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MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE OF AGRIPPINA,
THE
WIFE OF GERMANICUS.

Crittwell, Printer, St. James's-Street, Bath.

1911

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MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE OF AGRIPPINA,
THE
WIFE OF GERMANICUS.

BY
ELIZABETH HAMILTON,
AUTHOR OF "LETTERS ON THE ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION;" &c. &c.

"History may be said to embody Truth, and prove from Facts
"the Reasonableness of Opinion." JOHNSON.

IN THREE VOLS.—VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

TO point out the advantages which are to be derived from paying some attention to the nature of the human mind in the education of youth, was the object of a former work; the Author's aim in the present is to give such an illustration of the principles that were then unfolded, as may render them more extensively useful.

In the task of instructing others many are indeed concerned; but the duties of self-instruction and self-government are imposed on *all*. Who-

ever can lend assistance towards the due performance of these important duties, may be considered as the benefactor of the human race; and from the approbation with which her feeble efforts have been hitherto honoured, the Author is convinced, that even those who bring their single *mite* into the treasury, shall in no wise fail of reward.

Such a knowledge of the human mind as is to be obtained from observation and experience, appears to be placed within the reach of every one capable of reflection, and this reflection it is the aim of every moralist to excite, when he reasons upon the consequences of vice and virtue: But to those who wish to attain a knowledge of their own hearts, and are anxiously solicitous for their improvement, something more than general observations are requisite.

In order to the government of the passions, it is necessary to be acquainted with their origin and progress; a species of knowledge, to be derived not so much from a view of their consequences, as from an accurate observation of their gradual developement. In pursuing this enquiry, we ought not to be discouraged at finding it more complex than we at first view apprehended. The metaphysician may indeed separate the passions from each other, as the experimental philosopher separates the rays of light by the prism, and represent each singly to our view in one uniform colour. But in human character it is not thus that the passions are found to appear. Every passion, even that which predominates, is there seen blended with those which gave it birth, and with the passions and affections to which it has affinity: and it is by observing

observing these affinities, that we are enabled to pronounce on the good or evil tendency of any particular passion. If pride, for instance, be a virtue, it will be found in connexion with, and productive of, affections of the benevolent class; if on the contrary it should appear allied to the malevolent and vindictive, we need not hesitate to pronounce it a dangerous inmate of the human bosom.

Convinced of the importance of throwing light upon a subject so universally interesting, and fully aware of the dislike which the young and unreflecting are apt to conceive against whatever appears in a didactic form, the Author formed the design of conveying the observations that had occurred to her, through a more agreeable medium.

She soon perceived that it was not by fiction her purpose could be accomplished.

A work

A work of imagination, in which the characters are of the author's own creation, and in which every event is at his disposal, may be so managed, as to be admirably calculated to promote the reception of a favourite theory, but can never be considered as a confirmation of its truth. Nor will the theory built upon such a basis be of long duration; for though the brilliant illusions of fancy may affect the sensibilities of the heart, and so far captivate the understanding as to render it unwilling to exert itself in detecting the fallacy of arguments which have spoken so powerfully to the feelings, the charm will at length be broken, and then the system which had been supported by its influence, will inevitably sink into disgrace.

The characters in a work of imagination may, it is true, be drawn in exact conformity to nature, and placed
in

in such situations as to afford a striking illustration of certain truths; but how are those who are little accustomed to make observations on human life to judge of the genuineness of the representation? They cannot appeal to experience, and if they refer to the feelings, it is but too probable that the decision will be erroneous. Should it even be otherwise, there is still reason to doubt whether the emotions produced by the narration of fictitious events will awaken those reflections upon the progress of the passions, for which the work may have been principally intended.

Where the effect produced upon the feelings is powerful, all that is addressed to the judgment appears dull; nor is it to be expected, that the young and ardent mind will receive much improvement from lessons of wisdom, perused at a moment,

“ When

“ When hope and fear alternate sway the breast,
 “ Like light and shade upon a waving field,
 “ Courting each other.”

If from an interesting novel so little is to be expected, from a novel void of interest we can hope for nothing; since, however wise, however moral, it would have few readers. The same sermon which a person of taste would listen to with delight from the mouth of the preacher, would, if delivered from the stage, appear intolerably dull. So necessary it is that the tone of mind should be in unison with the object of attention! Hence arises the advantage which the biographer possesses over the novelist. Amusement is expected by the reader from both; but in sitting down to peruse the memoirs of a fellow-being, in whose past existence we have assurance, in whose eternal existence we have hope, the expectation of amusement is chastened
 by

by the solemnity of the ideas attached to truth. The emotions produced will, on this account, be probably less vivid, but the interest will be deeper; while the impression made upon the mind, by a belief in the reality of the scene will give a peculiar force to whatever is calculated to operate either as warning or example.

Such was the tenour of the arguments which determined the Author in favour of biography. What subject to make choice of, was the question that next occurred; and it must be confessed, that it was far from being easily resolved.

To give the memoirs of those who have but lately departed from the scene, and who still live in the hearts of their friends and the memory of the public, may at first view appear an easy task. Concerning them there seems to be no difficulty in obtaining information.

information. All the events of their lives, their peculiar habits and sentiments, their joys and sorrows, their frailties and their virtues, may be collected from the lips of living witnesses. But even with all these sources of information at his command, the biographer who wishes to convey instruction to the living from the grave of the dead, will find himself encompassed with many difficulties. The obstacles by which he is opposed, are, in some instances, such as sensibility will never attempt to surmount; and in others, of a nature which not even the united powers of industry and genius can overcome.

In the lives of persons who have filled a private station, exercising their talents and their virtues in the performance of the relative and social duties, there may be much to honour, and much to applaud; but there cannot,

Not, in the nature of things, be a sufficient variety of incident to attract attention. In the few instances where the memoirs of such persons have been given to the world, we accordingly seldom find more than a general eulogium on their characters; which, tho' it may leave an impression favourable to virtue, is not calculated to add much to our knowledge. Nor concerning those who have been placed in situations more conspicuous, who in their lives were considered as the ornaments of their country, and whose names are universally known and venerated, is it easy for the biographer to give such particulars as can alone convey a *full* and *just* idea of the character.

To trace the progress of an extraordinary mind from the first dawn of genius to maturity; to mark the circumstances from which it received its peculiar bent; to develope the sources
whence

whence the understanding derived its stores; and thus (if I may be allowed the expression) to pourtray the characteristic features of the soul, though a task that requires transcendent abilities for its accomplishment, is but a part of what the biographer is expected to perform.

Every individual, however high his intellectual endowments, is impelled by passions, and influenced by affections, which essentially affect his character and conduct. Without a complete display of these, the delineation will remain imperfect; and yet completely to delineate them, is not in human power: for however possible it may be to trace the progress of talents, and to take the measure of the understanding, HE who made the heart can alone appreciate its frailties and its virtues. Their record is on high, but the memorial that remains is imperfect,

fect, and the manner of their growth has eluded observation. To special acts of benevolence many may indeed give testimony; but the secret trials of the heart, those exercises of patience, forbearance, and fortitude, by which it obtained a triumph over the selfish affections, are not of a nature to be disclosed.

In private life, the virtues are exercised by the temper, dispositions, and sentiments of those with whom one is intimately connected. Wisdom is learned from experience; and this experience is in many instances derived from the errors of the individual, or from the errors and frailties of those most dear to him. These are, these ought to be, for ever veiled from vulgar eyes. The heart must be without a spark of delicacy or feeling, that would voluntarily drag them into notice.

If

If in tracing the virtues of the illustrious dead we find it so difficult to arrive at truth, how shall we dare to dip our pencil in the darker shades? Is it from indifferent spectators, from friends or foes, that we shall take our colouring? Upon whom, alas! can we depend? Casual observers are liable to misapprehension; where there has been enmity, there will be prejudice; and ill would it suit the tenderness of friendship to point out the blemishes which have been washed with its tears, and to harrow up the faults which time would soon have buried in oblivion!

Nor is it from what passes in conversation, when the spirits are animated beyond the usual tone, and the mind is influenced by associations which an intimate acquaintance with every member of the company could alone explain, that a just idea of the principles

ples and sentiments of an individual is to be obtained. The observations which drop even from persons of deep reflection, upon subjects casually introduced, are not always to be received as conclusive testimony of their serious opinions; far less ought the expressions drawn forth by opposition in the warmth of colloquial debate to be recorded as certain indications of peevishness or irascibility. The writer who speaks from his own knowledge, may doubtless, in his statement, be exceedingly correct; he may describe with faithful accuracy the personal defects, the incidental weaknesses of a departed friend, and by his philosophical impartiality entitle himself to rank with the investigator of nature,

“ One who could peep and botanize

“ Upon his mother's grave !”

But with whatever avidity this species of information may be received, we
naturally

naturally revolt from the hand that offers it. It is also to be questioned, whether all that could be learned from such disclosures of the secret transactions of private life, would in any degree compensate for the moral evils which would ensue, did such instances of breach of confidence become common. Intimacy would then be considered as a snare, and the companion of the social board dreaded as a spy, who was to report to the world the unguarded sallies of the moment.

Are we, then, it may be asked, to make no enquiries concerning the characters of those who have gone before us to the silent house? Should delicacy with regard to the feelings of surviving friends be permitted to silence the voice of truth? or respect for departed genius to cancel the remembrance of its follies, and to veil its crimes? On this general view of the question

question it becomes not the present writer to decide. It is enough for her to point out the difficulties which must be encountered by a mind not destitute of sensibility, in attempting to give a genuine likeness of any well-known character.

If uncertainty dwell upon the transactions of a recent period, it may be deemed fruitless to carry our researches into times that are now remote: and fruitless it must undoubtedly prove, if we confine our enquiries to the lives and characters of private citizens. Even of those votaries of science, or favourites of the muses, who have “built to themselves a name,” how few are there concerning whom we can now obtain such information as would afford any addition to our knowledge of the human mind? Of such however it cannot be said, that “their memorial has perished with them.” In their writings.

things they have left an evidence of their talents, whose testimony cannot be suborned ; but still they do not afford sufficient data to the biographer, who is required to give an account of the actions, as well as of the sentiments. If he go to former ages in quest of materials, he can only hope to find them in the page of history ; and the transactions that are there recorded, will, in the opinion of many, appear too far removed from the occurrences of common life, to convey instruction to those who aspire not beyond the sphere in which Providence has placed them.

To the writer of the following memoirs the objection above stated did not appear so forcible as it has been by others represented. In order to get a clear insight into the nature of the passions, and the consequences arising from their indulgence, it is perhaps

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necessary that we extend our views beyond the station in which Providence has placed us. If human nature be our object, it is needless to confine ourselves to rank, or sex, or period of society, for we shall find it in every clime and situation invariably the same.

The actions of a person of exalted rank may not, it is true, afford us any direct example, capable of application to the transactions of our limited sphere; but are we hence to infer, that an examination of the passions and opinions in which those actions originated, is without its use? To know how this man rose to power, and that achieved greatness, may be a fruitless speculation to the private citizen. But to know how far the attainment of the object of ambition tended to happiness; to ascertain the consequences of indulging the love of wealth, or power, or distinction, and all the passions with
which

which they are connected; are objects in which all have an equal degree of interest. When the sphere of action is circumscribed, the passions must of necessity be subject to controul. It is in the rank soil of unlimited power that we are to look for these giant productions of the active principle: but let it be remembered, that though situation may lop some of the most luxuriant shoots, the root is still the same; and that human pride operates in the production of human misery as certainly in the bosom of the peasant as in that of the prince.

That the characters of those who stand on the dangerous pinnacle of greatness are peculiarly liable to misrepresentation, cannot be denied. Their errors are marks at which calumny delights to throw her darts, whilst flattery holds up her concave mirror to their slightest virtues. But

as time advances, malice and flattery disappear; and from actions which have been scrutinized and canvassed by friends and foes, and received and acknowledged as facts by both parties, truth then endeavours to extract the evidence on which posterity is to pronounce its verdict.

It is, indeed, the conquerors and disturbers of the earth, to whose actions the attention of succeeding ages has been chiefly devoted; "for," as it has been well observed by a venerable historian, "it has unfortunately happened, the Muse of History hath been so much in love with Mars, that she hath conversed but little with Minerva."*

The character of Agrippina must be considered as an exception to the above observation. By the masterly hand of Tacitus it has been delineated

* Henry's Hist. of Britain, vol. iv. p. 91.

with a force and spirit, which gives the original to our eyes glowing with life and animation. The features are, indeed, so prominent, that the most unskilful artist could not fail of taking a likeness; and it is this consideration which has chiefly operated as an encouragement to what has been attempted in the following pages. The age in which Agrippina lived is likewise considered as a favourable circumstance. With the names of her contemporaries all are in some degree conversant. The most remarkable events of the period are so familiar even to the unlearned, that imagination can without difficulty enter on the scene, and be pleased to form an intimacy with objects which had hitherto been only indistinctly viewed, as from a distance.

In singling out the grand-daughter of Augustus as the subject of her first attempt

attempt at biographical sketching, the author may perhaps have been influenced by impressions made upon the mind at that period of life when the feelings are usually stronger than the judgment: but though, on mature deliberation, she perceived that the choice was not without objections, none occurred that were of sufficient force to induce her to relinquish the design.

In one whose range of information is, even when compared with many of her own sex, extremely limited, and who in classical learning vies not with a school-boy of the lowest form, an attempt to approach so near to classic ground, may have the appearance of presumption: but as the most enlightened are always the most liberal and candid, she has little reason to fear being thus interpreted.

In the memoirs of Agrippina, the learned reader will not expect to find
any

any accession to his knowledge with regard to facts; though, when presented in a detached form, they may possibly, in some instances, give rise to reflections that did not before occur: nor will he be displeased to re-peruse even those more trifling anecdotes, which, by delighting the youthful fancy, had served to sweeten the labours of his school-day hours. In a work intended only for the learned, these might with propriety have been omitted; but as there are many readers of her own sex, who are only acquainted with the outline of Roman history, every minute circumstance which tended to render the scene familiar to the imagination, was essential to the author's plan. In this respect, advantage might undoubtedly have been derived from the assistance of the artist; but by the author who aspires at having a book approved on other grounds

grounds than the merits of its adventitious embellishments, such decorations will be rejected, as, while they do not essentially enhance the value of the work, add materially to its price.

It now remains to give some account of the materials that have been employed in the compilation of the following Memoirs. These have been chiefly taken from the records of antiquity; for though it was only through the medium of translation that these could be consulted, it appeared more advisable thus to apply to the source, than to seek for information from the compilers of modern history.

Mr. Murphy's translation of the Annals of Tacitus, and the notes prefixed to that valuable performance, have afforded almost the whole of the outline; occasionally assisted by Suetonius, in Mr. Thomson's translation. For whatever related to Agrippina in Dio Cas-

sius

sus, or in V. Paterculus, the Author has been indebted to the kindness of two learned friends, who obligingly translated such extracts from each as they thought would be in any wise useful. In the description of manners and customs she has been assisted by the works of numerous writers, but where accuracy was required, has chiefly consulted the treatise of Mr. Adams on Roman antiquities. To avoid swelling the page with a parade of quotations, authorities have never been referred to, except where the very words of the author are quoted; and it is believed that those who are most intimately acquainted with the original, will not be most forward to tax the author with having exaggerated the features of the portrait, which, with feeble hand, she has attempted to delineate.

In the life of Agrippina, she has never departed from her authorities; though where they were silent, she has endeavoured to fill the chasm in the manner that appeared most consonant to probability. The employment of Agrippina's leisure hours, her domestic avocations, society, &c. were circumstances which it suited not the dignity of history to record. But circumstances too trivial for history are essentially necessary to the biographer, who aims at exciting an interest for the subject of his memoirs in the reader's breast. General descriptions possess not a sufficient influence over the imagination or the feelings, to answer his purpose. "Where we do not conceive distinctly, we do not sympathize deeply in any human affection."*

If Agrippina may sometimes be found in scenes into which she was not fol-

* Currie.

lowed

lowed by the historian,—the scenes themselves, every object with which they are filled, and every ornament by which they are decorated, are faithfully copied from the most authentic describers of ancient manners.

The period of Agrippina's residence in Germany could not be passed over without some account of the native inhabitants. In a detached form, this account would have been disgusting to those to whom it was already familiar, and dull and uninteresting to the ignorant. By interweaving it with the narrative, it was hoped that it might be rendered acceptable to both. In a few other instances a similar liberty has been taken. How far the author has succeeded upon these occasions in keeping up the character of the heroine, by ascribing to her such sentiments and feelings as were perfectly

fecily appropriate, every reader will for himself determine.

Throughout the whole performance criticism may find much to censure, but it is hoped that candour will find something to applaud: and let those who are least willing to admit extenuation or apology for the author's failures remember, that "to have attempted much is always laudable, even when the enterprise is above the strength that undertakes it."*

* Johnson.

GENEALOGICAL SKETCH.

AS the names that most frequently occur in these Memoirs are all in some degree connected with the family of the Cæsars, in order to give a clear idea of their different degrees of consanguinity, it may be proper to present the reader with a short sketch of the three principal branches, and the manner in which they are interwoven with each other. These are, first, the descendants of Augustus; secondly, the descendants of Livia, adopted by Augustus; and thirdly, the descendants of his sister Octavia.

Caius Octavius Augustus Cæsar was the son of Caius Octavius, by Atia, the niece of Julius Cæsar. He married, first, Claudia; second, Scribonia; and third, Livia. By
Scribonia

Scribonia he had one daughter, Julia, who married, first, Marcellus; second, M. Vipfanius Agrippa; and third, Tiberius.

By Agrippa Julia had five children; viz. Caius, Lucius, Agrippina, Julia, and Agrippa Posthumus. Her second husband V. Agrippa had by his first marriage with Pomponia, the daughter of Atticus, one daughter, Vipfania Agrippina; who was married first to Tiberius, the step-son of Augustus, and secondly, to Afinius Gallus. Vipfania was consequently (though no relation to Augustus) half-sister to his grand-children.

Octavia, the sister of Augustus, was married first to Claudius Marcellus, by whom she had two daughters. After the death of Marcellus, Octavia married Mark Antony, by whom she had two daughters, both of the name of Antonia. Her second daughter by Marcellus was married first to Agrippa, (mentioned above) second to Julius Antoninus, the son of Antony by his former wife.

Octavia's daughters by Antony were married, the elder to Domitius Aenobarbus; the younger to Nero Drusus, the son of Livia, and brother of Tiberius.

The children of Antonia and Drusus, were, first, Germanicus; second, Claudius; third, Livilla. Germanicus, son of Antonia, and grandson of Octavia, married Agrippina, the grand-daughter of Augustus.

The sons of Livia, the third wife of Augustus, by her first husband Claudius Nero, were, first, Tiberius; second, Nero Drusus.

Tiberius married, first, Vipsania Agrippina; and second, Julia, stepmother to Vipsania, and daughter to Augustus.

By Vipsania Tiberius had one son, Drusus, who married his cousin Livilla, the daughter of his uncle Drusus and Antonia. Tiberius was adopted by Augustus A. D. 4, succeeded him in the empire A. D. 14, and died A. D. 37.

Drusus, the second son of Livia by Claudius Nero, married Antonia, as mentioned above; her son Germanicus, by his marriage with Agrippina, united the family of Livia with that of the Cæsars, and joined the two branches of the house of Octavius. Their children were related equally to Augustus, to Octavia, and to Livia; their names were as follow:

1. Nero Cæsar. He married his cousin Julia, grand-daughter of Tiberius, and daughter of Drusus and Livilla.
2. Drusus

2. Drusus Cæsar. Æmilia Lepida became his wife.

3. Caius. Died in infancy.

4. Drusus Cæsar, afterwards named Caligula. He married, divorced, and murdered several wives.

5. Agrippina. Married, first, Domitius Æno-barbus, by whom she had one son, Nero emperor of Rome; second, to Palsianus Crispus; third, to her uncle Claudius.

6. Drusilia. She was twice married.

7. Julia. She was likewise twice married, but not in the life-time of her mother.



CHAPTER I.

Preliminary Observations on the History and Character of the Ancient Romans.

SO various and so splendid are the memorials of Roman greatness, that had the history of Rome been lost, almost every nation of Europe and of Asia could produce sufficient testimony of the magnificence of her views, and the extent of her conquests. These might have appeared to the antiquary a satisfactory proof of the power and genius of that extraordinary people; but records of more importance have happily been preserved, and when no vestige of Roman camp, or theatre, or temple, shall remain, Roman literature

will continue to excite the admiration of the world.

When we trace the progress of this mighty people, from an assemblage of banditti to the attainment of almost universal empire; when we observe the wisdom that inspired their councils, the success that attended their arms, and the many extraordinary proofs of heroic valour and consummate virtue which were exhibited in the conduct of individuals; we are apt to conclude, that, in mental as well as in corporeal powers, they must have excelled the present race of mankind. Dazzled by the splendour of great achievements, we do not stop to examine minutely into the grounds of our admiration. Charmed by the sound of virtue, imagination is led captive, and we are but little inclined to weigh the merit that has thus delighted us, in the impartial scale of truth.

So much does the colouring of the historian aid the imposition, that I believe
few

few young people rise from the perusal of the Roman History with any other impression than that of unlimited admiration for the perfect virtue of the heroes of the republic, and of detestation equally unqualified for their successors. The mind, accustomed to reflection, will be impressed with sentiments of esteem and reprobation, not less powerful, but more discriminating and enlightened. Taught by philosophy, and the experience of ages, to doubt the possibility of a sudden and total change in the character of a whole people, such an one will not seek in recent circumstances for the cause of the phenomenon, but will with patient assiduity trace it to its remotest source.

The period of history which is connected with the subject of the following memoirs, is that to which the above observation will be found particularly applicable. In the reign of AUGUSTUS, men were such as they had been formed by the
institutions

institutions of the republic; and though the increasing prevalence of luxury had, no doubt, a considerable influence in producing a change in the national manners, the root of those more prominent virtues and vices, which still characterised the Roman people, was implanted in a deeper soil.

A complete analysis of the causes which operated on the formation of the national character of the Romans, is far beyond the abilities of the present writer. But as the mention of a few of the more obvious may suggest subject of reflection to those who would never think of looking into a profound treatise, they shall be briefly stated in the order they that have occurred to the author's mind.

The further we extend our observations upon the distinguishing peculiarities which form the characteristic features of national character, the more fully shall we be convinced of the extraordinary influence of political institution. Political institution is

to society what early education is to the individual. It gives a permanent direction to desire and aversion, the master-keys of all the passions and affections of the human heart.

From minds inured to the influence of abject fear, nothing great or noble can be expected. It is a principal which necessarily destroys activity, and impairs benevolence, rendering the disposition either cruel or abject. Under tyrannical forms of government, the associations producing fear must inevitably have an almost universal operation; individual minds may struggle against its influence, but the national character will be rendered contemptible, in proportion to the extent and rigour of the despotism. While Rome gloried in her freedom, she contained within her bosom an innumerable multitude of slaves. These, in process of time, obtained freedom, acquired property, and, from their numbers and their wealth, may
be

be supposed to have had no inconsiderable influence in producing the apparent change of national character.

In the same degree in which the impressions made by the slavish principle of fear have a tendency to debase and enfeeble the human mind, will the operation of more generous motives be found to elevate and strengthen it. Of this nature is the love of liberty; which, when unpolluted by selfishness, exalts and purifies the heart. That it was, at any time, entirely free from this admixture in the Roman breast, history will not justify us in asserting; but, limited as we must acknowledge it to have been in its operation, a principle so noble could not fail to produce the most salutary consequences; nor need we hesitate to pronounce, that, from the foundation of Rome to the destruction of the republic, the love of freedom was the soil which produced and fostered all the manly virtues.

By connecting the idea of liberty with that of the chief good, ambition was di-

rected into such channels as swelled the tide of national prosperity. The love of glory, that most active principle of the human mind, was rendered subservient, not to the selfish gratification of individual interest, but to the aggrandisement of the state. In the mind of a Roman citizen every idea of glory was associated with the idea of Rome: not with Rome, as the place of his birth, or the seat of his residence, but as the community of which he formed, not a nominal, but an essential part. The strength of this sentiment is evident throughout the Roman history; where we have many proofs, how entirely the idea of *self* may be annihilated in the fervour of patriotic zeal.

This association, from which Rome derived so much of her power and influence, may be traced to the earliest institutions of the republic. By these it was artfully contrived, that the honour and interest of every individual should be blended with
that

that of his order; while the interest of each order was intimately connected with the interest and preservation of the state.

While the Roman people depended on pillage for their subsistence, it was, in the spirit of this policy, ordained, that the booty obtained in war should not enrich an individual, but become the property of the community. Thus, while neither arts nor commerce afforded means of acquiring property, all ranks must necessarily have become dependent on the public for support; but while every citizen exercised a share of the sovereign power, this dependence only connected the idea of individual interest more closely with that of the public.

A willing obedience to the laws was another consequence of this association; and an obedience, mingled with the love of glory, is of so generous a nature, that it cannot fail to prove the parent of many virtues. In the early ages of Rome, we
may

may often observe it giving a salutary check to pride in the moment of victory, and affording a rallying point to despondency after recent misfortune. Thus, fortitude and self-control became conspicuous virtues in the Roman character.

For this self-command and obedience to the laws, the mind of a young Roman was prepared by the whole course of his education. The ancients were not so unwise as to imagine, that the passions which have been permitted to gain an ascendancy in the infant state, will by rules and precepts be conjured into subjection; they were not so inconsistent as to fix in the youthful mind associations of happiness and glory, that were incompatible with the virtues of a citizen, or inimical to the public welfare. Obedience to the laws, and to parental authority, instead of being considered by the Romans as adverse to the spirit of liberty, were deemed its best support; for with the Romans the
dea

idea of liberty comprehended the exercise of all the duties, as well as the enjoyment of all the privileges, of a citizen. It was to this sentiment, more than to the valour of their legions, that they owed the conquest of the world; it inspired their leaders with confidence, and breathed into their armies the soul of discipline.

“ In the times to which I now refer,” says TACITUS, in speaking of the concluding period of republican virtue, “ the son of every family was the legitimate offspring of a virtuous mother. The infant, as soon as born, was not consigned to the mean dwelling of a hireling nurse, but was reared and cherished in the bosom of a tender parent. To regulate all household affairs, and attend to her infant race, was, at that time, the glory of the female character. A matron, related to the family, and distinguished by the purity of her life, was chosen to watch the progress of the tender
“ mind.

“ mind. In her presence not one indecent
 “ word was uttered; nothing was done
 “ against propriety and good manners.
 “ The hours of study and serious employ-
 “ ment were settled by her direction; and
 “ not only so, but even the diversions of
 “ the children were conducted with modest
 “ reserve and sanctity of manners. The
 “ consequence of this regular discipline
 “ was, that the young mind grew up in
 “ innocence, unstained by vice, unwarped
 “ by irregular passions; and under that cul-
 “ ture received the seeds of science.”

The advantages of this sound founda-
 tion, appeared in the strength of the su-
 perstructure, and the height to which it
 attained. It was not the knowledge of
 remote facts, nor of foreign languages, nor
 an acquaintance with the history of distant
 nations, nor of any one branch of science
 or literature, that could correspond with
 the Roman notions of an accomplished
 gentleman; but such an improvement of
 every

every power and faculty, as should render him capable of serving his country in every different capacity. The Roman candidate for public favour was taught to act, as well as to think; and while he exercised the active, it was not permitted him to neglect the cultivation of the faculties that are considered as speculative.

