

A

CLASSICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL
 TOUR THROUGH GREECE.



CHAPTER I.

General remarks, and miscellaneous customs. Soil and climate of Attica. Provisions. Music of modern Greece. Dances. Complaints made at Constantinople against the Voivode of Athens. Intrusion of the Disdar into the bath of Turkish women—his discovery and danger—his flight to Ægina, and clandestine return to Athens—his concealment in the author's house. Visit of the author to the Disdar's wife, and their perilous situation. Superstitions of the Athenians. The Evil, or Envious Eye. Games of the modern Greeks. Birds of Attica. Reptiles—Insects. Compendium of the final history of Athens, and its capture by the Turks.

THERE is no country in the world, of the same extent as Greece, where the climate, soil, and aspect, exhibit such discordant varieties. The pages of ancient history do not bring us acquainted with any region where the forms of government were so many, and so diverse, or where the genius of the people displayed such opposite characteristics. This comparatively diminutive¹ tract of Europe, was distinguished by

¹ The length of Greece from north to south is three hundred and fifty miles; its breadth two hundred and fifty.—Robertson's Hist. of Greece.

2 CONTRAST OF DIFFERENT STATES OF ANCIENT GREECE.

the most vivid contrasts. Here we beheld the tempestuous, fluctuating, and anarchic liberty of the Athenians; and there the rigid, inflexible, and lowering despotism of the Spartans. In one part our admiration and our sympathy are excited, by the steady resistance and unremitting constancy of the oppressed Messenians; in another a different sentiment is produced, by the submissive apathy and unwarlike temper of the Eleians. We see the Arcadians leading a hardy life of pastoral independence; while Argos and Corinth are subjugated by wealth, and enervated by luxury. The Thebans are distinguished by their want of fidelity and of patriotism, or by mighty, but evanescent enterprise. Epiros, Acarnania, and Ætolia, are found piratical and uncivilized; while the voluptuous and hospitable Thessalians are signalized by their turbulence and their treachery.

The Athenians encouraged trade and cherished the arts; the Spartans forbade the one, and despised the other. The former, who abounded in orators, were conspicuous for a copious volubility of speech; while the latter were proverbial for their taciturnity. The Athenians accumulated wealth and indulged in luxury; the Spartans affected poverty and temperance, and forbade theatrical representations. The Athenian women were mild and domestic, and were seldom seen in public: the Spartan females exhibited more bold and masculine traits, and, associated in the ardent competition for strength and activity that was seen in the public games, their characters acquired an extraordinary hardihood, unsuited to the elegant softness of the female mind. This singular contrast of manners and feelings between the two principal nations in Greece, is energetically portrayed in the speech of the Corinthians, in the Lacedæmonian Assembly, concerning the Potideans, at the commencement of the Peloponnesian war.¹ Athens, however, surpassed the other states of Greece, as much as Greece itself surpassed the

¹ Thucyd. b. 1. c. 68.

PATRIOTISM OF THE GREEKS.

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other surrounding nations. Strabo¹ rapturously exclaims, that Attica was the work of the gods, and of the ancient heroes: *ἡ γὰρ Ἀττικὴ θεῶν ἐστὶ κτίσμα καὶ προγόνων Ἡρώων*. The praise of Cicero² is not less remarkable: “Unde Humanitas, Doctrina, Religio, Fruges, Jura, Leges ortæ atque in omnes Terras distributæ putantur.” The Athenians were regarded as patterns of excellence, and models for imitation; not merely in the mechanical sciences of architecture, sculpture, and painting, but in the more noble and exalted attainments of the mind. Their exertions were marked with a liberal and enthusiastic spirit peculiar to themselves: “they excelled in the temperate dignity of style, the graceful proportions of art, the forms of visible and intellectual beauty, the just delineation of character and passion, the rhetoric of narrative and argument, the regular fabric of epic and dramatic poetry, in moral and political writings.”³

But while we admire their noble deeds and transcendent qualities, their history is often deformed, and their moral lustre obscured, by instances of cruelty and ingratitude. But what above all things recalls our admiration for the Greeks in general, is that strong and indelible attachment to their country, which extended, not only to their native soil, but even to the other Grecian states, with which, in the contests for political pre-eminence, they were frequently at variance. As soon, however, as a common cause required the united strength of all parties, an end was put to the jealousies of the neighbouring states, and to the rivalry of politicians, and all united to defend their country. This noble principle of patriotic virtue was most conspicuous in their wars with the Persians. The Athenians afforded copious assistance to their great rivals and powerful enemies, the Spartans, when their capital was destroyed by an earthquake; and when the Spartans had taken Athens, and were advised to destroy their natural enemy, they refused to “pluck out the eye

¹ B. 9. p. 396.

