *Rep. Lac.* xiv. 4; Plutarch, *Agis*, c. 10; Lykurgus, c. 27; Plato, *Protagoras*, p. 348.

No Spartan left the country without permission: Isokratês, *Orat.* xi. (Busiris), p. 225; Xenoph. *ut sup.*

Both these regulations became much relaxed after the close of the Peloponnesian war.

² Plutarch, *Lykurg.* c. 25.

maintained by the labour of others, over whom Lykurgus exclusively watches, with the provident eye of a trainer, for the purpose of disciplining them into a state of regimental preparation,¹ single minded obedience, and bodily efficiency and endurance, so that they may be always fit and ready for defence, for conquest and for dominion. The parallel of the Lykurgean institutions is to be found in the Republic of Plato, who approves the Spartan principle of select guardians carefully trained and administering the community at discretion; with this momentous difference indeed, that the Spartan character² formed by Lykurgus is of a low type, rendered savage and fierce by exclusive and overdone bodily discipline,—destitute even of the elements of letters,—immersed in their own narrow specialities, and taught to despise all that lay beyond,—possessing all the qualities requisite to procure dominion, but none of those calculated to render dominion popular or salutary to the subject; while the habits and attributes of the guardians, as shadowed forth by Plato, are enlarged as well as philanthropic, qualifying them not simply to govern, but to govern for purposes protective, conciliatory and exalted. Both Plato and Aristotle conceive as the perfection of society something of the Spartan type—a select body of equally privileged citizens, disengaged from

¹ Plutarch observes justly about Sparta under the discipline of Lykurgus, that it was “not the polity of a city, but the life of a trained and skilful man”—οὐ πόλεως ἢ Σπάρτη πολιτείαν, ἀλλ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκητοῦ καὶ σοφοῦ βίον ἔχουσα (Plutarch, Lyk. c. 30).

About the perfect habit of obedience at Sparta, see Xenophon, Memorab. iii. 5, 9, 15-iv. 4, 15, the grand attributes of Sparta in the eyes of its admirers (Isokratês, Panathen. Or. xii. p. 256-278), πειθαρχία—σωφροσύνη—τὰ γυμνάσια τάχει καθεστῶτα καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀσχησιν τῆς ἀνδρίας καὶ πρὸς τὴν ὁμόνοιαν καὶ συνόλως τὴν περὶ τὸν πόλεμον ἐμπειρίαν.

² Aristot. Polit. viii 3, 3. Οἱ Δάκωες . . . ἠθριώδεις ἀπεργάζονται τοῖς πόνοις.

That the Spartans were absolutely ignorant of letters, and could not read, is expressly stated by Isokratês (Panathen. Or. xii. p. 277), οὗτοι δὲ τοσοῦτον ἀπολελειμμένοι τῆς κοινῆς παιδείας καὶ φιλοσοφίας εἰσιν, ὥστ’ οὐδὲ γράμματα μαθάνουσιν, &c.

The preference of rhetoric to accuracy is so manifest in Isokratês, that we ought to understand his expressions with some reserve; but in this case it is evident that he means literally what he says, for in another part of the same discourse there is an expression dropt almost unconsciously which confirms it. “The most rational Spartans (he says) will appreciate this discourse, if they find any one to read it to them—ἤν λάβωσι τὸν ἀναγλωσόμενον (p. 285).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



to the local public opinion, and preference of death to the abandonment of Spartan maxims—intense ambition on the part of every one to distinguish himself within the prescribed sphere of duties, with little ambition for anything else. In what manner so rigorous a system of individual training can have been first brought to bear upon any community, mastering the course of the thoughts and actions from boyhood to old age—a work far more difficult than any political revolution—we are not permitted to discover. Nor does even the influence of an earnest and energetic Herakleid man—seconded by the still more powerful working of the Delphian god behind, upon the strong pious susceptibilities of the Spartan mind—sufficiently explain a phænomenon so remarkable in the history of mankind, unless we suppose them aided by some combination of co-operating circumstances which history has not transmitted to us,¹ and preceded by disorders so exaggerated as to render the citizens glad to escape from them at any price.

Respecting the ante-Lykurgean Sparta we possess no positive information whatever. But although this infortunate gap cannot be filled up, we may yet master the negative probabilities of the case, sufficiently to see that in what Plutarch has told us (and from Plutarch the modern views have, untillately, been derived), there is indeed a basis of reality, but there is also a large superstructure of romance,—in not a few particulars essentially misleading. For example, Plutarch treats Lykurgus as introducing his reforms at a time when Sparta was mistress of Laconia, and distributing the whole of that territory among the Pericæki. Now we know that Laconia was not then in possession of Sparta, and that the partition of Lykurgus (assuming it to be real) could only have been applied to the land in the immediate vicinity of the latter. For even Amyklæ, Pharis and Geronthræ were not conquered until the reign of Têleklus, posterior to any period which we can reasonably assign to Lykurgus: nor can any such dis-

Statements
of Plutarch
about Ly-
kurgus—
much ro-
mance in
the'n.

The most remarkable circumstance is, that these words are addressed by Brasidas to an army composed in large proportion of manumitted Helots (Thucyd. iv. 81).

¹ Plato treats the system of Lykurgus as emanating from the Delphian Apollo, and Lykurgus as his missionary (Legg. i. p. 632).

tribution of Laconia have really occurred. Farther we are told that Lykurgus banished from Sparta coined gold and silver, useless professions and frivolities, eager pursuit of gain, and ostentatious display. Without dwelling upon the improbability that any one of these anti-Spartan characteristics should have existed at so early a period as the ninth century before the Christian æra, we may at least be certain that coined silver was not then to be found, since it was first introduced into Greece by Pheidôn of Argos in the succeeding century, as has been stated in the preceding section.

But amongst all the points stated by Plutarch, the most suspicious by far, and the most misleading, because endless calculations have been built upon it, is the alleged redivision of landed property. He tells us that Lykurgus found fearful inequality in the landed possessions of the Spartans; nearly all the land in the hands of a few, and a great multitude without any land; that he rectified this evil by a redivision of the Spartan district into 9000 equal lots, and the rest of Laconia into 30,000, giving to each citizen as much as would produce a given quota of barley, &c.; and that he wished moreover to have divided the moveable property upon similar principles of equality, but was deterred by the difficulties of carrying his design into execution.

New partition of lands—no such measure ascribed to Lykurgus by earlier authors down to Aristotle.

Now we shall find on consideration that this new and equal partition of lands by Lykurgus is still more at variance with fact and probability than the two former alleged proceedings. All the historical evidences exhibit decided inequalities of property among the Spartans—inequalities which tended constantly to increase; moreover, the earlier authors do not conceive this evil as having grown up by way of abuse out of a primæval system of perfect equality, nor do they know anything of the original equal redivision by Lykurgus. Even as early as the poet Alkæus (B.C. 600-580) we find bitter complaints of the oppressive ascendancy of wealth, and the degradation of the poor man, cited as having been pronounced by Aristodêmus at Sparta: "Wealth (said he) makes the man—no poor person is either accounted good or honoured."¹ Next, the

¹ Alcæi Fragment. 41. p. 279, ed. Schneidewin:—

historian Hellanikus certainly knew nothing of the Lykurgian redivision—for he ascribed the whole Spartan polity to Eurysthenês and Proklês, the original founders, and hardly noticed Lykurgus at all. Again, in the brief but impressive description of the Spartan lawgiver by Herodotus, several other institutions are alluded to, but nothing is said about a redivision of the lands; and this latter point is in itself of such transcendent moment, and was so recognised among all Grecian thinkers, that the omission is almost a demonstration of ignorance. Thucydidês certainly could not have believed that equality of property was an original feature of the Lykurgian system; for he says that at Lacedæmon “the rich men assimilated themselves greatly in respect of clothing and general habits of life to the simplicity of the poor, and thus set an example which was partially followed in the rest of Greece:” a remark which both implies the existence of unequal property, and gives a just appreciation of the real working of Lykurgic institutions.¹ The like is the sentiment of Xenophon:² he observes that the rich at Sparta gained little by their wealth in point of superior comfort; but he never glances at any original measure carried into effect by Lykurgus for equalising possessions. Plato too,³ while he touches upon the great advantage possessed by the Dorians, immediately after their conquest of Peloponnesus, in being able to apportion land suitably to all—never hints that this original distribution had degenerated into an abuse, and that an entire subsequent redivision had been resorted to by Lykurgus: moreover, he is himself deeply sensible of the hazards of that formidable proceeding. Lastly, Aristotle clearly did not believe that Lykurgus had redivided the soil. For he informs us, first, that “both in Lacedæmon and in Krête, the legislator had rendered the enjoyment of property common through the establishment of the Sys-

‘Ὡς γὰρ δή ποτ’ Ἀριστόδημον φασί
οὐκ ἀπάλαμνον ἐν Σπάρτῃ
λόγον

Εἰπῆ, — Χρήματα’ ἀνὴρ’ πενιχρὸς
δ’ οὐδεὶς πέλετ’ ἐσθλὸς οὐδὲ
τίμιος.

Compare the Schol. ad Pindar. Isthm. ii. 17, and Diogen. Laërt. t. 31.

¹ Thucyd. i. 8. μετρία δ’ αὖ ἐσθῆτι καὶ ἐς τὸν νῦν τρόπον πρῶτοι Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐχρήσαντο, καὶ ἐς τὰ ἄλλα πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς οἱ τὰ μείζω κεκτημένοι ἰσοδιαίτοι μάλιστα κατέστησαν. See also Plutarch, Apophthegm. Lacon. p. 210. A.—F.

² Xenoph. Republ. Laced. c. 7.

³ Plato, Legg. iii. p. 684.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



without violent sedition, extinction of debts and redivision of the land—those “monstrous evils” as he terms them. Had he conceived Lykurgus as being himself the author of a complete redivision of land, he could hardly have avoided some allusion to it.

It appears then that none of the authors down to Aristotle ascribe to Lykurgus a redivision of the lands, either of Sparta or of Laconia. The statement to this effect in Plutarch, given in great detail and with precise specification of number and produce, must have been borrowed from some author later than Aristotle; and I think we may trace the source of it, when we study Plutarch’s biography of Lykurgus in conjunction with that of Agis and Kleomenês. The statement is taken from authors of the century after Aristotle, either in, or shortly before, the age when both those kings tried extreme measures to renovate the sinking state: the former by a thorough change of system and property, yet proposed and accepted according to constitutional forms; the latter by projects substantially similar, with violence to enforce them. The accumulation of landed property in few hands, the multiplication of poor, and the decline in the number of citizens, which are depicted as grave mischiefs by Aristotle, had become greatly aggravated during the century between him and Agis. The number of citizens, reckoned by Herodotus in the time of the Persian invasion at 8000, had dwindled down in the time of Aristotle to 1000, and in that of Agis to 700, out of which latter number 100 alone possessed most of the landed property of the state.¹ Now by the ancient rule of Lykurgus, the qualification for citizenship was the ability to furnish the prescribed quota, incumbent on each individual, at the public mess: so soon as a citizen became too poor to answer to this requisition, he lost his franchise and his eligibility to offices.² The

¹ Plutarch, Agis, c. iv.

² Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 21. Παρά ἐξ τοῖς Λακῶσιν ἕκαστον δεῖ φέρειν, καὶ σφόδρα πενήτων ἐνίων ὄντων, καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἀνάλωμα οὐ δυναμένων διαπύαν Ὅρος δὲ τῆς πολιτείας οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πάτριος, τὸν μὴ δυνάμενον τοῦτο τὸ τέλος φέρειν, μὴ μετέχειν

αὐτῆς. So also Xenophon, Rep. Lac. c. vii. ἴσα μὲν φέρειν εἰς τὰ ἐπιτήδεια, ὁμοίως δὲ διαιτᾶσθαι τάς ας.

The existence of this rate-paying qualification is the capital fact in the history of the Spartan constitution; especially when we couple it with the other fact, that no Spar-

tan acquired anything by any kind of industry.

¹ Herakleidēs Pontikus, ad calcem Cragii de Repub. Laced. p. 504. Compare Cragius, iii. 2, p. 196.

Aristotle (ii. 6, 10) states that it was discreditable to buy or sell a lot of land, but that the lot might be either given or bequeathed at pleasure. He mentions nothing about the prohibition to divide, and he even states what contradicts it,—that it was the practice to give a large dowry when a rich man's daughter married (ii. 6, 11). The sister of Agesilaus, Kyniska, was a person of large property, which apparently implies the division of his father's estate (Plutarch, Agesilaus, 30).

Whether there was ever any law prohibiting a father from dividing his lot among his children may well be doubted. The Rhetra of the ephor Epitadeus (Plutarch, Agis, 5) granted unlimited power of testamentary disposition to the possessor, so that he might give away or bequeath his land to a stranger if he chose. To this law great effects are ascribed: but it is evident that the tendency to accumulate property in few hands, and the tendency to diminution in the number of qualified citizens, were powerfully manifested before the

time of Epitadeus, who came after Lysander. Plutarch in another place notices Hesiod, Xenokratēs and Lykurgus, as having concurred with Plato in thinking that it was proper to leave only one single heir (ἓνα μόνον κληρόνομον καταλιπεῖν) (Ἵπομνήματα εἰς Ἡσίοδον, Fragm. vol. v. pp. 777, Wyttenb.). But Hesiod does not lay down this as a necessity or as a universal rule; he only says that a man is better off who has only one son (Opp. Di. 374). And if Plato had been able to cite Lykurgus as an authority for that system of an invariable number of separate κληροῖ or lots, which he sets forth in his treatise De Legibus (p. 740), it is highly probable that he would have done so. Still less can Aristotle have supposed that Lykurgus or the Spartan system either ensured, or intended to ensure, the maintenance of an unalterable number of distinct proprietary lots; for he expressly notices that scheme as a peculiarity of Philolaus the Corinthian, in his laws for the Thebans (Polit. ii. 9, 7).

² Polybius, Fragm. ap. Maii Collect. Vett. Scrip. vol. ii. p. 384.

Perhaps, as O. Müller remarks, this may mean only, that none except the eldest brother could afford to marry; but the feelings

Spartan brothers had often one and the same wife, the paternal land being just sufficient to furnish contributions for all to the public mess, and thus to keep alive the citizen-rights of all the sons. The tendency to diminution in the number of Spartan citizens seems to have gone on uninterruptedly from the time of the Persian war, and must have been aggravated by the foundation of Messênê, with its independent territory around, after the battle of Leuktra, an event which robbed the Spartans of a large portion of their property. Apart from these special causes, moreover, it has been observed often as a statistical fact, that a close corporation of citizens, or any small number of families, intermarrying habitually among one another, and not reinforced from without, have usually a tendency to diminish.

The present is not the occasion to enter at length into that combination of causes which partly sapped, partly overthrew, both the institutions of Lykurgus and the power of Sparta. But taking the condition of that city as it stood in the time of Agis III. (say about 250 B.C.), we know that its citizens had become few in number, the bulk of them miserably poor, and all the land in a small number of hands. The old discipline and the public mess (as far as the rich were concerned) had degenerated into mere forms—a numerous body of strangers or non-citizens (the old *xenêlasy*, or prohibition of resident strangers, being long discontinued) were domiciled in the town, forming a powerful moneyed interest; and lastly, the dignity and ascendancy of the state amongst its neighbours were altogether ruined. It was insupportable to a young enthusiast like king Agis, as well as to many ardent spirits among his contemporaries, to contrast this degradation with the previous glories of their country; nor did they see any other way of reconstructing the old Sparta except by again admitting the disfranchised poor citizens, redividing the lands, cancelling all debts, and restoring the public mess and military train-

Diminished number of citizens and degradation of Sparta in the reign of Agis.