Immortal Fame, the only species of immortality which beamed a steady light upon the Pagan world, was the object to which every effort of ambition was taught to point. The love of glory animated every exertion of the youthful mind. Inspired by this generous sentiment, the young Roman underwent, with patience, the severest duties of the military service; and only returned from the campaign to renew with greater ardour the study of eloquence, of the laws, and of polite literature. His progress was not estimated by the length of time that his name had been enrolled on the books of an university;

fitly; nor was it by keeping a certain number of terms that he obtained the stamp of proficiency in any liberal science. His merits were brought to a severer test. They underwent the scrutiny of a jealous and discerning public.

As there is in modern Europe nothing analogous to the constitution of ancient Rome, young readers are apt to consider the Patrician as a standing order of nobility, enjoying an hereditary right to the chief offices of the state. To correct this error, it may be necessary to observe, that the title of Patrician belonged only, in a proper sense, to those families of which the Senate was composed in the earliest times, before the Commons had obtained admission to the public honours: but that the character of *nobility* was wholly derived from the Curule Magistracies which any family had borne; and that those who could boast of the greatest number were always accounted the noblest.

The

The attainment of this illustrious rank was the object of a generous and noble ambition. It was to be purchased, through every step, by the vigorous exertions of manly eloquence, unblemished reputation, and heroic virtue.

Before a young Roman presumed to offer himself as a candidate for the office of Quæstor, the first in the career of glory, he had not only secured the favour of his general and of the army, by his conduct in a military campaign, but had given proof of his knowledge of the laws, and principles of equity, by pleading the cause of the oppressed before the tribunal of the public. By the constitution of ROMULUS, it was made the duty, the honour, and the interest of the rich and great, to exert their talents in the service of their fellow-citizens, and to become the patrons and protectors of the innocent and distressed. They gave their labours to the people, and the people repaid the obligation by
the

the honours and preferments of which they had the sole disposal.

That the promise of talents and of virtue, which had procured the suffrages of the citizens to the youthful candidate, might have time for proof; five years, from the attainment of the quæstorship, were required to elapse, before the offices next in order could be conferred. These were the dignities of Ædile, and of Tribune of the people.

To the former magistrate was committed the care of the public edifices, the celebration of the public games, and of all those splendid ceremonies, so dear to the populace; to the latter was entrusted a charge of more solid importance, the rights and liberties of the people. From the Ædile was expected a taste for magnificence, and unbounded liberality in expence: from the Tribune, all those qualities necessary to constitute a successful as well as a popular champion of public liberty.

He

He who had with honour fulfilled the functions of these subordinate magistracies, might, in his forty-third year, (for to that mature period did the term of probation extend) put in his claim to the office of Consul, which may be considered as the sovereign dignity.

The duties of this high office required the exercise of such various talents, as, in the degeneracy of later times, have rarely been united in an individual. The political genius of a statesman, the valour of a foldier, the skill of a general, the wisdom of a legislator, and an intimate knowledge of men and things, drawn not merely from the theory of the schools, but from the surer source of actual observation. Such were the qualifications necessary for the attainment of the consular dignity, at that glorious period in the history of Rome, when her august senate gave laws to the world. Such were the men who, while they presided at her councils, and led her legions

to victory, devoted every moment that could be snatched from the duties of an active life, to the compilation of those immortal works which will continue to enlighten the latest posterity. These proofs of intellectual vigour were not confined to a few solitary instances. They were sufficiently numerous to be characteristic of the Roman people; whose history presents to later ages no lesson so instructive or important, as the assurance that it gives of the consequence of bestowing cultivation, and affording employment, to all the various powers and faculties of the human soul. In the auspicious soil of freedom the mind attains a perfection which no less genial influence can produce; for it is only in the soil of freedom that all her faculties are called forth. With the loss of liberty the Romans soon lost all pretensions to superiority in intellectual vigour. By the secrecy of court policy, the sphere of observation was narrowed; by its jea-

lousy, the exercise of judgment was restrained. Tyranny prescribed bounds to the operation of reason; and though the germs of taste and fancy were graciously permitted to expand, the shortness of the period in which they flourished is a convincing proof, that where the primary faculties are without strength, these will soon decay.

In enumerating the causes which contributed to the vigour and elevation of the Roman character, we must not omit to mention the influence of female manners as one of the most important. Had the minds of the Roman youth received their first impressions from ignorance and folly, we may with some confidence pronounce, that the republic would not have produced many examples of manly virtue. In the passage quoted from *FACTUM*, we have seen the manner in which the Roman ladies performed one of the most essential duties of the matron character. Taught to place
her

her glory in the faithful discharge of the domestic and maternal duties, a Roman matron imperceptibly acquired an elevation of sentiment, a dignity of manners, which rendered her equally the object of esteem and of respect. Her country was no less dear to her than to her husband; but the same spirit of patriotism which impelled him to exert his valour in the field, or his wisdom in the senate, animated her mind in the instruction of her children, and the regulation of her family. Superior to every puerile pursuit, the only object of her ambition was an increase of the fame and glory of her race. The strength of mind inspired by this principle does not accord with our ideas of female amiability; but when we recollect that the views of a Roman matron extended not beyond the present scene, we shall rather applaud than condemn the heroism which taught her to impress upon the minds of her sons, that it was better to die with glory, than to live without renown.

While the matrons of ancient Rome preserved this elevation of sentiment, they were no less remarkable for modesty and decorum. They had wisdom to know their proper sphere, and were not impelled by vanity to quit it. But though they did not think it necessary to roam abroad in quest of admiration, it does not appear that their influence on public manners was the less salutary or extensive. Never, indeed, does the female character appear to have been more esteemed or venerated: the respect in which it was held, by softening all the sterner passions, facilitated the progress of civilization, and gave to the Roman mind, perhaps, as great a degree of polish as is consistent with any degree of strength.

Were we to confine our view of the tendency of the Roman institutions to their influence upon the intellectual powers, we should behold perpetual subject of admiration and applause; but when we
take

take a wider survey of this interesting subject, and observe the manner in which they operated upon the passions of the heart, our admiration will, in many instances, be changed into abhorrence, and our applause into contempt.

Some investigation of this point becomes necessary, since without it that apparent change in the Roman character which produced the loss of liberty, will appear violent and inexplicable. Nor is it a speculation of idle curiosity, but of universal interest; for, were the abilities of the writer equal to the task, the result would impress conviction on every serious mind, that where an improper bias is given to the affections of the heart, the faculties of the understanding, even in their most perfect state, will oppose a feeble barrier to corruption. The Romans might, on a superficial view, seem to have been sensible of this, from the pains they took to guard the infant mind from the early dominion

minion of the selfish passions ; but to this they were led from motives less comprehensive and enlightened. It was not from a consideration of their malignity, but of the obstruction which they gave to the cultivation of the mental powers, that they were put under the restraint of rigid discipline. The Romans went as far as human wisdom could penetrate ; but they reached not the recesses of the heart. They endeavoured to put a salutary check upon the career of the youthful passions, but they thought not of purifying the source from which they sprung. The associations, which all their institutions, religious and political, tended to produce, were allied to pride, and adverse to malevolence.

The Love of Liberty, that generous principle, which, when founded on a proper basis, embraces in its operation all the best affections of the human heart, excited in the Roman breast an influence that was very partial and imperfect. A citizen of
Rome

Rome gloried in freedom as his birthright. He considered his privileges as indefeasible, inestimable, and far more precious than life: he, therefore, freely ventured life for their support, and entertained a jealous apprehension of whatever threatened even remotely to affect them. The rights of his fellow-citizens were *his*, and for that reason were watched with the same assiduity, and guarded with the same vigilance, as his own; but while the consciousness of freedom nerved his mind, and gave strength and firmness to every faculty of the soul, it did not teach his heart to respect the feelings of others; nor did it warm it with the generous wish of extending the valued blessing. With his idea of liberty the power of exercising unlimited tyranny over a great part of his species was firmly united. This sentiment, which flowed from the right that Rome haughtily assumed of bringing all other nations into subjection, increased with the success of
his

her arms, till the spirit of national arrogance was considered as a national virtue. Nor was the pride of power confined to the body politic; it was felt and exercised by all the superior orders in their individual capacity. Domestic tyranny was authorised and established by the laws. The life of the slave was at the disposal of his master; and by the laws of Rome, children were, in every respect, the slaves of the parent.

Before the conquests of the Romans had introduced the more depraved manners of the Eastern nations, the domestic slaves had all some useful employment, which it was the business of the mistress to inspect. As luxury increased the numbers of the menial crew, they became idle and vicious; and where the heads of the family partook of the same character, found obsequiousness and flattery a surer road to favour than integrity and diligence. The moral conduct of these despised beings
seems

seems, indeed, to have been little more the object of attention to the Romans in their Pagan state, than it has been in after times to some of those who call themselves Christians. Not that the Pagans were universally insensible to the moral improvement of their slaves; in most families of any note, the education of those of tender years was an object of peculiar interest, and many of the slaves of both sexes were instructed not only in the arts which contribute to luxury, but in the sciences which ornament it.

Nor was Hope, the best comfort of our imperfect condition, denied to the Roman slaves. Under a generous master, emancipation was almost the certain reward of good behaviour; those who could render themselves in any way useful, seldom failed, in the course of a few years' servitude, to obtain the same favour. Nor were they even in their state of bondage deprived of all possibility of acquiring property; they

they were frequently so rich as to be enabled to purchase their liberty ; but even after they had obtained freedom, they were still considered as belonging to the family of their last owner, who, in having exchanged the rights of proprietor for that of patron, had bound them by a stronger, because more natural tie. The number of freed-men and freed-women attached to every family of distinction was immense ; some of these, by exerting their talents in the arts or in commerce, but many more by the less honourable means of fraud, flattery, and speculation, attained the possession of enormous wealth. The constant society of minds imbued so deeply with the selfish principle could not fail of being prejudicial to the young, and may doubtless be ascribed as one of the causes which accelerated the progress of corruption. Whatever may be averred of the slave system in modern times, it is very evident that its effects upon the Roman mind were exceedingly

exceedingly pernicious. As slaves were not considered in the light of rational beings, their evidence was not admissible, unless when it was extorted by torture. It appears to have been a point of honour to make offer of the sufferings of those unhappy wretches for this purpose, whenever persons of rank wished to clear themselves from the imputation of any state offence; and the coolness with which this offer was made, and the indifference with which the practice is mentioned, alike bear testimony to the degree in which the habit of exercising absolute dominion over such a vast portion of their fellow-creatures had destroyed the sympathies of the human heart.

As the manners degenerated, cruelty increased; and as the cruel had something to fear from the workings of revenge, the life of the master was guarded by a law, which ordained, that if the master was murdered by a slave, all the others, in his family, of either sex, and of every age, should

should suffer death.* That a law so barbarous should ever have been deemed necessary, is a sufficient proof of the tendency of slavery to produce and foster the malignant passions; and that its rigour should have been justified in a period of unexampled refinement, shews that the degrading influence of this pernicious system operates upon the enslaver no less than upon the enslaved.

While simplicity of manners prevailed, and poverty restrained the licentiousness of free-will, the consequences of that pride, which the possession of power never fails to engender, was disguised or rendered innoxious by the respect for public opinion.

* The number of slaves at one time led to execution in the reign of NERO occasioned a popular insurrection. Many even among the senators relented at the idea of slaughtering *four hundred persons* for the guilt of one; but the rigour of the law was vindicated by an able speaker, and all were doomed to suffer, without distinction of sex or age.

It was not till it had formed a junction with avarice and sensuality, that it was seen in its true colours, as the parent of the malevolent passions. When this period of corruption arrived, the power of exercising tyranny and oppression on the wide field of a provincial government, became the prime object of ambition. It was now that the nations which had yielded to the superiority of the Roman arms, first felt the fatal consequences of subjection. The groans of the miserable excited neither the feelings of shame, nor of compunction. Every commander was not a VERRES; but from the accounts transmitted to us of the manner in which the proconsular authority was exercised by some of the most distinguished characters that graced the latter period of the republic, we may be convinced that absolute power will seldom make to itself very rigid rules of justice.

If the civil institutions of the republic had any influence in the formation of national character,

character, that influence was incalculably increased by the power of superstition.

“The religion of Rome,” says Mr. GIBBON, “was not merely a speculative doctrine, professed in the schools, or taught in the temples. The innumerable deities and rites of Polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of business or pleasure, of public or of private life; and it seemed impossible to escape the observance of them, without, at the same time, renouncing the commerce of mankind, and amusements of society.”

A worship which thus mingled with all the transactions of common life, could not fail to affix certain ideas of respect, reverence, or affection, to the character or office of the deities, who were the objects of such devout adoration. If we take the liberty of examining the “elegant mythology” of the Heathens, we shall not find much reason to imagine that these associa-

tions

tions were very likely to improve the virtues of the heart. The sullen tyranny of Jupiter, the vindictive malice of his royal consort, the licentiousness of Venus, and the brutal sensuality of Bacchus, were acknowledged characteristics, duly celebrated by their respective votaries. Pride, revenge, and sensual indulgence, being thus consecrated by the example of the gods, were elevated to the rank of virtues.

It is observed by the elegant Author of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, that “the public spectacles were an essential part of the *cheerful devotion* of the Pagans, and the gods were supposed to accept, as the most grateful offering, the games that the prince and people offered in honour of their peculiar festivals.” Of the public spectacles exhibited at the games, the combat of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beasts, appear to have been at all times held in highest estimation. In the former, men, regularly
 trained

trained and educated for the purpose, fought, and bled, and died upon the public stage; the magnificence of the entertainment being in proportion to the number of the wretched victims. In the latter, a number of ferocious animals, whose fury was augmented by every art that ingenuity could invent, were let loose against a few timid and defenceless slaves, whose shrieks of terror and groans of agony were drowned in the louder acclamations of the rejoicing multitude!

To behold the agonizing wounds and painful deaths of these unhappy mortals, might be deemed a grateful spectacle to the gods of Rome; but one who has been educated under the benevolent system of the Gospel, must have successfully combated with many early prejudices, before he can allow to such exhibitions the appellation of *cheerful!* Had history handed down to us no other means of ascertaining the general disposition of the Romans, the de-
light

light which they took in contemplating such horrid scenes, would be sufficient evidence of its tendency to cruelty. Before the sufferings of any living creature can afford a pleasurable sensation to the human mind, the generous sympathies of nature must have been extinguished; and so powerfully are these sympathies connected with the benevolent affections, that all the virtues of the heart are impaired by their annihilation. We cannot suppose, that he who was accustomed to view with complacency the agonies of a fellow-creature, even though that fellow-creature was degraded to the rank of slave, would have much compunction in following the dictates of revenge. Nor need we scruple to infer, that he who regarded the life of a slave as an object of contempt, would, when passion prompted, and opportunity occurred, shew little regard to the life or happiness of a fellow-citizen.

The page of history bears testimony to the fact. We there perceive, even in the

ages of politeness and refinement, the permanent effects of those institutions, which had torn from the heart the tender feelings of humanity.

The clemency of AUGUSTUS has been the theme of eulogium to authors, ancient and modern; yet AUGUSTUS, the patron of letters, the *mild*, the *polite* AUGUSTUS,* with his own hands tore out the eyes of GALLIUS, the prætor, after having seen him put to the torture! The only crime of the

* There are few things more worthy the animadversion of the moralist, than the improper use of epithets. The young reader, afraid to trust his own judgment, relies on the superior penetration of his author. When he observes the perpetrator of actions from which his feelings revolt, and which his principles ought unequivocally to condemn, decorated with appellations that belong to benevolence and integrity; his ideas of right and wrong are in danger of being perplexed, vice becomes less and less the object of his hatred, and virtue ceases to inspire the warmth of approbation. Where the title of an author delights the imagination, it is easy, by false epithets, to mislead the judgment; and perhaps there is none who ought to be more guarded against, in this respect, than Mr. GIBBON.

unhappy

unhappy nobleman was that of having excited the suspicion of the tyrant by carrying under his cloak a double tablet, which was unfortunately mistaken for a sword!*

AUGUSTUS was bred to the trade of war, he had been practised in the science of destruction, and therefore may be considered as an exceptionable example: but to the younger PLINY no such exception can be taken. Distinguished by genius, enlightened by philosophy, endowed with all the endearing qualities of the heart, PLINY was with justice considered as the most accomplished nobleman of his times. When

* SÜETONIUS, p. 118. THOMPSON'S Translation.

Let the behaviour of AUGUSTUS upon this occasion be compared with that of a Christian monarch, when his life was actually endangered by the ball of an assassin, and our blind admiration of ancient fortitude and ancient clemency will abate somewhat of its fervour. Had the unhappy maniac, who aimed the fatal blow at our beloved sovereign, lived under the *mild* administration of AUGUSTUS, it is more than probable that his wife, and family, and friends, would have been devoted to torture and to death!

such

such a man as **PLINY** gives an account of his having put innocent females to the torture, by way of experiment; we may justly infer that those associations, which circumscribed the operations of sympathy, and threw contempt on the sufferings of the wretched, had a very extensive influence.

Though in Rome the priesthood did not form a distinct and separate order of citizens, the power attached to the office was so great, as to enable the patricians to maintain a decided superiority over the other branches of the community. Their policy taught them to increase and preserve that tendency to superstition, which is the concomitant of credulity and ignorance. Enlisting all the striking phenomena of nature into their service, they made every change in the state of the elements, every movement of the feathered tribes, nay even the very garbage from which the eyes of delicacy turns abhorrent,

means

means of working on the hopes and fears of the deluded multitude.

Whoever considers the consequences that must inevitably arise from the habit of constantly viewing objects as connected, that have in reality no connection, will easily perceive, why it should prove almost impossible for the mind of man to remain uninfluenced by the prejudices which he imposes upon others. The Roman Pontiffs, like those, who in times less remote have endeavoured to govern the vulgar by similar expedients, were seldom fully conscious of the fallacy and imposition of the arts they practised. Nor let us impute to them the honour or the infamy of creating a refined system of fraud, formed exactly to suit their purpose. The wisdom of NUMA adapted the popular superstition to the purposes of government; but the impression made upon the mind of the magistrate by omens and prodigies was not less vivid nor sincere than that

that which was felt by the meanest plebeian. Accustomed from his earliest years to attach undefined ideas of evil to certain phenomena, he, with unfeigned zeal, endeavoured to propitiate those gods, whose capricious favour was, as he believed, to be purchased by a punctual observance of vain rites and trifling ceremonies. We may be assured that these associations took too firm a hold of the Roman mind to be broken by the cobweb deductions of philosophy.

That “the various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful;”^{*} is an observation very elegantly expressed, but which is in some degree refuted by every page of Roman history.

Let us refer to those illustrious authors, whose station on the theatre of public

* GIBBON.

life was no less eminent than that which they have continued to maintain in the republic of letters. Not to mention the writers who flourished in the earlier ages, let us confine our investigation to the works of TACITUS, CICERO, or PLINY; in all we shall find indubitable traces of a credulity with regard to supernatural events, omens, prodigies, and dreams, that would disgrace the most paltry scribbler in any country of modern Europe. That species of superstition, which, since the reception of Christianity, has only been found in connection with extreme ignorance, was among the Romans common to all. Neither genius nor learning escaped its influence; and if on minds so cultivated and capacious as those we have above referred to, the impression made by early education proved too powerful to be eradicated; we may assuredly infer, that a tendency to superstition formed a striking trait in the national character,

As

As it was not pretended that the Gods of Rome were deserving of esteem, respect, or veneration, on account of any inherent virtues; their partiality for the favoured city formed their greatest or rather their only merit. When the gods of other nations shewed any symptoms of the same favourable disposition, they were received and adopted as objects of adoration, without any hesitation on account of their jarring attributes; and thus, in process of time, every debasing passion of the human breast found a patron in the pantheon of divinities. Actuated in this particular by the same principles of policy which induced them gradually to admit the cities of Italy into a participation of the rights of Romans, they hoped, by extending the privileges of *godship*, to increase the number of those who were interested in the preservation of the state.*

* “ On sçait que les Romains recurent dans leur ville les dieux des autres pays. Ils les recurent en conguer-

The freedom of Rome was no sooner conferred upon foreign deities, than they became legitimate objects of Roman worship; but we have every reason to believe, that till they were thus naturalized they were obnoxious to hatred and contempt.

“The superstition of the people was not,” it is true, “embittered by any mixture of theological rancour, nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system;”* but superstition which taught pride to glory in subduing the enmity of opposing deities, by the invincible force of the Roman arms, cannot be supposed to

ans; ils les faisoient porter dans les triomphes: mais lorsque les étrangers virent eux-même les établir on les reprima d’abord. On sçait de plus, que les Romains avoient coutume de donner aux divinités étrangers les noms de celles des leur qui y avoient le plus de rapport. Mais lorsque les pretres des autres pays voulerant faire adopter à Rome leur divinités sous leur propres noms, ils ne furent pas soufferts; et ce fut un des grands obstacles que trouve la religion Chrétienne.” —MONTESQUIEU sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur decadence: c. xvi.

* GIBBON.

allied

the Roman arms, cannot be supposed to have been nearly allied to the "*mild spirit of toleration.*" Pride is in its nature intolerant and vindictive; and when we consider, that pride was in the Roman breast combined with every idea of dignity and glory; that it was nurtured by public sentiment, and unchecked by religious principle; we shall not be very easily persuaded that Roman pride was divested of any of its constituent properties.

Such was the arrogance of the Roman spirit, that it in many instances perverted the judgment, and deterred the mind from entering on the examination of objects, which true philosophy would have deemed at least curious, if not important. The contempt in which they held all the rest of the world, impressed the minds even of the most learned with a haughty disdain of all that was not Roman. A glaring proof of this may be seen in the account given by Tacitus of the Jewish nation. At the
time

time he wrote, the Jews had been for nearly two centuries under the Roman yoke. The conquest of Jerufalem was considered by him as one of the most glorious achievements which distinguished the reign of his favourite Emperor, and is described with all the force and brilliancy of his incomparable pen. But though JOSEPHUS was his cotemporary, and the patron of JOSEPHUS was his friend; though Rome then was full of Jews of all ranks and descriptions, among whom were perhaps many who did not yield to TACITUS himself in point of learning; the son-in-law of AGRICOLA disdained to seek for information from *barbarians*, and rather chose to expose his ignoranceto the latest posterity, than to condescend to acquaint himself with the truth. When we reflect, that it was to this pride that Christianity had to oppose itself, we shall not be surprisid at the declaration of the Apostle, that “ *not many*

many wise, not many learned" were numbered with her early votaries.

The religion of the Pagans, as interwoven with the political institutions of Rome, had not only a tendency to corrupt the heart by the introduction of pride, cruelty, and malevolence; but to seduce the imagination, by a false taste for finery and show. As a nation of warriors, the Romans disdained all employment but that of war. Neither arts nor commerce were pursued as the means of acquiring property, and consequently the intervals of peace were spent in idleness. Active minds can never be idle with impunity; and the wisdom of the legislator saw that, to prevent mischief, it was necessary to furnish the idle with a constant supply of amusement. Hence all the pomp and splendour of the Pagan worship; which in so far obtained the end proposed, as it attracted the attention of the populace, and gave an object on which the restlessness of activity might

might spend itself, without disturbing the public tranquillity. The farther consequences of a passion for amusement thus inspired will be seen hereafter.

Of the influence of the sentiments of honourable ambition, which were mingled with every endearment of maternal love, enough has already been said, to give some idea of the consequences that arise to society from the formation of the female mind. It was the union of elevated sentiment with modesty and reserve, which rendered the character of a Roman matron an object of esteem and veneration. We may however observe, that had the esteem which the virtues of the Roman females were calculated to inspire, been permitted to mingle with the passions of the youthful bosom, the effects produced would have been still happier and more extensive. But the chastened sentiment of virtuous love was unknown to the Roman breast. Marriage was with them merely an institution

stitution of policy. Unions were formed and dissolved from motives of interest or convenience; but that refined affection which binds heart to heart, had no concern in lighting the hymeneal torch.

As the Romans married without love, we need not be surprised to find that they loved without delicacy. Where no sentiments of esteem blend their mild influences with passion, unbridled licentiousness will sooner or later be the consequence. Poverty and an active life preserved the more ancient republicans from the grossness of depravity; but no sooner had luxury opened the flood-gates of sensuality, than the Romans sunk into brutality. The Roman females soon caught the contagion of licentiousness. Unspotted chastity was no longer the matron's glory, or the maiden's pride. The care and instruction of her children, or skill and prudence evinced in the management of domestic affairs, no longer conferred dignity in the eyes of an illustrious

illustrious dame. The respect given to virtue could no longer gratify her ambition, for with objects of a very different nature ambition was now associated. So that she was distinguished, it was of little consequence that she was despised. We need not seek a surer criterion of corruption.

Before the reign of AUGUSTUS, the Roman character had undergone a rapid and important change. With the influx of wealth, and extent of dominion, those passions whose seeds had been sown by the religious and political institutions of the republic, at a period coeval with its date, ripened to maturity. Poverty and the strictness of rigid discipline had repressed their growth; but beneath the fostering hand of luxury, they sprung and flourished. Every circumstance that had tended to counteract or restrain their influence, was diminished or annihilated, before the Roman world stooped to acknowledge the authority of a master.

The

The important consequences of those habits of thinking which blended the idea of personal glory with the welfare and glory of Rome, have already been noticed; but this sentiment depended too much upon sympathy, to operate for any length of time upon distant armies, which no longer breathed the spirit of freemen and citizens, having an equal interest in the prosperity of the commonwealth for which they fought. Composed of various nations, having no tie but that of discipline and obedience to the same general, they imperceptibly transferred to their commander the allegiance and affection which in former times had been reserved for the state. The general on his part, having had his ambition polluted by the love of power and riches, no longer considered the applause of his fellow-citizens, and the glory of an illustrious name, as rewards sufficiently solid. Avarice was the concomitant of luxury, and inordinate wealth

wealth could alone gratify the pride that was united with sensuality. The command of an army, which conferred sovereign authority in a distant province, was considered as the surest and shortest road to fortune: and as neither justice nor compassion to barbarians formed any part of his religious code, he omitted no methods of extortion, of rapine, or of cruelty, which could facilitate the attainment of his object. Enriched by plunder, he returned to Rome, certain of purchasing from the cupidity of a degenerate people those public honours which had formerly been the meed of conspicuous valour or distinguished virtue.

In the taste for shews and public spectacles, a taste which policy had cherished as the means of softening the ferocity of a fierce and warlike people, he found a ready instrument of corruption. That greediness of amusement, which is either the prognostic or the symptom of the mind's disease,

was now augmented by indulgence into an epidemic phrenzy. All the nobler affections yielded to its influence; and as the spectacles, by which the insatiable thirst for amusement could only now be gratified, were little calculated to excite generous emotions; public spirit was neither kept alive by sympathy, nor rekindled by emulation. In losing public spirit, the Romans lost the sole animating principle on which their virtues depended for existence. While the love of virtue was supported by a rigid simplicity of manners, the talents of CÆSAR, seconded by the wealth of CRASSUS, and the power of POMPEY, would have in vain attempted to overthrow the constitution of their country; but the change of manners, and the prevalence of vice, rendered it an easy enterprize. The penetration of CÆSAR discovered the vulnerable part. He knew that luxury is prodigal, and that prodigality is selfish, and that selfishness scruples

not to purchase the low gratifications of depraved appetite at the expence of the public good. He therefore, by his example of profusion, increased prodigality, encouraged luxury, and promoted that desire of selfish gratification, which he knew how to turn to his own advantage.