² Orat. pro L. Flacco, s. 26.

³ Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

4 SUPERIORITY OF THE GREEKS IN ARTS AND SCIENCES.

of Greece.” When the city of Rhodes had been destroyed by an earthquake, the states of Greece vied with each other in the extent of their liberality, and thought themselves honoured when their presents were accepted by the Rhodians. The relation given by Polybius¹ of this general patriotic feeling, is highly curious and interesting.

The early history of Greece is enveloped in deep obscurity. The Dryopes, Caucones, Aones, Leleges, Thracians, the Pelasgians and Curetes, who at different periods are said to have been masters of this country, have probably left no remains of their arts or sciences to posterity. Their history is nearly unknown, but we may conjecture that they were uncultivated savages, or wandering and warlike shepherds, who made a casual and temporary residence, wherever they were attracted by the fertility of the soil, the abundance of water, or by considerations of local security and protection. There are however reasons to conclude, that the Pelasgians and the Curetes distinguished themselves by some scientific proficiency in the arts ; and the former particularly in military architecture and fortifications, as the solid and magnificent remains which are still to be observed in the various countries that were colonized by the Pelasgians, may, with every appearance of probability, be ascribed to that warlike and wandering people. The Romans were not only indebted to the Greeks for their knowledge in the elegant arts of architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, but also for their legislative code, as well as for the majority of their religious rites and ceremonies. Even when Rome had abandoned the affected simplicity of stern republicanism, and had arrived at its highest pitch of imperial splendour and power, Grecian artists were employed in Italy in preference to any others ; and the most beautiful monuments that still decorate the ancient

¹ B. 5. See also in the same book the speech of Agelaos of Naupaktos to Philip the Second, of Macedon.

SOIL AND PRODUCE OF ATTICA.

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capital of Italy, are of Grecian workmanship. The Romans never attempted to emulate their Athenian masters.¹

The soil of Attica is of a light, calcarious, and arid quality: and so scantily supplied with water, that in its most flourishing period the Athenians were enabled to maintain only a small² body of cavalry, on account of the want of pasture: and in case of necessity they called in the Thessalian horse. Thucydides³ and Diodorus Siculus⁴ call Attica unfertile; and we know that it derived a great part even of its necessary articles of subsistence from foreign countries; particularly from the islands of Eubœa and Cyprus, and the fertile coast about the Euxine. Oil was the only commodity of importance that was permitted to be exported;⁵ and even this was supposed not originally to have been a native⁶ product of the Attic soil. But we must recollect, that formerly no expedient was left untried, by which agriculture might be rendered prosperous; and that at present no violence is omitted by which it can be discouraged.

In Ægypt, where even the symbols and implements of cultivation are seen so frequently represented on their temples and obelisks, agriculture was held in a kind of religious veneration. Bacchus, under the name of Osiris, Ceres, under that of Isis,⁷ and the ox itself, under that of Apis, received the enthusiastic adoration of the

¹ The only part of architecture in which the Romans surpassed the Greeks, was in their aqueducts and cloacas.

² Thucydides says the Athenians had only 1,200 horsemen, b. 2. c. 2.

³ B. 1. c. 2.

⁴ B. 4.

⁵ Plutarch's Life of Solon.

⁶ According to Pindar, Hercules brought the olive to Greece, from the source of the Danube, Olymp. 3. v. 24. The *κοτινος*, or wild olive, grows in most parts of Greece, as was the case in very early times. In the sixth Olympiad, the Delphic oracle ordered that the victors at the Olympic games should be crowned with it. Daïkles, the Messenian, in the seventh Olympiad, was the first who was thus crowned; see Clavier prem. tems de la Greece, vol. 2. p. 205, who cites Phlegon. p. 148. and Dion. Halicarn. Ant. Rom. b. 1. See also Theophrast. Hist. Plant. b. 4. c. 14. The *Kotinos* was early known in Italy, and, according to Strabo, the tomb of Polites, near Temesa, in the country of the Brutii, was surrounded by them, b. 6. p. 255.

⁷ Diodor. Sic. b. 1. c. 13.