His ardent wish to restore the dignity of the state.

of the Spartans in respect to marriage were in many other points so different from ours, that we are hardly authorised to reject the literal statement (History of the Dorians, iii. 10, 2)—which indeed

is both illustrated and rendered credible by the permission granted in the laws of Solôn to an *ἐπικληρος* who had been claimed in marriage by a relative in his old age—*ἂν ὁ κρατῶν καὶ κύριος γεγονῶς κατὰ τὸν*



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



philosopher Sphærus of Borysthenês (friend and companion of Kleomenês,¹ disciple of Zeno the Stoic and author of works now lost both on Lykurgus and Sokratês and on the constitution of Sparta) may have been one of those who gave currency to such an hypothesis. And we shall readily believe, that if advanced, it would find easy and sincere credence, when we recollect how many similar delusions have obtained vogue in modern times far more favourable to historical accuracy—how much false colouring has been attached by the political feeling of recent days to matters of ancient history, such as the Saxon Witenagemote, the Great Charter, the rise and growth of the English House of Commons, or even the Poor Law of Elizabeth.

When we read the division of lands really proposed by king Agis, it is found to be a very close copy of the original division ascribed to Lykurgus. He parcels the lands bounded by the four limits of Pellênê, Sellasia, Malea, and Taygetus, into 4500 lots, one to every Spartan; and the lands beyond these limits into 15,000 lots, one to each Pericœkus; and he proposes to constitute in Sparta fifteen Pheiditia or public mess-tables, some including 400 individuals, others 200,—thus providing a place for each of his 4500 Spartans. With respect to the division originally ascribed to Lykurgus, different accounts were given. Some considered it to have set out 9000 lots for the district of Sparta, and 30,000 for

¹ Plutarch, Kleomenês, cap. 2—11, with the note of Schömann, p. 175; also Lycurg. cap. 8; Athenæ. iv. p. 141.

Phylarchus also described the proceedings of Kleomenês, seemingly with favour (Athenæ. ib.); compare Plutarch, Agis, c. 9.

Polybius believed that Lykurgus had introduced equality of landed possession both in the district of Sparta and throughout Laconia: his opinion is probably borrowed from these same authors, of the third century before the Christian æra. For he expresses his great surprise how the best-informed ancient authors (οἱ λογιώτατοι τῶν ἀρχαίων συγγραφέων), Plato, Xc-

nophon, Ephorus, Kallisthenês, can compare the Kretan polity to the o'd Lacedæmonian, the main features of the two being (as he says) so different—equality of property at Sparta, great inequality of property in Krête, among other differences (Polyh. vi. 45—48).

This remark of Polybius exhibits the difference of opinion of the earlier writers, as compared with those during the third century before the Christian æra. The former compared Spartan and Kretan institutions, because they did not conceive equality of landed property as a feature in old Sparta.

In the preceding argument respecting the redivision of land ascribed to Lykurgus, I have taken that measure as it is described by Plutarch. But there has been a tendency, in some able modern writers, while admitting the general fact of such redivision, to reject the account given by Plutarch in some of its main circumstances. That, for instance, which is the capital feature in Plutarch's narrative, and which gives soul and meaning to his picture of the lawgiver—the equality of partition—is now rejected by many as incorrect, and it is supposed that Lykurgus made some new agrarian regulations tending towards a general equality of landed property, but not an entirely new partition; that he may have resumed from the wealthy men lands which they had unjustly taken from the conquered Achæans, and thus provided allotments both for the poorer citizens and for the subject Laconians. Such is the opinion of Dr. Thirlwall, who at the same time admits that the exact proportion of the Lykurgean distribution can hardly be ascertained.²

Opinion that Lykurgus proposed some agrarian interference, but not an entire re-partition, gratuitous and improbable.

¹ Respecting Sphærus, see Plutarch, *Lycurg.* c. 8; *Kleomen.* c. 2; *Athenæ.* iv. p. 141; *Diogen. Laërt.* vii. sect. 137.

² *Hist. of Greece*, ch. viii. vol. i. p. 344—347.

C. F. Hermann, on the contrary, considers the equal partition of Laconia into lots indivisible and inalienable as "an essential condition" (*eine wesentliche Bedingung*) of the whole Lykurgean system (*Lehrbuch der Griechischen Staatsalterthümer*, sect. 28).

Tittmann (*Griechische Staatsverfassungen*, p. 588—596) states and seems to admit the equal partition as a fact, without any commentary.

Wachsmuth (*Hellenisch. Alterthumskunde*, v. 4. 42. p. 217) supposes "that the best land was already parcelled, before the time of Lykurgus, into lots of equal magnitude, corresponding to the number of Spartans, which number afterwards increased to nine thousand." For this assertion I know no evidence; it departs from Plutarch, without substituting anything better authenticated or more plausible. Wachsmuth notices the partition of Laconia among the *Periœki* in 30,000 equal lots, without any comment, and seemingly as if there were no doubt of it (p. 218).

Manso also supposes that there

I cannot but take a different view of the statement made by Plutarch. The moment that we depart from that rule of equality, which stands so prominently marked in his biography of Lykurgus, we step into a boundless field of possibility, in which there is nothing to determine us to one point more than to another. The surmise started by Dr. Thirlwall, of lands unjustly taken from the conquered Achæans by wealthy Spartan proprietors, is altogether gratuitous; and granting it to be correct, we have still to explain how it happened that this correction of a partial injustice came to be transformed into the comprehensive and systematic measure which Plutarch describes; and to explain, farther, from whence it arose that none of the authors earlier than Plutarch take any notice of Lykurgus as an agrarian equalizer. These two difficulties will still remain, even if we overlook the gratuitous nature of Dr. Thirlwall's supposition, or of any other supposition which can be proposed respecting the real Lykurgian measure which Plutarch is affirmed to have misrepresented.

It appears to me that these difficulties are best obviated by adopting a different canon of historical interpretation. We cannot accept as real the Lykurgian land division described in the life of the lawgiver; but treating this account as a fiction, two modes of proceeding are open to us. We may either consider the fiction, as it now stands, to be the exaggeration and distortion of some small fact, and then try to guess, without

The statement of Plutarch is best explained by supposing it a fiction of the time of Agis.

had once been an equal division of land prior to Lykurgus—that it had degenerated into abuse—and that Lykurgus corrected it, restoring, not absolute equality, but something near to equality (Manso, *Sparta*, vol. i. p. 110–121). This is the same gratuitous supposition as that of Wachsmuth.

O. Müller admits the division as stated by Plutarch, though he says that the whole number of 9000 lots cannot have been set out before the Messenian war; and he adheres to the idea of equality as contained in Plutarch; but he says that the equality consisted in “equal

estimate of average produce,”—not in equal acreable dimensions. He goes so far as to tell us that “the lots of the Spartans, which supported twice as many men as the lots of the Pericæki, must upon the whole have been twice as extensive (i. e. in the aggregate): each lot must therefore have been seven times greater” (compare *History of the Dorians*. iii. 3, 6; iii. 10, 2). He also supposes that “similar partitions of land had been made from the time of the first occupation of Laconia by the Dorians.” Whoever compares his various positions with the evidence brought to sup-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



and docile. Such is the picture with which "mischievous Oneirus" cheats the fancy of the patriotic Agis, whispering the treacherous message that the gods have promised *him* success in a similar attempt, and thus seducing him into that fatal revolutionary course, which is destined to bring himself, his wife and his aged mother to the dungeon and the hangman's rope.†

That the golden dream just described was dreamt by some Spartan patriots is certain, because it stands recorded in Plutarch; that it was not dreamt by the authors of centuries preceding Agis, I have already endeavoured to show; that the earnest feelings, of sickness of the present and yearning for a better future under the colours of a restored past, which filled the soul of this king and his brother reformers—combined with the levelling tendency between rich and poor which really was inherent in the Lykurgian discipline—were amply sufficient to beget such a dream and to procure for it a place among the great deeds of the old lawgiver, so much venerated and so little known,—this too I hold to be unquestionable. Had there been any evidence that Lykurgus had interfered with private property, to the limited extent which Dr. Thirlwall and other able critics imagine—that he had resumed certain lands unjustly taken by the rich from the Achæans—I should have been glad to record it; but finding no such evidence, I cannot think it necessary to presume the fact simply in order to account for the story in Plutarch.²

¹ Plutarch. Agis, c. 19—20.

² I read with much satisfaction in M. Kopstadt's Dissertation, that the general conclusion which I have endeavoured to establish respecting the alleged Lykurgian redivision of property, appears to him successfully proved. (Dissert. De Berum Laconic. Const. sect. 13. p. 138.)

He supposes, with perfect truth, that at the time when the first edition of these volumes was published, I was ignorant of the fact that Lachmann and Kortüm had both called in question the reality of the Lykurgian redivision. In regard to Professor Kortüm, the fact

was first brought to my knowledge by his notice of these two volumes in the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, 1846, No. 41. p. 649.

Since the first edition I have read the treatise of Lachmann (*Die Spartanische Staatsverfassung in ihrer Entwicklung und ihrem Verfall*, sect. 10. p. 170) wherein the redivision ascribed to Lykurgus is canvassed. He too attributes the origin of the tale as a portion of history, to the social and political feelings current in the days of Agis III. and Kleomenês III. He notices also that it is in contradiction with Plato and Isokratês. But a large pro-

The various items in that story all hang together, and must be understood as forming parts of the same comprehensive fact, or comprehensive fancy. The fixed total of 9000 Spartan, and 30,000 Laconian lots,¹ the equality between them, and the rent accruing from each, represented by a given quantity of moist and dry produce,—all these particulars are alike true or alike uncertified. Upon the various numbers here given, many authors have raised calculations as to the population and produce of Laconia, which appear to me destitute of any trustworthy foundation. Those who accept the history, that Lykurgus constituted the above-mentioned numbers both of citizens and of lots of land, and that he contemplated the maintenance of both numbers in unchangeable proportion—are perplexed to assign the means whereby this adjustment was kept undisturbed. Nor are they much assisted in the solution of this embarrassing problem by the statement of Plutarch, who tells us that the number remained fixed of itself, and that the succession ran on from father to son without either consolidation or multiplication of parcels, down to the period when foreign wealth flowed into Sparta, as a consequence of the successful conclusion of the Peloponnesian war. Shortly after that period (he tells us) a

Acknowledged difficulty of understanding by what means the fixed number and integrity of the lots were maintained.

portion of the arguments which he brings to disprove it, are connected with ideas of his own respecting the social and political constitution of Sparta, which I think either untrue or uncertified. Moreover he believes in the inalienability as well as the indivisibility of the separate lots of land—which I believe to be just as little correct as their supposed equality.

Kopstadt (p. 139) thinks that I have gone too far in rejecting every middle opinion. He thinks that Lykurgus must have done something, though much less than what is affirmed, tending to realise equality of individual property.

I shall not say that this is impossible. If we had ampler evi-

dence, perhaps such facts might appear. But as the evidence stands now, there is nothing whatever to show it. Nor are we entitled (in my judgement) to presume that it was so, in the absence of evidence, simply in order to make out that the Lykurgean mythe is only an exaggeration, and not entire fiction.

¹ Aristotle (Polit. ii. 6, 11) remarks that the territory of the Spartans would maintain 1500 horsemen and 20,000 hoplites, while the number of citizens was in point of fact less than 1000. Dr. Thirlwall seems to prefer the reading of Götting—3000 instead of 30,000; but the latter seems better supported by MSS., and most suitable.

citizen named Epitadeus became ephor—a vindictive and malignant man, who, having had a quarrel with his son, and wishing to oust him from the succession, introduced and obtained sanction to a new Rhetra, whereby power was granted to every father of a family either to make over during life, or to bequeath after death, his house and his estate to any one whom he chose.¹ But it is plain that this story (whatever be the truth about the family quarrel of Epitadeus) does not help us out of the difficulty. From the time of Lykurgus to that of this disinheriting ephor, more than four centuries must be reckoned: now had there been real causes at work sufficient to maintain inviolate the identical number of lots and families during this long period, we see no reason why his new law, simply permissive and nothing more, should have overthrown it. We are not told by Plutarch what was the law of succession prior to Epitadeus. If the whole estate went by law to one son in the family, what became of the other sons, to whom industrious acquisition in any shape was repulsive as well as interdicted? If, on the other hand, the estate was divided between the sons equally (as it was by the law of succession at Athens), how can we defend the maintenance of an unchanged aggregate number of parcels?

Dr. Thirlwall, after having admitted a modified interference with private property by Lykurgus, so as to exact from the wealthy a certain sacrifice in order to create lots for the poor, and to bring about something approaching to equi-producing lots for all, observes:—"The average amount of the rent (paid by the cultivating Helots from each lot) seems to have been no more than was required for the frugal maintenance of a family with six persons. The right of transfer was as strictly confined as that of enjoyment: the patrimony was indivisible, inalienable, and descended to the eldest son; in default of a male heir, to the eldest daughter. The object seems to have been, after the number of the allotments became fixed, that each should be constantly represented by one head of a household. But the nature of the means employed for this end is one of the most obscure points of the Spartan system In the better times of the commonwealth, this seems to have been principally effected by adoptions and

¹ Plutarch, Agis, c. 5.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



the state-cavalry.¹ These and other proofs, of the existence of rich men at Sparta, are inconsistent with the idea of a body of citizens each possessing what was about enough for the frugal maintenance of six persons and no more.

As we do not find that such was in practice the state of property in the Spartan community, so neither can we discover that the lawgiver ever tried either to make or to keep it so. What he did was to impose a rigorous public discipline, with simple clothing and fare, incumbent alike upon the rich and the poor (this was his special present to Greece, according to Thucydides,² and his great point of contact with democracy, according to Aristotle); but he took no pains either to restrain the enrichment of the former, or to prevent the impoverishment of the latter. He meddled little with the distribution of property, and such neglect is one of the capital deficiencies for which Aristotle censures him. That philosopher tells us, indeed, that the Spartan law had made it dishonourable (he does not say, peremptorily forbidden) to buy or sell landed property, but that there was the fullest liberty both of donation and bequest: and the same results (he justly observes) ensued from the practice tolerated as would have ensued from the practice discountenanced—since it was easy to disguise a real sale under an ostensible donation. He notices pointedly the tendency of property at Sparta to concentrate itself in fewer hands, unopposed by any legal hindrances: the fathers married their daughters to whomsoever they chose, and gave dowries according to their own discretion, generally very large: the rich families moreover intermarried among one another habitually and without restriction. Now all these are indicated by Aristotle as cases in which the law might have interfered, and ought to have interfered, but did not—for the great purpose of disseminating the benefits of landed property as much as possible among the mass of the citizens. Again, he tells us that the law encouraged the multiplication of progeny, and granted exemptions to such citizens as had three or four children—but took no thought how the numerous families of poorer citizens were to live, or to maintain their qualification at

¹ Xenoph. Hellen. vi. 4, 11; Xenoph. de Rep. Lac. v. 3; Molpis ap. Athenæ. iv. p. 141; Aristot. Polit. ii. 2, 5.

² Thucyd. i. 6; Aristot. Polit. iv. 7, 4, 5; viii. 1, 3.

the public tables, most of the lands of the state being in the hands of the rich.¹ His notice, and condemnation of that law, which made the franchise of the Spartan citizen dependent upon his continuing to furnish his quota to the public table—have been already adverted to; as well as the potent love of money² which he notes in the Spartan character, and which must have tended continually to keep together the richer families among themselves: while amongst a community where industry was unknown, no poor citizen could ever become rich.

If we duly weigh these evidences, we shall see that equality of possessions neither existed in fact, nor ever entered into the scheme and tendencies of the lawgiver at Sparta. And the picture which Dr. Thirlwall³ has drawn of a body of citizens each possessing a lot of land about adequate to the frugal maintenance of six persons—of adoptions and marriages of heiresses arranged with a

Erroneous suppositions with regard to the Spartan law and practice of succession.

¹ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 10—13; v. 6, 7.