Judging that the man who has not courage to combat his own vicious inclinations, will not evince much constancy in the cause of freedom; he considered all in whom the spirit of independence was too feeble to restrain the love of pleasure, as deserters from the standard of liberty.

His expectation was justified by the event. His camp became the asylum of every distinguished profligate, who in scenes of giddy riot or ostentatious luxury had squandered the fortunes of his ancestors. The number was formidable. By the levity of idleness, and the factious spirit of discontent, it was every day increased. The fortunes of CÆSAR prevailed. But in fact

fact the triumph of CÆSAR was nothing more than the triumph of the selfish and sensual passions over those restraints which a contempt of riches and love of national glory had once imposed. Roman liberty did not die a violent, but a natural death. In vain did a few vigorous and independent minds endeavour to protract the hour of her dissolution. In vain did they hope from the death of CÆSAR a restoration of her existence. The dagger of Brutus, might, like the Galvanic shock, produce a short and convulsive motion, but the animating soul of liberty, had fled for ever !

The design of the present dissertation does not permit us to pursue the consequences of those circumstances which conspired in the formation and developement of Roman character, beyond the first ages of the empire. To the general state of society in that period we must confine our views. But connected as that period is with an event of universal importance to
the

the human race, my readers will pardon a short digression upon a subject of such general interest.

The more seriously we contemplate the effects of those associations which the political institutions and idolatrous worship of ancient Rome inspired, and which philosophy itself tended to rivet in the human mind; the more deeply shall we be impressed with admiration at the unfathomable wisdom and omnipotent power of that **BEING**, by whom it was decreed, that at this very era of depravity a religion should make its way into the world, which not only overturned the speculative opinions that influenced the understanding, but compelled its votaries to make a sacrifice of all the passions and prejudices which education and habit had entwined with every fibre of the heart! Opinions which are formed from abstract speculations vary with every change in the point of view from which they are contemplated; but the

the affociations which have engendered pride, the love of power or of glory, a disposition to cruelty, to sensuality, or revenge, take too firm a hold upon the mind to be dissolved at the command of reason. The wisdom of philosophy, so far from aiming at the subjugation of all the malignant passions, only partially disapproved them; each sect pleading for the indulgence of the particular class which was connected with its peculiar tenets. The stern virtue of the Stoic was proud, vindictive, and unrelenting. The selfish system of the Epicurean was effeminate and sensual: and although the Academic philosophy admitted of more sublime and elevated sentiments of moral duty, the foundation upon which these sentiments were built, was of a nature so unsteady and fluctuating, that however they might occasionally influence the conduct of an individual, they could have no general operation upon human character.

Completely

Completely to change the ideas of happiness or glory in the mind of an individual, is a task so difficult as to have been rarely accomplished. To eradicate the passions and prejudices connected with these associations, may well by human wisdom be deemed impossible, for never by human power has it been effected. To what cause but to the overruling providence of the great CREATOR, can we then assign the progress of a religion, which changed every principle of action, opposed all the prejudices of education, and condemned the customs and habits which time, and the intercourses of society, had rendered congenial to the mind? In vain might PAUL have planted or APOLLOS watered, nothing but Divine grace could have been effectual "in turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just!" But however powerfully Divine grace was manifested in preparing the hearts of men for the reception of the Gospel, we have no
reason

reason to believe, that it at once conquered all the prejudices of education, or entirely and miraculously subdued the passions which the corrupt customs of society had inflamed and cherished. Saint PAUL, in his Epistle to the Romans, evidently addresses himself to men who were still labouring under the influence of those associations, whose pernicious tendency we have been endeavouring to explain. The pain and difficulty of dissolving them could only be compared to *death*—"a death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness." And when we consider the extraordinary change that was to be produced, we shall not think the metaphor overstrained.

At a period when the grossest impurities were practised without shame and without disgrace, the Christians were required to preserve unspotted holiness. Pure as the unblemished sacrifice which they had been taught to offer to their divinities, they were to present their bodies to the LORD.

They

They who had been accustomed to consider themselves as superior to the rest of the human race, were no longer *to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think soberly*. The refined policy of AUGUSTUS had introduced that politeness which throws the veil of deceit over rancour and internal hatred; but the Christians were *to love without dissimulation, openly and without disguise, to abhor evil, and to cleave to that which was good*. They who had had their hearts shut against the tender impulses of humanity, who had considered the sufferings of their inferiors as beneath their notice or regard, were *to distribute to the necessities of the saints, to rejoice with them that rejoiced, and weep with them that weeped*; and they who had been accustomed to view revenge in the light of an heroic virtue, were *to avenge themselves no more; to give place to wrath; to feed the enemy that hungered, and to give drink to the thirsty foe*.

Of

Of the difficulty of effecting such a total change in the sentiments, manners, and affections, we who have been brought up under the influence of the Gospel dispensation can form but a very inadequate idea. Even the infidel who now denies the truth of Divine revelation, has drawn from the source which he affects to despise, ideas of moral purity and perfection which never entered into the heart of heathen moralist to conceive; vices, which, in the ages of Roman refinement, philosophers could applaud, and poets celebrate, would now procure irrevocable and disgraceful banishment from society. But in the age of NERO, when the light of the Gospel began to dawn upon the Pagan world, the heart was not only corrupted by the prevalence of vice, but the understanding darkened by false notions of virtue. No wonder, then, if passions and prejudices, which had been the growth of ages, should sometimes appear to have retained an influence

fluence in the minds of individuals, however opposite to the tenets of that religion which they now professed.

It has been observed by a learned prelate, to whom his contemporaries and posterity will admit the justice of applying the eulogium bestowed by Mr. GIBBON on those philosophers “ whose names adorn the age in which they lived, and exalt the dignity of human nature,” that “ the same intolerant system which had been adopted by the emperors in their treatment of Christians whilst they themselves were Pagans, was afterwards observed by them in their treatment of Pagans when they themselves became Christians.”*

Nor is it intolerance only that descended from the ancient institutions of Rome to defile the pure current of the Gospel virtues. The long-cherished spirit of Roman pride, and that love of power which was the

* The Bishop of Landaff's Letters to Mr. GIBBON.
distinguishing

distinguishing characteristic of Roman ambition, may in after ages have been sometimes found to triumph over the meekness and moderation inculcated by the religion of JESUS. The imposing pageantries of Pagan worship was another and a fruitful source of corruption. Minds long accustomed to attach ideas of respect and veneration to the splendour of decoration, the pomp of processions, and the observance of a multitude of trifling ceremonies, could not easily break these associations, however opposite they might be to the spirituality of Christian devotion. Superstition, whose roots had taken hold of the soil by a thousand ramifications, was too deeply fixed to be easily eradicated. Before the first preachers of the Gospel it had indeed fallen prostrate; but in imperfect proselytes it revived and flourished; nor has it, in the centuries that have succeeded, given way, so as to promise its speedy extirpation from the Christian world.

Imperfectly

Imperfectly as the religion of JESUS may have been understood and practised by many of its votaries, the benevolent mind will rejoice in tracing its benignant influence in humanizing the passions, and ameliorating the condition of the human race. Let us cherish the delightful hope, that its more perfect acceptance and more universal influence will complete the triumph of reason and virtue, teaching every heart to give glory to GOD, and to glow with benevolence towards man.

CHAPTER II.

OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, *his birth; education; marriage with SCRIBONIA; divorce; marriage with LIVIA.—Education of JULIA; her marriage with MARCELLUS; with VESPASIANUS AGRIPPA; with TIBERIUS.*

FROM THE 671ST TO THE 742D YEAR
OF ROME.

OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, afterwards honoured by the title of AUGUSTUS, was descended from an equestrian family, of which his father CAIUS was the first who obtained the senatorian dignity. His mother ATIA, niece to JULIUS CÆSAR, was a woman of exemplary conduct, and distinguished accomplishments. Her care
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in the education of her son is celebrated by TACITUS, who attributes the early maturity of his talents to her assiduous cultivation. At twelve years of age he did honour to his instructress, by the elegance and propriety with which he pronounced a funeral oration in honour of her mother JULIA.

But whatever applause may be due to the mother of AUGUSTUS for the pains she bestowed on the improvement of his mind, it is but too probable that she imbued it with that spirit of ambition which proved the governing principle of his future life. To the love of power all the other passions of the heart were rendered subservient. Neither anger nor resentment, neither love, nor pity, nor gratitude, nor honour, were permitted to oppose the call of interest, or to stand in the way of the gratification of ambition. At eighteen years of age the pupil of ATIA was the most accomplished of hypocrites.

Master

Master of the arts of diffimulation, OCTAVIUS, at this early period, rendered the wisdom of CICERO, the profligacy of ANTHONY, and the levity of LEPIDUS, alike instrumental to the accomplishment of his designs. Alternately uniting himself to the party that could best promote his interest, and sacrificing without remorse the friends who had supported him, when they could no longer serve the purposes of his ambition; he at length, through treachery and slaughter, waded to that pre-eminent situation, from which his uncle had been hurled by the weak vengeance of an ill-concerted conspiracy. In the resentment against JULIUS, the cool and crafty AUGUSTUS saw the effects of wounded pride, which though it could submit to slavery, could not brook contempt. He, therefore, took care to avoid the rock which had proved fatal to his predecessor. Contenting himself with the *reality* of power, he quietly left the senate, and the
 people

people in possession of its appearance. Renouncing the hateful title of Dictator, he, under the popular appellation of Tribune and Emperor, for upwards of fifty years maintained absolute sovereignty over the Roman world.

Could the undisturbed possession of power confer happiness, Augustus had been the happiest of human kind; but while he tasted of greatness even to satiety, the cup of bliss was often empoisoned by domestic misery; and he who could dispose of kingdoms at his pleasure, and command the lives and fortunes of a vast portion of the human race, was a stranger to heartfelt satisfaction.

According to the custom of the Romans, he had been contracted in infancy to the daughter of a person of rank; but as no engagement could stand in the way of his ambition, he no sooner found it his interest to form an alliance with Mark Anthony, than he gave up all thoughts of the

daughter of Isauricus ; and at the same time that he signed the bloody proscription, which gave the best and noblest of his former friends to the vengeance of his new ally, he espoused Claudia, the daughter-in-law of the profligate triumvir.* The same policy which formed, dissolved the inauspicious union. But what were the motives which dictated his succeeding choice, it is somewhat more difficult to determine. He was still but in the spring of life when he became the third husband of Scribonia, who was probably his senior in years, and was already a mother. By this marriage he had one daughter, Julia his only child.

How long he might have continued to live with Scribonia is uncertain. He complained loudly of the perverseness of her temper ; but as he did not part with her, till his passions were inflamed by another

* See Note A. at the end of the volume.

object,

object, it is possible that the account he gave of the irascibility of her disposition, might only be an excuse for the fickleness of his own. His daughter Julia was yet in the cradle, when Tiberius Claudius Nero, a man of learning and talents, who had obtained the dignities of pontiff and of prætor, returned from Sicily, whither he had fled after the defeat of Anthony, and with his wife and infant son threw himself at the feet of the conqueror. The eyes of Livia were more eloquent than her husband's orations. Her tears obtained the pardon, of which her charms were the price. The clemency of Augustus was extended to the friend of Anthony, on the humiliating condition of yielding his wife, then far advanced in her pregnancy, to the arms of the emperor.

That delicacy of sentiment which would in the present times attach ideas of infamy to such a dishonourable barter, was unknown to the Romans. Tiberius Nero,
restored

restored to his rank, continued to live in estimation; and Livia was congratulated on the accession of dignity, without being deemed to have incurred disgrace. In a few weeks after her marriage with Augustus, she gave a son to her former husband, who had her family name of Drusus,* and who, with his brother Tiberius, was afterwards adopted by the emperor. No female conquest was ever more sudden or compleat than that which Livia obtained over the heart of her imperial lover. Her power was permanent; but it was supported by arts which truth and virtue hold in abhorrence, and employed for purposes the most wicked and flagitious. In cunning and dissimulation, Augustus himself, the most accomplished dissembler of his times, was confessedly her inferior. Nor did she yield to him in the strength of her ambi-

* It was the son of this Drusus who was married to Agrippina.

tion, or in the perseverance with which she pursued her deep-laid plans for the aggrandisement of her family.

Under such a mother it cannot be supposed that the tender mind of Julia would imbibe the principles of virtue. Her father, recollecting the care which Atia had bestowed on his instruction, and from her precepts and his own experience being deeply impressed with the importance of education, spared no pains in the cultivation of her talents, and even seems to have watched over her morals and conduct with the most laudable assiduity. But in vain did he endeavour by precepts to preserve the purity of her mind from contamination. In vain, by prohibiting her from conversing with strangers, or by ordering a diary to be kept of all her words and actions,* did he hope to inspire her with virtuous principles. The influence of Livia was too predominant not to extend

* Suetonius.

to the slaves who were placed about the person of her step-daughter; and it was not for Livia's interest, that Julia should be too worthy of her father's esteem.

Augustus, disappointed in his hopes of having children by Livia, was anxious to strengthen his family by the marriage of Julia with his nephew, the son of his sister Octavia,* for whom he seems always to have preserved the tenderest affection. Marcellus was a youth of much promise. Graceful in his person, engaging in his manners, and amiable in all the dispositions of the heart, he was endeared to the people by his virtues, and beloved by his uncle as the ornament of the Julian line. In rendering him his son by adoption, and his son-in-law by marriage, he equally consulted his own inclination and the interests of the people. But alas! the bright prospects that opened on this

* See Note B. at the end of the volume.

illustrious

illustrious youth were soon closed by death. His death was however glorious, for Virgil has immortalised his memory.

The disposal of Julia again became the object of paternal care. The person who appeared most worthy in the eyes of Augustus to succeed the young Marcellus, was a man whose merit might deserve the esteem of the father, but whose manners were not very likely to engage the daughter's affections. Marcus Vipfanius Agrippa, who was thus distinguished by the favour of the emperor, was of low extraction, unpolished to a degree of rusticity, and at this time, though not in the decline of life, considerably advanced in years. Notwithstanding the disadvantages of a rude exterior, Agrippa possessed those qualities which deserved the friendship, and did honour to the discernment, of Augustus. The vigour of his genius supplied the want of a liberal education. Though a stranger to letters, he was the friend of literature; and
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though destitute of knowledge in the fine arts, he so judiciously employed the taste and skill of others, that under his direction not only Rome, but all Italy was adorned by the most useful and magnificent structures. In war he displayed the talents of a great general, and in peace maintained a character of unblemished integrity. From an humble station he had the art of rising in the world with dignity; a certain proof that his mind was greater than his fortunes.

At the time that he was selected by Augustus for his son-in-law, Agrippa was enjoying the happiness of connubial love with the sister of the deceased Marcellus, who had already brought him several children. The misery he might inflict upon his niece, by tearing from her arms the husband of her affections, and father of her infant family, did not affect the mind of Augustus; but to reconcile his sister to the indignity that was thus offered to her daughter, he deigned to consider as an
object

object of some importance. Octavia had the sense to yield with a good grace to an evil she had it not in her power to prevent. She took home the divorced Marcella, and permitted Agrippa to pursue the path of ambition in a nearer connection with the imperial family.

About the same time that Agrippa received the hand of Julia, his daughter Vipsania, the offspring of a former marriage, was united to Tiberius, (the elder son of Livia) whose sullen mind was softened into tenderness by the virtues and charms of his amiable consort.

Domestic felicity now seemed to have taken up her abode in the family of Augustus. Drusus Nero, the younger of his step-sons, whose virtues and accomplishments were, even at an early period, the objects of universal admiration, was united to Antonia, the daughter of Octavia by Mark Anthony; and the strength that was thus given by family connexion

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to the Julian line, was augmented by the promising family which blessed the union of Julia and Agrippa. Caius and Lucius, the sons of Julia, were, according to the forms of the Roman law, purchased from their father by Augustus, and formally adopted by him as his sons, and consequently heirs of his fortune and dignities. The two daughters, Julia and Agrippina, shared with their brothers the tender affection of their illustrious grandfather; who, blind to the miseries that awaited his ill-fated race, indulged the pleasing hope that his name should through them be perpetuated to the latest posterity.

The haughty Livia beheld with a jealous and malignant eye the blooming offspring of Julia, whose numbers seemed to present an insuperable bar to her ambitious views. The death of Agrippa re-inspired her hopes. While he lived, his children had a protector too vigilant to be duped by her dissimulation, and too powerful to
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be overcome by the utmost efforts of her malice. But when Agrippa expired, the defenceless orphans came within her grasp. The compleat ascendancy which she had by this time obtained over the mind of her husband, put them compleatly in her power ; and the character of Julia was not such as to give her an influence that could counteract the specious arts of an insidious step-dame. After her husband's death, Julia was delivered of her fifth child, who bore his father's name of Agrippa, and from the circumstances of his birth, had the additional appellation of Posthumus.

It was now that Livia took the first step towards the accomplishment of the long-cherished object of her ambition, the aggrandisement of her favourite son. By her persuasions, the emperor projected the union of Julia with Tiberius, who, though far from being inferior to his mother in ambition, was in this instance utterly
averse

averse from the plan which she had so kindly formed for his advancement. He loved Vipfania, who was now in a situation that gratified his hopes of paternal endearment, and called forth all his tenderness. Vipfania merited the affection of her husband and the world's esteem, by the gentleness of her manners and the purity of her life. Had she continued the wife of Tiberius, it is more than probable, that her benignant influence would have smoothed the ruggedness of his nature, and chained the gloomy passions of his soul. It was neither from her great beauty, though she was acknowledged to be beautiful, nor from the mere sweetness of her manners, however captivating, that we should have expected a permanent change to have been wrought in the tyrant's heart. But in addition to these endearing qualities, Vipfania possessed an elegant and cultivated mind. Her taste for literature was hereditary; for she was
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the great-grand-child of the celebrated Attica, the friend of Cicero. An attachment to such a woman, cemented as it was by tenderness and esteem, could hardly fail of having a salutary influence on a young man who was neither destitute of understanding, nor of taste.

In the mind of Tiberius love for some time triumphed over ambition. He resisted the entreaties of his mother, and the commands of Augustus. But the former knew how and when to assail him with her arguments; or to wound him by her resentment. Mistress of all the avenues to his heart, she alternately piqued his pride, and fired his ambition; till at length she extorted from him an ungracious consent to her wishes. He divorced the beloved Vipsania, and with ill-concealed aversion, took the widow of her father to his reluctant bosom.

The consequences of this ill-omened union were such as might have been expected.

pested. Julia, whose criminal levity had been restrained by her respect for Agrippa, sensible that she was odious to Tiberius, who was probably not less so to her, gave a loose to the vicious inclinations that revelled in her heart. As her children were the care of her father, she felt not the maternal tie as any check upon her moral conduct. Her flagitious amours, though they were for some time managed with a degree of secrecy, did not escape the knowledge of her husband; who despised, as much as he detested her. But it was dangerous to complain of the daughter of Augustus; and after the sacrifice of his feelings which Tiberius had already made, he thought it folly to risque his hopes. by giving way to his resentment. By devouring in secret the chagrin which preved upon his heart, he gave an additional shade to the natural gloom of his temper. The more he observed of the conduct of Julia, the more deeply did he regret the loss of his beloved
 Vipsania ;

Vipsania; and so greatly was he affected by an accidental interview with this lady, who was now married to Asinius Gallus,* that by the emperor's command care was taken that they should meet no more. In the house of her second husband, Vipsania was delivered of that child on whom Tiberius had fondly placed his hopes. He gave the name of Drusus to this son of his love, and treated him through life as the sole object of his affection.

* Asinius Gallus was the son of A. Pollio, the friend of Augustus, and the patron of Virgil, who addresses to him his most celebrated eclogue.

CHAPTER III.

AGRIPPINA'S *infant Character; Care of AUGUSTUS in her Education; contracted to GERMANICUS; her Mother's Profligacy and Wretchedness.*

CONTINUED TO THE 753D YEAR OF
ROME, BEING THE FIRST YEAR OF
THE CHRISTIAN ÆRA.

HAVING given such a sketch of the events which preceded the birth of Agrippina, and of the characters with whom she was most nearly connected, as seemed necessary for the purpose of elucidation, we shall now attend more closely to the immediate subject of the present Memoirs.

Agrippina

Agrippina lost her father at a period when the mind is happily insensible to misfortune. Surrounded by all that could gratify or amuse the infant fancy, she felt no diminution of happiness, no interruption of enjoyment. Perceiving herself a particular object of attention to him whose smiles imparted the glow of satisfaction, and whose frowns were dreaded as the wrath of heaven, she could not avoid, even at a very early age, feeling the complacency of self-importance; a feeling which we may presume the obsequiousness of domestics, and the flattery of friends, did not tend to diminish. The young favourite of the emperor was not likely to be often vexed by contradiction. Even Livia, whatever aversion she might secretly entertain, would, according to the maxims which governed her conduct, proportion the ardency of her caresses to the depth of her malignity. The same means which had been taken to corrupt the mind of

the mother might have been adopted with equal success to deprave the principles of the daughter ; but happily for Agrippina, she was soon removed from the dangers and temptations, which, in the house of Augustus, might have ensnared her unsuspecting youth.

According to the ancient custom of the Romans, she was contracted in infancy to Germanicus, the son of Drusus and Antonia, who was then a boy about her own age. Marriages formed in this arbitrary manner cannot be supposed to have been often productive of matrimonial felicity. The misery attendant upon such unions was expected to be obviated by the facility of divorce ; but it was soon found that the remedy was in itself an evil more pernicious than that which it was intended to remove. Divorces had at all times been authorised by the Roman laws, but (such was the virtue of the early ages) were long without example in the Roman history ;

history; their frequency, which may justly be considered as the criterion of general depravity, was now productive of all the evil consequences that can arise from giving legality to prostitution. Augustus, though he had himself abused the liberty of divorce in a most licentious and shameful manner, no sooner became intent upon the reformation of public morals, than he reprobated the practice as the source of their corruption. He issued edicts, he promulgated laws, to check the growing evil. But alas! neither laws nor edicts can alter the nature of things. When luxury and its attendant vices have pervaded all ranks, and universally vitiated the morals of a powerful and wealthy people, vice is not to be controlled by the authority of legislative wisdom. In such a state, nothing short of national calamity can prove a corrective of sufficient efficacy; but to this state of universal depravity Rome had not yet *fully* arrived. Virtue had still many votaries;

ries; and in the midst of a corrupt society a number of illustrious citizens still preserved the purity of unblemished reputation.

Of this honourable description were the parents of Germanicus. The character of Drusus has been celebrated by most of the poets, and all the historians, of the Augustan age. It is impressively delineated by one of the latter, who says, that Drusus was “a youth of as many virtues as prudence can acquire, or human nature can admit.”* His military talents engaged the affections of the army, while his amiable manners endeared him to the people.

The virtues of Antonia† were not less eminent, or less worthy of universal esteem, than those of her husband. Though distinguished by beauty and every personal accomplishment, she was ambitious of a

* Velleius Paterculus.

† See Note C. at the end of the volume.

higher title to admiration than beauty or personal accomplishments can bestow.— Wisdom and prudence, tenderness and fidelity, were the honourable characteristics of the wife of Drusus. Attached to each other by every tie of affection and esteem, Drusus and Antonia presented to a dissolute age a rare example of connubial happiness. But alas! such happiness was not doomed to be of long duration. The amiable Drusus, loaded with early honours, was, in the midst of his career of glory, snatched from an admiring world. After having, for his success in the wars of Germany, obtained the honour of an ovation,* and the triumphal ornaments, he returned with the additional dignity of the Consulate to the summer camp, where he shortly after expired; leaving to his afflicted widow no consolation so soothing as the remembrance of his virtues. His

* See Note D. at the end of the volume.

death

death was lamented by the prince and people with equal sincerity; and the honourable surname of Germanicus was by the vote of the senate decreed to his posterity, as a perpetual memorial of the virtues and achievements of their illustrious ancestor. His son was destined to do immortal honour to the name, and in the promising dispositions of her charming boy, the heart of Antonia experienced the invigorating solace of hope.

Germanicus was only three years of age at the time of his father's death; how soon he was contracted to Agrippina is uncertain; but as they were equally the care of Antonia, she, in the course of their education, successfully cultivated in their tender minds that mutual affection which laid the foundation of their future felicity.

Under her maternal care they were preserved from the contamination of vice, while they were imbued with every noble and generous sentiment that can adorn the
human

human character. Nor was Augustus less solicitous concerning the education of his grand-children, than he had been with regard to his daughter. His letters to Agrippina were still extant in the time of the historian Suetonius; who quotes one that was written to her while she was very young, in which he commends her ingenuity, and among other excellent advices, begs her “*to be particularly careful, both in speaking and writing, to avoid affectation.*”

Agrippina was endowed by nature with a capacity that rendered the acquisition of knowledge not only easy, but delightful; and she had the happiness of being born at a period, when literary taste had reached its utmost perfection. That impetus which the institutions of ancient Rome had given to the human mind was not yet exhausted; but being now impelled into other channels, produced those glorious monuments of genius which have been the admiration of all succeeding ages.

The

The love of letters had been successfully cultivated by Atia in the mind of her son. In his taste for literature, Augustus was no hypocrite. He cultivated the arts of oratory and poetry with success; but as an author, though desirous of distinction, he was superior to the meanness of jealousy.

His friend and minister Mæcenas was endeared to him by a similarity of taste. It was this distinguished patron of genius, who first introduced Virgil to the notice of Augustus. And Virgil in his turn, with a liberality worthy of his talents, introduced Horace to the favour of both. Encouragement gave an additional stimulus to genius; and under the protection of Augustus, Latin poetry was taught successfully to emulate the best productions of the Grecian muse. The wish of the prince was seconded by the fervour of the people. Of that fervour, with regard to the effusions of poetry, we, in modern times, can form but a very inadequate

adequate notion. The Christian religion has rendered our ideas of immortality more correct; but in the age of Augustus, the idea of immortal glory was firmly associated with every exertion personal or mental, that raised an individual to distinguished renown. Though the *Æneid*, which would undoubtedly have proved the most popular of his works, was not published till after the death of Virgil; such was the celebrity he enjoyed, that when at any time he came to Rome, the people crowded to gaze upon him with the profoundest admiration. When he went to the theatre, the audience manifested their respect by rising from their seats, as was customary on the entrance of the emperor. Wherever he appeared, he received the tribute that was due to one who had done honour to his country, and heard on every hand the burst of admiration or the murmur of applause.