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ANCIENT POPULATION OF ATTICA.

grateful Egyptians. Greece, in imitating the principal part of Egyptian worship, followed her example in the encouragement which she gave, and in the respect which she evinced, for agricultural pursuits. Throughout the greater part of Turkey necessity is almost the only motive in the cultivation of the soil; the husbandman is outraged and despised: and as in great part of Italy, Spain, and Portugal, their agricultural practice is so very deficient, that they lose half the profit of their land; and were it not for the exuberant fertility of the soil, the labour would not be compensated by the crop. There were however in the narrow and sterile country of Attica, a hundred and seventy-four *demoi*, or towns, besides the capital. Its population is uncertain; but I should conceive, that, considering the number of the *demoi*, it could not have contained in its flourishing period, less than a million and a half of inhabitants, including strangers and slaves. We know that it was so overstocked that it was obliged to diminish the superabundance of its population, by sending out many colonies to distant countries. According to Plutarch,¹ the number of true Athenian citizens in the time of Pericles, was fourteen thousand and forty. In the time of Demetrius the Phalerian, there were, according to Athenæus,² 20,000 citizens in Attica, besides 10,000 strangers, and 400,000 slaves. Some however seem of opinion, that this number was contained within the capital itself. Aristophanes³ asserts, that there were 80,000 inhabitants in Athens, besides the slaves; and Plato⁴ says, that amongst the citizens of Attica, there were 20,000 able to bear arms. Athens indeed might easily have contained half a million of inhabitants within the whole circuit of its walls, including the ports; and we know that the houses were crowded, and sometimes of large dimensions. According to Demosthenes,⁵ some habitations in Athens surpassed in beauty the edifices of Pericles. This

¹ Life of Pericles.² Deipnosoph. b. 6.³ Ecclcs.⁴ Critias.⁵ Olynth.

POWER AND WEALTH OF ANCIENT ATHENS.

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however was a rare case, as the houses were in general small, and accompanied as in the present day with over-hanging galleries.¹ The streets were dark, narrow, and irregular.

The interesting historical and statistical speech of Pericles,² previous to the Peloponnesian war, exhibits a splendid picture of the power, prosperity, and opulence of this diminutive country. The sea coast of Attica was guarded by 300 ships; 1,200 cavalry, 1,600 archers, and 15,000 pikemen, were ready to defend the country; not counting the 16,000 troops who were to guard the walls of Athens, and the forts of Attica, nor those who were stationed in the colonial garrisons. They could call to their assistance a thousand³ tributary towns, and command the fleets of Chios, Lesbos, and Corcyra. And their treasury contained 9,700 talents,⁴ besides a great quantity of gold in the temples of the gods.

In addition to these acquired riches, Attica possessed some local advantages, which to a certain degree compensated for the sterility of its soil. The silver mines of Laurion, added to the wealth of the treasury, as well as to that of individuals, and those sumptuous edifices, which constituted the pride of the Athenians, and the admiration of the present day, owed their origin to the marble quarries of Pentelikon. The Athenian ports were numerous and good; and even their ungrateful soil, and their narrow territory, were useful in exciting the inhabitants to extend their commerce, and multiply their settlements, by which they gratified at once their taste for luxury, and their love of power.

The air of Attica was always esteemed for its purity; and it is still the best in Greece. Its extreme dryness has greatly contributed to the admirable preservation of the Athenian edifices; for where they

¹ Aristot. Econom. b. 2.

² Thucyd. b. 2. c. 13.

³ Aristoph. Vesp. v. 705. A thousand is probably a poetical manner of expressing a great many.

⁴ Thucyd. b. 2. c. 13. The Attic talent was worth about two hundred and twenty-five pounds sterling; by which it appears that the Athenian treasury contained 2,182,500 pounds.

have escaped the unhallowed violence of Christians, Turks, and Goths, they appear as fresh as if they had been lately finished.

The heat of the Athenian summer is mitigated by the regularity of the wind ; which, rising about ten o'clock in the forenoon, blows with refreshing strength during a great part of the day ; generally from some point between west and north. Plutarch¹ calls them Etesian winds ; and says that Themistocles² would not begin the battle of Salamis, until that time of the day when the wind always blows fresh from the sea. We may therefore infer that the battle began about ten in the forenoon.

According to Polybius,³ a ship might sail from Cephallenia to Messenia in one day, when favoured by the Etesian gales. It is evident therefore that they blew nearly from the north-west. For a few days, when I was at Athens, in the month of August, 1805, and the wind did not blow, the heat became intolerable. Fahrenheit's thermometer rising to 105° within doors ; whereas on the days when the sea breeze set in as usual, it seldom rose higher than 85°.

It would appear from a passage in Aulus Gellius,⁴ that the Etesian winds blew from different points in different quarters of the globe. "Etesiæ et Prodromi appellantur, qui certo tempore anni quam canis oritur, ex aliâ, atque aliâ parte cæli spirant." In some countries these were attended with constant rain ; and in others with a long continuance of dry weather.