² The panegyrist Xenophon acknowledges much the same respecting the Sparta which he witnessed; but he maintains that it had been better in former times (Repub. Lac. c. 14).

³ The view of Dr. Thirlwall agrees in the main with that of Manso and O. Müller (Manso, Sparta. vol. i. p. 118—128; and vol. ii. Beilage, 9, p. 129; and Müller, History of the Dorians, vol. ii. B. iii. c. 10. sect. 2, 3).

Both these authors maintain the proposition stated by Plutarch (Agis, c. 5, in his reference to the ephor Epitadeus, and the new law carried by that ephor), that the number of Spartan lots, nearly equal and rigorously indivisible, remained with little or no change from the time of the original division down to the return of Lysander after his victorious close of the Peloponnesian war. Both acknowledge that they cannot understand by what regulations this

long unalterability, so improbable in itself, was maintained: but both affirm the fact positively.

The period will be more than 400 years, if the original division be referred to Lykurgus: more than 300 years, if the 9000 lots are understood to date from the Messenian war.

If this alleged fact be really a fact, it is something almost without a parallel in the history of mankind: and before we consent to believe it, we ought at least to be satisfied that there is considerable show of positive evidence in its favour, and not much against it. But on examining Manso and Müller, it will be seen that not only is there very slender evidence in its favour—there is a decided balance of evidence against it.

The evidence produced to prove the indivisibility of the Spartan lot is a passage of Herakleidês Ponticus, c. 2 (ad calc. Cragii, p. 504), πωλεῖν δὲ γῆν Λακεδαιμονίοις αἰσχρὸν νενόμισται—τῆς ἀρχαίας μοίρας ἀνανέμεσθαι (or νενεμήσθαι) οὐδὲν

deliberate view of providing for the younger children of numerous families—of interference on the part of the kings

ἔξεσσι. The first portion of this assertion is confirmed by, and probably borrowed from, Aristotle, who says the same thing nearly in the same words: the second portion of the sentence ought, according to all reasonable rules of construction, to be understood with reference to the first part; that is, to the *sale* of the original lot. "To sell land is held disgraceful among the Lacedæmonians, nor is it permitted to sever off any portion of the original lot," i. e. *for sale*. Herakleidês is not here speaking of the law of *succession* to property at Lacedæmon, nor can we infer from his words that the whole lot was transmitted entire to one son. No evidence except this very irrelevant sentence is produced by Müller and Manso to justify their positive assertion, that the Spartan lot of land was indivisible in respect to inheritance.

Having thus determined the indivisible transmission of lots to one son of a family, Manso and Müller presume, without any proof, that that son must be the eldest: and Müller preceeds to state something equally unsupported by proof:—"The extent of his rights, however, was perhaps no farther than that he was considered master of the house and property; while the other members of the family had an equal right to the enjoyment of it. . . . The master of the family was therefore obliged to contribute for all these to the *syssitia*, without which contribution no one was admitted."—pp. 199, 200.

All this is completely gratuitous, and will be found to produce as many difficulties in one way as

it removes in another.

The next law as to the transmission of property which Manso states to have prevailed, is, that all daughters were to marry without receiving any dowry—the case of a sole daughter is here excepted. For this proposition he cites Plutarch, *Apophteg. Laconic.* p. 227; Justin. iii. 3; Ælian. V. H. vi. 6. These authors do certainly affirm that there was such a regulation, and both Plutarch and Justin assign reasons for it, real or supposed. "Lykurgus being asked why he directed that maidens should be married without dowry, answered,—In order that maidens of poor families might not remain unmarried, and that character and virtue might be exclusively attended to in the choice of a wife." The same general reason is given by Justin. Now the *reason* here given for the prohibition of dowry, goes indirectly to prove that there existed no such law of general succession as that which had been before stated, viz. the sacred indivisibility of the primitive lot. For had this latter been recognised, the reason would have been obvious why daughters could receive no dowry: the father's whole landed property (and a Spartan could have little of any other property, since he never acquired anything by industry) was under the strictest entail to his eldest son. Plutarch and Justin, therefore, while in their statement as to the matter of fact they warrant Manso in affirming the prohibition of dowry (about this matter of fact, more presently), do by the reason which they give, discountenance his former supposition as to the indivisibility of the primitive family lots.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



to Plutarch? To insist on the intellectual eminence of Aristotle would be superfluous: and on this subject he is a witness the more valuable, as he had made careful, laborious and personal inquiries into the Grecian governments generally, and that of Sparta among them—the great *point de mire* for ancient speculative politicians.

Now the statements of Aristotle distinctly exclude the idea of equal, indivisible, inalienable, perpetual lots,—and prohibition of dowry. He particularly notices the habit of giving very large dowries, and the constant tendency of the lots of land to become consolidated in fewer and fewer hands. He tells us nothing upon the subject which is not perfectly consistent, intelligible, and uncontradicted by any known statements belonging to his own or to earlier times. But the reason why men refuse to believe him, and either set aside or explain away his evidence, is that they sit down to study with their minds full of the division of landed property ascribed to Lykurgus by Plutarch. I willingly concede that on this occasion we have to choose between Plutarch and Aristotle. We cannot reconcile them except by arbitrary suppositions, every one of which breaks up the simplicity, beauty and symmetry of Plutarch's agrarian idea—and every one of which still leaves the perpetuity of the original lots unexplained. And I have no hesitation in pre-

rejecting the statement of Plutarch, and rejecting it altogether with all its consequences.

But the authority of Aristotle is not the only argument which may be urged to refute this supposition, that the distinct Spartan lots remained unaltered in number down to the time of Lysander. For if the number of distinct lots remained undiminished, the number of citizens cannot have greatly diminished. Now the conspiracy of Kinadôn falls during the life of Lysander, within the first ten years after the close of the Peloponnesian war: and in the account which Xenophon gives of that conspiracy, the paucity of the number of citizens is brought out in the clearest and most emphatic manner. And this must be before the time when the new law of Epitadeus is said to have passed, at least before that law can have had room to produce any sensible effects. If then the ancient 9000 lots still remained all separate, without either consolidation or subdivision, how are we to account for the small number of citizens at the time of the conspiracy of Kinadôn?

This examination of the evidence (for the purpose of which I have been compelled to prolong the present note) shows—1. That the hypothesis of indivisible, inalienable lots, maintained for a long period in undiminished number at Sparta, is not only sustained by the very minimum of affirmative evidence, but is contradicted by

to which he refers, may have existed in the glowing retrospect of Agis, but are not acknowledged in the sober appreciation of Aristotle. That the citizens were far more numerous in early times, the philosopher tells us, and that the community had in his day greatly declined in power, we also know: in this sense the times of Sparta had doubtless once been better. We may even concede that during the three centuries succeeding Lykurgus, when they were continually acquiring new territory, and when Aristotle

very good negative. 2. That the hypothesis which represents dowries to daughters as being prohibited by law, is indeed affirmed by Plutarch, Ælian and Justin, but is contradicted by the better authority of Aristotle.

The recent edition of Herakleidês Ponticus, published by Schneidewin in 1847 since my first edition, presents an amended text which completely bears out my interpretation. His text, derived from a fuller comparison of existing MSS., as well as from better critical judgement (see his Prolegg. o. iii. p. liv.), stands—Πωλεῖν δὲ γῆν Λακεδαιμονίοις αἰσχρὸν νόμισται. τῆς δὲ ἀρχαίας μοίρας οὐδὲ ἕξεισιν (p. 7). It is plain that all this passage relates to sale of land, and not to testation, or succession, or division. Thus much *negatively* is certain, and Schneidewin remarks in his note (p. 53) that it contradicts Müller, Hermann, and Schömann—adding, that the distinction drawn is, between land inherited from the original family lots, and land otherwise acquired, by donation, bequest, &c. Sale of the former was absolutely illegal: sale of the latter was discreditable, yet not absolutely illegal. Aristotle in the Politics (vii. 6, 10) takes no notice of any such distinction, between land inherited from the primitive lots, and land otherwise acquired. Nor was there perhaps

any well-defined line of distinction, in a country of unwritten customs like Sparta, between what was simply disgraceful and what was positively illegal. Schneidewin in his note, however, assumes the original equality of the lots as certain in itself, and as being the cause of the prohibition: neither of which appears to me true.

I speak of this confused compilation still under the name of Herakleidês Ponticus, by which it is commonly known; though Schneidewin in the second chapter of his Prolegomena has shown sufficient reason for believing that there is no authority for connecting it with the name of Herakleidês. He tries to establish the work as consisting of Excerpta from the lost treatise of Aristotle's περὶ Πολιτειῶν: which is well made out with regard to some parts, but not enough to justify his inference as to the whole. The article, wherein Welcker vindicates the ascribing of the work to an Excerptor of Herakleidês, is unsatisfactory (Kleine Schriften, p. 451).

Beyond this irrelevant passage of Herakleidês Ponticus, no farther evidence is produced by Müller and Manso to justify their positive assertion, that the Spartan lot of land was indivisible in respect to inheritance.

had been told that they had occasionally admitted new citizens, so that the aggregate number of citizens had once been 10,000—we may concede that in these previous centuries the distribution of land had been less unequal, so that the disproportion between the great size of the territory and the small number of citizens was not so marked as it had become at the period which the philosopher personally witnessed; for the causes tending to augmented inequality were constant and uninterrupted in their working. But this admission will still leave us far removed from the sketch drawn by Dr. Thirlwall, which depicts the Lykurgean Sparta as starting from a new agrarian scheme not far removed from equality of landed property—the citizens as spontaneously disposed to uphold this equality by giving to unprovided men the benefit of adoptions and heiress-marriages—and the magistrate as interfering to enforce this latter purpose, even in cases where the citizens were themselves unwilling. All our evidence exhibits to us both decided inequality of possessions and inclinations on the part of rich men the reverse of those which Dr. Thirlwall indicates; nor will the powers of interference which he ascribes to the magistrate be found sustained by the chapter of Herodotus on which he seems to rest them.¹

¹ Herod. vi. 57, in enumerating the privileges and perquisites of the kings—δικάζειν δὲ μούρους τοὺς βασιλῆας τόσαδὲ μούνα· πατροῦχου τε παρθένου περί, ἐς τὸ ἰκνέεται ἔχειν, ἣν μὴ περὶ ὁ πατήρ αὐτὴν ἐγγυήσῃ· καὶ ὀδῶν δημοσιέων περί· καὶ ἣν τις θετὸν παῖδα ποιέεσθαι ἐθέλῃ, βασιλῆων ἐνάντιον ποιέεσθαι.

It seems curious that πατροῦχος παρθένος should mean a damsel who has *no father* (literally *lucus a non lucendo*); but I suppose that we must accept this upon the authority of Julius Pollux and Timæus. Proceeding on this interpretation, Valckenaer gives the meaning of the passage very justly: “Orhæ nuptias, necdum a patre desponsatæ, si plures sibi vindicarcut, fieretque ἡ ἐπίκληρος, ut Athenis loquebantur, ἐπίδικος, Spartæ lis ista dirimebatur a regibus solis.”

Now the judicial function here described is something very different from the language of Dr. Thirlwall, that “the kings had the disposal of the hand of orphan heiresses in cases where the father had not signified his will.” Such disposal would approach somewhat to that omnipotence which Aristophanês (Vesp. 585) makes old Philokleon claim for the Athenian dikasts (an exaggeration well-calculated to serve the poet’s purpose of making the dikasts appear monsters of caprice and injustice), and would be analogous to the power which English kings enjoyed three centuries ago as feudal guardians over wards. But the language of Herodotus is inconsistent with the idea that the kings *chose* a husband for the orphan heiress. She was claimed as of right by persons



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Discarding then these two suppositions, we have to consider the Lykurgæan system as brought to bear upon Sparta and its immediate circumjacent district, apart from the rest of Laconia, and as not meddling systematically with the partition of property, whatever that may have been, which the Dorian conquerors established at their original settlement. Lykurgus does not try to make the poor rich, nor the rich poor; but he imposes upon both the same subjugating drill¹—the same habits of life, gentlemanlike idleness, and unlettered strength—the same fare, clothing, labours, privations, endurance, punishments, and subordination. It is a lesson instructive at least, however unsatisfactory, to political students—that with all this equality of dealing, he ends in creating a community in whom not merely the love of pre-eminence, but even the love of money, stands powerfully and specially developed.²

How far the peculiar of the primitive Sparta extended we have no means of determining; but its limits down the valley of the Eurotas were certainly narrow, inasmuch as it did not reach so far as Amyklæ. Nor can we tell what principles the Dorian conquerors may have followed in the original allotment of lands within the limits of that peculiar. Equal apportionment is not probable, because all the individuals of a conquering band are seldom regarded as possessing equal claims; but whatever the original apportionment may have been, it remained without any general or avowed disturbance until the days of Agis III. and Kleomenês III. Here then we have the primitive Sparta, including Dorian warriors with their Helot subjects, but no Pericæki. And it is upon these Spartans separately, perhaps after the period of aggravated disorder and lawlessness noticed by Herodotus and Thucydidês, that the painful but invigorating discipline above sketched must have been originally brought to bear.

The gradual conquest of Laconia, with the acquisition of additional lands and new Helots, and the formation of the order of Pericæki, both of which were a consequence of it—is to be considered as posterior to the introduction

¹ Σπάρτα δαμασιμβροτος, Simondês, apud Plutarch. Agesilaus, c. 1.

² Aristotel. Polit. ii. 6, 9, 19, 23. τὸ φιλότιμον—τὸ φιλοχρήματον.

of the Lykurgean system at Sparta, and as resulting partly from the increased force which that system imparted. The career of conquest went on, beginning from Têlekhus, for nearly three centuries—with some interruptions indeed, and in the case of the Messenian war, with a desperate and even precarious struggle—so that in the time of Thucydidês, and for some time previously, the Spartans possessed two-fifths of Peloponnesus. And this series of new acquisitions and victories disguised the really weak point of the Spartan system, by rendering it possible either to plant the poorer citizens as Pericœki in a conquered township, or to supply them with lots of land, of which they could receive the produce without leaving the city—so that their numbers and their military strength were prevented from declining. It is even affirmed by Aristotle, that during these early times they augmented the number of their citizens by fresh admissions, which of course implies the acquisition of additional lots of land.¹ But successful war (to use an expression substantially borrowed from the same philosopher) was necessary to their salvation: the establishment of their ascendancy, and of their maximum of territory, was followed, after no very long interval, by symptoms of decline.² It will hereafter be seen that at the period of the conspiracy of Kinadôn (395 B.C.), the full citizens (called Homoioi or Peers) were considerably inferior in number to the Hypomeiones, or Spartans who could no longer furnish their qualification, and had become disfranchised. And the loss thus sustained was very imperfectly repaired by the admitted practice sometimes resorted to by rich men, of associating with their own children the children of poorer citizens, and paying the contribution of these latter to the public tables, so as to enable them to go through the prescribed course of education and discipline—whereby they became (under the title or sobriquet of Mothâkes³) citizens, with a certain taint of inferiority, yet were sometimes appointed to honourable commands.

Gradual conquest of Laconia, the result of the new force imparted by the Lykurgean discipline.

¹ Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 12.

² Aristot. Polit. ii. 6, 22. Τοιγαροῦν ἐσώζοντο πολεμοῦντες, ἀπώλοντο δὲ ἄρξαντες, &c. Compare also

vii. 13, 15.

³ Plutarch, Kleomen. c. 8; Phylarch. ap. Athenæ. vi. p. 271.

The strangers called Τρόφιμοι,

Laconia, the state and territory of the Lacedæmonians, was affirmed at the time of its greatest extension to have comprehended 100 cities¹—this after the conquest of Messenia, so that it would include all the southern portion of Peloponnesus, from Thyrea on the Argolic Gulf to the southern bank of the river Nedon in its course into the Ionian Sea. But Laconia, more strictly so called, was distinguished from Messenia, and was understood to desig-

and the illegitimate sons of Spartans, whom Xenophon mentions with eulogy, as "having partaken in the honourable training of the city," must probably have been introduced in this same way, by private support from the rich (Xenoph. Hellen. v. 3, 9). The *xenêlasy* must have then become practically much relaxed, if not extinct.