It was

It was at this time the custom for authors of all descriptions to read or recite their works to a select audience of friends and critics, who freely commented upon the faults or beauties of the performance. Virgil had long resisted the intreaties of Augustus, who was extremely anxious to be favoured with a specimen of the *Æneid*, upon which he knew he had been for a length of time engaged; when the work was considerably advanced, the poet so far yielded to the request of the Emperor, as to recite the second, the fourth, and the sixth books, in the presence of a select party at the palace. The recent death of Marcellus had at this time thrown a gloom over the social board, and Augustus was glad to seize the opportunity of giving a momentary suspension to the sorrows of his beloved sister, by diverting her attention to another object. Octavia's attention was soon arrested. She listened with tranquil pleasure to the woes of Priam and of
Hecuba,

Hecuba, smiled at the frantic despair of the Carthaginian Queen, and anxiously followed the pious hero to the regions of the dead, and saw the shades of her illustrious ancestors pass in review before her. But when the poet arrived at that celebrated passage, where he has so artfully introduced the young Marcellus, as if in perspective, encompassed by admiring crowds, who seem in vain endeavouring to ward off his destiny, the feelings of Octavia were wound to too high a pitch for her enfeebled frame to support; she fainted away, and was with difficulty restored to life. After she had been sufficiently recovered, and had time for recollection, she shewed her sense of the poet's merit, by ordering him a present of ten sestercei for every line relative to her Marcellus, which on the whole amounted to rather more than two thousand pounds sterling.*

* See Note F. at the end of the volume.

As a true taste for the beauties of poetical composition was never yet found in a mind possessed of a limited range of ideas; it cannot be supposed that poetry engrossed the favour of Augustus.

In his estimation of talents or of virtue, Augustus was not biased by the spirit of party; he was too conscious of his own superiority to have recourse to the despicable practice of traducing the character, or under-rating the genius, of an opponent. Though he had pursued Brutus and Cassius with unrelenting vengeance, he was not offended with the historian Livy, for attributing to them the virtues of consistency and patriotism. And though the murder of Cicero threw the most indelible disgrace upon his own character, he did not seek to justify the atrocity of that black transaction by insinuations that would lessen the merit of the man he had destroyed. It was, however, a subject on which delicacy would choose to be silent, and so much did
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one of the brothers of Agrippina fear that he should incur the displeasure of his grandfather, by studying the works of the unfortunate consul, that upon his sudden entrance he hastily hid the book beneath his robe. The quick eye of Augustus detected the concealment; the poor boy was made instantly to produce the hidden treasure, and while the emperor turned over the pages with serious attention, stood in trembling expectation of a severe rebuke. His apprehensions were groundless. Augustus returned the volume with an approving smile, saying, "My dear boy, the author of this book was a wise man, and a lover of his country." It is, perhaps, seldom that the children of a prince have been thus permitted to reap instruction from the enemies of their family!

The ambition of Augustus was not tinged with the littleness of vanity. He knew that to give popularity to his government, it was more material to render his
 subjects

subjects happy, than to make an ostentatious display of his own wealth or consequence. While he possessed an absolute dominion over the lives and fortunes of his former fellow-citizens, he affected no external appearance of superiority, but lived in every respect like a private gentleman of moderate fortune. The house he occupied was far from being one of the best in Rome; nor was it furnished in a manner that was either so magnificent or expensive, as those of many other senators.* His table was remarkable for the same plainness and frugality; but to those who possessed a taste for the pleasures of conversation, it never failed to afford a most luxurious treat. His parties were usually small, but they were

* "His frugality in the furniture of his house appears even at this day (viz. in the time of Suetonius) from some beds and tables, still extant, most of which are scarcely fit for any genteel private family. It is reported, that he never lay upon a bed but such as was low and meanly furnished. He seldom wore any garment but what was made by his wife, sister, daughter, and grand-daughters."—Sect. sect. 73.

enlivened by wit, and adorned by genius and wisdom. All the young persons of the family were placed at an adjoining table; and had the advantage of listening to the various subjects of discussion or of criticism that engaged the attention of their seniors. Sometimes a poem or a play was read for the amusement of the company, who afterwards delivered their opinions upon the merits of the composition. Tho' decorum was preserved, restraint was banished from the social board, and in the house of Augustus the guests forgot that Rome had now a master.

With the lessons of prudence and wisdom the ardent mind of Agrippina imbibed the generous spirit of independence. The haughty Livia soon saw that her arts were detected, and her character abhorred; her hatred to Agrippina was increased by the conviction, and its rancour soon extended to all with whom she was connected. The growing attachment of her grandson to
his

his betrothed wife gave to her malignant mind a pang such as a demon may be supposed to feel; and while they were united in the love and admiration of all their other relatives, they were also united as objects of equal aversion in the breast of Livia.

A daughter who was elder, and a son who was younger, than our hero, shared the maternal care of Antonia. The former, named Livilla, was soon contracted to Caius Cæsar, the brother of Agrippina; and as she by this means came under the authority, and was subjected to the influence, of her grandmother Livia, the infamy of her after-conduct may be easily accounted for. She and the younger sister of Agrippina were equal victims to the corrupting arts which had destroyed the innocence of Julia; who was now running the career of depravity without shame and without restraint.

The husband of Julia was no stranger to the infamy of her conduct. He knew that
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that in the life-time of Agrippa the tongue of scandal had not been silent: and was aware that Sempronius Gracchus still carried on the criminal intimacy, which was then suspected to have taken place betwixt him and Julia. Tiberius buried his resentment in the dark recesses of his breast; but he marked Sempronius Gracchus for future vengeance.

It is the nature of vice to be progressive. The imagination of Julia had first been foiled by the admission of impure ideas; the second step in vice was a breach of her marriage vows, which was probably excused to herself by the false and pernicious notions of the irresistible influence of sympathetic tenderness. The arts of the seducer might aid the sophistry of passion; but the woman who has forfeited her honour, cannot long retain that self-respect which is the support of every virtue. She who ceases to be chaste, will soon cease to be amiable. Julia, instead of being humbled

by the consciousness of guilt, became more proud and arrogant. She despised Tiberius, and taking advantage of her superior birth, and the favour of Augustus, she took every opportunity of evincing her contempt. Nor was she long constant to her first seducer. Another and another succeeded him in her favour, till at length in her cousin Marcus Julius Antonius she found a paramour equally abandoned as herself. Antonius was the son of the triumvir by Fulvia, and inherited all his father's profligacy without any pretensions to his talents. His half-sister Antonia was not more remarkable for the possession of every virtue, than he was for the practice of every vice. The unfortunate Marcella, who was divorced from Agrippa, in order to make way for his marriage with Julia, was destined to receive Antonius as her second husband: and this near connexion with the family of Augustus, gave an easy access to Antonius in the prosecution of his intrigue.

Long did the close and fullen mind of Tiberius brood in silence over the deep-felt injury. Diffimulation and concealment converted malevolence into a chronic disease of the mind, which no alteration of circumstances could remedy.

From inflicting misery on Julia, he hoped to experience some alleviation of his own. To divulge her conduct to Augustus, was a step which to his suspicious temper appeared fraught with danger: he therefore preferred a plan of retirement which was better suited to the gloomy habits of his soul.

Caius, the eldest son of Julia, and heir-apparent of Augustus, was now springing into manhood; he and his brother Lucius had both been presented to the senate, honoured with the name of Cæsar, and loaded with dignities which had never before been conferred on youths of their tender age. Tiberius, under a plea of delicacy, requested permission to retire, that he might not stand
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in the way of their preferment. He had already borne all the public offices of the state, had been twice consul, and had for five years been invested with the tribunitian authority. The resignation of so many honours had the appearance of forbearance and humility; but Augustus saw the misanthropy of his heart. He refused his permission to the departure of Tiberius, in which he was supported by Livia, who was much incensed at a plan which she conceived to be weak and impolitic, and which she feared would effectually impede the execution of her own designs. But Tiberius was firm. He avowed his intention of starving himself to death, if he were disappointed; and had actually been some days without food, when a passport from the emperor saved his life to be the scourge and bane of the family of his benefactor.

He immediately quitted the city, accompanied by the reluctant Julia. Out of respect to the son-in-law of the emperor,

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ror, many persons of distinction attended them to the place of embarkation; but the gloomy cynic maintained impenetrable silence on the road. He arrived at Ostia without having opened his lips to any one of the company; and at parting only coldly saluted a few of those who had so kindly attended him.*

The island of Rhodes was the place chosen by Tiberius for his retreat. Thither he and his small suite arrived in safety; and to a mind at ease the beauty of this celebrated spot might have afforded the most lively sensations of delight. But it is difficult to say, whether Tiberius or his wife was least qualified to enjoy the charms of nature. The sublime or the beautiful can produce no correspondent emotions, where malignity or sensuality have taken possession of the heart. To impurity or malevolence the exquisite gratifications of refined taste are unknown.

* Suetonius.

Julia, awakened from her dream of pleasure, was pursued by the gnawing worm of self-reproach. She found herself in the power of the man she had injured and hated; and while she walked in solitary sorrow through the Rhodian groves, she could only look back to scenes of infamy, or forward to the horrors of misery and disgrace. In the awful silence of retirement, the shade of Agrippa and the images of her children alternately arose to her imagination. The former with a frowning aspect accused her infidelity; the latter, clothed in infant innocence, reproved her foul desertion of the maternal character. Every recollection of the arts of Livia fixed a venomed shaft in her lacerated heart. She too late was sensible, that in forsaking the paths of virtue, she had involved not only herself, but her offspring, in a labyrinth of evil, from which there was no possibility of escape.

Augustus had given peace to the world, but he could not still the passions of the guilty

guilty breast. He had exalted his family to the pinnacle of human greatness, but while they looked down with pride on all that dwelt upon earth, they felt not in the situation to which they had been raised any real felicity. To the imperial family, however, did all the various nations which bowed beneath the yoke of Rome, direct their eyes with emotions of envy or admiration. The power of Augustus was felt in the remotest regions. Throughout every province of the empire his will was law. “*But though he meant not so, neither did his heart think so,*” he was but an instrument in the hand of Providence for fulfilling the eternal purposes of Divine wisdom. To this end, the peace which he established, the ordinances which he issued, and the rules of government which he adopted, were alike conducive. “He sent forth a decree that the world should be taxed,” and that decree, by leading the blessed Mary to the city of David, estab-

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blished her descent from the King of Israel, to whom it had been promised, that of him a prince should in after times be born, “ of whose kingdom there should be no end.”

While Augustus received from his fellow creatures the homage which was due to the great CREATOR; the obscure city of Bethlehem was pointed out by the star of heaven as the residence of Him “ in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.” To hail the auspicious event, multitudes of the heavenly host descended from on high, and while Augustus was listening with complacency to the flattering falsehoods of the Roman poets, angels were on the plains of Judea, sounding their glorious harps, “ praising God and saying, *Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace; good-will towards men!*”*

* See Note G.

CHAPTER IV.

Conduct of LIVIA to AGRIPPINA and her Brothers.—LUCIUS CÆSAR sent from Rome.—CAIUS CÆSAR married to LIVILLA; sent into Asia.—GERMANICUS assumes the manly Gown; married to AGRIPPINA.

CONTINUED TO THE 756TH YEAR OF
ROME; THIRD YEAR OF THE
CHRISTIAN ÆRA.

AGRIPPINA had too much sensibility to be indifferent to the conduct of her mother. It is not indeed probable, that she was made acquainted with her absolute guilt; but the ideas of propriety which she had imbibed from the dignified demeanour
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of Antonia, could not fail to be often shocked by the levity of Julia's manners and conversation. The pain she had thus experienced would reconcile her mind to a separation, which in any circumstances must have been amply recompensed by the absence of Tiberius, whose morose and sullen manners threw an unwelcome restraint upon the gaiety of his young relations. From the time he parted with Vipsania, there was nothing so odious to him as the sight of happiness; and as the vivacity of Agrippina must have rendered her particularly liable to offend in this way, it is not to be wondered that he conceived for her an aversion no less cordial than that which she had inspired in the breast of Livia.

Agrippina, with the thoughtlessness of youth, derided the impotent hatred of both son and mother. Secure of the affections of all who were truly dear to her, the darling of Augustus, the pride of Antonia, the beloved of Germanicus, had
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in her heart no room for the feelings of malevolence. One kind action would have rendered even Livia or Tiberius objects of interest to a mind overflowing with affection. But neither Livia nor her son ever put the gratitude of Agrippina to the test.

The empress, (for so we may be permitted to distinguish the wife of Augustus) was vexed and irritated by the conduct of Tiberius; but her resentment, instead of being directed against its proper object, was, with that injustice which is the never-failing concomitant of the malignant passions, vented on the innocent. Deprived of the object of her affection, if affection it may be called which is founded in ambition and self-love, she could not bear to observe the pleasure which Augustus derived from the company of his grandchildren. Caius and Lucius, whose education he had superintended with unwearied assiduity, were now the agreeable companions

companions of his days. The former had assumed the manly robe, and the title of prince of the Roman youth: the latter was fast approaching to the same honours, and by the quickness of his genius and the boldness of his undaunted spirit, was probably first in the favour of Augustus, as he certainly was in the hatred of Livia. Conscious of her ill-will, and no stranger to his own pretensions, he was too ardent to be always so guarded in his expressions, as not to leave room for a plausible complaint of disrespect.

A boy of fourteen was no match for the practised arts of one who had grown old in hypocrisy and intrigue. A charge of behaving disrespectfully to the empress was made out against the sprightly favourite; and Augustus was prevailed upon, however reluctantly, to gratify her resentment by sending his grandson into Campania, under the pretence of prosecuting his
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his studies to greater advantage at a distance from Rome.

Such a convincing proof of the pernicious ascendancy of Livia must inevitably strike deep into the heart of Agrippina. She felt the indignity that was thus offered to her brother; but was soothed (such was the effects of heathen morality!) by the hopes that a few years would put him in a situation to be revenged.

Augustus was now busily employed in endeavouring to regenerate the public morals, which it had been the easier business of his predecessor to corrupt. As a means of inspiring the people with a respect for religion, he increased the number and dignity of the priests, and added new honours and revenues to the vestal virgins.* By the death of one of these immaculate preservers of the paladium of Rome, a vacancy occurred about this period, which was to be filled as usual by a maid

* See Note II.

of noble birth. The senators were desired to give in the names of their daughters, that their merits might undergo a proper scrutiny, previous to the day of election. Many who were desirous of being excused, addressed themselves by petition to the emperor; who, exasperated at such a proof of Roman degeneracy, swore by a tremendous oath, that if any of his granddaughters had been of the age required, he should voluntarily have offered them to fill the honourable office! Agrippina might perhaps congratulate herself upon so narrow an escape; but had she been able to penetrate her future destiny, she would have deplored the circumstance which deprived her of an asylum, where she might have spent a peaceful life in the happiness of security and content!

Brighter scenes than those of calm contentment now occupied her youthful fancy. Agrippina beheld her elder brother advancing to maturity, and by the indulgence
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of Augustus and the fervility of the senate, invested with the public dignities at a much earlier period than ancient wisdom had authorised, or ancient modesty had pretended to solicit. His promising virtues rendered him an object of esteem to all, and his fraternal affection seemed the security of his father's family. His marriage with Livilla, which was celebrated without ostentation, imparted a peculiar satisfaction to Agrippina, as it closely connected her brother with Germanicus. She was not long permitted to enjoy the hopes that were thus excited. Livia, who dreaded that the consequence of these nuptials might increase the obstacles which stood in the way of her ambition, prevailed upon the emperor to honour the young Cæsar with an employment that would immediately separate him from his youthful bride. The command of the legions in Armenia was entrusted to Caius, with an establishment suitable to his dignity; but in consideration

deration of his youth and inexperience, it was thought adviseable that he should be accompanied by Lollius, who had been his domestic tutor, and was still permitted to retain some degree of authority over his former pupil. Lollius, like all who were placed about the grand-children of Augustus, was the creature of Livia, and it is sufficient to say that he proved himself worthy of the confidence of his patrons.

The tears which Agrippina shed on the departure of her brother, were those of affection and tenderness, sweetened by the idea of his preferment, and by the hopes of his returning with glory to the embraces of his family. A still dearer interest soon occupied her heart. Her Germanicus was now to change the short habit, or *prætecta*, for the manly robe; a period of much joy to the Roman youth, as it seemed to form a new æra in their existence. It may be believed, that no hands but those of Agrippina were employed

ployed in preparing the auspicious dress; and that as she proceeded in the delightful task, her fancy wove scenes of future happiness, bright and spotless as the texture of the fabric on which she was occupied. At length the wished-for day arrived. The young hero, attended by the numerous friends and relations of his family, went in solemn procession to the temple of Jupiter, where, after the performance of divine rites, he was invested with the white *toga** by the hands of Augustus; who then leading him into the forum, or great square of the city, which was the scene of all public transactions, presented the son of Drusus to the assembled multitude. The elegance of his person, the openness and intelligence of his fine countenance, and the air of modest dignity which marked his whole deportment, delighted the admiring crowd. Tears of joy bedewed the cheeks of the

* Note I.

hardy veterans, who had fought and conquered under the banners of his father. The name of Germanicus, which was endeared to all ranks in the community, was blest by every tongue. His auspicious entry into public life was hailed by the universal acclamations of a generous and affectionate people, who seemed from this period to have adopted his interests as their own.

In these delicious moments, the tender mother reaped the rich reward of all her anxious pains and unwearied assiduity. In the bloom of beauty she had withdrawn from an admiring world, and consecrated her days to the education of her children and the memory of her husband. She now with exultation could compare the result of her virtuous determination with the hollow and contemptible triumphs of vanity or ambition. The consciousness of having cherished in the bosom of her son those virtues which would do honour to the

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the name acquired by his father's valour, gave to the widowed heart of Antonia such a sensation of delight, as no votary of dissipation ever yet experienced. We may conceive the feelings with which she pronounced upon this occasion the maternal blessing; and as the character of Germanicus was distinguished for gratitude and piety, he could not be insensible to the happiness he enjoyed in being blest with such a mother as Antonia. His marriage with Agrippina, which must have taken place before he had attained his seventeenth year, completed his felicity; and could the biographer of real life imitate the example of the novelist, the reader might be left to suppose that a life of uninterrupted happiness was the inevitable consequence of the auspicious union. Happy indeed they could not fail to be, for their happiness was placed on the solid foundation of an intimate knowledge of each other's dispositions, and a sincere esteem of each

each

each other's virtues. Nature had been uncommonly liberal to both in every personal charm, and every mental endowment. The vivacity of Agrippina's temper was modified by the mild wisdom of Germanicus. That haughtiness which had been nurtured by early indulgence, was softened, and in the life-time of Germanicus even annihilated, by her respect for his opinion, and her strict ideas of duty; while his gentle virtues was perhaps roused to greater energy by her superior spirit and vivacity. Antonia found in her a daughter every way worthy of her affection; and the choice of Germanicus was (with the exception of Livia) blest with universal approbation.

Antonia required the happiness of Germanicus to console her for the unpromising disposition of her younger son. Claudius seemed to have been born with a deficiency of feeling and of intellect, which she would gladly have attributed to a weak
and

and sickly constitution ; but the powers of his mind did not strengthen with those of his body. It is not improbable that her anxiety for his improvement was in fact prejudicial to his faculties. His slow capacity was perhaps urged to the acquisition of knowledge at a period when attention and observation were yet weak and defective. As he did not want memory, he learned to read, and even to retain what he read, though it made no impression on any other faculty. Incapable of paying that attention to the manners of others that could teach him to form his own, he was perpetually erring against propriety ; and insensible to the feelings of those with whom he conversed, he could not correct himself by a sense of the impression that was made by his conduct. Perhaps his stupidity was increased by the injudicious zeal of his preceptors, and the habit of considering himself as inferior to his companions might actually increase the disparity.

Augustus

Augustus was little less mortified than Antonia at the dulness of Claudius. The following letter, preserved by Suetonius, will shew his sentiments upon the subject in the clearest light, and at the same time serve as a proof of the ascendancy of Livia, without whose concurrence no step relative to any branch of the family was now taken. The letter alluded to must have been written after the return of Tiberius, and consequently at a later period than we have yet arrived at in the memoirs of Agrippina; but it is now introduced, that the thread of the narrative may not afterwards be interrupted.

AUGUSTUS TO LIVIA.

“ I HAVE had some conversation with Tiberius, according to your desire, my dear Livia, as to what must be done with your grandson Claudius at the games of Mars. We are both agreed in this, that
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onte for all we ought to be determined what course to take with him. For if he be really perfect and entire, as I may say, with regard to his intellects, why should we hesitate to promote him by the same steps and degrees we did his brother? But if we find him indeed unfinished, and defective both in body and mind, we must beware of giving occasion for him and ourselves to be laughed at by the world, which is ready enough to make matters of this kind the subject of mirth and derision. We shall never be easy, if we are always to be debating upon every occasion of this kind, without coming to a final decision where he be really capable of public offices or not. With regard to what you consult me about at present, I am not against his superintending at the feasts of the priests, if he will suffer himself to be governed by his kinsman Silanus's son, that he may do nothing to make the people stare and laugh at him. But

I do

I do not approve of his seeing the Circensian games from the Pulvinar.* He will be there exposed to view in the very front of the theatre; you may, if you think proper, give our kinswoman Antonia this part of my letter to read."

In another letter he writes as follows:—
 "I shall invite the youth Claudius every day during your absence to supper, that he may not sup alone with his friend Sulpicius and Athenadorus. I wish he was more cautious and attentive in the choice of some person, whose motion, air, and gait, might be proper for the poor creature's imitation.

"In things of consequence he sadly fails."

Where his mind does not run astray, he discovers a noble disposition."

Augustus in a third letter says, "Let me die, my dear Livia, if I am not astonished, that your grandson Claudius should

* Note K.

declaim;

declaim so as to please me: for how he that talks so obscurely, should be able to declaim so clearly and properly, I cannot imagine." Augustus might easily have explained the mystery. When he declaimed, he used the ideas and the arrangement of others; when he conversed, he displayed the confusion of his own.

Antonia seems to have been sensibly mortified by the untoward genius of her younger son: but Germanicus pitied his weakness, and ever treated him with tenderness and affection.*

* Note L.

CHAPTER V.

LUCIUS CÆSAR sent to Marseilles; dies by Poison.—AUGUSTUS made acquainted with JULIA'S guilty Conduct; his Grief.—Trial of JULIA; her Banishment.—Death of CAIUS CÆSAR.—Recal of TIBERIUS; adopted by the Emperor.—GERMANICUS adopted by TIBERIUS.

TO THE YEAR 5 OF THE CHRISTIAN
ÆRA.—A. U. C. 758.

BLESSED in the tender love of her Germanicus, admired by all who saw, and careffed by all who were dear to her, Agrippina considered this world as an elysium, far fairer than the poet's fancy had ever feigned.

Next to her husband, her brothers held the dearest place in her affection.

Lucius

Lucius had been permitted to return from Campania to assist at her nuptials; and while his improvement did honour to the masters under whom he studied, his appearance indicated a spirit and capacity beyond his years. On his assuming the manly robe, he was presented to the people by Augustus in a set speech, which he concluded by entreating them to grant their favour to the youth according as he deserved it. The honours which had been conferred upon his brother, were by acclamation voted to Lucius; and the friends of the house of Cæsar rejoiced in the apparent strength of the Julian line.

By the advice of Livia, the command of the army in Spain, a province which enjoyed the most uninterrupted tranquillity, was granted to the young prince, as an initiation into the knowledge of military affairs; and that he might have no time for being injured by the dissipation of the capitol, his departure from Rome, was, by
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the provident wisdom of his step-mother, hastened as much as possible. Who were the companions of his journey, or by what route he travelled, cannot now be accurately known; but Agrippina had the pleasure of hearing that he reached Marfeilles in safety.

Marfeilles had risen to renown as a Grecian colony, and was for ages distinguished as a seat of learning, "where" in the elegant language of Tacitus, "the refinements of Greece were happily blended with the sober manners of provincial economy." Its schools of oratory and philosophy could not fail to attract the attention of a young man of vigorous talents and liberal education; and it was probably with regret, that Lucius took leave of the hospitable Marfeillans to proceed to the Spanish camp. Unconscious as the victim which crops the flowers that strew its path to the altar on which it is doomed to bleed, Lucius seized the present

sent moment of delight, and expected that futurity would only vary the scene of pleasure. But alas! before he left Rome, his fate had been decreed by Livia. The morning's sun which was to have guided him on his journey, beheld the unhappy youth a lifeless corse. The first bloody sacrifice offered by the empress at the shrine of ambition!

By whom the poison was administered is not clearly ascertained; and as all enquiry concerning it was quashed by the authority of her whose deed it was most justly considered, the name of the slave who was the blind instrument of her cruelty, has not been deemed worthy of notice by any historian.

A deed which filled Rome with horror and indignation, could not fail of making a still deeper impression on all who were more immediately interested in the fate of the unhappy youth. Those lively feelings which distinguished Agrippina, and rendered

dered her through all the scenes of her darkly-chequered life peculiarly susceptible of happiness or misery, brought agony to her heart. Alternately a prey to grief, to suspicion, and to the most distracting apprehension, for the lives of her remaining brothers, it would have been impossible for her in the presence of Livia to have restrained the emotions produced by the conflicting passions of her soul. Germanicus saw the danger to which she might be exposed, and wisely prevailed upon her to withdraw from observation. Soothed by the endearments of tender sympathy, she listened to the wise remonstrances of her husband ; and while she bedewed the memory of Lucius with her tears, abstained from complaint or accusation.

Whatever were the feelings or the suspicions of Augustus on the tragical fate of his favourite grandson, he did not betray such symptoms of emotion as could lead to their discovery ; but lest his mind, if permitted

permitted to dwell without interruption on the melancholy scene, should gather strength to turn on the viper whose venom threatened perdition to his blood, it was deemed necessary to direct his attention into an other channel.

The art of Livia, always fruitful in invention, contrived that the guilt of Julia should all at once burst on the mind of her unhappy father. Pride she well knew to be in his bosom a still stronger feeling than paternal affection. Nor was she disappointed in her expectations. No sooner was Augustus convinced of his daughter's infamy, than all the feelings of indignant honour shook his disordered soul. Shame and rage, grief and resentment, alternately took possession of his heart, till by the struggle of contending passions reason had nearly lost her seat.

He imprecated vengeance on the head of his child, he cursed the hour of her birth, and, as if he had wished the whole
world

world to sympathise in his despair, he sent a letter to the senate, describing in the most lively colours, the disgrace of Julia, and the anguish of his heart.*

A bill of divorce was instantly dispatched to Tiberius, with orders to send the unhappy Julia to Rome, there to expiate by death the crimes which had sullied the honour of her illustrious family. Letters from Livia accompanied this dispatch, which apprised Tiberius that his supplications in favour of his wretched wife would redound to the honour of his own clemency, but that there was no room to fear that they would have any effect in softening the stern heart of her incensed father.

Tiberius obeyed the imperial mandate with real joy, and well-feigned reluctance.

* Augustus soon repented of this indiscreet exposure of his daughter's guilt, and bitterly lamented the rashness with which he had thus published the scandal of his house. "If Agrippa or Mæcenæ had lived," he was heard to say, "I should have been restrained from this act of imprudence."—Seneca, as quoted by Ferguson.

He interceded for his guilty wife with such an appearance of candour and magnanimity, as was calculated to make her conduct appear still more inexcusable in the eyes of Augustus and of the world. But his character was already too well known to gain much credit, either with the emperor or the public, for pity or sincerity.