The productions of Attica were compared for their excellence with those of Rhodes, by Lynceus of Samos.⁵

The waters though not abundant are pure and light.⁶ The olives and the honey are still the best in the world. The wine is indifferent

¹ Life of Dion.

² Life of Themistocles.

³ B. 5. p. 354.

⁴ Noct. Att. b. 2. c. 22. See also the note of Casaubon on Strabo, b. 3. p. 144. note 4. Aristot. Meteor. 2. 16. Polyb. b. 4. and 5. Diodor. Sic. b. 3. Strabo, b. 2, 3, and 15. Plin. Nat. Hist. b. 2. c. 47. Columel. b. 2. c. 27. Michael Glyca, Ann. Pars. 1. p. 7. Paris edit.

⁵ See Athenæus Deipnosoph. b. 14. c. 13. and 19.

⁶ Athenæus Deipnosoph. b. 2. c. 5.

PRODUCE OF ATTICA.

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and impregnated with rosin. The meat is bad, owing to the want of pastures. The common food is goat, kid, and lamb. Game is plentiful and good. Fish is scarce, on account of the few fishing boats employed. The favourite and most plentiful fish on the coast of Attica is the Pelamydes, or Πηλαμυς,¹ which is called by its ancient name. It is the scomber-pelamis² of the Latins. The oysters are of a large size; and both the fish and the shell are beautifully coloured. They are called *gaidarapoda*³ by the Greeks, from their resemblance to the form of an ass's foot.

The provisions of the Greek islands are far superior to those of the continent. The meat is of a different quality, and the wine is seldom impregnated with rosin. Most of the wines of the Archipelago are excellent; particularly those of Tenedos, Cyprus, Tenos, Ikaria, Samos, Andros, Chios, and Crete. The wines of the Ionian islands are also extremely fine. The only good wines of the Grecian continent are those of the plain of Sparta, Pheneos, and Ligurio, near Epidaurus in Argolis.

The corn is ripe in Attica about twenty-five days sooner than in the Morea and in Crete. This is probably owing to the nature of the earth, and the abundance of nitre with which the Attic soil is impregnated. I have seen corn, cotton, and tobacco, growing amongst the ruins of ancient cities, in places where it would appear impossible for the plough to work, or for vegetation to exist; and where there is scarcely any soil, and little else than small stones and broken tiles.

Their ploughs are drawn by two oxen, and penetrate very little into the ground. The corn, instead of being threshed, is trodden out by horses. The horse, who is held by a long rope, runs round upon an even rocky spot where the corn is scattered. There are

¹ See Strabo, b. 7. p. 320. b. 12. p. 545, 549. He mentions the Θυννη and the Πηλαμυς as different fish.

² Supposed to be the Tunny when young.

³ Belon. Voyage du Levant. See also Valmont, Dict. d'Hist. Nat. tom. 4.

three principal treading floors at Athens; which are at the temple of Jupiter Olympios, the temple of Theseus, and the Pnyx.

The harvest is completely finished, and the corn all trodden, about the 15th of August. In the island of Ceylan,¹ and at Adrianople,² the corn is trodden by oxen: and in some parts of Italy, they use both oxen and horses for that purpose; but more commonly the latter; and sometimes ten horses are employed at the same time, in one treading-ground. Horses are also made use of for the same purpose in some parts of France.

That corn was trodden by oxen in the earliest ages we see by one of the laws of Moses; where it is written—"Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn."³ The same custom is alluded to in the beautiful simile of Homer,⁴ who compares the carnage which Achilles made amongst his Trojan foes, to the treading of corn by oxen:

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις ζευξῆ βοῶν ἀρσενῶν εὐρομετῶπυς
 Τριβήμεναι κρι λευκῶν εὐτροχαλῶ ἐν ἀλῶν
 Ριμφα τε λεπτ' ἐγενοντο βῶν ὑπο ποσσ' ἐριμυκῶν.

"As with autumnal harvest cover'd o'er,
 And thick bestrown, lies Ceres' sacred floor;
 When round and round, with never-wearied pain
 The trampling steers beat out th' unnumber'd grain."⁵

Mr. Hamilton, in his learned work on Ægypt, mentions some catacombs, near Mount Dgibbel Skeikh Saïd; upon the sculptured parts of which, asses and oxen are exhibited in the act of treading the corn. Pigs were employed in that country for the same purpose, according to Herodotus.⁶

¹ Knox's Voyage to Ceylan.

² Lady M. W. Montague's Letters on Turkey.

³ Deuteronomy, c. 25. v. 4. and St. Paul's first Epist. to the Corinthians, c. 9. v. 9.

⁴ Iliad. 20. v. 495.

⁵ Pope.

⁶ B. 2. c. 14.