¹ Strabo, viii. p. 362; Steph. Byz. *Αἰθια*.

Construing the word *πόλεις* extensively, so as to include townships small as well as considerable, this estimate is probably inferior to the truth; since even during the depressed times of modern Greece a fraction of the ancient Laconia (including in that term Messenia) exhibited much more than 100 *bourgs*.

In reference merely to the territory called Maina, between Calamata in the Messenian Gulf and Capo di Magna, the western part of the peninsula of Tænarus, see a curious letter addressed to the Duc de Nevers in 1618 (on occasion of a projected movement to liberate the Morea from the Turks, and to assure to him the sovereignty of it, as descendant of the Palæologi) by a confidential agent whom he despatched thither—M. Chateaurenaud—who sends to him "une sorte de tableau statistique du Magne, où sont énumérés 125 bourgs ou villages renfermans 4913 feux, et pouvans fournir 10,000

combattans, dont 4000 armés, et 6000 sans armes (between Calamata and Capo di Magna)." (Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions, tom. xv. 1842, p. 329. Mémoire de M. Berger de Xivrey.)

This estimate is not far removed from that of Colonel Leake towards the beginning of the present century, who considers that there were then in Mani (the same territory) 130 towns and villages; and this too in a state of society exceedingly disturbed and insecure—where private feuds and private towers (or *pyrghi*) for defence were universal, and in parts of which, Colonel Leake says, "I see men preparing the ground for cotton, with a dagger and pistols at their girdles. This, it seems, is the ordinary armour of the cultivator when there is no particular suspicion of danger; the shepherd is almost always armed with a musket." . . . "The Maniotes reckon their population at 30,000, and their muskets at 10,000." (Leake, Travels in Morea, vol. i. ch. vii. pp. 243, 263-266.)

Now under the dominion of Sparta all Laconia doubtless enjoyed complete internal security, so that the idea of the cultivator tilling his land in arms would be unheard of. Reasoning upon the basis of what has just been stated about the Maniote population and number of townships, 100 *πόλεις* for all Laconia is a very moderate computation.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



that the Spartans conquered Helus, a maritime town on the left bank of the Eurotas, and reduced its inhabitants to bondage—from whose name,¹ according to various authors, the general title *Helots*, belonging to all the serfs of Laconia, was derived. But of the conquest of the other towns of Laconia—Gythium, Akriæ, Therapnæ, &c.—or of the eastern land on the coast of the Argolic Gulf, including Brasiaæ and Epidaurus Limêra, or the island of

belonged to the Argeian confederacy, we have no accounts. Scanty as our information is, it just enables us to make out a progressive increase of the organisation of Lykurgus. Of this progress a farther manifestation is found, besides the conquest of the Achæans in the south by Têleklus and Alkamenês, in their successful opposition to the great power of Pheidôn the Argeian, related in a previous chapter. We now approach the long and arduous efforts by which they accomplished the subjugation of their brethren the Messenian Dorians.

¹ Pausan. iii. 2, 7; iii. 20, 6. Strabo, viii. p. 363.

If it be true (as Pausanias states) that the Argeians aided Helus to resist, their assistance must pro-

bably have been given by sea; perhaps from Epidaurus Limêra, or Prasiaæ, when these towns formed part of the Argeian federation,

CHAPTER VII.

FIRST AND SECOND MESSENIAN WARS.

THAT there were two long contests between the Lacedæmonians and Messenians, and that, in both, the former were completely victorious, is a fact sufficiently attested. And if we could trust the statements in Pausanias—our chief and almost only authority on the subject—we should be in a situation to recount the history of both these wars in considerable detail. But unfortunately the incidents narrated in that writer have been gathered from sources which are, even by his own admission, undeserving of credit—from Rhianus, the poet of Bêné in Krête, who had composed an epic poem on Aristomenês and the second Messenian war, about B.C. 220—and from Myrôn of Priênê, a prose author whose date is not exactly known, but belonging to the Alexandrine age, and not earlier than the third century before the Christian æra. From Rhianus we have no right to expect trustworthy information, while the accuracy of Myrôn is much depreciated by Pausanias himself—on some points even too much, as will presently be shown. But apart from the mental habits either of the prose writer or the poet, it does not seem that any good means of knowledge were open to either of them, except the poems of Tyrtæus, which we are by no means sure that they ever consulted. The account of the two wars, extracted from these two authors by Pausanias, is a string of *tableaux*, several of them indeed highly poetical, but destitute of historical coherence or sufficiency; and O. Müller has justly observed, that “absolutely no reason is given in them for the subjection of Messenia.”¹ They

Authorities for the history of the Messenian wars.

¹ History of the Dorians, i. 7, 10 (note). It seems that Diodorus had given a history of the Messenian wars in considerable detail, if we may judge from a fragment of the last seventh book, containing the debate between Kleonnis and Aristomenês. Very probably it was

taken from Ephorus—though this we do not know.

For the statements of Pausanias respecting Myrôn and Rhianus, see iv. 6. Besides Myrôn and Rhianus, however, he seems to have received oral statements from contemporary Messenians and Lacedæmonians; at

are accounts unworthy of being transcribed in detail into the pages of general history, nor can we pretend to do anything more than verify a few leading facts of the war.

The poet Tyrtæus was himself engaged on the side of the Spartans in the second war, and it is from him that we learn the few indisputable facts respecting both the first and the second. If the Messenians had never been re-established in Peloponnesus, we should probably never have heard any farther details respecting these early contests. That re-establishment, together with the first foundation of the city called Messênê on Mount Ithômê, was among the capital wounds inflicted on Sparta by Epaminôndas, in the year B.C. 369—between 300 and 250 years after the conclusion of the second Messenian war. The descendants of the old Messenians, who had remained for so long a period without any fixed position in Greece, were incorporated in the new city, together with various Helots and miscellaneous settlers who had no claim to a similar genealogy. The gods and heroes of the Messenian race were reverentially invoked at this great ceremony, especially the great hero Aristomenês;¹ and the sight of Mount Ithômê, the ardour of the newly established citizens, the hatred and apprehension of Sparta, operating as a powerful stimulus to the creation and multiplication of what are called *traditions*, sufficed to expand the few facts known respecting the struggles of the old Messenians into a variety of details. In almost all these stories we discover a colouring unfavourable to Sparta, contrasting forcibly with the account given by Isokratês in his Discourse called Archidamus, wherein we read the view which a Spartan might take of the ancient conquests of his forefathers. But a clear proof that these Messenian stories had no real basis of tradition, is shown in the contradictory statements respecting the principal hero Aristomenês; for some place him in the first, others in the second, of the two wars. Diodôrus and Myrôn both placed him in the first; Rhianus in the second. Though Pausanias gives it as his opinion that the account of the latter is preferable, and that Aristomenês really belongs to the second Messenian war, it

least on some occasions he states and contrasts the two contradictory stories (iv. 4, 4; iv. 5, 1).

¹ Pausan. iv. 27, 2—3; Diodor. xv. 77.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ing during the second war), “the fathers of our fathers conquered Messênê;” thus loosely indicating the relative dates of the two.

The Spartans (as we learn from Isokratês, whose words date from a time when the city of Messênê was only a recent foundation) professed to have seized the territory, partly in revenge for the impiety of the Messenians in killing their own king the Herakleid Kresphontês, whose relative had appealed to Sparta for aid—partly by sentence of the Delphian oracle. Such were the causes which had induced them first to invade the country, and they had conquered it after a struggle of twenty years.¹ The Lacedæmonian explanations, as given in Pausanias, seem for the most part to be counter-statements arranged after the time when the Messenian version, evidently the interesting and popular account, had become circulated.

Causes alleged by the Spartans.

It has already been stated that the Lacedæmonians and Messenians had a joint border temple and sacrifice in honour of Artemis Limnatis, dating from the earliest times of their establishment in Peloponnesus. The site of this temple near the upper course of the river Nedon, in the mountainous territory north-east of Kalamata, but west of the highest ridge of Taygetus, has recently been exactly verified—and it seems in these early days to have belonged to Sparta. That the quarrel began at one of these border sacrifices was the statement of both parties, Lacedæmonians and Messenians. According to the latter, the Lacedæmonian king Têleklus laid a snare for the Messenians, by dressing up some youthful Spartans as virgins and giving them daggers; whereupon a contest ensued, in which the Spartans were worsted and Têleklus slain. That Têleklus was slain at the temple by the Messenians, was also the account of the Spartans—but they affirmed that he was

(Theopompus), Μεσσήνην εἰλομεν εὐρύχορον.

For we surely might be authorised in saying—“It was through Epaminôndas that the Spartans were conquered and humbled: or it was through Lord Nelson that the French fleet was destroyed in the last war,” though both of them perished in the accomplishment.

Tyrtæus therefore does not contradict the assertion, that Theopompus was slain by Aristomenês, nor can he be cited as a witness to prove that Aristomenês did not live during the *first* Messenian war: which is the purpose for which Pausanias quotes him (iv. 6).

¹ Isokratês (Archidamus), Or. vi. p. 121–122.

slain in attempting to defend some young Lacedæmonian maidens, who were sacrificing at the temple, against outrageous violence from the Messenian youth.¹ In spite of the death of this king, however, the war did not actually break out until some little time after, when Alkamenês and Theopompus were kings at Sparta, and Antiochus and Androklês, sons of Phintas, kings of Mes-

Spartan king Tê-leklus slain by the Messenians at the temple of Artemis Limnatis.

senia. The immediate cause of it was, a private altercation between the Messenian Polycharês (victor at the fourth Olympiad, B.C. 764) and the Spartan Euæphnus. Polycharês, having been grossly injured by Euæphnus, and his claim for redress having been rejected at Sparta, took revenge by aggressions upon other Lacedæmonians. The Messenians

¹ Strabo (vi. p. 257) gives a similar account of the sacrilege and murderous conduct of the Messenian youth at the temple of Artemis Limnatis. His version, substantially agreeing with that of the Lacedæmonians, seems to be borrowed from Antiochus, the contemporary of Thucydidês, and is therefore earlier than the foundation of Messênê by Epaminôndas, from which event the philo-Messeniau statements take their rise. Antiochus, writing during the plenitude of Lacedæmonian power, would naturally look upon the Messenians as irretrievably prostrate, and the impiety here narrated would in his mind be the natural cause why the divine judgments overtook them. Ephorus gives a similar account (ap. Strabo. vi. p. 280).

Compare Herakleidês Fonticus (ad calcem Cragii De Rep. Laced. p. 528) and Justin, iii. 4.

The possession of this temple of Artemis Limnatis—and of the Ager Dentheliatas, the district in which it was situated—was a subject of constant dispute between the Lacedæmonians and Messenians after the foundation of the city of Messênê, even down to the time

of the Roman emperor Tiberius (Tacit. Annal. iv. 43). See Stephan. Byz. v. Δεθαύριοι; Pausan. iii. 2, 6; iv. 4, 2; iv. 31, 3. Strabo. viii. p. 362.

For the situation of the temple of Artemis Limnatis, and the description of the Ager Dentheliatas, see Professor Ross, *Reisen im Peloponnes*, i. p. 5—11. He discovered two boundary-stones with inscriptions, dating from the time of the early Roman emperors, marking the confines of Lacedæmon and Messênê; both on the line of the highest ridge of Taygetus, where the waters separate east and west, and considerably to the eastward of the temple of Artemis Limnatis, so that at that time the Ager Dentheliatas was considered a part of Messenia.

I now find that Colonel Leake (*Peloponnesiaca*, p. 181) regards these Inscriptions discovered by Professor Ross as not proving that the temple of Artemis Limnatis was situated near the spot where they were found. His authority weighs much with me on such a point, though the arguments which he here employs do not seem to me conclusive.

refused to give him up; though one of the two kings, An-
 First Mes- droklês, strongly insisted upon doing so, and
 senian war. maintained his opinion so earnestly against the
 opposite sense of the majority and of his brother Antiochus,
 that a tumult arose, and he was slain. The Lacedæmonians,
 now resolving upon war, struck the first blow without any
 formal declaration, by surprising the border town of
 Ampheia, and putting its defenders to the sword. They
 farther overran the Messenian territory, and attacked some
 other towns, but without success. Euphaês, who had now
 succeeded his father Antiochus as king of Messenia, sum-
 moned the forces of the country and carried on the war
 against them with energy and boldness. For the first four
 years of the war the Lacedæmonians made no progress, and
 even incurred the ridicule of the old men of their nation
 as faint-hearted warriors. In the fifth year, however, they
 undertook a more vigorous invasion, under their two kings,
 Theopompus and Polydôrus, who were met by Euphaês
 with the full force of the Messenians. A desperate battle
 ensued, in which it does not seem that either side gained
 much advantage: nevertheless the Messenians found them-
 selves so much enfeebled by it, that they were forced to
 take refuge on the fortified mountain of Ithômê, abandoning
 the rest of the country. In their distress they sent to
 Messenian solicit counsel and protection from Delphi, but
 kings Eu- their messenger brought back the appalling
 phaês and answer that a virgin of the royal race of Æpytus
 Aristodê- must be sacrificed for their salvation. At the
 mus. tragic scene which ensues, Aristodêmus puts to death his
 own daughter, yet without satisfying the exigences of the
 oracle. The war still continued, and in the thirteenth year
 of it another hard-fought battle took place, in which the
 brave Euphaês was slain, but the result was again indecisive.
 Aristodêmus, being elected king in his place, prosecuted
 the war strenuously. The fifth year of his reign is signa-
 lised by a third general battle, wherein the Corinthians assist
 the Spartans, and the Arcadians and Sikyonians are on the
 side of Messenia; the victory is here decisive on the side
 of Aristodêmus, and the Lacedæmonians are driven back
 into their own territory.¹ It was now their turn to send

¹ It is perhaps to this occasion that the story of the Epeunakti in Theopompus referred (ap. Athe- næ. vi. p. 271),—Helots adopted into the sleeping-place of their masters who had been slain in the



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Had we possessed the account of the first Messenian war as given by Myrôn and Diodôrus, it would evidently have been very different from the above, because they included Aristomenês in it, and to him the leading parts would be assigned. As the narrative now stands in Pausanias, we are not introduced to that great Messenian hero—the Achilles of the epic of Rhianus¹—until the second war, in which his gigantic proportions stand prominently forward. He is the great champion of his country in the three battles which are represented as taking place during this war: the first, with indecisive result, at Deræ; the second, a signal victory on the part of the Messenians, at the Boar's Grave; the third, an equally signal defeat, in consequence of the traitorous flight of Aristokratês king of the Arcadian Orchomenus, who, ostensibly embracing the alliance of the Messenians, had received bribes from Sparta. Thrice did Aristomenês sacrifice to Zeus Ithomatês the sacrifice called Hekatomphonia,² reserved for those who had slain with their own hands 100 enemies in battle. At the head of a chosen band he carried his incursions more than once into the heart of the Lacedæmonian territory, surprised Amyklæ and Pharis, and even penetrated by night into the unfortified precinct of Sparta itself, where he suspended his shield as a token of defiance in the temple of Athênê Chalkiœkus. Thrice was he taken prisoner, but on two occasions marvellously escaped before he could be conveyed to Sparta: the third occasion was more fatal, and he was cast by order of the Spartans into the Keadas, a deep rocky cavity in Mount Taygetus into which it was their habit to precipitate criminals. But even in this emergency the divine aid³ was not withheld from him. While the fifty Messenians who shared his punishment were all killed by the shock, he alone was both supported by the gods so as to reach the bottom unhurt, and enabled to find an unexpected means of escape. For when, abandoning all hope, he had wrapped himself up in his cloak to die, he per-

Revolt of the Messenians against Sparta—second Messenian war—Aristomenês.