Agrippina heard with horror of her mother's crimes. Her virtuous mind was shocked at the idea of such impurity; her filial piety was wounded by being obliged to condemn the conduct of a parent. In trembling suspense she waited the hour of her arrival; now dreading that life might be the forfeit of her guilt, and again wishing that her crimes and sorrows might be buried in a watery grave. In the mean time, Sempronius Gracchus and Julius Antonius, the lovers of Julia, were brought to trial. They were both condemned: the former to perpetual banishment, the latter to suffer an ignominious death.

death. No one called in question the justice of the sentence. Gracchus had betrayed the confidence of friendship, and while he was under many obligations to Augustus and his son, had, by the seduction of Julia, brought dishonour on all with whom she was connected. Antonius was involved in still deeper guilt; to the ties of friendship he added those of blood, and the crime of adultery was aggravated by the sin of ingratitude. Yet his punishment was to a Roman less dreadful than that of his fellow-delinquent.*

The fate of Julia was perhaps more terrible than either. Augustus retracted the sentence of death, but doomed the once gay and thoughtless Julia to hopeless exile. A conscience filled with remorse, and a mind enervated by dissipation, are wretched companions in retirement; what must they then prove in a solitude never to be cheered by hope, never to be interrupted by soci-

* Note M.

ety! The island of Pandatoria, (now Santa Maria) in the Tuscan sea, was fixed upon as the place of her confinement. Thither she was hurried, without being permitted to take a last leave of her children; and by the commands of Augustus divested of all the ornaments of her rank, and humbled by the mean attire of a plebeian.

It was reported to the emperor, that Phœbe, the freed-woman and confidante of Julia, (whom we may, without impropriety, conjecture to have been one of those employed by Livia to corrupt the unsuspecting innocence of her youth) had in a fit of remorse hanged herself. "Would I had been the father of Phœbe, rather than of Julia!" was the emphatic reply of Augustus.*

The wound which a mother's disgrace had inflicted in the filial heart of Agrippina still continued to bleed, when the promised return of her elder brother gave a salutary check to her affliction, and re-

* Suetonius.

vived

vived the drooping spirits of her family. The presence of Caius was anxiously expected by his sister, not only on account of the pleasure she naturally hoped to receive in the society of a beloved brother, but as she thought it necessary to the support and protection of his relations, and of his younger brother in particular. Poor Posthumus had been in infancy awed into timidity by the harsh austerity of the empress; but the unfortunate boy had an ingenuous temper and an affectionate heart; and to his sister the natural kindness of his disposition was shewn without disguise. She encouraged him to hope that the restraint in which he was now held, was soon to terminate; and that on the return of Caius he would find a friend, who had sufficient interest with Augustus to counteract the insidious arts by which Livia so successfully endeavoured to create a prejudice against his unoffending innocence. The consular dignity, to which Caius had been elected,

electèd, could not fail of arming him with such an authority as might be fatal to the murderers of the unhappy Lucius. His arrival was expected with impatience by all who either hated the arrogance or dreaded the resentment of the haughty Livia ; and it is probable that his young bride, whom he had been obliged so precipitately to leave, was not so devoid of attachment to the gallant youth, as to think with indifference of the expected moment that was to restore him to her arms. But alas ! that moment was never destined to arrive. While she indulged the dream of happiness, Livilla was already a widow !

The heavy tidings of the prince's death were brought by a courier from Syria ; for so far had the ill-fated Caius proceeded on his journey homeward from Armenia, when a fatal period was put to his progress and his life. Consternation and dismay spread through the palace, and from the palace were soon diffused over the city.

The

The account succinctly stated, that he had died at Lydia, and that his death was *occasioned by a wound*.

From what hand was the wound received? was the general question.

The answers were vague and contradictory; nor did any statement of the fact ever appear that was sufficiently authentic to clear from suspicion the character of Lollius. The prince's tutor was too high in the favour of Livia, to be arraigned for the murder; but in the public mind he never was acquitted of the charge.

This second blow was more than Agrippina could support. She now to a certainty was convinced, that both her brothers had been inhumanly murdered by the same relentless hand: for whoever were the instruments, it was Livia, the cruel Livia, who dealt the deadly wound. The murder of Lucius had been attributed to personal malice, and particular resentment for a supposed offence; but in the death

death of Caius the views of the empress were too palpably displayed to admit of doubt. To open the succession to Tiberius, the two princes were cut off in the bloom of youth, and the career of glory; when their opening virtues had just began to attract the esteem and admiration of the world. Would the unhappy Posthumus long remain the only surviving obstacle to his ambition? Alas! in the fate of his brothers all saw the doom of the unfortunate boy, whose mind had been purposely injured in hopes of giving a shew of justice to the blackest inhumanity.

The guilt of Livia was known and abhorred; but who dared accuse the wife of Augustus of the crime of murder? That noble intrepidity which braves all personal danger in the cause of justice and humanity, is the inheritance of freemen; the cautious policy of selfishness is the only wisdom known to slaves.

The

The introduction of domestic assassination was considered by the Romans with horror, and she who set the first example of a deed so atrocious, was detested by every honest mind; but the murmurs of indignation were secret, and such was the degeneracy of the times, that they who were conscious of having uttered them with most asperity, were perhaps the foremost to pay their court to the empress, in order to conceal their guilt.

The malign influence of Livia over the mind of Augustus had already alienated his heart from all who had a natural claim to his affection. She, and she alone, was now necessary to his happiness. The composure with which he bore the melancholy fate of his sons, was considered less as a proof of fortitude than of insensibility. The courtiers, with admirable versatility, took the tone from the sovereign, and ceased to mourn those whom Cæsar had ceased to lament. The pious
resignation

resignation was approved by the smiles of Livia, and the names of Caius and of Lucius were soon consigned to oblivion in the regions of the palace.

The soul of Agrippina was superior to disguise. She could not even bear the appearance of being imposed upon by the hypocritical sympathy of the wretch who had embued her hands in the blood of her beloved brothers. Respect for Germanicus might seal her lips; but no consideration could prevail on her to assume the semblance of esteem for the woman she abhorred. Her present situation was an apology for retirement, and the birth of a son gave a new object to her solicitude. The anguish of her heart was soothed by the feelings of maternal tenderness, and in the moment that she presented the little Nero to the arms of Germanicus, she might possibly forget that she had ever been afflicted. But sorrows such as she had experienced, give too deep a tone to the feelings,

ings, to admit of an immediate change. It is more than probable, that while she hung with a mother's fondness over her sleeping infant, the dangers to which he might hereafter be exposed, would involuntarily intrude upon her fancy, and by the anguish of anxiety chasten the fervour of hope.

While the cruel Livia was paving the way for the advancement of Tiberius, by the destruction of her husband's family; the son of her idolatry was wasting his gloomy hours in the solitude of Rhodes, a prey to abortive malevolence, and unavailing discontent. Augustus, with all the appearance of suavity and complaisance, could not brook the shadow of opposition. The love of power had been the ruling passion of his life. He had now for years been accustomed to despotic sway. His word, nay even his look, was considered as law, by all who approached him. Livia took advantage of his weakness, and made this
 tenacious-

tenaciousness of authority the instrument of her ambition. By an appearance of abject submission to his will, she governed him with an authority more absolute than he had ever ruled the meanest slave. She hoped that she had taught Tiberius an equal share of dissimulation. But the stubbornness of his temper, and the strength of his passions, made him somewhat of a less accomplished hypocrite. Though opposed by Augustus in his sudden resolution of retiring from Rome, he had obstinately persisted in the design; the hopes of being able to punish, or at least to mortify his wife, being at that time a motive more powerful than the fear of the emperor's resentment.

That he did not put an end to his uneasiness by the murder of Julia, is rather extraordinary; but as we cannot suppose him to have been restrained by any scruple of conscience, we may believe that he was deterred by a fear of detection; or, that as Julia was surrounded by her own people,
and

and treated with all the respect due to her rank, he might even find it impossible to execute such a plan of vengeance. If he indeed ever harboured such a scheme, and was obliged to relinquish it, the disappointment would not fail to add to the irksomeness of his situation. Be that as it may, he soon became disgusted with retirement, and solicited the emperor's leave to return to Rome. But Augustus determined to mortify that pride which had dared to oppose his inclination. He sternly refused compliance with his request; and upon a second supplication, in which Tiberius most humbly declared, that his only intention in retiring from Rome was a point of delicacy with regard to the young princes, who were now of an age to secure their own dignity, and to obviate all suspicions of rivalry; and his only motive for desiring to return was the wish of visiting his beloved relations; Augustus replied, that " he might lay aside all concern for his

his relations, whom he had left with so much indifference.”*

On the condemnation of Julia, he again renewed his solicitations with no better success; and as the friendship of courtiers is regulated by the favour of the monarch, it was no sooner imagined that he was in disgrace with Augustus, than he sunk into an object of universal hatred and contempt.

Of all the trials to which the human mind is exposed, there appears to be none more difficult to support with dignity than a state of exile. The annals of ancient history present upon this subject to the philosophic enquirer a number of curious and interesting facts. We shall there find, that the so much admired virtue of the heroes and sages of antiquity was a sunshine plant, which expanded its fair foliage in the hour of prosperity, but shrunk and withered in the winter's storm. Could conscious rectitude afford a sufficient support in the adverse

* Suetonius

turns of fortune, we should not have to blush for the pusillanimous wailings of the virtuous Cicero, in the short-lived period of disgrace. Could the certainty of public celebrity impart satisfaction to the human mind, Ovid might have smiled at the vengeance of Augustus, in the confidence that the name of the poet would be as immortal as that of the emperor. Could patriotism and courage sustain the soul, Cato and Brutus might have outlived the triumph of despotism, and smiled at the malignity of fortune. To brave the transient pain of death, is to a mind elevated by the tone of passion an effort of no great magnitude: but to bear with firmness and magnanimity the trials of adversity, where there is no eye to witness, and no spectator to applaud; to evince the same resolution, and to practise the same virtue, in the dreary shade of solitude, as on the theatre of an admiring world; requires the support of principles more
powerful

powerful than heathen philosophy could inspire.*

If to minds possessed of every moral virtue a state of exile appeared a calamity so very insupportable, we need not be surpris'd, that one who had so few resources as Tiberius, should find it still more dreadful. His was not indeed without hope of a speedy termination; for he could not believe that the interest of Livia would prove unequal to obtaining any object on which she set her heart. But he felt the bitterness of neglect; and a temper already soured by chagrin was still farther irritated by disappointment. Instead of those liberal pursuits which might have had a salutary influence in allaying the perturbed passions of the soul, the weak desire of prying into futurity made him addict himself to the science of astrology, which the superstition of the times had brought into repute. The trial he made of the abilities of Thrafullus, a celebrated

* Note N.

master of this pretended science, presents such a striking a view of the character of Tiberius, and of the superstition of the times, that I shall beg leave to give the anecdote in the words of the historian.

“ Whenever he chose to consult an astrologer,” says Tacitus, “ he retired with him to the top of the house, attended by a single freedman selected for the purpose, illiterate, but of great bodily strength. This man conducted the soothsayer, whose talents were to be tried, along the ridge of the cliff on which the mansion stood; and as he returned, if the emperor suspected fraud or vain affectation of knowledge, he threw the impostor headlong into the sea. Tiberius was by these means left at ease, and no witness survived to tell the story. Thrasullus was put to the same test. Being led along the precipice, he answered a number of questions; and not only promised imperial splendour to Tiberius, but opened a scene of future events,

events, in a manner that filled his imagination with astonishment. Tiberius desired to know whether he had cast his own nativity? Could he foresee what was to happen in the course of the year? Nay, on that very day? Thrafullus consulted the position of the heavens, and the aspect of the planets: he was struck with fear—he paused—he hesitated—he sunk into profound meditation—terror and amazement shook his frame. Breaking silence at last, ‘I perceive,’ he said, ‘the crisis of my fate; this very moment may be my last.’ Tiberius clasped him in his arms, congratulating him both on his knowledge, and on his escape from danger. From that moment he considered the predictions of Thrafullus as the oracles of truth, and the astrologer was ranked in the number of the prince’s confidential friends.”

Without consulting the stars, the cunning soothsayer might have foretold with certainty, that the anxiety of Tiberius to

know his future fortune was prompted by an ambition, which was not very likely to be deterred from the attainment of its object by any considerations of pity or remorse.

Eight years did Tiberius spend in the gloom of solitude, a prey to chagrin, and all the passions allied to impotent ambition. His temper was not, perhaps, by nature prone either to wrath or cruelty. Had his mother perished in the hour of his birth, the son of Claudius Nero might have been virtuous and happy. By early associating in his mind the idea of glory with absolute power, she gave the selfish passions an ascendancy over the social; and by teaching him that dissimulation was the first attribute of wisdom, she extinguished the generous principles of truth and honour, and rendered him perpetually liable to the torture of suspicion. The malevolent passions that were thus introduced into the heart, were augmented by the very effort

effort of concealment. Let us not however believe, that they at once conquered every feeling, and extirpated all the sympathetic affections. Their progress was gradual; but like the slow disease which attacks the vital organs of the human frame, they imperceptibly increased in malignity, till at length they corrupted the whole mass.

Upon the death of Caius, Livia renewed her solicitations for the return of Tiberius; whose presence was so necessary to console her well-feigned affliction, that the emperor, softened by grief, and subdued by the appearance of sympathy, consented without reluctance to her wishes. A constitution always delicate was now sinking under the infirmities of declining age; and the assistance of a young man noted for prudence and discretion appeared to Augustus as a very desirable object. Esteem and affection would have pointed to Germanicus, as the person most eminently qualified to supply the place of a lamented son.

The

The endowments of his mind, the integrity of his heart, and the urbanity of his temper, recommended the son of Drusus to the favour of Augustus, and had secured to him the affections of the people; who eagerly believed, that should he succeed to the imperial dignity, the restoration of their liberties would be the sole object of his generous ambition. It is possible, that a knowledge of their sentiments, their hopes, and wishes, might impart an apprehension that the popularity of a youth so much and so deservedly beloved would shade the setting glories of his reign. This apprehension, added to the knowledge of Livia's hatred of Agrippina, and the fears of having his peace interrupted by domestic dissention, was the probable cause of his determination in favour of Tiberius. But that Germanicus might not be removed from all hopes of succession, the emperor stipulated with Tiberius, that on the same day on which he was adopted
by

by him, he should on his part adopt Germanicus.

Augustus, though by the pernicious arts of Livia, he had been in some measure alienated from his family, was not entirely devoid of natural affection. The innocent Posthumus, whose shyness and timidity had been craftily misrepresented by the empress as fullness and pride, was neither overlooked nor set aside. His adoption preceded that of Tiberius, who was considered by Augustus as the guardian of his tender years.

What were the sentiments of Agrippina upon these several arrangements can only be conjectured from a knowledge of her temper, and general mode of thinking and acting. The fatal catastrophe of her elder brothers could inspire her with little hope in regard to the fate of Posthumus, who was as much their inferior in abilities as in years. Nor is it likely that the near connexion with Tiberius, whose children she and her husband had now become by adoption,

adoption, would be at all agreeable to a mind like hers. Her independent spirit must have revolted at being thus made subject to the absolute control of the man to whom she attributed her mother's disgrace, and for whose sake she knew her brothers to have been cruelly sacrificed. Whatever were her feelings, the interests of her family rendered an appearance of acquiescence in the will of Augustus an act of duty; and she had too much good sense to murmur, where she must inevitably submit.

Tiberius set the example of the obedience which he exacted. After his adoption, he never exercised any of the rights of a free citizen, but in every respect became subordinate to his new father; not even taking the liberty of giving freedom to a slave in his own name, nor of accepting any gift or legacy, but as a part of the allowance which was from that time his due. This ostentatious parade of duty was amply recompensed by substantial benefits,

nefits, and the appearance of humility rewarded by unlimited authority. The tribunitian dignity, which in fact was equivalent to supreme power, was conferred upon him for five years, and was followed by a special commission to settle the state of Germany. Called by his new office to take the command of the army in a remote province, his absence relieved Germanicus and Agrippina from the insupportable burthen which restraint imposes upon the generous and sincere.

The marriage of Julia, Agrippina's younger sister, took place about this time, and diffused an air of cheerfulness and joy. Augustus gave her hand to a noble patrician, whose family was worthy of the honourable alliance. The character of Paulus Æmilius Lepidus never rose to distinguished eminence, but he was a man of birth and fair reputation, and as such deserved a better wife.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Banishment of AGRIPPA POSTHUMUS.—Reflections on the Conduct of AUGUSTUS.—Domestic Life of AGRIPPINA.—Domestic Economy of the Romans.—Importance attached to Education.—Slavery.—Literature.—Popularity of GERMANICUS.

A. D. 5 TO 10.—A. U. C. 763.

AGRIPPINA was not long permitted to enjoy the tranquillity which the absence of Tiberius was calculated to produce. It did not require her acuteness of penetration to predict the fate of the unfortunate Posthumus; but so willing is affection to grasp at hope, that she might sometimes flatter herself, that Livia would
be

be contented with having rendered the poor youth so apparently insignificant, as to be no longer an object of jealousy or apprehension. But Livia argued in a very different manner. By the adoption of his grandson, Augustus had shewn that he still considered him as the natural representative of his family; and however successful she had been in fixing an imputation of stupidity and stubbornness on the unhappy boy, the unoffending innocence of his life put it out of her power to make him be believed guilty of any positive crime. As he advanced to maturity, he might by degrees conquer that mingled sensation of timidity and pride, which she had hitherto found it easy to represent as the certain proofs of an intractable disposition. He was now approaching to his fifteenth year, and should he be permitted to assume the manly gown, and to be presented to the people as the son of the emperor, the popularity of his elder brothers might be transferred

to him; and warned by their fate, he might, under the protection of Germanicus, be effectually placed beyond her reach. No time was therefore to be lost. By what arguments she prevailed upon the emperor, it is not easy to conjecture. But she so far succeeded in her wicked designs, that Agrippa Posthumus was banished to Planasia, a small island on the coast of Etruria, now known by the name of Pianosa. There, under the care of able tutors, and with an establishment suitable to his rank, he was to prosecute his studies; but none who were acquainted with Livia, harboured an expectation of his return.

Augustus, conscious of the opinion that would be entertained of this event, apologised for his conduct, by declaring that the boy was rude and unmanageable; but the meekness of his submission, and the innocence of his life, contradicted the assertion; and the weakness of an uxorious husband tamely yielding to the ascendancy of a wicked

wicked wife was considered as the true explanation of the transaction.

Accustomed from our early years to hear the reign of Augustus mentioned as the most glorious period of history, all the ideas which constitute our notions of a hero are associated with his name. Dazzled by the success which attended his ambition, we too readily forget or pardon the crimes by which it was polluted. A flattering and exaggerated portrait of his virtues was the reward of his patronage of literature; and the vices of his successors gave to the representation all the force of contrast. But when we lay aside all partiality and prejudice, we shall view in Augustus a striking example of the vanity of ambition, and the inconsistency of human pride. He who was saluted master of the universe, before whom kings fell prostrate, and to whose statues divine honours were offered, was himself the slave of an imperious woman. He who had
conquered

conquered the legions of Brutus and of Anthony, and who had triumphantly trampled on the expiring embers of liberty, wanted either the power or the resolution to protect his own offspring. Ensnared by the arts of an insidious hypocrite, he tamely permitted the cruel destruction of those children whose infancy he had cherished with all the fondness of affection, and whose education he had watched with all the anxiety of parental tenderness. Had the angry ghost of Cicero demanded a sacrifice, the offerings made by Livia of the sons of Julia would have appeased its utmost vengeance. But Augustus, lulled by the voice of flattery, appeared insensible to the ignominy of a conduct marked by pusillanimity and guilt.

The five years which followed the banishment of Posthumus, were passed by Agrippina in the bosom of domestic peace. Two other sons were in that period added to her family, who had the names of Drusus and

and Caius; and these, with their elder brother Nero, were little less dear to the emperor than to their parents. Augustus was not only fond but proud of his great-grand-children; and upon hearing that a severe tax upon bachelors had excited murmurs among the young nobility, he carried these infants to the theatre, and holding Caius upon his own knee, while he placed Nero and Drusus on their father's, he significantly pointed to the children and to Germanicus, saying that "none need be ashamed to imitate the example of a young man so deservedly respectable."*

Germanicus did not stand in need of the encomiums of Augustus to recommend him to popular applause. He was already endeared to all ranks in the community, and had the rare felicity of enjoying universal esteem, without exciting the malevolence of envy. In Germanicus were seen the dignified virtues of an ancient

* Suetonius.

republican,

republican, blended with all the graces of modern politeness. Fond of literature, he was learned without the ostentation of learning. Gentle and modest in his manners, yet known to be brave, intrepid, and magnanimous. While his vigorous talents were equal to the most ardent enterprize, and would have sustained with dignity the weight of empire, his ambition seemed confined to the sole object of an unspotted reputation. Early taught by the precepts of Antonia to consider virtue as the truest glory, Germanicus disdained all other objects of pursuit. His liberality was untinged by vanity, and his charity flowed from the pure source of a benevolent heart.

In the faithful affection of such a husband Agrippina could not fail to enjoy the most exalted species of human felicity. Inspired by the same taste, they equally disdained the puerile amusements which are necessary to fill the heavy hours that would otherwise be insupportable to the rich and idle. Minds so accomplished as those of

this amiable pair are too opulent to require the aid of such poor resources. Susceptible of all the delicate and refined pleasures which the contemplation of the works of genius can produce, they devoted their leisure to the study of the best authors, and enjoyed the luxury of conversing with the most illustrious characters.

Germanicus and Agrippina, like others of the same rank, divided their time betwixt town and country. But while the country-houses of Mæcenas, and even of Horace and of Virgil, were so conspicuous as to have attracted the attention of posterity, no vestige remains to point out the residence of Germanicus. It is therefore probable, that the same simplicity which distinguished his manners dictated the choice of his habitation; and that while almost the great men of Rome vied with each other in the number and the elegance of their rural villas,* the son of Drusus was

* Nemo O.

contented

contented to confer dignity upon the place of his abode, instead of seeking to derive consequence from its magnificence.

Whether in town or country, the crowds of clients who were eager to shew their respect by a personal attendance on their patrons, and the number of slaves appropriated to every department of the domestic economy, rendered retirement, strictly speaking, impossible to a person of high station. Augustus, when he wished to be free of all interruption, went to the house of one of his freedmen, where he found himself at liberty to read or write without fear of intrusion; and when indisposed, commonly took up his residence with Mæcenas. So difficult was it to find repose in the habitation of a prince!

The superintendance of the family, which in former times had formed an essential part of the duties of a wife, was in these days entrusted to a number of deputies, who in their separate departments exercised an absolute

folute authority over the inferior domestics. This delegation of trust was more or less definite, according to the character and abilities of the mistress. While those who had like Agrippina been educated in the sobriety of republican manners, still considered an attention to household economy as one of their primary duties ; such as had imbibed the modern ideas of pleasure, gave themselves neither care nor trouble concerning any domestic arrangement. The houses of the latter consequently exhibited scenes of dissipation and extravagance, such as modern folly can never hope to equal.*

In the house of Germanicus riot and confusion were unknown. The number of domestic slaves rendered it necessary to institute a rigid discipline; but as obedience to rules is always less grievous than subjection to caprice, it may be inferred, that those who lived under the roof of Germa-

* Note P.

nicus and Agrippina, had no reason to complain of any peculiar hardship.

That contempt for indolence which the ancient Romans had been at so much pains to cherish as a republican virtue, continued still in some degree to operate, and to diffuse a spirit of activity through every part of the domestic economy. The times indeed were now approaching, when idleness, under the auspices of folly and vanity, was to be brought into fashion, and considered as one of the distinguished privileges of the great; but as we are informed that Augustus never wore a robe which was not fabricated by the hands of his wife, his daughter, or his grand daughter, we may infer that the Roman ladies of his time were in general strangers to idleness and ennui. And if

“To guide the spindle, and direct the loom,”

were still considered as part of the essential duties of a virtuous matron; we have every reason to conclude, that in the apartment
 appro-

appropriated to the various branches of domestic manufacture Agrippina was no stranger.

Every thing was made at home. And though luxury had ere now introduced the fashions and the silks of Persia, pride, or shame, or economy, prevented the Romans from wearing the productions of a foreign loom in the state in which they had been imported. The webs of silk were unravelled, and wrought up anew with an equal mixture of linen or woollen yarn: An opportunity was thus given for the display of taste in the invention of new patterns. Agrippina, while she arranged the glossy threads, could not but admire their inimitable beauty; but had no conception of the manner of their formation. Believing silk to be a vegetable production of some unknown region, she might amuse her fancy by forming conjectures concerning the appearance of the parent plant; but natural history was a science in which so
little

little progress had then been made, that no object belonging to that important branch of human knowledge excited much curiosity.

While presiding over the labours of her attendant nymphs, Agrippina often listened to some favourite author, whose works were read to her by a young female slave instructed for the purpose. Nor did this retard the progress of her embroiderers, or give any interruption to the busy shuttle; it being one of the inestimable advantages of industry, that it gives a stimulus to the power of attention, and increases its capacity in such a degree that what was at first difficult soon appears to be mechanical. The robes that were manufactured by Agrippina's damsels, however they might be ornamented by embroidery, which was now much in fashion, were of a close and solid fabric. It was not till the succeeding age that they were worn of so thin a texture as to attract the notice of the satirist, and to give just offence to delicacy. Taste had

not as yet been thus far corrupted by licentiousness, and consequently modesty was not in the days of Agrippina openly violated in the dress of those who had any wish to be considered as virtuous.

A predilection for the principles that had guided the conduct of the venerable matrons of former times, had been early implanted by Antonia in the mind of her daughter-in-law. Hence, doubtless, arose that loftiness of spirit, which disdained to seek for glory in those puerile objects to which so many of her sex directed their ambition. The praise of excelling in beauty, wit, elegance, or learning, was to her not sufficiently gratifying, unless sentiments of respect and esteem were mingled with those of admiration.

As the sphere of her duties enlarged, her anxiety to fulfill them increased in an equal proportion; and as of all the duties to which she was now called, the care and instruction of her children appeared the most important, it may be believed that she applied with

ed with assiduity to the delightful task. In an affair of such moment Agrippina was too wise to be guided by the caprice of fashion. Considering that plan of education which had produced the greatest and the wisest men as most worthy to be adopted, she endeavoured to follow the method that had been pursued in former times. In those times, the first words lisped by the infant tongue had been to the Roman ladies a signal for commencing the labour of instruction. Sensible of the advantages of a distinct articulation, they wisely endeavoured, while the organs of speech were flexible, to form them to the pronounciation of every difficult sound. By this attention alone it is that children can acquire such a command of those organs, as is not only essential to eloquence, but highly useful in bestowing a facility in the acquirement of every foreign language. From the time that a child could speak, no inaccuracy of expression was permitted to pass unnoticed; and

and that they might be enabled thus to lay a foundation for that pre-eminence in the art of oratory, which was a primary object of ambition, ladies of rank assiduously cultivated the study of their native language. They learned to speak with peculiar purity and elegance, and valued themselves upon this accomplishment, as one that could be rendered useful to their offspring.

No sooner did it become fashionable to consign the tender period of infancy to the care of slaves and mercenaries, than oratory declined: nor was it oratory alone that suffered by this pernicious change, since to the same cause may fairly be attributed the decline of taste.