His chivalrous exploits and narrow escapes—end of the second war—the Messenians again conquered.

¹ This is the express comparison introduced by Pausanias, iv. 5, 2.

² Plutarch, Sept. Sapient. Convivium, p. 159.

³ Pausan. iv. 18, 4. 'Αριστομένην δὲ ἔς τε τὰ ἄλλα θεῶν τις, καὶ δὴ καὶ τότε ἐφύλασσε.

Plutarch (De Herodot. Maligni-

ceived a fox creeping about among the dead bodies: waiting until the animal approached him, he grasped its tail, defending himself from its bites as well as he could by means of his cloak; and being thus enabled to find the aperture by which the fox had entered, enlarged it sufficiently for crawling out himself. To the surprise both of friends and enemies he again appeared alive and vigorous at Eira. That fortified mountain, on the banks of the river Nedon, and near the Ionian sea, had been occupied by the Messenians after the battle in which they had been betrayed by Aristokratês the Arcadian; it was there that they had concentrated their whole force, as in the former war at Ithômê, abandoning the rest of the country. Under the conduct of Aristomenês, assisted by the prophet Theoklus, they maintained this strong position for eleven years. At length they were compelled to abandon it. Yet as in the case of Ithômê, the final determining circumstances are represented to have been, not any superiority of bravery or organization on the part of the Lacedæmonians, but treacherous betrayal and stratagem, seconding the fatal decree of the gods. Unable to maintain Eira longer, Aristomenês, with his sons and a body of his countrymen, forced his way through the assailants and quitted the country—some of them retiring to Arcadia and Elis, and finally migrating to Rhegium. He himself passed the remainder of his days in Rhodes, where he dwelt along with his son-in-law Damagêtus, the ancestor of the noble Rhodian family called the Diagorids, celebrated for its numerous Olympic victories.

Such are the main features of what Pausanias calls¹ the second Messenian war, or of what ought rather to be called the Aristomeneis of the poet Rhianus. That after the foundation of Messênê, and the recall of the exiles by Epaminondas, favour and credence was found for many tales respecting the prowess of the ancient hero whom they invoked² in their libations—tales well cal-

Narrative of Pausanias, borrowed from the poet Rhianus, is undeserving of credit.

tat. p. 856) states that Herodotus had mentioned Aristomenês as having been made prisoner by the Lacedæmonians: but Plutarch must here have been deceived by his memory, for Herodotus does not mention Aristomenês.

15-24.

According to an incidental notice in Herodotus, the Samians affirmed that they had aided Lacedæmon in war against Messênê,—at what period we do not know (Herodot. iii. 56).

¹ The narrative in Pausanias, iv.

² Τοὺς δὲ Μεσσηνίου οἶδα αὐτὸς

culated to interest the fancy, to vivify the patriotism, and to inflame the anti-Spartan antipathies, of the new inhabitants—there can be little doubt. And the Messenian maidens of that day may well have sung in their public processional sacrifices,¹ how “Aristomenês pursued the flying Lacedæmonians down to the mid-plain of Stenyklêrus and up to the very summit of the mountain.” From such stories (*traditions* they ought not to be denominated) Rhianus may doubtless have borrowed; but if proof were wanting to show how completely he looked at his materials from the point of view of the poet and not from that of the historian, we should find it in the remarkable fact noticed by Pausanias. Rhianus represented Leotychides as having been king of Sparta during the second Messenian war: now Leotychides (as Pausanias observes) did not reign until near a century and a half afterwards, during the Persian invasion.²

To the great champion of Messenia, during this war, we may oppose on the side of Sparta another remarkable person, less striking as a character of romance, but more interesting in many ways to the historian—I mean the poet Tyrtaeus, a native of Aphidnæ in Attica, an inestimable ally of the Lacedæmonians during most part of this second struggle. According to a story—which however has the air partly of a boast of the later Attic

ἐπὶ ταῖς σπονδαῖς Ἀριστομένην Νικομήδους καλοῦντας (Pausan. ii. 14, 5). The practice still continued in his time.

Compare also Pausan. iv. 27, 3; iv. 32, 3-4.

¹ Pausanias heard the song himself (iv. 16, 4)—Ἐπέλεγον ἄσμα τὸ καὶ ἐς ἡμᾶς ἔτι ἀδόμενον:

Ἐς τε μέσον πεδῖον Στενυκλήριον
 ἔς τ' ὄρος ἄχρον
 Εἶπετ' Ἀριστομένης τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις.

According to one story, the Lacedæmonians were said to have got possession of the person of Aristomenês and killed him: they found in him a hairy heart (Steph. Byz. v. Ἀνδανία).

² Pausan. iv. 15, 1.

Perhaps Leotychides was king during the last revolt of the Helots or Messenians in 464 B.C., which is called the third Messenian war. He seems to have been then in exile, in consequence of his venality during the Thessalian expedition—but not yet dead (Herodot. vi. 72). Of the reality of what Mr. Clinton calls the *third* Messenian war in 490 B.C., I see no adequate proof (see Fast. Hell. vol. i. p. 257).

The poem of Rhianus was entitled Μεσσηνιακά. He also composed Θεσσαλικά, Ἡλιακά, Ἀγαῖκά. See the fragments—they are very few—in Düntzer's Collection, p. 67-77.

He seems to have mentioned Nikoteleia, the mother of Aristo-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



undiminished popularity among the Spartans,¹ contributed much to determine the ultimate issue of this war, there is no reason to doubt; nor is his name the only one to attest the susceptibility of the Spartan mind in that day towards music and poetry. The first establishment of the Karneian festival with its musical competition at Sparta, falls during the period assigned by Pausanias to the second Messenian war: the Lesbian harper Terpander, who gained the first recorded prize at this solemnity, is affirmed to have been sent for by the Spartans pursuant to a mandate from the Delphian oracle, and to have been the means of appeasing a sedition. In like manner, the Kretan Thalêtas was invited thither during a pestilence, which his art (as it is pretended) contributed to heal (about 620 B.C.); and Alkman, Xenokritus, Polymnastus, and Sakadas, all foreigners by birth, found favourable reception, and acquired popularity by their music and poetry. With the exception of Sakadas, who is a little later, all these names fall in the same century as Tyrtæus, between 660 B.C.—610 B.C. The fashion which the Spartan music continued for a long time to maintain, is ascribed chiefly to the genius of Terpander.²

The training in which a Spartan passed his life consisted of exercises warlike, social, and religious, blended together. While the individual, strengthened by gymnastics, went through his painful lessons of fatigue, endurance and aggression—the citizens collectively were kept in the constant habit of simultaneous and regulated movement in the warlike march, in the religious dance, and in the social procession. Music and song, being constantly employed to direct the measure and keep alive the spirit³ of these multitudinous movements, became associated with the most powerful feelings which the habitual self-suppression of a Spartan permitted to arise, and especially with those sympathies which are communicated at once to an assembled crowd. Indeed the musician and the minstrel were the only persons who ever addressed themselves to the feelings of a Lacedæmonian assembly. Moreover the simple music of that early day, though destitute of artistical merit and superseded afterwards by more complicated combi-

¹ Philochorus, Frag. 56, ed. Didot; 1134, 1142, 1146.

Lycurgus cont. Leocrat. p. 163.

³ Thucyd. v. 69; Xenoph. Rep.

² See Plutarch, De Musicâ, pp.

Laced. c. 13.

nations, had nevertheless a pronounced ethical character. It wrought much more powerfully on the impulses and resolutions of the hearers, though it tickled the ear less gratefully, than the scientific compositions of afterdays. Farther, each particular style of music had its own appropriate mental effect—the Phrygian mode imparted a wild and maddening stimulus; the Dorian mode created a settled and deliberate resolution, exempt alike from the desponding and from the impetuous sentiments.¹ What is called the Dorian mode, seems to be in reality the old native Greek mode as contradistinguished from the Phrygian and Lydian—these being the three primitive modes, subdivided and combined only in later times, with which the first Grecian musicians became conversant. It probably acquired its title of Dorian from the musical celebrity of Sparta and Argos, during the seventh and sixth centuries before the Christian æra; but it belonged as much to the Arcadians and Achæans as to the Spartans and Argeians. And the marked ethical effects, produced both by the Dorian and the Phrygian modes in ancient times, are facts perfectly well-attested, however difficult they may be to explain upon any general theory of music.

Powerful
ethical
effect of
the old
Grecian
music.

That the impression produced by Tyrtæus at Sparta, therefore, with his martial music, and emphatic exhortations to bravery in the field, as well as union at home, should have been very considerable, is perfectly consistent with the character both of the age and of the people; especially as he is represented to have appeared pursuant to the injunction of the Delphian oracle. From the scanty fragments remaining to us of his elegies and anapæsts, however, we can satisfy ourselves only of two facts: first, that the war was long, obstinately contested, and dangerous to Sparta as well as to the Messenians; next, that other parties in Peloponnesus took part on both sides, especially on the side of the Messenians. So frequent and harassing were the aggressions of the latter upon the Spartan territory, that a large portion of the border land was left uncultivated: scarcity ensued, and the proprietors of the deserted farms, driven to despair, pressed for a redivision of the

Sufferings
of the
Spartans
in the
second
Messenian
war.

¹ See the treatise of Plutarch, De Musicâ, passim, especially c. 17, p. 1136, &c.; 33. p. 1143. Plato, Rep. iii. p. 399; Arist. Pol. viii. 6, 5-8.

landed property in the state. It was in appeasing these discontents that the poem of Tyrtæus called *Eunomia*, "Legal order," was found signally beneficial.¹ It seems certain that a considerable portion of the Arcadians, together with the Pisatæ and the Triphylians, took part with the Messenians; there are also some statements numbering the Eleians among their allies, but this appears not probable. The state of the case rather seems to have been, that the old quarrel between the Eleians and the Pisatæ respecting the right to preside at the Olympic games, which had already burst forth during the preceding century in the reign of the Argeian Pheidôn, still continued. Unwilling dependents of Elis, the Pisatæ and Triphylians took part with the subject Messenians, while the masters at Elis and Sparta made common cause, as they had before done against Pheidôn.² Pantaleôn king of Pisa, revolting from Elis, acted as commander of his countrymen in co-operation with the Messenians; and he is farther noted for having, at the period of the 34th Olympiad (644 B.C.), marched a body of troops to Olympia, and thus dispossessed the Eleians, on that occasion, of the presidency: that particular festival—as well as the 8th Olympiad, in which Pheidôn interfered, —and the 104th Olympiad, in which the Arcadians marched in,—were always marked on the Eleian register as non-Olympiads, or informal celebrations. We may reasonably connect this temporary triumph of the Pisatans with the Messenian war, inasmuch as they were no match for the Eleians single-handed, while the fraternity of Sparta with Elis is in perfect harmony with the scheme of Peloponnesian politics which we have observed as prevalent even before and during the days of Pheidôn.³ The second Mes-

The excellent treatise *De Metris Pindari*, prefixed by M. Boeckh to his edition of Pindar, is full of instruction upon this as well as upon all other points connected with the Grecian music (see lib. iii. c. 8. p. 238).

¹ Aristot. *Polit.* v. 7, 1; Pausan. iv. 18, 2.

² Pausan. vi. 12, 2; Strabo, viii. p. 355, where the *Νέστορος ἀπόγονοι* mean the Pylians of Triphylia.

³ Respecting the position of the Eleians and Pisatæ during the second Messenian war, there is confusion in the different statements: as they cannot all be reconciled, we are compelled to make a choice.

That the Eleians were allies of Sparta, and the Pisatans of Messenia—also that the contests of Sparta and Messenia were mixed up with those of Elis and Pisa about the agonothesia of the Olym-



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



of the first, and lasting, according to Pausanias, seventeen years; according to Plutarch, more than twenty years.¹

Many of the Messenians who abandoned their country after this second conquest are said to have found shelter and sympathy among the Arcadians, who admitted them to a new home and gave them their daughters in marriage; and who moreover punished severely king of Orchomenus, in abandoning the Messenians at the battle of the Trench. That per-

Punish-
ment of
the traitor
Aristokra-
tês, king
of the Ar-
cadian
Orcho-
menus.

different, and I imagine him to have been misled by an erroneous authority. See Mr. Clinton, F. H. ad ann. 660 B.C. to 580 B.C.

¹ Plutarch, De Serâ Num. Vind. p. 548; Pausan. iv. 15, 1; iv. 17, 3; iv. 23, 2.

The date of the second Messenian war, and the interval between the second and the first, are points respecting which also there is irreconcilable discrepancy of statement: we can only choose the most probable: see the passages collected and canvassed in O. Müller (Dorians, i. 7, 11, and in Mr. Clinton, Fast. Hellen. vol. i. Appendix 2. p. 257).

According to Pausanias, the second war lasted from B.C. 685—668, and there was an interval between the first and the second war of 39 years. Justin (iii. 5) reckons an interval of eighty years; Eusebius an interval of ninety years. The main evidence is the passage of Tyrtaeus, wherein that poet, speaking during the second war, says, "The fathers of our fathers conquered Messênê."

Mr. Clinton adheres very nearly to the view of Pausanias; he supposes that the real date is only six years lower (679—662). But I agree with Clavier (Histoire des Premiers Temps de la Grèce, t. ii. p. 233) and O. Müller (l. c.) in thinking that an interval of thirty-

nine years is too short to suit the phrase of *our fathers' fathers*. Speaking in the present year (1846), it would not be held proper to say, "The fathers of our fathers carried on the war between 1793 and the peace of Amiens;" we should rather say, "The fathers of our fathers carried on the American war and the Seven Years' war." An age is *marked* by its mature and even elderly members—by those between thirty-five and fifty-five years of age.

Agreeing as I do here with O. Müller, against Mr. Clinton, I also agree with him in thinking that the best mark which we possess of the date of the second Messenian war is the statement respecting Pantaleôn: the 34th Olympiad, which Pantaleôn celebrated, probably fell within the time of the war; which would thus be brought down much later than the time assigned by Pausanias, yet not so far down as that named by Eusebius and Justin: the exact year of its commencement, however, we have no means of fixing.

Krebs, in his discussions on the Fragments of the lost Books of Diodorus, thinks that that historian placed the beginning of the second Messenian war in the 35th Olympiad (B.C. 640) (Krebs, *Lectiones Diodoreæ*, p. 254—260).

fidious leader was put to death and his race dethroned, while the crime as well as the punishment was farther commemorated by an inscription, which was to be seen near the altar of Zeus Lykæus in Arcadia. The inscription doubtless existed in the days of Kallisthenês, in the generation after the restoration of Messênê. But whether it had any existence prior to that event, or what degree of truth there may be in the story about Aristokratês, we are unable to determine:¹ the son of Aristokratês, named Aristodêmus, is alleged in another authority to have reigned afterwards at Orchomenus.² That which stands strongly marked is, the sympathy of Arcadians and Messenians against Sparta—a sentiment which was in its full vigour at the time of the restoration of Messênê.

The second Messenian war was thus terminated by the complete subjugation of the Messenians. Such Spartans of them as remained in the country were reduced to a servitude probably not less hard than that which Tyrtæus described them as having endured between the first war and the second. In after-times, the whole territory which figures on the map as Messenia,—south of the river Nedon, and westward of the summit of Taygetus,—appears as subject to Sparta, and as forming the western portion of Laconia; distributed (in what proportion we know not) between Pericæic towns and Helot villages. By what steps, or after what degree of farther resistance, the Spartans conquered this country we have no information; but we are told that they made over Asinê to the expelled Dryopes from the Argolic peninsula, and Mothônê to the fugitives from Nauplia.³ Nor do we hear of any serious revolt from Sparta in this territory until 150 years afterwards,⁴ subsequent to the Persian invasion,—a revolt which Sparta, after serious efforts, succeeded in crushing, so that the territory

¹ Diodor. xv. 66; Polyb. iv. 33, who quotes Kallisthenês; Paus. viii. 5, 8. Neither the inscription, as cited by Polybius, nor the allusion in Plutarch (*De Serâ Numin. Vindictâ*, p. 548), appears to fit the narrative of Pausanias, for both of them imply secret and long-concealed treason, tardily brought to light by the inter-

position of the gods; whereas Pausanias describes the treason of Aristokratês at the battle of the Trench as palpable and flagrant.