To render the mind susceptible of the emotions of sublimity or beauty, is not a task to be performed by the vulgar. To persons of this description the rules of criticism may indeed be known, and by pedants they may be applied with great assiduity;

gacity; but to feel, to admire, and to enjoy excellence of every kind and species, is a privilege that not "all the learning of the schools" can bestow on a coarse or vulgar mind.

In fixing the associations by which this sensibility may in some respects be said to be created, the virtuous and well-educated mother possessed so many advantages over the servile or mercenary preceptor, that we cannot be surpris'd at her superior success. To the instructions of Cornelia historians have attributed the eloquence of the Gracchi; and it was from Atia that Augustus acknowledged having derived those mental accomplishments which endeared him to the Roman people. Nor did the first and greatest characters of the Roman world scruple to confess similar obligations to the virtuous matrons from whom they derived their birth.

Women so capable of instructing their sons must have made no small progress in
taste.

taste, knowledge, and literature. They were in fact highly accomplished: and as all their accomplishments tended to some useful purpose, they were unaccompanied by vanity.

Greek, the only language besides their own which the Romans thought worthy their attention, was assiduously cultivated by every person of liberal education. Agrippina both wrote and conversed in the Greek tongue with facility and elegance; and it is probable, that it was from her that her children received their first instructions in this as in other branches of knowledge. What taste she had in music cannot now be ascertained; but the notions of propriety that were still prevalent, left the ambition of excelling as musical performers to their Greek slaves. Ladies, however fond of music, were content to listen; nor did it occur to them, that any glory was to be acquired by rivalling in their art those public performers who were
often

often the most depraved and worthless of the human race.

Compared to the depravity of after-times, Rome was in the days of Augustus virtuous. To the cotemporaries of Agrippina, the disgusting description of the profligacy of female manners, given by the satirist of a succeeding age, was by no means applicable. Many were indeed vicious, but as few had yet arrived at that pitch of iniquity as openly to glory in their shame, it is but reasonable to presume, that the numbers were on the side of virtue. We shall have the greater reason to acquiesce in this conclusion, from the respect that was as yet paid to the female character. And it will be observed by every attentive reader of Roman history, that it was not till men were no longer indebted to maternal instruction, that they relinquished those sentiments of respect for the sex, which few who have owed much
mental

mental improvement to a mother's care, have ever failed to feel.

The character of Antonia had been too much venerated by her son, to permit him to entertain that contempt for the female mind, which, by removing every idea of equality, frequently renders the hymeneal chain so galling. He did not consider Agrippina in the light of an inferior an irrational being, incapable of entering into his sentiments, and unworthy of his confidence and friendship. He knew that it was not the honour of sharing in her husband's studies, nor the consciousness of being the chosen companion of his serious hours, that would lead her to neglect the peculiar duties of her situation, or to go beyond her sphere. The conduct of Agrippina did honour to her husband's discernment, and rewarded his tenderness. By her active mind every hour was occupied by its appropriate duties, and of these the improvement of her understanding was neither last nor least. Embued

Embued from her earliest years with a taste for literature, she delighted to listen to the conversations that were held at her husband's table by the most learned men of the age. Supper, the favourite repast of the Romans, and the only meal at which the family regularly assembled, commenced rather earlier than the modern hour of dinner ; and sometimes lasted till the evening was far advanced. But the time spent at table was not lost. It was then that Agrippina had the opportunity of hearing such discussions on every interesting subject, as strengthened her understanding, and improved her taste.

Gluttony, the vice of the base and degenerate, must ever be held in abhorrence by superior minds. It was for the pleasure of society, more than for the luxury of the table, that the friends of Germanicus rejoiced in an invitation to his hospitable board. Both in the town and country-houses of the Romans the apartment allotted

lotted to the social meal was situated in the upper part of the house, a circumstance necessary, in the first instance, for securing the enjoyment of quiet, and advantageous in the second, by affording to the visitors at the rural villa the opportunity of viewing without fatigue the beauties of its prospects. The social repast was in some respects considered as a sacred rite. The table was consecrated by the images of the household gods, in whose presence it would in ancient times have been deemed indecorous to utter a word inconsistent with purity and virtue. These deities were deemed the guardians of the stranger, and became securities for his protection and the rites of hospitality.*

The ideas of reverence that were thus connected with the social board, rendered the time of meals the most favourable season for discussing the most serious topics. Associations so deeply fixed could not be

* Note Q.

easily

easily changed; and accordingly we find, that even after luxury had corrupted all the institutions of the primitive ages, the custom of having a reader to entertain the company during supper with the works of some favourite author was still observed. At the conclusion of the meal these well-known compositions gave place to those of later date. As indolence and inanity had not yet become the characteristics of a fine gentleman, most of those who had any ambition to be distinguished either at the bar or in the senate, could boast of some literary production worthy the attention of their friends. These effusions of genius, whether in prose or verse, it was customary for the author to read to a select audience previous to publication; that thus having it in his power to profit by the observations of friends, on whose taste and judgment he could rely, he might be fortified against the cavils of meaner critics.*

* Note R.

As writing was not then a trade, fame was the generous object of the author's ambition; and as criticism was paid for in the same unsubstantial coin as all other efforts of literary taste, and as it moreover required intellect of the highest order, and information of the most extensive and multifarious kind, few authors engaged in it, that were not perfectly qualified for the undertaking. Envy must indeed in all ages have equally hated the success that attended merit, and ill-nature must have been then, as in after-times, delighted with every opportunity of detraction: but the criticisms of malignity have not been thought worthy of preservation; they have perished with the passions that produced them, nor can we regret that it is only those of a more useful and generous nature that have escaped the wreck of time.

The custom above alluded to, of reading aloud the compositions of the closet in the presence of a numerous audience, is utterly repugnant

repugnant to our ideas of delicacy, and indeed seems incompatible with that sensibility which is so generally found connected with genius. But to our refined notions of delicacy the Romans were entirely strangers. No man was ashamed of praising himself, or of openly soliciting the applause of others; and as the approbation of persons of approved taste was sought after with an avidity, of which we can scarcely form any conception, we may believe that Agrippina was often called to listen to the literary productions of her friends.

Germanicus cultivated a taste for poetry, and wrote some tragedies in the Greek language, which are spoken of as excellent. We cannot now pronounce upon their merits, but they are a proof that his leisure hours were devoted to the elegant gratifications of a superior mind. Nor did poetry alone engross the attention of this accomplished prince. Learned in the laws of his country, and distinguished as an orator, he
 exerted

exerted his talents and his eloquence in the cause of truth and virtue. Even after he had arrived at the dignity of consul, he appeared at the forum as the supporter of injured innocence. At the bar, or in the senate, whether the interests of the public or of individuals became the subject of discussion, he zealously espoused the cause of justice and humanity. To defend the weak from the oppression of the mighty, to bring guilt to punishment, and to rescue innocence from the snares of the destroyer, were objects worthy of Germanicus. For these noble purposes he often exchanged the consular robe for the pleader's gown; and such was the high opinion formed of his character, and so far did the fame of his generosity extend, that his patronage and protection were assiduously sought after not only by the towns of Italy but even by foreign states.

Agrippina shewed upon all occasions such a lively interest in her husband's fame, that

she could not but exult in every proof of his increasing and far-extended popularity. A cautious prudence would have dictated reserve in the expression of these sentiments; but cautious prudence was not the characteristic of Agrippina. She gloried in mortifying Livia, by exaggerating every proof of public favour shewed to Germanicus. She delighted in convincing her, that Germanicus was the favourite of the people; and that Tiberius, however favoured by Augustus, was still the object of public aversion and contempt.

By this imprudence Agrippina, while she neither added to her husband's reputation, nor her own happiness, increased the hatred which rankled in the bosom of her step-mother, and awakened the sullen jealousy of Tiberius. It is thus, alas! that ardent minds, by rashly yielding to the impulse of the moment, so frequently become accessory to their own misfortunes!

CHAPTER VII.

Marriage of DRUSUS.—Public Amusements.

—*Death of CAIUS.—TIBERIUS and GERMANICUS sent to quell the Revolt in Dalmatia.—Their Return.—Defeat of VARUS.—AGRIPPINA accompanies her Husband to Germany.—Returns to Rome.—Birth of CALIGULA.—Second Expedition into Germany.—Death of AUGUSTUS.—Murder of AGRIPPA POSTHUMUS.*

FROM A. D. 9, TO A. D. 14,

HOWEVER they might be disposed to relish the pleasures of retirement, it was not possible for Germanicus and Agrippina to taste often of its sweets. Time, that inestimable talent which those who fill a private station have it in their power to spend

spend as inclination prompts, comes burthened with a thousand taxes to the envied great, who frequently live less to themselves than to the world. Of these sacrifices of time, the constant attendance at public spectacles, which, as a mark of respect for the people, was numbered among the indispensable duties of a Roman magistrate, may appear to us as the most painful. But we are not to judge of their feelings by our own. The love of amusement had degenerated into a passion, from the influence of which few were now exempted. This passion it had been the policy of Augustus to cherish, and of such importance did he consider the gratification of the public taste, that in the hour of death he mentioned it as the glory of his reign, that he had seven and forty times presented the people with games, either upon his own account, or on the account of absent magistrates.

Upon one occasion, however, he was made to feel, that it was not by turning the
attention

attention of the populace to frivolous objects; that he could at all times secure to himself tranquillity. The disgrace of a favourite performer was deemed an affair of such serious importance, as to throw all Rome into a ferment: and those degenerate Romans, who beheld with apathy every encroachment made upon the liberties of the people, could not with patience submit to the decree which deprived them of a worthiest individual, who contributed to their amusement. The emperor was in this instance obliged to yield. The banished actor was recalled, and received by the people with shouts and acclamations, such as had formerly welcomed the heroes who had shed their blood in defence of the liberties of Rome.

The constant attendance of Augustus at every public exhibition was not only dictated by policy but inclination. He was, in fact, fond of the amusements of the populace; and in gratifying the taste of the
people

people he gratified his own. Nor can we suppose that Agrippina was endowed with sentiments of delicacy, that were unknown the age in which she lived. Nor is it probable, that in accompanying the rest of the imperial family to the amusements of the arena, the circus, or the theatre, that she ever once reflected with any degree of horror on the nature of the spectacles that were exhibited.

From regard to decency, Augustus had prohibited the female part of the audience from taking their seats in the circus or amphitheatre, till after the performance of the wrestlers. But this was the only part of the entertainment from which they were excluded; and to make amends for the mortification, they were permitted freely to indulge their curiosity in beholding the murder of gladiators, and the ferocious conflict of wild beasts. Nor were the amusements of the theatre less objectionable; for the plays and pantomimes that were there performed, are said by respect-

able writers, to have been too gross to be described.

The pantomimes were introduced by Augustus, who, though certainly intent upon the reformation of public morals, piqued himself upon having added these indecent spectacles to the number of popular amusements; a certain proof, that the consequences of polluting the imagination had never attracted the attention of the pagan world.

To preserve, amid such numerous sources of corruption, a steady regard for virtue, and manners unblemished by any impropriety, was no ordinary merit. The character of Agrippina will rise in our esteem, according as we are capable of estimating the temptations by which she was surrounded. Nor can the licentiousness of the times be more forcibly displayed, than by the unbounded applause bestowed upon her conduct; since it was by comparing it with that of others, that her cotemporaries
 must

must have formed their opinion of its uncommon merit. To be faithful to such a husband as Germanicus, appears not to us in the light of an extraordinary effort of female virtue; but the chaste decorum of Agrippina is always mentioned in terms of such high approbation by the Roman writers, as may induce us to conclude, that they were not acquainted with many similar instances of conjugal fidelity.

About this time Livilla, sister of Germanicus, and widow of the young Cæsar, was married to Drusus the son of Tiberius. This young man appears in every respect, but the love of wine, to have been the very opposite of his father. His temper was open, his heart generous and sincere. Affectionately attached to Germanicus, he rejoiced in the double tie that now united them; and had the dispositions of Livilla borne any resemblance to those of her brother, the happiness of Drusus had been complete.

In the midst of the rejoicings at these nuptials, the felicity of Germanicus and Agrippina was interrupted by a domestic sorrow, in which all their friends partook, nor did even the hard heart of Livia refuse sympathy in this affliction. Their young son, a child of uncommon beauty, was snatched away by sudden death: and so much had the infantine graces of the lovely boy endeared him to his family, that his loss was lamented with all the sincerity of grief. In honour to the memory of this captivating child, his effigy, in the character of Cupid, was set up by Livia in the temple of Venus, for the adoration of the populace; and Augustus had another of admirable workmanship placed in his bed-chamber, which he is said by Suetonius to have kissed as often as he entered the apartment.

While Agrippina was indulging that melancholy which was naturally occasioned by the loss she had sustained, the public mind

mind was agitated by a variety of events, which alternately called forth the opposite emotions of grief and joy. The satisfaction occasioned by the success of Tiberius in Illyricum was counterbalanced by the dread of a general revolt of the conquered provinces from the Danube to the Rhine. A few words dropped by Augustus, importing the possibility of the barbarians reaching Rome by a march of ten days, spread a general alarm. The apprehension of danger, however causeless, gave a facility to the preparations for war, which were carried on with such vigour, that the new levies were soon in a condition to follow Tiberius and Germanicus to the field.

As Dalmatia, which had been invaded by the barbarians, was the immediate scene of action, the emperor thought proper to fix his residence during the campaign at Ariminum, a convenient situation for receiving the earliest intelligence from the armies. Thither Agrippina with her family accompanied

panied him, and there she remained, until the joyful triumph and final victory obtained by Germanicus dispelled the cloud that hung over the public mind, and relieved her from her own peculiar burthen of anxiety.

The success of Germanicus terminated the war in Dalmatia, where the subdued barbarians again resumed the Roman yoke; and Tiberius having with the division under his command obtained a victory no less complete, both generals came over to Italy, where on his landing the happy Agrippina joined her victorious lord.

The heart is perhaps never so sensible of happiness, as after a short separation from the object of its affection. If that separation has been attended with peculiar circumstances of distress or danger, every misery that has been experienced, tends by the force of contrast to increase the emotions of delight, and gives to the pleasure of re-union an inexpressible degree of tenderness. Such were the feelings of
 Agrippina

Agrippina on the safe return of her amiable husband; nor will it detract from the sincerity of her conjugal affection, to suppose that her delight was augmented by the additional lustre which was now shed on the name of Germanicus. Fondly exulting in this accession of glory, she anticipated the honour of the triumph, which had been decreed to him, in conjunction with Tiberius, by the senate and people; but before the generals had reached the gates of Rome, the news of a disastrous event had changed the aspect of affairs, and converted the public joy into the depth of sorrow.

While in Dalmatia every thing had yielded to the Roman arms, the legions on the Rhine were experiencing one of the most humiliating defeats that had ever stained the page of Roman glory. The public rejoicings instantly ceased, and, with all the fervour of popular sentiment, the song of triumph was exchanged for the groan of despair. At such a moment it
would

would have been improper for the conquerors to have availed themselves of the decree of the senate. Respect for the feelings of the public induced them to defer the honour, and to enter Rome in a private manner, with no other mark of distinction than the triumphal robes.* Their services were however rewarded by an honourable reception. The rashness and misfortunes of the slaughtered Varus, being put in contrast with their prudence and success, served to swell the tide of popular applause; and as the repulsive manners of Tiberius checked every sympathetic emotion, Germanicus appeared the delight of every eye, and the darling of every heart. He received the congratulations of all with unaffected affability; and expressed his sense of the public misfortune with a simplicity that left no doubt of the sincerity of his concern. He found all Rome in mourning, for few were the families who had

* Note S.

not in the army of Varus some dear relative whose loss they now deplored.

The death of twice as many thousands of brave men, had their death answered the purposes of his ambition, Augustus would have contemplated without emotion; but the wound that was inflicted on his pride by the triumph of the barbarians agonised his soul. Refusing all consolation, his mind perpetually dwelt upon a misfortune which he considered as an indelible stain upon his reign. In the spirit of superstition, he addressed himself to Jupiter, making a solemn vow to celebrate the great games to his honour, "*if he would be pleased to recover the state from its present situation;*"* and in the anguish of despair, he was frequently seen to knock his head against the wall, crying out, "Quintillus Varus, give me back my legions!"

To retrieve the affairs of Germany, nothing appeared so necessary as the presence

* Suetonius.

of Tiberius and Germanicus, who, at the head of a gallant army, were destined to punish the audacity of those who had dared to retort a part of the injuries they had received on the instruments of their ruin.

Could our German ancestors have boasted of an historian capable of transmitting the actions of his nation to posterity, the pride and insolence which the Romans ascribed to the gallant struggle of a warlike people, would have been denominated spirit and virtue. But that spirit which aspires to freedom, was, in the enemies of Rome, a crime of the highest magnitude, and as such was now to be chastised by the adopted son of Augustus at the head of his victorious legions.

Agrippina was permitted to obey the impulse of her affection in following her husband to the scene of danger and of glory. In the course of her long journey, she was, we may be assured, accommodated as became a princess of her high rank:
 though

though were we to appreciate her travelling accommodations by our own notions of comfort, we should perhaps wonder how a lady brought up in all the delicacy of a court could bear the fatigues and hardships to which she must inevitably have been exposed.

Her travelling chariot, however it might be carved and gilded, was, from the want of springs, no easier than a common cart. The Roman roads were indeed excellent, and extended through every country to which the Romans had penetrated; but after quitting Italy, where the thickly feathered villas of the Roman and provincial nobility offered a cordial reception at every stage, a tent was probably the only shelter of Agrippina during the greatest part of her route.

The wife of Germanicus was not to be appalled by puny evils. In the performance of duty, she would have scorned the idea of hardship or danger; but in the pre-
 fence

fence of her beloved husband these ideas were unknown. While she hung on his supporting arm, the Alpine precipice was divested of all its terrors; and seated by his side, the rude forests of Germany, and the fairer scenes of Gaul, were beheld with equal emotions of delight.

The Romans were so little curious with regard to the unpolished nations who preferred freedom to the enjoyment of luxury, that Agrippina was not prepared by the accuracy of previous description for the new scenes which rose on her astonished sight. Those who have always moved in a narrow sphere, must necessarily have few ideas of comparison; and to such every thing that is new or strange, appears consequently wrong; nor does any object afford delight, or any custom meet with approbation, in which some analogy cannot be traced to objects and customs already familiar to the mind. Every one must have observed the eagerness with which these

analogies are sought for by those who for the first time find themselves surrounded by objects that are in a manner isolated and detached from all their previous associations. Transport an Hebridian or a Creole to the banks of the Thames, and in every verdant lawn or shady grove they will each admire, not the beauty of the verdure, nor the richness of the shade, but some circumstance which calls to his recollection the plains or woods of his native island.

Thus it was with Agrippina in this her first visit to foreign regions. On entering the deep gloom of one of those immeasurable forests which stretched over a vast portion of Germany, she was, in imagination, transported to an Italian grove. At every turn of the majestic Rhine she discovered some remote resemblance to the muddy Tibur; and in every rude stone that had been set up by the natives with any appearance of design, she saw the representative of one of the ancient gods of Rome. In being thus misled by

her previous affociations, Agrippina was by no means singular. Her countrymen, even those of the highest rank, were not exempt from similar absurdities. Instead of examining with minute attention the peculiar customs and religious ceremonies of the Germans, a knowledge of which would doubtless have explained in a satisfactory manner much that now appeared disgusting, merely because it was strange; they gratified a silly pride, by despising whatever they did not understand. Often indeed were they obliged to confess the superior address and dauntless valour of their formidable foes; but still they considered them as beings of an inferior nature; nor once reflected, how short a space of time had elapsed, since the Romans were themselves in a state of civilisation no less rude. Such an idea of her ancestors would have been too shocking to Agrippina to be permitted to enter her imagination. Though she delighted to dwell on the antiquity of her family,

family, and piqued herself on the long line of her illustrious ancestors, it did not probably occur to her that every step she ascended brought her nearer to barbarism, and that when the chain was no longer visible, it was lost mid ruffians and banditti. Upon such slender foundations does human vanity erect its airy trophies!

Tiberius did not forfeit in Germany the character he had acquired in Illyricum, of an excellent general; but as Germanicus was only second in command, and as all the merit of the inferior officers were by courtesy attributed to the auspices of the commander-in-chief, we know not how much his abilities may in the present instance have availed his country. It is therefore unnecessary to say more than that the campaign terminated with glory to the Romans, and that in the country of the Trevesi, (now Treves) at a village called Ambiatinus, Agrippina was delivered of a son, who did not long survive.

Altars

Altars were in after ages seen at this place, denoting by their inscriptions, that they had been raised in honour of the delivery of Agrippina; and the inhabitants, willing to flatter themselves that their country had given birth to a Roman emperor, contended that Caligula was the child then born: but the assertion was refuted, and the child born at Treves proved to have been one of those who died in infancy, whose name has not been recorded.*

Agrippina, by accompanying her husband into Germany, had escaped the mortification of witnessing the deserved disgrace of her sister. Æmilius Lepidus was not a man who would tamely submit to have his family dishonoured by a wife of illustrious birth. He disclaimed alliance with infamy, and no sooner discovered the flagitious conduct of Julia, than he proclaimed his wrongs to Augustus and to the world. The guilt of Julia was but too easily made evident ;

* Suetonius.

and the same crimes for which her wretched mother was now suffering an ignominious exile, doomed the daughter to a similar punishment. Trimetus, an island in the Adriatic, was fixed on by Augustus as the place of her confinement; and there for twenty years this once blooming beauty languished in solitary wretchedness, till death, in the forty-first year of her age, released her from a miserable existence.

By the time that Agrippina returned to Rome, the name of Julia was forgotten; or if it were ever mentioned, it was only by Augustus, and then it was loaded with such reproachful epithets, as shewed how deeply he felt the wound which her conduct had inflicted on his heart. The character of Agrippina might have borrowed an additional lustre from contrasting it with that of her mother and sister; but the misconduct of such near relatives creates in the world a suspicion with regard to the character of the virtuous, and it required in
 Agrippina

Agrippina no ordinary strictness of decorum to preserve the purity of her's untainted by the breath of calumny, while the rest of her family had given proofs of a disposition so depraved.

How much Agrippina condemned the conduct of her sister was shewn by the opposite tenour of her own; but as a sense of honour was the highest motive on which her regard for virtue could be built, she considered not the errors of Julia with the horror excited by the idea of crimes. Though she herself offered up her vows at the shrine of Minerva, she had no right to blame her sister for choosing a patroness in the Cyprian goddess. Both were objects of worship equally legitimate. But however this mode of arguing might have satisfied Agrippina's conscience, it could not heal the wound which, through her sister's disgrace, had been given to her pride. She felt the exile of Julia as ignominious to her family, and inwardly resented it, as a new proof
of

of the malignant ascendancy of the empress by whose advice Augustus had probably been guided. Nor was she singular in this opinion; nor was it the punishment alone that was attributed to Livia, for by all the friends of the Julian family it was pointedly remarked, that no female of that illustrious house had ever trodden the path of infamy, but such as had been brought up under her especial care. To her corrupting arts the criminal levity of both the Julia's was attributed; and when considered as the victims of her malice, they became more the objects of pity than abhorrence. The unrelenting rigour with which their crimes were punished, augmented those sentiments of compassion, and raised a secret murmur against the unfeeling severity of Augustus.

Agrippina could not be blamed for partaking in sentiments that were so generally felt: but she had not, like others, the consolation of being permitted to express her feelings.

feelings. Even the satisfaction of shewing kindness to the infant offspring of her lost sister was prohibited. The child of which Julia had been delivered after her condemnation,* was by the command of Augustus left to perish as an outcast; nor were the two elder children, though there was no doubt of their legitimacy, taken under the royal protection.

While the descendants of Augustus were thus banished from his presence, the art of Livia prepared new triumphs for her unworthy son. The decree which united him with Augustus in the government of the provinces, as it appeared to secure to Tiberius the succession of the imperial dignity, gave a death-wound to the hopes of the most virtuous citizens, who had turned their eyes upon Germanicus as the well-known friend of liberty and Rome.

Their expectations in his favour had been cherished by a variety of circumstances.

* Note T.

As the son of Drusus he had an equal claim with Tiberius on the affection of Livia, and by his marriage with Agrippina he became in an equal degree connected with the emperor. Their children were alike descended from both; the blood of Augustus and of Livia flowed in their veins; they were the true representatives of the Julian family, nor had Tiberius any right to dispute with them pretensions so justly founded. As the husband of Agrippina therefore, laying aside all regard to superior merit, Germanicus appeared to be the natural heir of Augustus; and with respect to personal character, the emperor himself did not seem to think there could be any comparison. Of his opinion of Tiberius there could be no doubt, as he did not scruple to repeat in company the observation that had been made upon him in his childhood by Gadara, one of his tutors, who emphatically pronounced him “ a composition of mud mixed with blood.”

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He, on the other hand, never failed to speak of Germanicus in terms of the highest praise. He saw and admired the noble qualities of his soul, and loved and esteemed him for his virtues. Nor did he disapprove of the affection that was shewn him by the people. And yet with a perfect knowledge of the characters of both, he chose Tiberius for his present colleague and future successor!

This conduct would appear altogether inexplicable, did not the vanity displayed by him on other occasions offer a solution to the problem.

Had Germanicus been less popular or less deserving of popularity, Augustus would most probably have indulged his affection by devolving upon him the sovereign dignity; but his soul was not sufficiently enlarged to contemplate with satisfaction the consequences of such a step. He did not wish to be outshone by a successor, whose virtues would have shaded the lustre of his reign.

reign. He knew how much he should lose by the comparison; and indulged the mean gratification which arose from the assurance, that after his death the Roman world would look back to the period of his reign with regret. "Unhappy Rome!" exclaimed he one day, as Tiberius left his apartment, "Unhappy Rome! that is doomed to the jaws of this slow, grinding beast!"* But, notwithstanding the opinion that he entertained of the fullness and cruelty of his disposition, he always appeared to respect his understanding, and to consider him as an able statesman and most accomplished general.

To the aspiring mind of Agrippina the conduct of Augustus upon this occasion must have been mortifying in the extreme: but her unassuming husband was so far from encouraging her ambitious views, that he seemed more solicitous to avoid than to court the dangerous honours of imperial greatness. Attached to the form of go-

* Suetonius.

vernment under which Rome had risen to pre-eminence and glory, he bounded his ambition to those constitutional honours, which had been enjoyed by the illustrious heroes of former times; and having now arrived at the 24th year of his age, he entered upon the consulship with the unanimous approbation of his fellow-citizens.

Wherever he appeared, he was hailed by the voice of gratulation, and old and young, rich and poor, vied with each other in the most lively expressions of affection and respect. Agrippina had her full share of public favour. Independently of what was due to her as the wife of Germanicus, her own merit had secured her a large portion of esteem; and so blind are mortals with regard to futurity, that the birth of a son during the consulate of her husband was considered as a certain omen of her future happiness. To this son the name of Caius was given, in memory of his deceased brother; and many were the pious
 VOWS

vows offered to the gods for the preservation of his life; but had the virtuous parents known that that life was to be stained by every crime that could disgrace humanity, they would with joy have consigned him to an early grave! Happy is it for the peace of mortals, that the veil which covers futurity, is too thick for human eyes to penetrate; and that the smiles of infancy have a natural tendency to inspire the confidence of hope! Agrippina, flattered by the promising appearance of her children, indulged the fond idea, that through them the virtues as well as the name of Germanicus should be transmitted to late posterity; and her mother-in-law Antonia, willing to cherish the same agreeable illusion, saw in the blooming family of her son the perpetuity of an honoured race.