² Herakleid. Pontic. ap. Diog. Laërt. i. 94.

³ Pausan. iv. 24, 2; iv. 34, 6; iv. 35, 2.

⁴ Thucyd. i. 101.

remained in her power until her defeat at Leuktra, which led to the foundation of Messênê by Epaminondas. The fertility of the plains—especially of the central portion near the river Pamisus, so much extolled by observers, modern as well as ancient—rendered it an acquisition highly valuable. At some time or other, it must of course have been formally partitioned among the Spartans, but it is probable that different and successive allotments were made, according as the various portions of territory, both to the east and to the west of Taygetus, were conquered. Of all this we have no information.¹

Imperfectly as these two Messenian wars are known to us, we may see enough to warrant us in making two re-
 marks. Both were tedious, protracted, and painful, showing how slowly the results of war were then gathered, and adding one additional illustration to prove how much the rapid and instantaneous conquest of Laconia and Messenia by the Dorians, which the Herakleid legend sets forth, is contradicted by historical analogy. Both were characterised by a similar defensive proceeding on the part of the Messenians—the occupation of a mountain difficult of access, and the fortification of it for the special purpose and resistance—Ithômê (which is said to have had already a small town upon it) in the first war, Eira in the second. It is reasonable to infer from hence that neither their principal town Stenyklêrus, nor any other town in their country, was strongly fortified so as to be calculated to stand a siege; that there were no walled towns among them analogous to Mykenæ and Tiryns on the eastern portion of Peloponnesus: and that perhaps what were called towns were, like Sparta itself, clusters of unfortified villages. The subsequent state
 y
 with this dispersed village residence during their period of freedom.

¹ Pausanias says, τὴν μὲν ἄλλην Μεσσηνιακὴν, πλὴν τῆς Ἀσιναιῶν, αὐτοὶ διελάγχανον, &c. (iv. 24, 2).

In an apophthegm ascribed to King Polydorus, leader of the Spartans during the first Messenian war, he is asked, whether he is

really taking arms against his brethren, to which he replies, "No; I am only marching to the unallotted portion of the territory." (Plutarch, Apophthegm. Laconic. p. 231.)—ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκλήρωτον χώραν.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



ponnesian war, the political interests of Lacedæmon had become considerably changed, and it was to her advantage to maintain the independence of the subordinate states against the superior: accordingly, we find her at that time upholding the autonomy of Lepreum. From what cause the devastation of the Triphylian towns by Elis which Herodotus mentions as having happened in his time, arose, we do not know; the fact seems to indicate a continual yearning for their original independence, which was still commemorated, down to a much later period, by the ancient Amphiktyony at Samikum in Triphylia in honour of Poseidôn—a common religious festival frequented by all the Triphylian towns and celebrated by the inhabitants of Makistus, who sent round proclamation of a formal truce for the holy period.¹ The Lacedæmonians, after the close of the Peloponnesian war had left them undisputed heads of Greece, formally upheld the independence of the Triphylian towns against Elis, and seem to have countenanced their endeavours to attach themselves to the Arcadian aggregate, which however was never fully accomplished. Their dependence on Elis became loose and uncertain, but was never wholly shaken off.²

see Stephan. Byz. v. Δυσπόντιον, which shows that the inhabitants of the Pisatid cannot have rendered themselves independent of Elis in the 26th Olympiad, as Strabo alleges (viii. p. 365.)

¹ Herodot. iv. 149; Strabo, viii. p. 343.

² Diodor. xiv. 17; xv. 77; Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 2, 23, 26.

It was about this period probably that the idea of the local eponymus, Triphylus, son of Arka, was first introduced (Polyb. iv. 77).

CHAPTER VIII.

CONQUESTS OF SPARTA TOWARDS ARCADIA AND ARGOLIS.

I HAVE described in the last two chapters, as far as our imperfect evidence permits, how Sparta came into possession both of the southern portion of Laconia along the course of the Eurotas down to its mouth, and of the Messenian territory westward. Her progress towards Arcadia and Argolis is now to be sketched, so as to conduct her to that position which she occupied during the reign of Peisistratus at Athens, or about 560-540 B.C.,—a time when she had reached the maximum of her territorial possessions, and when she was confessedly the commanding state in Hellas.

The central region of Peloponnesus, called Arcadia, had never received any immigrants from without. Its indigenous inhabitants—a strong and hardy race of mountaineers, the most numerous Hellenic tribe in the peninsula, and the constant hive for mercenary troops¹—were among the rudest and poorest of Greeks, retaining for the longest period their original subdivision into a number of petty hill-villages, each independent of the other; while the union of all who bore the Arcadian name (though they had some common sacrifices, such as the festival of the Lykæan Zeus, of Despoina, daughter of Poseidôn and Dêmêtêr, and of Artemis Hymnia²) was more loose and ineffective than that of Greeks generally,

¹ Hermippus ap. Athenæ. i. p. 27. 'Ανδράποδ' ἐκ Φρυγίας, ἀπὸ δ' Ἀρκαδίας ἐπικούρους. Also Xenoph. Hellen. vii. 1, 23. πλεῖστον δὲ φύλον τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν τὸ Ἀρκαδικὸν εἶη, &c.

² Pausan. viii. 6, 7; viii. 37, 6; viii. 38, 2. Xenias, one of the generals of Greek mercenaries in the service of Cyrus the younger, a native of the Parrhasian district

in Arcadia, celebrates with great solemnity, during the march upward, the festival and games of the Lykæa (Xenoph. Anabas. i. 2. 10; compare Pindar, Olymp. ix. 142).

Many of the forests in Arcadia contained not only wild boars, but bears, in the days of Pausanias (viii. 23, 4).

either in or out of Peloponnesus. The Arcadian villagers were usually denominated by the names of regions, coincident with certain ethnical subdivisions—the Azānes, the Parrhasii, the Mænalii (adjoining Mount Mænalus), the Eutrēsii, the Ægytæ, the Skiritæ,¹ &c. Some considerable towns however there were—aggregations of villages or demes which had been once autonomous. Of these the principal were Tegea and Mantinea, bordering on Laconia and Argolis—Orchomenus, Pheneus, and Stymphalus, towards the north-east, bordering on Achaia and Phlius—Kleitôr and Heræa, westward, where the country is divided from Elis and Triphylia by the woody mountains of Pholôe and Erymanthus—and Phigaleia, on the south-western border near to Messenia. The most powerful of all were Tegea and Mantinea²—conterminous towns, nearly equal in force, dividing between them the cold and high plain of Tripolitza, and separated by one of those capricious torrents which only escape through katabothra. To regulate the efflux of this water was a difficult task, requiring friendly co-operation of both the towns; and when their frequent jealousies brought on a quarrel, the more aggressive of the two inundated the territory of its neighbour as one means of annoyance. The power of Tegea, which had grown up out of nine constituent townships originally separate,³ appears to have been more ancient than that of its rival; as we may judge from its splendid heroic pretensions connected with the name of Echemus, and from the post conceded to its hoplites in joint Peloponnesian armaments, which was second in distinction only to that of the Lace-

¹ Pausan. viii. 26, 5; Strabo, viii p. 388.

Some geographers distributed the Arcadians into three subdivisions, Azanes, Parrhasii, and Trapezuntii. Azan passed for the son of Arcas, and his lot in the division of the paternal inheritance was said to have contained seventeen towns (ἀς ἑλαχίστην Ἀζάνην). Stephan. Byz. v. Ἀζανία—Παρόρασια. Kleitôr seems the chief place in Azania, as far as we can infer from genealogy (Pausan. viii. 4, 2, 3). Pæus or Pæos, from whence the Azanian suitor of the daughter

of Kleisthenês presented himself, was between Kleitôr and Psôphis (Herod. vi. 127; Paus. viii. 23, 6). A Delphian oracle, however, reckons the inhabitants of Phigaleia, in the southwestern corner of Arcadia, among the Azanes (Paus. viii. 42, 3).

The burial-place of Arcas was supposed to be on Mount Mænalus (Paus. viii. 9, 2).

² Thucyd. v. 65. Compare the description of the ground in Professor Ross (Reisen im Peloponnes, iv. 7).

³ Strabo, viii. p. 337.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Both Tegea and Mantinea held several of these smaller Arcadian townships near them in a sort of dependence, and were anxious to extend this empire over others: during the Peloponnesian war, we find the Mantineians establishing and garrisoning a fortress at Kypsela among the Parhasii, near the site in which Megalopolis was afterwards built.¹ But at this period, Sparta, as the political chief of Hellas—having a strong interest in keeping all the Grecian towns, small and great, as much isolated from each other as possible, and in checking all schemes for the formation of local confederacies—stood forward as the protectress of the autonomy of these smaller Arcadians, and drove back the Mantineians within their own limits.² At a somewhat later period, during the acmé of her power, a few years before the battle of Leuktra, she even proceeded to the extreme length of breaking up the unity of Mantinea itself, causing the walls to be razed, and the inhabitants to be again parcelled into their five original Demes—a violent arrangement which the turn of political events very soon reversed.³ It was not until after the battle of Leuktra and the depression of Sparta that any measures were taken for the formation of an Arcadian political confederacy;⁴ and even then the jealousies of the separate cities rendered it incomplete and short-lived. The great permanent change, the establishment of Megalopolis, was accomplished by the ascendancy of Epaminondas. Forty petty Arcadian townships, among those situated to the west of Mount Mænalus, were aggregated into the new city; the jealousies of Tegea, Mantinea, and Kleitôr, were for a while suspended; and œkists came

Tegea and Mantinea the most powerful Arcadian towns before the building of Megalopolis.

a spirit of contemptuous sneering, proceeding from Xenophon's miso-Theban tendencies: "the Arcadian hoplites with their clubs put themselves forward to be as good as the Thebans." That these tendencies of Xenophon show themselves in expressions very unbecoming to the dignity of history (though curious as evidences of the time) may be seen by vii. 5, 12, where he says of the Thebans—ἐνταῦθα δὴ οἱ πῦρ πνέοντες, οἱ νενικηχότες

τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους, οἱ τῷ παντὶ πλέονες, &c.

¹ Thucyd. v. 83, 47, 81.

² Thucyd. l. c. Compare the instructive speech of Kleigenês, the envoy from Akanthus, addressed to the Lacedæmonians, B.C. 382 (Xen. Hellen. v. 2, 15–16).

³ Xenoph. Hellen. v. 2, 1-6; Diodor. xv. 19.

⁴ Xenoph. Hellen. vi. 5, 10-11; vii. 1, 23-25.

from all of them, as well as from the districts of the Mænalii and Parrhasii, in order to impart to the new establishment a genuine Pan-Arcadian character.¹ It was thus that there arose for the first time a powerful city on the borders of Laconia and Messenia, rescuing the Arcadian townships from their dependence on Sparta, and imparting to them political interests of their own, which rendered them both a check upon their former chief and a support to the re-established Messenians.

It has been necessary thus to bring the attention of the reader for one moment to events long posterior in the order of time (Megalopolis was founded in 370 B.C.), in order that he may understand, by contrast, the general course of those incidents of the earlier time, where direct accounts are wanting. The northern boundary of the Spartan territory was formed by some of the many small Arcadian townships or districts, several of which were successively conquered by the Spartans and incorporated with their dominion, though at what precise time we are unable to say. We are told that Charilaus, the reputed nephew and ward of Lykurgus, took Ægys, and that he also invaded the territory of Tegea, but with singular ill-success, for he was defeated and taken prisoner:² we also hear that the Spartans took Phigaleia by surprise in the 30th Olympiad, but were driven out again by the neighbouring Arcadian Oresthasians.³ During the second Messenian war the Arcadians are represented as cordially seconding the Messenians: and it may seem perhaps singular, that while neither Mantinea nor Tegea are mentioned in this war, the more distant town of Orchomenus, with its king Aristokratês, takes the lead. But the facts of the contest come before us with so poetical a colouring, that we cannot venture to

Encroachments of Sparta up on the southern boundary of Arcadia.

¹ Pausan. viii. 27, 5. No œkist is mentioned from Orchomenus, though three of the petty townships contributing (συντελοῦντα) to Orchomenus were embodied in the new city. The feud between the neighbouring cities of Orchomenus and Mantinea was bitter (Xen. Hellen. vi. 5, 11-22). Orchomenus and Hēræa both opposed the politi-

cal confederation of Arcadia.

The oration of Demosthenês, ὑπὲρ Μεγαλοπολιτῶν, strongly attests the importance of this city, especially c. 10—ἐάν μὲν ἀναίρεθῶσι καὶ διοικισθῶσιν, ἰσχυροῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις εὐθύς ἐστὶν εἶναι, &c.

² Pausan. iii. 2, 6; iii. 7, 3; viii. 48, 3.

³ Pausan. viii. 39, 2.

draw any positive inference as to the times to which they are referred.

Cenus¹ and Karystus seem to have belonged to the Spartans in the days of Alkman: moreover the district called Skiritis, bordering on the territory of Tegea—as well as Belemina and Maleatis, to the westward, and Karyæ to the eastward and south-eastward, of Skiritis—forming all together the entire northern frontier of Sparta, and all occupied by Arcadian inhabitants—had been conquered and made part of the Spartan territory² before 600 B.C. And Herodotus tells us, that at this period the Spartan kings Leon and Hegesiklês contemplated nothing less than the conquest of entire Arcadia, and sent to ask from the Delphian oracle a blessing on their enterprise.³ The priestess dismissed their wishes as extravagant, in reference to the whole of Arcadia, but encouraged them, though with the usual equivocations of language, to try their fortune against Tegea. Flushed with their course of previous success, not less than by the favourable construction which they put upon the words of the oracle, the Lacedæmonians marched against Tegea with such entire confidence of success, as to carry with them chains for the purpose of binding their expected prisoners. But the result was disappointment and defeat. They were repulsed with loss; and the prisoners whom they left behind, bound in the very chains which their

Unsuccessful attempts of the Spartans against Tegea.

¹ Alkman, Fr. 15, Welcker; Strabo, x. p. 446.

² That the Skiritæ were Arcadians is well-known (Thuc. v. 47; Steph. Byz. v. Σκίριος); the possession of Belemina was disputed with Sparta, in the days of her comparative humiliation, by the Arcadians: see Plutarch, Kleomenês, 4; Pausan. viii. 35, 4.

Respecting Karyæ (the border town of Sparta, where the διαβατήρια were sacrificed, Thuc. v. 55) see Photius Καρυάτεια—έορτή Ἀρτέμιδος· τὰς δὲ Καρυάς Ἀρχάδων οὐσας ἀπετέμοντο Λακεδαιμόνιοι.

The readiness with which Karyæ and the Maleates revolted against Sparta after the battle of Leuktra.

even before the invasion of Lacedæmonia by the Thebans, exhibits them apparently as conquered foreign dependencies of Sparta, without any kindred of race (Xenoph. Hellen. vi. 5, 24-26; vii. 1, 28). Leuktron in the Maleatis seems to have formed a part of the territory of Megalopolis in the days of Kleomenês III. (Plutarch, Kleomenês, 6); in the Peloponnesian war it was the frontier town of Sparta towards Mount Lykæum (Thuc. v. 53).