After the birth of Caius, eighteen months of uninterrupted tranquillity were spent by Agrippina and Germanicus in Rome and its neighbourhood; but at the conclusion
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of that period, a short separation took place, Germanicus being obliged to set off for Germany, where he was to take the supreme command, while Agrippina was from some unknown cause prevented from accompanying him. The obstacle, which most probably arose from the sickness either of herself or children, was no sooner removed, than the faithful Agrippina prepared to follow. Her two elder boys were left with Antonia; but the little Caius was to be the companion of her journey. That he had been on a visit to Augustus before his departure, will be seen by the following letter, which is one of the few that have been preserved.

Letter of AUGUSTUS to AGRIPPINA.

“ YESTERDAY I gave order for Talaris and Afellius to set out on their journey towards you, if the gods permit, with your child Caius, upon the fifteenth of the calends

calends of June. I send with him a physician of mine, whom, I wrote to Germanicus, he may retain if he please. Farewell, my dear Agrippina. Take what care you can to come safe and well to your Germanicus."

Agrippina, after a prosperous journey, arrived in safety on the banks of the Rhine, where she was met by Germanicus, and conducted by him to the camp in the Lower Germany, where she was received with all the demonstrations of respect and attachment due to her own virtues and to her husband's character.

As a compliment to her husband and to the army, she had dressed her little boy in the uniform of the legions, and held him up thus habited, as they passed along the ranks, to the delight and admiration of the soldiers, who, observing on his little foot the *caligæ* or soldier's shoe, redoubled their shouts of approbation, and fixed, in
their

their transport, the name of Caligula upon the child, who from henceforth became the darling of the camp.

Awed by Germanicus, the surrounding nations appeared not in the field during the whole of this campaign in any considerable force. No battle of importance was fought; and the Roman armies, divided in summer into separate camps, and in winter stationed at the most convenient quarters, were for a length time permitted quietly to pursue those occupations to which in peace the troops had usually been devoted. In this state of tranquillity, Agrippina and her husband would have enjoyed the pleasures afforded by their situation without alloy, had not every successive messenger from Rome disturbed their minds by awakening some subject of anxiety or alarm.

Intelligence transmitted by Antonia, thro' the medium of a confidential friend, revived in Agrippina's breast the long-lost hope of seeing her brother Posthumus

again restored to his family and to the world. With no less astonishment than delight she heard, that Augustus, without the knowledge of Livia, and in a private manner, accompanied only by Fabius Maximus, and a few select friends, had gone to the island of Planasia to visit the unfortunate youth. The meeting was in the last degree interesting. No language could express the surprise and joy of the poor devoted Agrippa on finding himself in the arms of his grandfather, and affectionately pressed to his aged bosom. No words were uttered in this affecting moment, but the tears that were mutually shed spoke more forcibly. Augustus, free from restraint, gave a short indulgence to the feelings of paternal tenderness. What he said to the young prince in the short conversation that followed could not be known, but by the interview he plainly evinced that he was not, as had been supposed, estranged from his affection.

Such

Such was the purport of the communication made by Antonia to her daughter-in-law, in whose ardent mind it created emotions so mixed and various, as in a moment to destroy all that tranquil resignation, which Germanicus had taught her to assume. The impatience with which she waited for the result of this important event was excessive, and but for the soothing flattery of hope, could scarce have been endured. Giving reins to imagination, she sometimes saw her injured brother reinstated in imperial splendour, and the hated Livia, with her as much hated son, crouching to the young Cæsar as the destined master of the Roman world. She anticipated to her children the advantages of such a protector, to herself and to her husband the pleasure and the safety of such an assured friend.

Thus did she endeavour to divert anxiety, in the vain assurance that the first messenger from Rome would bring a confirmation of her wishes. But alas! the tidings with
which

which all letters were now filled, was of a different complexion. They spoke of the emperor's languid health; of his having avowedly declined all public business, which was now entirely left to the management of Tiberius. They gave an account of parties of pleasure made for his amusement; of the musicians and comedians who had been honoured by his applause; and of the wits or beauties who had attracted his attention. They entered into a minute description of suppers given by Livia to select parties of her favourites, where Augustus amused himself and the company by distributing jewels and trinkets, which were drawn for by lottery; and gave a detail of all the smart things that were said upon the occasion. But not one word of Agrippa Posthumus did any of the various correspondents of Germanicus and Agrippina presume to utter. Astonished at their silence on a subject so interesting, Agrippina began to fear that Antonia had been imposed

imposed upon; and that the interview, which her lively imagination had made the foundation of so much happiness, had in reality never taken place. The return of Antonia's confidential servant put an end to conjecture, and almost extinguished every spark of hope.

With inexpressible anguish Agrippina learned, that whatever were the intentions of Augustus with regard to his grandson, there was now no doubt of their being frustrated; since Livia had become mistress of the secret, and had already wreaked her vengeance on the head of Fabius Maximus, who had been the companion and confidant of the emperor on his visit to Planasia. This weak and imprudent man had in an unhappy hour divulged the particulars of the mysterious journey to his wife, who, hoping to gain the favour of Livia, treacherously betrayed the confidence so rashly reposed in her, and repeated to the empress all she had been told by her doating husband.

The

The alarm of Livia was only to be equalled by her rage and indignation. She saw the fabric her dextrous hand had reared, and which she had cemented with so much blood, trembling on the brink of ruin. By the recall of Posthumus all her deep-laid schemes in favour of Tiberius would be in a moment rendered abortive. That the emperor, whose steps she had so closely guarded, should thus elude her vigilance; that the sentiments of natural affection which she had taken such unwearied pains to extirpate, should still exert an influence in his heart; were considerations so galling as not to be endured! In the bitterness of her wrath, she sent a threatening message to Maximus, which at once explained to him the perfidy of his wife, and the peril to which it had exposed him.

Ashamed of his weakness, terrified at the resentment of Livia, and dreading the still juster indignation of Augustus; the unhappy man with his own hands put a period

period to his life! His wife with horror beheld the consequence of her perfidious babbling. In the excess of despair, she gave publicity to the whole transaction; she wept, she raved, and in the vehemence of sorrow, loudly accused herself as the murderers of her husband.

What were the feelings of Augustus upon this occasion, no one could conjecture. But it was sufficiently evident, that he took no further step towards recalling his grandson, and that the domination of Livia became every day more compleat.

Agrippina, however slender the thread by which she held her hopes, felt, on seeing it thus rudely broken, all the anguish of disappointment. Conscious that the language of invective was displeasing to Germanicus, she endeavoured to suppress every expression of resentment; but the generous openness of her character betrayed the feelings of her soul, and gave an opportunity to the spies of Livia (for such were
many

many of Agrippina's pretended friends) to give such a report of her disposition as increased the malice of her enemy.

Germanicus, though too prudent to encourage his wife in expectations that were so liable to be frustrated, had too much tenderness rudely to dash from her lips the cup of hope. He recalled to her recollection the many instances of affection which she and her brothers had received from their grandfather, and the many proofs of dislike which he had exhibited towards Tiberius, at the very time that he was loading him with public honours. From these seeming contradictions in the character of Augustus, he wisely inferred the impossibility of forming any decided judgment on his future conduct. He might during his life yield to the ascendancy of Livia, and yet resolve at his death to do justice to the claims of blood. Whatever determination the emperor might finally adopt, he declared his fixed resolution of
being

being guided by his will, and that no allure-
ment of ambition, no dictate of resentment,
should ever tempt him to depart from the
plain path of duty.

By similar declarations, Germanicus
checked the officious zeal of his friends,
when they ventured to inform him of the
wishes of the people and of the armies in
his behalf. Instead of listening to the flat-
tering assurances that he had already reigned
in the hearts of the Romans, and that the
death of Augustus would open to him a
certain ascent to the imperial dignity, he
considered every hint upon the subject as
an affront to his honour; and such was
the known integrity of his heart, that his
sincerity was never questioned.

Soon was that sincerity put to the se-
verest test. The death of Augustus was
rumoured in the camp, and the name of
Germanicus which run in hollow whispers
along the lines, gave sufficient indication of
the disposition of the legions with regard

to

to the choice of a successor. The report reached the ears of Germanicus and Agrippina, but as it came in a questionable shape, it was by the former treated with contempt.

Agrippina, more credulous, and less capable of self-control, was thrown into a state of anxiety and perturbation, which too soon exchanged for the painful certainty of all that her boding heart had feared. Her grandfather was indeed no more; and the cruel son of Livia had paved his way to the vacant throne by the murder of her brother!

Germanicus would in tenderness have concealed from her the circumstances of the tragic scene, but with the heroic firmness which characterised her soul, she scorned an indulgence given to the supposed weakness of her sex; and assured her husband, that the knowledge of the particulars would neither aggravate her resentment, nor prevent her making a sacrifice
of

of every revengeful feeling to the duty she owed to him and to her children. Germanicus then submitted the letters to her perusal, and from them she learned, that Augustus, on his journey to Rome from Beneventum, (whither he had accompanied Tiberius) was seized with an indisposition which induced him to stop at Nola, where his family had formerly resided, and there in the same house, and in the same chamber where his father had expired, he breathed his last on the afternoon of the eighteenth of August.*

Tiberius, who had been sent for by Livia on the first appearance of danger, had arrived the evening before, and with seeming grief and real satisfaction watched the progress of the disorder, while in stolen interviews he concerted with his artful mother the means of keeping the fatal

* In the year of Rome 767, A. D. 14. Augustus when he died, wanted only a month of completing his 76th year.

event secret, until he should have secured to himself the quiet possession of the imperial power.

Livia, who fully participated in his anxiety, agreed with Tiberius, that while Agrippa Posthumus lived, he would present an insuperable obstacle to his wishes. His prior claims might be powerfully supported; and if Germanicus declared in his favour, must inevitably prevail. Prudence then required that Tiberius should provide for his own safety by the instant death of his rival. Thus does ambition endeavour to throw the specious veil of necessity over the most atrocious of crimes!

It was determined, that the moment Augustus breathed his last, a centurion, in whom Tiberius could confide, should be dispatched to Planasia to accomplish the horrid deed. Having assisted in giving the necessary instructions to this emissary, Livia returned to the emperor's chamber, and by the apparent tenderness of her
 caresses

careless soothed his dying hour. The kiss which sealed his last adieu was the signal for the centurion's departure; and till his return Livia continued to sit by the bedside, as if watching the slumbers of her dearest husband.

Swiftly did the messenger of death obey the orders of his master. On reaching Planasia, he instantly sought the young prince, whom he found in a solitary walk, where he was probably amusing his lonely hours with the lively hope of happiness which his grandfather's visit had kindled in his breast. By the sudden assault of the centurion his hopes were in an instant converted to despair. But courage was the consequence of desperation. Tho' unarmed, he did not easily yield, and by the stoutness of his resistance, made the contest for some time doubtful. At length the ruffian prevailed, and the mangled corse of the wretched Posthumus was committed to the waves.

In anxious expectation Tiberius waited the return of the assassin; but no sooner

was he informed by the wretch that his orders had been duly executed, than with the refined dissimulation peculiar to himself, he assumed an air of stern displeasure, told the fellow “ *he had given no such orders, and that for what he had done he must answer to the senate.*”*

Such was the purport of the intelligence received from the friends of Agrippina and Germanicus. Many minute circumstances were added, which tended to aggravate the wounded feelings of Agrippina, and to throw a blacker shade on the guilt of Livia and her son.

The generous soul of Germanicus revolted with horror from the idea of his near affinity to those who had thus stained their hands in the blood of the innocent; but the claims which Tiberius had upon his duty and allegiance appeared in his eyes too sacred to be cancelled. Allegiance to Tiberius had not indeed as yet become strictly

* Tacitus.

due; but in becoming his son by adoption, Germanicus had bound himself to the performance of every filial duty; and so nicely delicate were his notions of honour and integrity, that he considered himself no less engaged to the performance of what his promises implied, than to what they specified. Obedience to the laws was however, in the opinion of Germanicus, the primary duty of a Roman citizen. He therefore resolved to wait with patience for the determination of the senate, and guided by its decree, to act as the voice of his country should appear to dictate.

CHAP. VIII.

Fears of TIBERIUS.—Loyalty of GERMANICUS.—AGRIPPINA accompanies him into Gaul.—Mutiny of the Legions.—Heroism of AGRIPPINA.—At the Request of GERMANICUS, she retires to Ubiorum Oppidum.

A. D. 14.

TIBERIUS as yet scarcely dared to flatter himself with the quiet possession of imperial power. He could not believe that Germanicus was less ambitious than himself, nor that a prince who had the voice of the people, and the command of powerful armies, would tamely relinquish the glorious prize which circumstances had placed within his reach. With cautious
 steps

steps, therefore, and under the mask of necessity, he proceeded to take the direction of public affairs. At Rome, though the wishes of the people were in favour of Germanicus, they were stifled by the dread of the tribunitian power which was held by Tiberius; who, while he pretended to be utterly averse from assuming the imperial dignity, had taken care to seize on its most important prerogatives. But though all now wore the appearance of submission, he was conscious that even those who had been the most forward to testify their loyalty to the nominated successor of Augustus, would be the first to fly to the standard of Germanicus, and to recognise as their sovereign him who already reigned in the hearts of the Roman people.

Disturbed by these reflections, and perplexed by the various schemes of dissimulation or treachery which presented themselves to his mind, Tiberius seemed to hesitate; and so successfully did he dissemble,

that some of the senators were weak enough to believe, that he actually intended to relinquish all thoughts of the sovereign power. By far the greater number, however, saw through the thin disguise, and adopting his own system of deceit, redoubled their solicitations, entreating him to assume the reins of government with an earnestness no less sincere than his reluctance. Tiberius, after having supported his part in the farce with admirable gravity for a sufficient length of time, thought it necessary to bring it to a conclusion by permitting himself to be prevailed upon, and was accordingly invested with the imperial honours. Messengers were dispatched to Germanicus to notify the important event, and in the name of the senate to demand testimonies of his allegiance to the new emperor. Letters were at the same time sent from Tiberius to the prince and to the other generals, which in the same language that he had used in
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the senate, declared that “in obedience to the commands of his late father, and in compassion to the republic, he had loaded himself with the care of the empire, until the senate should in mercy relieve him from the intolerable burthen!”

Whatever contempt Germanicus might feel for the deceit and affectation displayed by Tiberius, he did not hesitate a moment concerning the propriety of yielding obedience to the command of the consuls and the senate. He instantly took the oath of fidelity to Tiberius, nor was his resolution shaken by a perfect knowledge of the fidelity of the army and the wishes of the people. Germanicus knew, that though these were in his favour, a contest with Tiberius could not be carried on without a vast effusion of human blood. The charms of empire did not appear to him so very dazzling, as to afford a sufficient recompence for all the certain evils which would inevitably attend on the ambitious enterprise.

enterprise. And though the power of restoring the ancient constitution, and reviving Roman liberty, appeared to his imagination infinitely more glorious than supreme authority over willing slaves, he knew that the minds of his countrymen were too much debased to understand or to enjoy the blessings of civil liberty; and that if their chains were at that moment broken, the only use they would make of freedom would be to substitute the despotism of anarchy for that of an individual.

These sentiments were no doubt strengthened in the breast of Germanicus by those principles of loyalty and filial obedience which education had fixed and cherished in his heart. Nor had Tiberius as yet made such a display of any vicious propensity, as to give an unequivocal assurance that his reign would be fatal to the happiness of the Roman people. All those actions of his life which were most exceptionable, appeared to Germanicus as the
work

work of Livia. It was only in scenes far removed from her influence that he looked for the real character of Tiberius; and his behaviour in Dalmatia, where he had evinced the qualities of a great commander, prudence, vigilance, and circumspection, was, in his opinion, a pledge for the propriety of his conduct in a more exalted station. Affection for Drusus was another and a very powerful motive for avoiding a contest, which, if it terminated happily for him, must inevitably be fatal to his brother. With that promptness which is the consequence of clear judgment and well-defined principles, Germanicus decided on the part he was now to take, and cheerfully swore to conform to the will of Augustus, by supporting the authority of the new emperor. Nor did he perform the duty which that oath imposed upon him with lukewarm indifference. Sensible that the provinces only wanted a favourable occasion to throw off the yoke,
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he hastened to secure their allegiance to the successor of Augustus; and as this duty necessarily called him into Gaul, he gladly embraced the opportunity of removing Agrippina to a new scene, where a change of objects and of occupation might dissipate the melancholy which oppressed her heart.

In the noble conduct of Germanicus, Agrippina found a consolation more effectual than all the world could offer. Capable of feeling and of estimating the virtue which was the object of her admiration, she beheld with rapture the magnanimity displayed by her husband in a juncture when a mind less truly great would have yielded to the impulse of ambition, and have called that ambition glory. In emulation of his conduct, she endeavoured to controul her feelings. She spoke not of Livia; she complained not of Tiberius; and though the melancholy fate of her brothers secretly oppressed her spirits, she
wore

wore composure in her countenance, and endeavoured as much as possible to attain the reality of the cheerfulness she assumed.

Germanicus on his arrival in Gaul proclaimed the accession of Tiberius, and convened the states in order to receive from them the oath of allegiance to the new sovereign. While her husband was engaged in this important business, Agrippina employed herself in the instruction of her son, or in receiving visits of ceremony from the principal inhabitants of the province. In the novelty of the scene she could not fail to find amusement, but perhaps its greatest pleasure was derived from a source less pure; and it is but too probable, that the pride of acknowledged superiority, and the consciousness of inspiring the most lively admiration, or the most profound respect, were the ideas most gratifying to the imagination of the Roman princess.

The Gauls, though in comparison of their German neighbours, or the barbarians

rians of Britain, they deserved the appellation of polished, were still in a very early stage of civilisation. They, however, appeared to Agrippina as infinitely more tolerable than the natives of any of the other provinces, and having been conversant with a variety of nations and characters, she was now in some degree qualified to appreciate their merit. The enjoyment of a pure air and a willing soil gave to the Gauls a degree of spirit and vivacity, which enabled them to adopt with ease the more refined manners of their conquerors. Among their chiefs, many affected the Roman dress; and some were initiated into the Roman literature, which was always followed by a dereliction of their ancient superstition, and an adherence to that of Rome. But a still greater number remained as yet firmly attached to the religion of their fathers, and sent their sons into Britain to be instructed by the Druids of that island, who were held in peculiar
veneration,

reneration by the Gauls on account of their superior wisdom.

The affairs of Gaul were settled to the satisfaction of Germanicus ; but scarcely had he tasted of repose, when an express from the army brought the unwelcome tidings of a furious mutiny, which had burst forth with such violence as to bid defiance to any influence less powerful than that of the commander in chief. The emergency would not admit of delay. Germanicus resolved to set out upon the instant : nor would Agrippina be left behind ; she promptly and cheerfully obeyed the hasty summons, determined to share in every danger to which her husband might be exposed.

While they hastily pursued their anxious journey, their alarm was increased by fresh intelligence. They learned with horror, that the mutineers had already stained the camp with Roman blood ; that in their frenzy they had massacred their officers,
and

and had sworn never to submit to Tiberius, until he had redressed their wrongs. These shocking tidings were soon in part confirmed by the appearance of Cassius Chærea, a young centurion, who, covered with wounds, had made his escape from the dreadful scene, by cutting his way sword in hand through the assailants. Germanicus, after having attentively listened to the detail of all the horrid transactions that had taken place in the camp, bestowed merited praises on the bravery and conduct of the young centurion, who would have considered the approbation of his general as an ample recompence for far greater sufferings. The valour of the youth, and the idea of the danger to which he had been recently exposed, excited the sensibility of Agrippina, who gave the strictest charges to her attendants to pay every attention in binding up his wounds. Alas! how little did she then imagine, that from the hands of this very man the darling child

child

child who now smiled sweetly by her side, was to receive his death!* Blind to futurity, and fully occupied with the interests of the present moment, they proceeded as rapidly as possible on their anxious journey.

The camp was now in sight, on the outside of the entrenchments the legions met their general, but instead of the acclamations with which they were wont to hail the return of their beloved chief, they now observed a gloomy and portentous silence. Conscious guilt and fullen despair were painted on every countenance; but the awe with which the presence of Germanicus inspired them, restrained for a time the tumult of passion, and procured a temporary obedience to authority.

Agrippina was conducted to her tent, while Germanicus, having ordered the men

* It was this Cassius Charea, who, when a military tribune, headed the conspiracy against the emperor Caligula, whom he slew with the assistance of another conspirator.

to form into their respective companies, mounted the tribunal, and began a speech calculated to recal the infatuated soldiery to a sense of their duty. He was for some time heard with respectful silence ; but when he proceeded to reproach them with their guilt, they first in hollow murmurs, and then in loud and louder shouts, proclaimed their wrongs in vindication of their conduct, disclaimed allegiance to Tiberius, and with one consent vowed to support Germanicus with their lives, if he would comply with the wishes of the people, and seize the sovereign power.

No words can paint the horror of Germanicus, on finding himself thus involved in the guilt of rebellion. He instantly leaped from the tribunal, and as the soldiers opposed his passage, drew his sword and pointed it to his heart, resolved to perish rather than forfeit his honour. The people near him used their utmost endeavours to
prevent

prevent a catastrophe so horrid ; but the ringleaders of the mutiny, conscious that they were already too deep in guilt to go unpunished, had the insolence to desire him to strike. One villain, more daring than the rest, presented a naked sword, and with an insulting sneer desired the prince to take it, as it was sharper than his own. “ This behaviour,” says the historian, “ even in the moment of phrenzy, appeared to the soldiers an atrocious act. A pause ensued. The friends of Germanicus seized the opportunity, and conveyed him to his tent.*

What were the feelings of Agrippina during this transaction may be more easily imagined than described. It was impossible to conceal from her the danger to which Germanicus had been exposed. His situation was full of peril, and should the army on the Upper Rhine be induced to engage in the revolt, his ruin was inevitable.

* Tacitus,

In such circumstances it might have been expected from female weakness to have added to the perplexity of the moment by unavailing lamentation. Here indeed there was no need of feigning terror, in order to excite her husband's tenderness, and distract his attention. She had only to give way to her feelings, so effectually to disturb his mind as to render him incapable of taking the steps that were necessary for his safety. But Agrippina, though susceptible of fear, was superior to pusillanimity. She had early been taught, that the fortitude which sustains with firmness the pressure of adversity, is no unfeminine virtue; and that to be truly amiable is to be at all times rational and wise. Suppressing every emotion that might have betrayed the anguish of apprehension, she applauded his firmness, encouraged his resolution, and on his return from council listened with calmness to the account of the plans that had been there resolved on, giving her opinion,

when

when required, with modesty, but with precision.

The measures taken by Germanicus were successful. The legions, having received from the private finances of their general the full payment of their arrears, and a solemn promise of redress of other grievances, proceeded to winter quarters, while Germanicus hastened to the army on the Upper Rhine, which had lately experienced a similar convulsion. Here order was happily re-established, so that his presence was not long necessary; he therefore after a short stay proceeded to meet the deputies of the senate at the winter camp stationed near the Ubian altar.*

The legions quartered at this place had been deeply engaged in the late mutiny. Conscious that their guilt had gone unpunished, they were easily induced to believe that the senate, instead of confirming the the pardon granted by their offended ge-

* Where the city of Bon now stands. neral,

neral, had decreed them traitors to their country, and that the deputies were sent with no other intention than to make them examples of a signal vengeance. Fear gave birth to the credulity by which it was again augmented; and as fear when associated with conscious guilt is the most fierce and cruel of the passions, it is not surprising that the explosion which now took place, should have been proportionably dreadful.

The conspiracy though extensive was secret. The deputies were received on their arrival at the camp with all proper demonstrations of respect. Germanicus and Agrippina, having spent the evening in interesting conversation with their guests, concerning the friends most dear to them, retired to rest, unconscious of the dangers by which they were surrounded. At the still hour of midnight they were awakened by the clamours of the furious multitude, who soon with violence broke open the doors of the house, and rushing
into

into the apartment of Germanicus demanded the purple standard, which was in the hour of battle the signal of attack. Germanicus, without means of defence, without time for recollection, was forcibly dragged from his bed, and by menaces of instant death compelled to surrender the standard, which they so violently demanded.

The deputies were now the objects of vengeance to the credulous and enraged multitude. The chief of the embassy was an old senator of consular rank, Munatius Plancus, and him they had resolved to consider as their most determined enemy. Plancus fled to the altar of the gods, for by this sacred name was the place distinguished where the standards of the legions were deposited. He feebly grasped the eagles, and demanded protection, but in vain. The torrent was too impetuous to be resisted by the barriers of superstition, and but for the gallant defence made by a

standard-bearer, the unhappy Plancus must have fallen a sacrifice to popular fury.

Germanicus had now again to stem the tide of treason and rebellion; and Agrippina again to suffer all the agonies of apprehension, from the danger to which he must inevitably be exposed. At the dawn of day she saw him depart, for the purpose of encountering the storm, and either stilling it by his authority or perishing in the attempt. In solemn silence he advanced to the tribunal, and commanded Plancus to be conducted from his place of refuge. The command was instantly obeyed. The awe-struck multitude permitted the object of their resentment to pass unmolested to Germanicus, who, having respectfully placed him by his side, addressed the soldiers in a short remonstrance, calculated to inspire them with remorse and horror at the enormity of the crime they had so nearly perpetrated. The men were astonished, perhaps terrified, at the forcible representation of
their

their guilt; but no symptoms of compunction or repentance appeared. Germanicus, to shew them that they had forfeited his confidence, committed the ambassadors to the protection of a detachment of auxiliaries, and dismissed them from the camp.

On returning to his house the prince found a number of his friends, who had hurried thither from all quarters on the first news of the outrage that had been committed on his person. He was immediately beset by prayers and intreaties to fly from a place where mutiny and treason reigned, and that hastening to the army on the Upper Rhine, he should return with a sufficient force to chastise the delinquents. Germanicus, naturally averse to measures of severity, and indignant at the idea of running in fear from his own troops, refused to listen to them on the subject; but when they proceeded to speak of Agrippina, when they represented to him the danger to which she might possibly be exposed, he

no longer retained the firmness which he had hitherto supported. Observing his agitation, they proceeded: "Why," said they, "if you set no value on your own life, why risk that of the princess and your infant son? The commonwealth demands of you their safety. They are the property of the state—the children of Augustus—the hope of Rome—and their security depends on you."*

Germanicus greatly agitated turned to Agrippina. 'You see, my Agrippina,' cried he, 'that the opinion of our friends coincides with mine. All that they have now advanced, I have already urged. Persist not, I beseech you, in refusing to comply with my most earnest wish, nor oppress my heart by denying it the consolation of being assured of your safety.'

"I thank you, Germanicus, I thank our noble friends," cried Agrippina, indignantly, "for imagining that the descendant

* Tacitus.

of Augustus, the daughter of Vipfanius Agrippa, has fo far degenerated as to fhink from danger. By what part of my conduct have I deferved a treatment fo injurious? In what inftance have I departed from the character of a Roman matron, that I fhould thus be called on to defert my husband in the ftorm, and to provide for my own fafety by a daftardly and ignominious flight?"