³ Herod. i. 66. καταφρονήσαντες Ἀρχάδων κρέσσονες εἶναι, ἐχρηστηρίζοντο ἐν Δέλφοισι ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ Ἀρχάδων γῶρῃ.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



municated to the authorities, who, by a concerted scheme, banished him under a pretended criminal accusation. He then again returned to Tegea, under the guise of an exile, prevailed upon the blacksmith to let to him the premises, and when he found himself in possession, dug up and carried off to Sparta the bones of the venerated hero.¹

From and after this fortunate acquisition, the character of the contest was changed; the Spartans found themselves constantly victorious over the Tegeans. But it does not seem that these victories led to any positive result, though they might perhaps serve to enforce the practical conviction of Spartan superiority; for the territory of Tegea remained unimpaired, and its autonomy noway restrained. During the Persian invasion Tegea appears as the willing ally of Lacedæmon, and as the second military power in the Peloponnesus;² and we may fairly presume that it was chiefly the strenuous resistance of the Tegeans which prevented the Lacedæmonians from extending their empire over the larger portion of the Arcadian communities. These latter always maintained their independence, though acknowledging Sparta as the presiding power in Peloponnesus, and obeying her orders implicitly as to the disposal of their military force. And the influence which Sparta thus possessed over all Arcadia was one main item in her power, never seriously shaken until the battle of Leuktra; which took away her previous means of ensuring success and plunder to her minor followers.³

Having thus related the extension of the power of Sparta on her northern or Arcadian frontier, it remains to mention her acquisitions on the eastern and north-eastern side, towards Argos. Originally (as has been before stated) not merely the province of Kynuria and the Thyreātis, but also the whole coast down to the promontory of Malea, had either been part of the territory of Argos or belonged to the Argeian confederacy. We learn from Herodotus,⁴ that before the time when the embassy from Cræsus king

Boundaries of Sparta towards Argos—conquest of Thyreātis by Sparta.

¹ Herod. i. 69-70.

² Herod. ix. 26.

³ Xenoph. Hellen. v. 2, 19. Ὡσπερ Ἀρχάδες, ἔταν μεθ' ὑμῶν ἴωσι, τὰ τε αὐτῶν σώζουσι καὶ τὰ ἀλλότρια

ἀρπάζουσι, &c.

This was said to the Lacedæmonians about ten years before the battle of Leuktra.

⁴ Herod. i. 82.

of Lydia came to solicit aid in Greece (about 547 B.C.), the whole of this territory had fallen into the power of Sparta; but how long before, or at what precise epoch, we have no information. A considerable victory is said to have been gained by the Argeians over the Spartans in the 27th Olympiad or 669 B.C., at Hysiæ, on the road between Argos and Tegea.¹ At that time it does not seem probable that Kynuria could have been in the possession of the Spartans—so that we must refer the acquisition to some period in the following century; though Pausanias places it much earlier, during the reign of Theopompus²—and Eusebius connects it with the first establishment of the festival called Gymnopædia at Sparta in 678 B.C.

About the year 547 B.C., the Argeians made an effort to reconquer Thyrea from Sparta, which led to a combat long memorable in the annals of Grecian heroism. It was agreed between the two powers that the possession of this territory should be determined by a combat of 300 select champions on each side; the armies of both retiring, in order to leave the field clear. So undaunted, and so equal was the valour of these two chosen companies, that the battle terminated by leaving only three of them alive—Alkênôr and Chromius among the Argeians, Othryadês among the Spartans. The two Argeian warriors hastened home to report their victory, but Othryadês remained on the field, carried off the arms of the enemy's dead into the Spartan camp, and kept his position until he was joined by his countrymen the next morning. Both Argos and Sparta claimed the victory for their respective champions, and the dispute after all was decided by a general conflict, in which the Spartans were the conquerors, though not without much slaughter on both sides. The brave Othryadês, ashamed to return home as the single survivor of the 300, fell upon his own sword on the field of battle.³

Battle of the 300 select champions, between Sparta and Argos, to decide the possession of the Thyreâtis—valour of Othryadês.

This defeat decided the possession of Thyrea, which did not again pass, until a very late period of Grecian history, under the power of Argos. The preliminary duel of 300, with its uncertain issue, though well-established as to

¹ Pausan. ii. 25, 1.

² Pausan. iii. 7, 5.

³ Herod. i. 82; Strabo, viii. p. 376.

the general fact, was represented

Thyreātis
comes into
possession
of Sparta—
efforts of
the Ar-
geians to
recover it.

ner totally different from the above story, which seems to have been current among the Lacedæmonians.¹ But the most remarkable circumstance is, that more than a century afterwards—when the two powers were negotiating for a renewal of the then expiring truce—the Argeians, still hankering after this their ancient territory, desired the Lacedæmonians to submit the question to arbitration; which being refused, they next stipulated for the privilege of trying the point in dispute by a duel similar to the former, at any time except during the prevalence of war or of epidemic disease. The historian tells us that the Lacedæmonians acquiesced in this proposition, though they thought it absurd,² in consequence of their anxiety to keep their relations with Argos at that time smooth and pacific. But there is no reason to imagine that the real duel, in which Othryadês contended, was considered as absurd at the time when it took place or during the age immediately succeeding. It fell in with a sort of chivalrous pugnacity which is noticed among the attributes of the early Greeks³, and also with various legendary exploits, such as the single combat of Echemus and Hyllus, of Melanthus and Xanthus,

¹ The Argeians showed at Argos a statue of Perilaus, son of Alkênôr, killing Othryadês (Pausan. ii. 20, §; ii, 38, 5; compare x. 9, 6, and the references in Larcher ad Herodot. i. 82). The narrative of Chrysermus, ἐν τρίτῳ Πελοποννησιακῶν (as given in Plutarch, Parallel. Hellenic. p. 306), is different in many respects.

Pausanias found the Thyreatis in possession of the Argeians (iii. 38, 5). They told him that they had recovered it by adjudication; when or by whom we do not know: it seems to have passed back to Argos before the close of the reign of Kleomenês III. at Sparta (220 B.C.), Polyb. iv. 36.

Strabo even reckons Prasiæ as Argeian, to the south of Kynuria (viii. p. 36^o), though in his other passage (p. 374), seemingly cited

from Ephorus, it is treated as Lacedæmonian. Compare Manso, Sparta, vol. ii. Beilage I. p. 48.

Eusebius, placing this duel at a much earlier period (Ol. 27, 3, 678 B.C.), ascribes the first foundation of the Gymnopædia at Sparta to the desire of commemorating the event. Pausanias (iii. 7, 3) places it still farther back, in the reign of Theopompus.

² Thucyd. v. 41. Τοῖς δὲ Λακεδαιμονίοις τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐδόκει μωρία εἶναι ταῦτα, ἔπειτα (ἐπεθύμουν γὰρ πάντως τὸ Ἄργος φίλιον ἔχειν) ξυνεχωρησαν ἐφ' οἷς ἤξιουν, καὶ ξυνεγράψαντο.

³ Herodot. vii. 9. Compare the challenge which Herodotus alleges to have been proclaimed to the Spartans by Mardonius, through a herald, just before the battle of Platæa (ix. 48).



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Strabo seems to have conceived the Kynurians plying originally, not only the frontier district of Argolis and Laconia, wherein Thyrea is situated, but also the north-western portion of Argolis, under the ridge called Lyrkeium, which separates the latter from the Arcadian territory of Stymphalus.¹ This ridge was near the town of Orneæ, which lay on the border of Argolis near the con-

statement of Herodotus, that the Orneates were a portion of Kynurians, held by Argos along with the other Kynurians in the condition of dependent allies and Pericæki, and very probably also of Ionian origin.

The conquest of Thyrea (a district valuable to the Lacedæmonians, as we may presume from the large booty which the Argeians got from it during the Peloponnesian war)² was the last territorial acquisition made by Sparta. She was now possessed of a continuous dominion, comprising the whole southern portion of the Peloponnesus, from the southern bank of the river Nedon on the western coast, to the northern boundary of Thyreātis on the eastern coast. The area of her territory, including as it did both Laconia and Messenia, was equal to two-fifths of the entire peninsula, all governed from the single city, and for the exclusive purpose and benefit of the citizens of Sparta. Within all this wide area there was not a single community pretending to independent agency. The townships of the Pericæki, and the villages of the Helots, were each individually unimportant; nor do we hear of any one of them presuming to treat with a foreign state. All consider themselves as nothing else but subjects of the Spartan ephors and their subordinate officers. They are indeed discontented subjects, hating as well as fearing their masters, and not to be trusted if a favourable opportunity for secure revolt

Herodotus tells us that the latter were Ionians: he gives to this name much greater importance and extension than the evidence bears out.

¹ Strabo, viii. p. 370—ὁ Ἴναχος ἔχων τὰς πηγὰς ἐκ Λυρκείου τοῦ κατὰ Κυνουρίαν ὄρους τῆς Ἀρχαδίας. Coray

and Grosskurd gain nothing here by the conjectural reading of Ἀργελας in place of Ἀρχαδίας, for the ridge of Lyrkeium ran between the two, and might therefore be connected with either without impropriety.

² Thucyd. vi. 95.

presents itself. But no individual township or district is strong enough to stand up for itself, while combinations among them are prevented by the habitual watchfulness and unscrupulous precautions of the ephors, especially by that jealous secret police called the *Krypteia*, to which allusion has already been made.

Not only therefore was the Spartan territory larger and its population more numerous than that of any other state in Hellas, but its government was also more completely centralised and more strictly obeyed. Its source of weakness was the discontent of its *Periœki* and *Helots*, the latter of whom were not (like the slaves of other states) imported barbarians from different countries, and speaking a broken Greek, but genuine Hellens—of one dialect and lineage, sympathising with each other, and as much entitled to the protection of Zeus *Hellanius* as their masters—from whom indeed they stood distinguished by no other line except the perfect training, individual and collective, which was peculiar to the Spartans. During the period on which we are at present dwelling, it does not seem that this discontent comes sensibly into operation; but we shall observe its manifestations very unequivocally after the Persian and during the Peloponnesian war.

Great comparative power of Sparta at that early time.

To such auxiliary causes of Spartan predominance we must add another—the excellent military position of Sparta, and the unassailable character of Laconia generally. On three sides that territory is washed by the sea,¹ with a coast remarkably dangerous and destitute of harbours; hence Sparta had nothing to apprehend from this quarter until the Persian invasion and its consequences—one of the most remarkable of which was, the astonishing development of the Athenian naval force. The city of Sparta, far removed from the sea, was admirably defended by an almost impassable northern frontier, composed of those districts which we have observed above to have been conquered from Arcadia—*Karyātis*, *Skirītis*, *Maleātis*, and *Beleminātis*. The difficulty as well as danger of marching into Laconia by these mountain passes, noticed by *Euripidês*, was keenly felt by every enemy of the *Lacedæmonians*, and has been powerfully stated by a first rate modern

¹ Xenophon. *Hellen.* iv. 8, 7: φοβούμενος τὴν ἀλιμενότητα τῆς χωρᾶς.

observer, Colonel Leake.¹ No site could be better chosen for holding the key of all the penetrable passes than that of Sparta. This well-protected frontier was a substitute more than sufficient for fortifications to Sparta itself, which always maintained, down to the times of the despot Nabis, its primitive aspect of a group of adjacent hill-villages rather than a regular city.

Careful personal training of the Spartans— at a time when other states had no training at all.

When, along with such territorial advantages, we contemplate the personal training peculiar to the Spartan citizens, as yet undiminished in their numbers,—combined with the effect of that training upon Grecian sentiment, in inspiring awe and admiration,—we shall not be surprised to find, that during the half-century which elapsed between the year 600 B.C., and the final conquest of Thyreātis from Argos, Sparta had acquired and begun to exercise a recognised ascendancy over all the Grecian states. Her military force was at that time superior

¹ Xenoph. Hellen. v. 5, 10; Eurip. ap. Strabo. viii. p. 366; Leake, Travels in Morea, vol. iii. c. xxii. p. 25.

“It is to the strength of the frontiers, and the comparatively large extent of country enclosed within them, that we must trace the primary cause of the Lacedæmonian power. These enabled the people, when strengthened by a rigid military discipline, and put in motion by an ambitious spirit, first to triumph over their weaker neighbours of Messenia, by this additional strength to overawe the disunited republics of Arcadia, and at length for centuries to hold an acknowledged military superiority over every other state in Greece.

“It is remarkable that all the principal passes into Laconia lead to one point: this point is Sparta: a fact which shows at once how well the position of that city was chosen for the defence of the province, and how well it was adapted, especially as long

as it continued to be unwalled, to maintain a perpetual vigilance and readiness for defence, which are the surest means of offensive success.

“The natural openings into the plain of Sparta are only two; one by the upper Eurotas, as the course of that river above Sparta may be termed; the other by its only large branch *Ænus*, now the *Kelefina*, which, as I have already stated, joins the Eurotas opposite to the north-eastern extremity of Sparta. All the natural approaches to Sparta from the northward lead to one or the other of these two valleys. On the side of Messenia, the northerly prolongation of Mount Taygetum, which joins Mount Lyceum at the pass of Andania, now the pass of *Makryplái*, furnishes a continued barrier of the loftiest kind, admitting only of routes easily defensible; and which—whether from the *Cromitis* of Arcadia to the south-westward of the modern *Londári*, from the *Stenykleric* plain, from



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Our accounts of the memorable military organisation of Sparta are scanty, and insufficient to place the details of it clearly before us. The arms of the Spartans, as to all material points, were not different from those of other Greek hoplites. But one grand peculiarity is observable from the beginning, as an item in the Lykurgean institutions. That lawgiver established military divisions quite distinct from the civil divisions, whereas in the other states of Greece, until a period much later than that which we have now reached, the two were confounded—the hoplites or horsemen of the same tribe or ward being marshalled together on the field of battle. Every Lacedæmonian was bound to military service from the age of twenty to sixty, and the ephors, when they sent forth an expedition, called to arms all the men within some given limit of age. Herodotus tells us that Lykurgus established both the Syssitia or public mess and the Enômoties and Triākads, or the military subdivisions peculiar to Sparta.¹ The Triākads are not mentioned elsewhere nor can we distinctly make out what they were; but the Enômoty was the special characteristic of the system, and the pivot upon which all its arrangements turned. It was a small company of men, the number of whom was variable, being given differently at 25, 32, or 36 men—drilled and practised together in military evolutions, and bound to each other by a common oath.² Each Enômoty had a separate captain or enomotarch, the strongest and ablest soldier of the company, who always occupied the front rank, and led the Enômoty when it marched in

Military institutions of Sparta—Peculiar and minute military subdivisions, distinct from the civil—Enômoties, &c.

¹ Herodot. i. 67: compare Larcher's note.

Concerning the obscure and difficult subject of the military arrangements of Sparta, see Cragius, *Repub. Laced.* iv. 4; Manso, *Sparta*, ii. Beilage 18. p. 224; O. Müller, *Hist. Dorians*, iii. 12; Dr. Arnold's note on Thucydides, v. 68; and Dr. Thirlwall, *History of Greece*, vol. i. Appendix 3, p. 520.

² Pollux. i. 10, 129. Ἰδὼς μὲντοι τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων, ἐνωμοτία, καὶ μόρα: compare Suidas and Hesych.

v. Ἐνωμοτία; Xenoph. *Rep. Lacon.* c. 11; Thucyd. v. 67—68; Xenoph. *Hellen.* vi. 4, 12.

Suidas states the enômoty at 25 men; in the Lacedæmonian army which fought at the first battle of Mantinea (418 B.C.), it seems to have consisted of about 32 men (*Thuc. l. c.*): at the battle of Leuktra of 36 men (*Xen. Hellen. l. c.*). But the language of Xenophôn and Thucydides does not imply that the number of each enômoty was equal.

¹ O. Müller states that the enomotarch, after a παραγωγή or deployment into phalanx, stood on the right hand, which is contrary to Xenoph. Rep. Lac. 11, 9.—Ὅτε δὲ ὁ ἄρχων εὐώνυμος γίνεται, οὐδ' ἐν τούτῳ μειονεχτεῖν ἡγοῦνται ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ πλεονεχτεῖν—the ἄρχων was the first enomotarch of the lochus, the πρωτοστάτης (as appears from 11, 5.), when the enomoty marched in single file. To put the ἡγεμῶν on the right flank, was done occasionally for special reason—ἦν δὲ ποτε ἕνεκά τινος δοκῆ συμφέρειν, τὸν ἡγεμόνα δέξιον κέραις ἔχειν, &c. I understand Xenophon's description of the παραγωγή or deployment differently from Müller—it rather seems that the enomoties which stood first made a side movement to the left, so that the first enomotarch still maintained his place on the left, at the same time that the opportunity was created for the enomoties in the rear to come up and form equal front (τῶ ἐνω-

μοτάρχη παρεγγυᾶται εἰς μέτωπον παρ' ἀσπίδα καθίστασθαι)—the words παρ' ἀσπίδα have reference, as I imagine, to the proceeding of the first enomotarch, who set the example of side-movement to the left-hand, as it is shown by the words which follow—καὶ διὰ παντός οὗτος ἐστ' ἂν ἡ φάλαγξ ἐναντία καταστῆ. The phalanx was constituted when all the lochi formed an equal and continuous front, whether the sixteen enomoties (of which each lochus was composed) might be each in one file, in three files, or in six files.

² See Xenoph. Anab. iv, 8, 10 upon the advantage of attacking the enemy with ὄρθιοι λόγοι, in which case the strongest and best soldiers all came first into conflict. It is to be recollected, however, that the practice of the Cyreian troops cannot be safely quoted as authority for the practice at Sparta. Xenophôn and his colleagues established Lochi, Pentekosties and Enomoties in the

into the same order, each man knowing perfectly the duties belonging to the place into which chance had thrown him.¹ Above the *Enômoty* were several larger divisions—the *Pentekostys*, the *Lochus*, and the *Mora*,² of which latter there seem to have been six in all. Respecting the number of each division, and the proportion of the larger to the smaller, we find statements altogether different, yet each resting upon good authority,—so that we are driven to suppose that there was no peremptory standard, and that

Cyreian army: the *Lochus* consisted of 100 men, but the numbers of the other two divisions are not stated (*Anab.* iii. 4, 21; iv. 3, 26: compare *Arrian*, *Tactic.* cap. 6).

¹ The words of *Thucydides* indicate the peculiar marshalling of the *Lacedæmonians*, as distinguished both from their enemies and from their allies at the battle of *Mantineia*—καὶ εὐθὺς ὑπὸ σπουδῆς καθίσταντο ἐς κόσμον τὸν ἐαυτῶν, Ἄγιδος τοῦ βασιλέως ἕκαστα ἐξηγουμένου κατὰ νόμον: again c. 68.

About the music of the flute or fife, *Thucyd.* v. 69; *Xen.* *Rep. Lac.* 13, 9: *Plutarch*, *Lycurg.* c. 22.

² *Meursius*, *Dr. Arnold* and *Racchetti* (*Della Milizia dei Greci Antichi*, Milan, 1807, p. 166) all think that *Lochus* and *Mora* were different names for the same division; but if this is to be reconciled with the statement of *Xenophon* in *Repub. Lac.* c. 11, we must suppose an actual change of nomenclature after the *Peloponnesian* war, which appears to be *Dr. Arnold's* opinion—yet it is not easy to account for.

There is one point in *Dr. Thirlwall's* Appendix which is of some importance, and in which I cannot but dissent from his opinion. He says, after stating the nomenclature and classification of the *Spartan* military force as given by *Xenophon*, “*Xenophon* speaks only of *Spartans*, as appears by the epithet πολιτικῶν,” p. 521: the

words of *Xenophon* are, Ἐκάστη δὲ τῶν πολιτικῶν μορῶν ἔχει πολέμαρχον ἓνα, &c. (*Rep. Lac.* 11).

It appears to me that *Xenophon* is here speaking of the aggregate *Lacedæmonian* heavy-armed force, including both *Spartans* and *Periæki*—not of *Spartans* alone. The word πολιτικῶν does not mean *Spartans* as distinguished from *Periæki*; but *Lacedæmonians*, as distinguished from allies. Thus when *Agesilaus* returns home from the blockade of *Phlius*, *Xenophon* tells us that ταῦτα ποιήσας τοὺς μὲν συμμάχους ἀφῆκε, τὸ δὲ πολιτικὸν οἶκαδε ἀπήγαγε (*Hellen.* v. 3, 25).

O. Müller also thinks that the whole number of 5740 men, who fought at the first battle of *Mantineia* in the thirteenth year of the *Peloponnesian* war, were furnished by the city of *Sparta* itself (*Hist. of Dorians*, iii. 12, 2): and to prove this he refers to the very passage just cited from the *Hellenica* of *Xenophon*, which, as far as it proves anything, proves the contrary of his position. He gives no other evidence to support it, and I think it in the highest degree improbable. I have already remarked that he understands the expression πολιτικὴ γῶρα (in *Polybius*, vi. 45) to mean the district of *Sparta* itself as contradistinguished from *Laconia*—a construction which seems to me not warranted by the passage in *Polybius*.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

HISTORY

Tens of thousands of important historical sources, many previously unobtainable, are now available for the first time with a Forgotten Books Full Membership.

Unlimited Access
\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



of the other cities of Greece, even down to the close of the Peloponnesian war, enjoyed little or no special training, having neither any small company like the *enômoty*, consisting of particular men drilled to act together—nor fixed and disciplined officers—nor triple scale of subordination and subdivision. Gymnastics and the use of arms made

In other Grecian cities there were no peculiar military divisions, distinct from the civil. a part of education everywhere, and it is to be presumed that no Grecian hoplite was entirely without some practice of marching in line and military evolutions, inasmuch as the obligation to serve was universal and often enforced. But such practice was casual and unequal, nor had any individual of Argos or Athens a fixed military place and duty. The citizen took arms among

his tribe, under a *Taxiarch* chosen from it for the occasion, and was placed in a rank or line wherein neither his place nor his immediate neighbours were predetermined. The tribe appears to have been the only military classification known to Athens,¹ and the *taxiarch* the only tribe officer for infantry, as the *phylarch* was for cavalry, under the general-in-chief. Moreover, orders from the general were proclaimed to the line collectively by a herald of loud voice, not communicated to the *taxiarch* so as to make him responsible for the proper execution of them by his division.

¹ Herodot. vi. 111; Thucyd. vi. 98; Xenoph. Hellen. iv. 2, 19.

The same marshalling of hoplites, according to the civil tribes to which they belonged, is seen in the inhabitants of Messênê in Sicily as well as of Syracuse (Thucyd. iii. 90; vi. 100).

At Argos there was a body of 1000 hoplites, who during the Peloponnesian war received training in military manœuvres at the cost of the city (Thucyd. v. 67), but there is reason to believe that this arrangement was not introduced until about the period of the peace of Nicias in the tenth or eleventh year of the Peloponnesian war, when the truce between Argos and Sparta was just expiring, and when the former began to entertain schemes of ambition. The *Epariti*

in Arcadia began at a much later time, after the battle of Leuktra (Xenoph. Hellen. vii. 4, 43).

About the Athenian *Taxiarchs*, one to each tribe, see Æschines, de Fals. Leg. c. 53. p. 300 R.; Lysias, pro Mantitheo, Or. xvi. p. 147; Demosth. adv. Bœotum pro nomine, p. 999 R. Philippic. i. p. 47.

See the advice given by Xenophon (in his Treatise De Officio Magistri Equitum) for the remodelling of the Athenian cavalry, and for the introduction of small divisions, each with its special commander. The division into tribes is all that he finds recognised (Off. M. E. C. ii. 2—iv. 9); he strongly recommends giving orders—*διὰ παραγγέλλσεως* and not *ἀπὸ κήρυκος*.

With an arrangement thus perfunctory and unsystematised, we shall be surprised to find how well the military duties were often performed. But every Greek who contrasted it with the symmetrical structure of the Lacedæmonian armed force, and with the laborious preparation of every Spartan for his appropriate duty, felt an internal sentiment of inferiority which made him willingly accept the headship of "these professional artists in the business of war,"¹ as they are often denominated.

It was through the concurrence of these various circumstances that the willing acknowledgment of Sparta as the leading state of Hellas became a part of Grecian habitual sentiment, during the interval between about 600 B.C. and 547 B.C. During this period too, chiefly, Greece and her colonies were ripening into a sort of recognised and active partnership. The common religious assemblies, which bound the parts together, not only acquired greater formality and more extended development, but also became more numerous and frequent—while the Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean games were exalted into a national importance, approaching to that of the Olympic. The recognised superiority of Sparta thus formed part and parcel of the first historical aggregation of the Grecian states. It was about the year 547 B.C., that Cræsus of Lydia, when pressed by Cyrus and the Persians, solicited aid from Greece, addressing himself to the Spartans as confessed presidents of the whole Hellenic body.² And the tendencies then at work, towards a certain degree of increased intercourse and co-operation among the dispersed members of the Hellenic name, were doubtless assisted by the existence of a state recognised by all as the first—a state whose superiority was the more readily acquiesced in, because it was earned by a painful and laborious discipline, which all admired, but none chose to copy.³

Recognised superiority of Sparta—a part of early Grecian sentiment—coincident with the growing tendency to increased communion.

¹ Plutarch, Pelopid. c. 23. Πάντων ἄκροι τεχνῖται καὶ σοφισταὶ τῶν πολεμικῶν, ὄντες οἱ Σπαρτιᾶται, &c. (Xenoph. Rep. Lac. c. 14) ἡγήσαϊο ἄν, τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους αὐτοσχεδιαστάς εἶναι τῶν στρατιωτικῶν, Λακεδαιμονίου τῷ ὄντι τεχνίτας τῶν πολεμικῶν. . . Ὡστε τῶν δεομένων γίγ-

νεσθαι οὐδὲν ἀπορεῖται· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀπρόσχεπτὸν ἐστίν.

² Ἰμέας γὰρ πυνθάνομαι προεστάναι τῆς Ἑλλάδος (Herodot. i. 69): compare i. 152; v. 49; vi. 84, about Spartan hegemony.

³ Xenoph. Repub. Lac. 10, 8. ἐπαινοῦσι μὲν πάντες τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπιτη-

Whether it be true (as O. Müller and other learned men conceive) that the Homeric mode of fighting was the general practice in Peloponnesus and the rest of Greece anterior to the invasion of the Dorians, and that the latter first introduced the habit of fighting with close ranks and protended spears, is a point which cannot be determined.

Homeric mode of fighting—probably belonged to Asia, not to Greece.

Throughout all our historical knowledge of Greece, a close rank among the hoplites, charging with spears always in hand, is the prevailing practice; though there are cases of exception, in which the spear is hurled, when troops seem afraid of coming to close quarters.¹ Nor is it by

any means certain, that the Homeric manner of fighting ever really prevailed in Peloponnesus, which is a country eminently inconvenient for the use of war-chariots. The descriptions of the bard may perhaps have been founded chiefly upon what he and his auditors witnessed on the coast of Asia Minor, where chariots were more employed, and where the country was much more favourable to them.² We have no historical knowledge of any military practice in Peloponnesus anterior to the hoplites with close ranks and protended spears.

One Peloponnesian state there was, and one alone, which disdained to acknowledge the superiority or headship of Lacedæmôn. Argos never forgot that she had once been the chief power in the peninsula, and her feeling towards Sparta was that of a jealous, but impotent, competitor. By what steps the decline of her power had taken place, we are unable

δεύματα, μιμῆσθαι δὲ αὐτὰ οὐδεμία πόλις ἐθέλει.

The magnificent funeral discourse, pronounced by Periklês in the early part of the Peloponnesian war over the deceased Athenian warriors, includes a remarkable contrast of the unconstrained patriotism and bravery of the Athenians, with the austere, repulsive and ostentatious drilling to which the Spartans were subject from their earliest youth; at the same time it attests the powerful effect which that drilling produced upon the mind of Greece (Thucyd. ii.

37-39). πιστεύοντες οὐ ταῖς παρασκευαῖς τὸ πλεόν καὶ ἀπάταις, ἢ τῷ ἀφ' ἡμῶν αὐτῶν ἐς τὰ ἔργα εὐψύχῃ καὶ ἐν ταῖς παιδείαις οἱ μὲν (the Spartans) ἐπιπόνῃ ἀσχῆσαι εὐθὺς νέου ὄντες τὸ ἀνδρεῖον μετέρχονται, &c.

The impression of the light troops when they first began to attack the Lacedæmonian hoplites in the island of Sphacteria is strongly expressed by Thucydidês (iv. 34)—τῇ γνώμῃ δεδουλωμένοι ὡς ἐπὶ Λακεδαιμονίους, &c.

¹ Xenoph. Hellen. v. 4, 52: compare iii. 5, 20.

² Xenoph. Hellen. iii. 4, 19.



THIS PAGE IS LOCKED TO FREE MEMBERS

Purchase full membership to immediately unlock this page

FORGOTTEN BOOKS

FULL

MEMBERSHIP

797,885 Books!

All you can read

for only

\$8.99/month

Continue

*Fair usage policy applies



Platæa, at a time when Argos held aloof and rather favoured the Persians. At what time Kleônæ became the ally or dependent of Argos, we cannot distinctly make out. During the Peloponnesian war it is numbered in that character along with Orneæ;¹ but it seems not to have lost its autonomy about the year 470 B.C., at which period

Her conquest of Mykenæ, Tiryns, and Kleônæ.—Nemean games.

Pindar represents the Kleonæans as presiding and distributing prizes at the Nemean games.² The grove of Nemea was less than two miles from their town, and they were the original presidents of this great festival—a function, of which they were subsequently robbed by the Argeians, in the same manner as the Pisatans had been treated by the Eleians with reference to the Olympic Agôn. The extinction of the autonomy of Kleônæ, and the acquisition of the presidency of the Nemean festival by Argos, were doubtless simultaneous, but we are unable to mark the exact time. For the statement of Eusebius, that the Argeians celebrated the Nemean festival as early as the 53rd Olympiad, or 568 B.C., is contradicted by the more valuable evidence of Pindar.³

Of Corinth and Sikyôn it will be more convenient to speak when we survey what is called the Age of the Tyrants or Despots; and of the inhabitants of Achaia (who occupied the southern coast of the Corinthian Gulf, westward of Sikyôn as far as Cape Araxus, the north-western point of Peloponnesus), a few words exhaust our whole knowledge, down to the time at which we are arrived. These

Achaia—twelve autonomous towns, perhaps more—little known.

¹ Thucyd. v. 67-vi. 95.

The Kleônæans are also said to have aided the Argeians in the destruction of Mykenæ, conjointly with the Tegeatans: from hence, however, we cannot infer anything as to their dependence at that time (Strabo, viii. p. 377).

² Pindar, Nem. x. 42. Κλεωναίων προς ἀνδρῶν τετράκις (compare Nem. iv. 17). Κλεωναίου τ' ἀπ' ἀγῶνος, &c.

³ See Corsini Dissertation. Agonisticæ, iii. 2.

The tenth Nemean Ode of Pindar is on this point peculiarly good evidence, inasmuch as it is com-

posed for, and supposed to be sung by Theiæus, a native of Argos. Had there been any jealousy then subsisting between Argos and Kleônæ on the subject of the presidency of this festival, Pindar would never on such an occasion have mentioned expressly the Kleônæans as presidents.

The statements of the Scholia on Pindar, that the Corinthians at one time celebrated the Nemean games, or that they were of old celebrated at Sikyôn, seem unfounded (Schol. Pind. Arg. Nem., and Nem. x. 49).