'No,' replied Germanicus mildly, "no my love. It is not for your own fake, it is for mine, that I conjure you to go. While you remain in this fcene of tumult and diforder, I am truly miserable, nor can I anfwer for the confequence. To manage the unruly paffions of the multitude, when once they have broken the bounds prefcribed by authority, requires the utmoft command of temper and of prudence. Should any infult be offered to you, thefe would infantly be loft. No longer mafter of myfelf, I could not avoid giving way to
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the fury of resentment, and by so doing, might involve us both in ruin.'

Agrippina remained inexorable. "You would have me go," said she to Germanicus reproachfully, "because you can bear with patience the disgrace of being thought unable to protect me. But in my eyes life is not so precious as to be preserved at the expence of honour; and rather would I with this hand put a period to my existence, than hear it said, that the wife of Germanicus was obliged to seek a refuge with the barbarians."

At these words the prince caught Caligula in his arms, and pressing him to his bosom, melted into tears. Agrippina, overcome by this proof of tenderness, threw her arms round his neck, and gave way to those emotions which her high spirit could no longer suppress. "Yes," cried Germanicus, embracing her, "yes, my Agrippina, it is on you that the lives, the safety of our offspring now depend. Let me adjure

adjure you by your love for this boy, by your regard for the unborn babe, whose fate is involved in your decision, to comply with my request. Had no insubordination prevailed, I should have wished you to have removed to the neighbouring city of the Ubii, before the period of your confinement; but as things now are, it would in your situation be madness to remain."

Agrippina, no longer able to resist entreaties urged with so much tenderness, assented to the proposal, as an instance of duty and obedience.

No sooner was the determination of Agrippina made known to the superior officers, than all the matrons who had accompanied their husbands to the camp, were with one consent assembled to attend her. The melancholy procession soon commenced. The female attendants of the princess led the way, followed by Agrippina and her infant son, whom she carried in her arms, bedewing his face with her tears. The
wives

wives of the officers according to their rank followed closely after ; and numbers of inferior station were driven forth from their husbands to augment the train. These untutored minds, alarmed at the disconsolate appearance of all around them, caught the contagion of sorrow, though hardly knowing what they had to fear, and by their shrieks and lamentations added to the impressiveness of the scene.

The Romans were too conscious of their courage to be ashamed to weep. Germanicus and his friends, while they beheld the departure of the tender objects of their attachment, permitted their tears to flow; and sent up their prayers to the gods for the safety of their wives and children.

Such was the spectacle that presented itself to the astonished legions, as the procession moved slowly on through the streets of the camp. “ The soldiers listened,” says Tacitus, “ they came forth from their tents; they stood astonished at the sight; and

and why, they said, wherefore those notes of sorrow? What means that mournful spectacle? A train of noble matrons deserted, left to themselves, abandoned by all! No centurion, not so much as a soldier to accompany them! The wife of the general, undistinguished in the crowd, without a guard, and without the train of attendants suited to her rank, sent forth to seek in a foreign state that protection denied her in a Roman camp!"

To these reflections shame and remorse succeeded. Every breast was touched with sympathy, and the fate of Agrippina in particular made the deepest impression upon every heart.

The sight of Caligula raised their emotions almost to phrenzy. He had ever been the darling of the soldiers, who boasted of his having been nursed and educated in the camp. Yet this child of their affections was now by their frantic folly driven from among them, and his mother, honoured for
her

her virtues as much as for her rank, she too must fly, fly from the men who had fought and bled under the command of her illustrious ancestors! Stung to the quick by these reflections, the soldiers pressed forward to Agrippina to oppose her passage. They knelt, they wept, they entreated her to stay. They flew in crowds to Germanicus, and implored him to spare them the mortification of seeing her depart. They besought him to punish their crimes in any way but this: they supplicated, they entreated, till, when at length the prince seemed about to break the indignant silence he had long observed, the half-finished sentence died away upon their lips in the eagerness of attention.

“ My wife and children are ever dear to me,” said Germanicus, “ but not more so than my father and the commonwealth. But the emperor will be safe in his own imperial dignity, and the commonwealth has other armies to fight her battles. For
my

my wife and children, if from their destruction you could derive additional glory, I could yield them up a sacrifice in such a cause; at present I remove them from the rage of frantic men. If horrors are still to multiply, let my blood glut your fury. The great grandson of Augustus, and the daughter-in-law of Tiberius, need not be left to fill the measure of your iniquity. Without that horrid catastrophe, the scene of guilt may end. But let me ask you, in these last days; what have you not attempted? What have you left unviolated? By what name shall I now address you? Shall I call you soldiers? soldiers who have dared to besiege the son of your emperor! Can I call you citizens? citizens! who have trampled under your feet the authority of the senate; who have violated the most awful sanctions, even those which hostile states have ever held in respect, the rights of ambassadors, and the law of nations!''*

* Tacitus.

Germanicus proceeded to paint in the strongest colours the atrocity of their conduct, and by a happy transition to the fate of Varus, endeavoured to concentrate their contending passions against the common enemy. When he saw that his eloquence had made a sensible impression, he thus continued: “ May that revenge be still reserved for the Roman sword; and may the gods withhold from the Belgic states, though now they court the opportunity, the vast renown of vindicating the Roman name, and humbling the pride of the German nations! And may thy spirit, adored Augustus! and thine, Drusus, my ever-honoured father! inspire these unhappy men, whom I now see touched with remorse. May your active energy blot out the disgrace that sits heavy upon them, and may the rage of civil discord discharge itself on the enemies of Rome! And you, my fellow-soldiers, whom I behold with altered looks, whose hearts begin to melt with sorrow
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and repentance, if you mean to remain faithful to your prince, and to restore my wife and children, detach yourselves at once from the contagion of guilty men, withdraw from the seditious; that act will be a proof of your remorse, an earnest of returning virtue."

This harangue had the desired effect. The soldiers in a suppliant tone requested Germanicus to select for punishment those whom he considered as most guilty, but at the same time entreated that he would recal his wife and son. The prince, anxious to have Agrippina removed to a scene of greater tranquillity than the camp was for some time likely to exhibit, and having plans in view which must soon have renewed the pain of parting, would by no means consent to her return; but with regard to Caligula he relented. Messengers were immediately dispatched to bring him back; and the soldiers, who impatiently waited his appearance, hailed his re-entrance into the camp with shouts and acclamations.

Caligula was too young to understand the meaning of the uproar ; but it is not improbable, that it made a strong impression on his tender nerves. How far this impression might influence his future character, it is impossible to determine ; but to those who assert that scenes of cruelty have a tendency to produce a manly courage, it may not be superfluous to enforce the observation, that he who was at once the most ferocious and unlettered of the Cæsars was early accustomed to the sight of blood.

No sooner did the influence of Germanicus turn the tide of those passions which had raged with so much fury, than the popular phrenzy took a new direction. The rage of the soldiers was now turned against those who had led them on to mutiny. Singling from among their ranks those who had been foremost in the tumult, they bound them in chains, and bringing them to a superior officer, loudly demanded
 their

their instant execution ; each, by the alacrity with which he assisted in the slaughter of his companion, endeavouring to expiate his own share of guilt. Such are the consequences of stimulating the passions of the unreflecting multitude, in the vain hopes of being able to guide at pleasure the direction of a flame, which, when thoroughly kindled, is far too furious for control, and frequently involves both friend and foe in one promiscuous ruin!

CHAPTER X.

AGRIPPINA proceeds to the City of the Ubii.
 —Manners of the Germans.—Entertainments.—Martial Dance.—Gaming.
 —Respect for their Female Relations.—A German Wedding.—THUSNELDA the wife of ARMINIUS.—Her Adventures.

A. D. 14.

AGRIPPINA meanwhile proceeded on her melancholy journey, rendered more irksome by having lost the company of her son, whose infantine prattle might have beguiled the heavy hours, and prevented her thoughts from dwelling on subjects that were anxious and perplexing. She was, it is true, surrounded by many faithful

faithful friends; and the nation of the Ubii, on whose territories she was about to enter, were devoted to her family; so that for herself she had nothing to apprehend. But she still trembled for her husband's safety: her spirits had not yet recovered from the agitation into which they had been thrown by the late transactions, and wherever she cast her eyes, the absence of Germanicus, like an east wind, gave a hardness to the outline of every prospect.

No sooner did the inhabitants of Ubiorum Oppidum receive notice of the honour intended them, than they hastened to meet their noble visitor; and to assure her of a proud and joyful welcome. To them Agrippina was endeared by ties which the Germans held most sacred. Originally inhabitants of the eastern side of the Rhine, the Ubians had incurred the displeasure of their German neighbours, by their attachment to the Roman cause. During Cæsar's wars in Gaul they had placed them-

selves under his protection, and by adhering faithfully to the engagements they had then made, brought upon themselves the persecution of the Cattians, and the Suevii; by whom they would have been overpowered, had not Vipfanius Agrippa, at that time commander of the Roman armies, rescued them from destruction. Conducting them to the west side of the river, Agrippa there gave them a territory of sufficient extent, aided them in building their new city, and declared himself their patron and protector.

Ardently attached to the memory of their benefactor, the Ubians considered the honour conferred upon them by the presence of his daughter as one of the happiest events. Their honest gratitude appeared in every action: respectfully conducting Agrippina and her suite into their city, (for so the assemblage of ill-constructed huts was called) the principal house was prepared for her reception, as well as the shornness
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of the notice would permit, and what was wanting in elegance was abundantly supplied in good-will.

It was in situations like these that Agrippina fully experienced the advantage of having had her mind formed in early life to habits of simplicity. Taught to consider the slaves of luxury as under the most ignominious bondage, she carefully preserved her mind from its dominion; and by frequently submitting to voluntary privations, prepared herself for encountering with resolution those which the vicissitudes of fortune might render inevitable.

To Agrippina and her friends all was new and strange. In her progress with Germanicus she had indeed often seen the natives of the country; but the communication with them had till now been slight and distant. The tight dress of the men appeared in the eyes of the Roman ladies indelicate and offensive. That of the women was more graceful. A robe, though not of
 very

very flowing drapery, partially concealed their shape, leaving the arms and part of the bosom uncovered. The texture seldom varied. It was of coarse linen, adorned, according to fancy, with purple stains. “Our wives,” said the chief in presenting his to the princess, “our wives are undorned except with modesty. Their treasure is the affection of their husbands, and the reverence of their children. You who are a virtuous wife and happy mother will find them worthy your protection!”*

Agrippina, returning a proper compliment, saluted the honourable matrons with great complacency. The feast being now prepared was served up according to the manner of the country, every one sitting at a separate table. The fare would not by a voluptuary have been considered tolerable. But though the mutton was newly killed and very ill broiled, the curds were excellent, and the wild apples, not-

* Not V.

withstanding

withstanding their acidity, were highly flavoured. Agrippina, though she never drank any thing stronger than water, had the curiosity to taste the liquor made from barley, which she had often heard spoken of as the favourite beverage of the Germans. Wine indeed the Ubians could now boast of, as the vineyards planted under the auspices of Agrippa, on the banks of the Rhine, had come to great perfection, and produced abundantly. But still many of them from long habit gave a preference to ale, which they drank in such quantities as to answer all the purposes of intoxication. The characteristic virtue of the women afforded sufficient evidence, that inebriety was a vice confined to the other sex; since excess is altogether incompatible with steady regularity of conduct.

The house destined to Agrippina was, like the others, surrounded with a small inclosure, for the Germans considered being overlooked by a neighbour as an infringement

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ment on freedom, and therefore even in their towns built each house apart. The slaves who attended the princess, were shocked at the homely furniture of her apartment, but she with better sense smiled at their distress, and though she could not help being incommoded by the smoke, which having no vent filled every part of the house, she neither gave way to fretfulness nor discontent.

Agrippina was not more surpris'd at the insensibility of the Germans to this inconvenience, than they in their turn were astonish'd how she could bear being troubled with the attendance of such a numerous retinue. This she discovered by means of one of the daughters of the Ubian chief, to whom as she had conceived a liking, she permitted the liberty of attending her toilette. "Is the lady lame," asked the young barbarian, "that she requires so much assistance? But if she has lost the use of her own limbs, why cannot one person

son

son reach what she wants? Why torment her with so many to do so very little. Alas, that one so great should be so helpless!”

The pride of the Roman was piqued at thus exciting only pity, where she expected admiration. ‘ And has your mother then no slaves to attend her person?’ asked Agrippina.

“ O no ;” replied the girl, “ my mother is too proud to be dependent. Our slaves live in their own houses, and take care of their own families ; they till the ground, and raise corn, and take care of the vineyards ; but they do not come near us, we want none of their assistance.”

Agrippina then discovered that all the household business was managed by its mistress and her daughters, without the assistance of servant or of slave ; and that as nothing could be more disgraceful than a slothful performance of these necessary duties, the girls were from infancy brought up to diligence and activity. Indolence

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was the exclusive privilege of the men, who in time of peace passed the fluggish hours in sleep or gluttony. The hero who had in the field braved every danger, and whose active and enterprising spirit had sustained all the evils of fatigue and hunger, and want of rest, with a resolution amounting to insensibility, sunk on his return into listlessness; from which he was only to be roused by objects that applied to the passions.

Agrippina did not for some time see much of this, as her arrival had created a sufficient degree of interest to prevent the Ubians from sinking into torpours. To serve or to amuse their illustrious visitor, was the object of every heart. In every house the feast was spread, and the strangers who poured in from the surrounding country to get a sight of the Roman princess, were welcomed with a spirit of hospitality which Agrippina had never before seen any thing to equal. As dancing was the amusement in which they took most delight, they naturally

naturally thought, that by an exhibition of this kind they should most highly gratify the Roman ladies, who, they were persuaded, had never witnessed any spectacle half so interesting. Agrippina cheerfully accepted the invitation, and with her friends and attendants, went at the appointed hour to the place of entertainment, which was a spacious lawn in the vicinity of the city. There, on an eminence, a sort of throne had been prepared for her, to which she was conducted by the Ubian chief, who had enough of the Roman language to do the office of interpreter. A band of young men immediately made their appearance, armed with swords and javelins, and dressed in short tunics of white linen. "Here are fencers!" cried Agrippina on perceiving them, "pray to whom do these performers belong?" The chief, astonished at her ignorance, replied, that the young men were all of noble birth, that they were not to fence but to dance, for
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with the Germans dancing was a martial exercise; that in honour to her they were clothed with the garments which they now wore, otherwise it was their usual custom to dance unincumbered by clothes. As he thus spake, the performance commenced; and Agrippina could not but admire the agility, grace, and elegance, that was displayed in every movement. The clashing of swords seemed at first to keep time with the music, but the combat soon became more fierce; wounds were given and received; and though, from the blood that flowed, many were evidently very seriously hurt, none relinquished his place, or appeared sensible to pain, but rather to go through the evolutions of the dance with redoubled animation. Agrippina had been too much accustomed to the amusements of the amphitheatre, to be shocked by this spectacle; but could not forbear expressing to her companions her astonishment, that any who were of free birth should thus
expose

expose themselves to unnecessary trouble. She however took care to conceal her sentiments from her entertainer, and distributed presents of golden chains and bracelets among such of the performers as had most distinguished themselves in the martial dance.

On the following day, as Agrippina was walking through the city, her attention was attracted towards to a young man of uncommonly dignified aspect, who was bound in chains, and walking with a look of stern fortitude by the side of a person who eyed him from time to time with an air of seeming exultation. On a nearer approach, she recollected having seen both these youths in the dance of the preceding evening. The gold chains which she had given to each, were now both worn by him who was leading the other into captivity, and who appeared too much elated by prosperity to take notice of any surrounding object. On being stopped by her interpreter, whom she had ordered to enquire

enquire into the meaning of these extraordinary circumstances, they both lifted up their eyes, and on seeing Agrippina betrayed symptoms of confusion. Both were covered with blushes, but while the captive seemed to shrink from her inquisitive glance, the other, affecting a careless air, came forwards, and informed her attendant, that after partaking of the banquet which had been prepared for them the preceding evening, they had, according to the custom of their nation, amused themselves by gaming; that the young man his companion, after losing all that he had in the world, had staked the gold chain given by him the princess; and that likewise being lost, he had at length staked himself! You see the consequence, added he gaily, he is now my slave, and I am about to sell him to the highest bidder.

Agrippina was extremely shocked at this account, and after a moment's deliberation resolved to save the imprudent youth
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from the horrors of a fate so dreadful. Having learned the price that was fixed upon him, she desired both the young men to follow her to her house, where, with a frowning aspect, she delivered the money into the winner's hand, telling him at the same time never more to approach her presence. Mortified and abashed he slunk away, while his companion, released from his fetters, threw himself at the feet of his benefactress, and expressed by a flood of tears the feelings of gratitude which overwhelmed his heart.*

Agrippina did not fail to give to Germanicus a very particular detail of all the circumstances that occurred to her observation. In every letter he repeated his injunctions to continue her remarks on the manners of the barbarians, and to use all the means in her power to obtain information concerning the meaning and origin of such customs as appeared to her most

* Note W.

strange

strange and unaccountable. But though indefatigable in her enquiries, it was but seldom that she met with satisfaction. Even in the civilised world customs are continued long after the circumstances in which they originated, have ceased to operate, and are forgotten; but to a rude and simple people whatever is immemorial appears eternal. With regard to what was reported to her of the various superstitions of the natives, Agrippina was perhaps sufficiently credulous; but as the very situation of the groves in which the principal ceremonies of their religion was performed, was carefully concealed, it is not to be supposed that the accounts they gave of their sacred rites was to be depended on as genuine.

No circumstance in the behaviour of the Germans appeared to the polite Romans so entirely unaccountable, as their high respect for the softer sex. Augustus, observing that the women were considered as their dearest pledges, and that the idea
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of their being led into captivity was insupportable, demanded female hostages from the conquered tribes, as the most undoubted of all securities. The event did honour to his penetration; as they who had never considered their male hostages as of any consequence, were never known to break a treaty when female honour was concerned in its preservation. With these facts Germanicus was well acquainted. He had likewise witnessed the effects of the ardour inspired in the barbarians by the presence of these beloved objects of affection in many an engagement, where the men were urged on to the cruel conflict by the shouts of approbation sent up by their wives and daughters who surrounded the field. He had seen the combat at their instance oft renewed, and by their interference the glory of victory snatched from the Roman arms. But he knew not by what means the German women had obtained so great an ascendancy, and would
not

not lose an opportunity so favourable as the present for having his curiosity gratified.

The observations which Agrippina made, led (or might have led) her to conclude, that the esteem and respect in which the German women were held by their male relations, was as much the cause as the consequence of their superior merit. Conscious of having a character to support, they were impelled by the most generous motives to the exercise of all the virtues on which their nation set the highest value. In war they accompanied their husbands to the field, and after the battle, it was upon them that the care of the wounded entirely devolved. They were the only surgeons, and by their skill in the art of healing supported that character of superior wisdom, which they had imperceptibly acquired. How it came to be acquired will be easily accounted for, when we reflect, that in the intervals of peace, while the other sex were engaged in gaming, drinking, and quarrelling, or in
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the indulgence of sloth, no less injurious to the mental powers, they were in their domestic avocations accustomed to the perpetual exercise of judgment. Hence, when questions of importance came to be discussed, they who were neither blinded by the fury of the passions nor the fumes of intoxication, had an evident advantage over their impassioned lords; and were frequently enabled by their sagacity and discernment to penetrate into the probable consequence of events, in a way that to minds incapable of reflection appeared altogether extraordinary. The Germans had the good sense not to despise the judicious counsels of their female friends; but to rescue the pride of sex from the mortification of acknowledged inferiority, they ascribed the wisdom of which they availed themselves to the inspiration of the gods! Whether it was the old women only who were believed to be thus inspired, or whether illumination was particularly attributed

to the young and beautiful, could not perhaps be easily ascertained; but neither in youth nor age did the German females disgrace the sacred character with which they were thus invested.

Agrippina, after her arrival at Ubiorum, was invited to the celebration of a grand feast, given by one of the principal chiefs in honour of his daughter's nuptials. A few days previous to the solemnity she went with a friend to pay a visit to the intended bride. They were received with the utmost respect by the mother of the family and her daughters, who, contrary to the expectation of the Roman ladies, were neither embarrassed by their presence, nor reluctant to satisfy their curiosity. In answer to the queries concerning the fortune of the bride, they were given to understand that marriages in Germany were not contracted from mercenary motives. "My daughter," said the mother of the bride, "has been sought by many chiefs, but she has preferred

preferred the son of our friend. The youth has proved himself deserving of her love, for in single combat he has slain three of the most valiant of the Suevii. She in the last war accompanied the other maidens to behold the battle, each resolved, should the enemy prove victorious, to die by her own hand, rather than submit to the conquerors, for never has any of our race survived their honour. Her gallant lover was crowned with glory, but he was deeply wounded in the bloody fray. Had she not been there, he must have perished. She flew like lightning to the spot where he lay gasping with fatigue and agony; she bound up his wounds, she administered cordials to revive his soul, and assisted by the damsels her companions in raising a shed of green boughs to keep out the scorching rays of the sun, she attended him by night and day till his recovery was completed. When they came back from the war, he delivered her the marriage presents

presents in presence of her father and his friends. By accepting them the match was made, and on the day appointed for the wedding-feast, when she will have the return for his gifts prepared, she will be made his for ever."

'And is what I have heard true?' said the sprightly friend of Agrippina, 'that there is here no chance of a second husband?'

"A second husband!" cried the old woman with astonishment, "where should she find a second heart to bestow upon him? We have indeed heard that at Rome women have many hearts, or rather that by their conduct they sometimes appear to have none; that there they commit adultery with impunity, and that, by a something called divorce, they even make adultery lawful. But these are slanders not to be credited of the great nation; nor am I so simple as to believe that women of exalted rank should ever degrade themselves."

"Would

“Would to the gods!” cried Agrippina, “that every Roman matron thought with you!”

The attendants of Agrippina were then ordered by their mistress to produce the ornaments she had selected as a present for the bride. These consisted of a white robe, an embroidered girdle with a clasp, and a gold ring, such as were given by the Romans to their brides at the ceremony of betrothment. To these Paulina added the purple ribbon, which it was the peculiar privilege of modest women to wear.

“The gifts are precious to me,” said the young German, “they shall be preserved in my family for ever. To the latest generation they shall be handed down, as a perpetual memorial of the honour conferred upon our house by the daughter of Agrippa.”

‘But you must wear them yourself,’ said Agrippina, ‘they were intended as a wedding-dress.’

“No,”

“ No,” replied the young woman, “ such gaudy ornaments are not befitting for a German; I should lose the respect of my husband, did he think me capable of taking pleasure in superfluous finery. He will glory in the gifts of the princess as the pledge of her friendship, but he would blush to see me expose myself by affecting to depart from the simplicity of our nation.”

Firm to her resolution the bride appeared on the day of her nuptials clad in the usual attire. A chemise of blue and white linen without sleeves descended to her feet, and being drawn tight round the waist by a band of the same materials, displayed her shape to advantage. Her long yellow hair, braided on her snowy forehead, was turned up behind, and fastened at the top by a bodkin of white thorn. Her fine complexion heightened by the blush of modesty gave to her dark blue eyes a vivacity, which, if it did not equal the brilliant lustre that sparkled in Agrippina’s, was nevertheless

nevertheless expressive and beautiful. At the entrance of the small lawn which surrounded the house, she received Agrippina and her friends, and conducted them to the seats prepared for them; from whence they could have a full view of the exchange of gifts which constituted the marriage ceremony.

The companion of the young chief first advanced with a yoke of oxen, which were given to the bride to remind her that the labours of the field were to be under her direction. Having driven the oxen to the stalls prepared for them, she returned and was met by the brother of the bridegroom, leading in his hand a horse fully caparisoned. "By accepting this horse," said he, "you declare your resolution of accompanying your husband wherever his fortunes may lead him. You are to be his companion in war, the partner of his toil and danger. You are to have but one country and one fate."

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The bride listened with attention, and by taking the reins and leading off the horse evinced her acquiescence. The bridegroom, who had been a pleased spectator of all that had hitherto passed, now came forward. In his hands he held a shield, a spear, and a sword. “ These,” says he, “ are the arms transmitted to me by my ancestors, they have for seven generations been by every chief of our family given to his bride, and faithfully kept by her till claimed by her eldest son. By my mother were they presented to me in the midst of the assembled chiefs, and by this act she declared her life to be without stain. These arms are emblematical of the husband’s honour, which he commits in trust to the partner of his bosom. They come unto your hands unpolluted by a single stain ; be it your care to preserve the sacred treasure, and to deliver it without spot or blemish to the son of our loves.”

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The bride received the precious deposit with modesty, but firmness; and then in her turn presented a helmet, a shield, a sword, and javelin; which, as her father in a short speech intimated, were intended to remind the husband that he was to be the protector of his wife and family. The shield being of very curious workmanship attracted the attention of Agrippina; it was handed to her for inspection, and on a nearer view she found that it was composed of osier twigs, dyed of a variety of bright colours, and most curiously platted, so as to give in each of the four divisions a lively representation of some flower, or animal peculiar to the country in which the chief or his family had signalized their valour.*

The feast for the numerous company was profusely spread; and was, as may be supposed, less remarkable for elegance

* This is considered by antiquarians as the origin of coats of arms.

or variety than for abundance. It had but just commenced, when two strangers appeared, who from their dress were known to belong to the Cattian nation. Neither their names or business were however asked. According to the German rules of hospitality, they were conducted in silence to the seat of honour, on the right hand of the master of the house, and regaled with the most dainty morsels.

There was something in the appearance of these youths which particularly attracted the attention of Agrippina. In the elder of the two an air of superiority was conspicuous; and the extreme delicacy of the features suited so ill with the complexion, as to create a doubt in her mind, whether it had not been embrowned by art. She had not yet among the barbarians seen a figure so graceful, or a deportment so dignified. Her curiosity was excited, and the silence of the strangers added to its force. Impatient of delay, she sent to the Ubian chief

chief to beg that he would enquire the name and rank of his extraordinary guests. The old man appeared no less surprised than mortified by her request, and humbly entreated that she would not insist upon his dishonouring himself by a breach of hospitality. It was then explained to her, that by the established customs of Germany, to ask the name of a stranger was to imply a doubt of his right to your protection, and was therefore highly indecorous: nor was it proper for the stranger rashly to declare himself, since whether he was the son of a friend or foe, he had an equal claim to attention.*

* The spirit of hospitality appears in the progress of society gradually to decrease, in proportion as nations advance in refinement. "In countries," says Montesquieu, "where the people move only by the spirit of commerce, they make a traffic of all the humane and the moral virtues. The sentiments of the heart, the social affections, and even the dues of humanity, are there to be obtained only for money." The spirit of selfishness which extinguishes that of hospitality, is not confined to commerce; it is the never-failing attendant on luxury and refinement. While

While Agrippina was holding this conference with her host, the strangers appeared to listen with interest to all that passed. The elder lifting his dark blue eyes which had hitherto been fixed upon the ground, darted on her a look of reproach, which affected her in the most sensible manner. Quickly entering into his feelings, she was ashamed of having indulged a curiosity which must have appeared to him so reprehensible ; nor could all the proud consciousness of superiority prevent her from being sensibly mortified at having violated the rules of propriety established by a rude unlettered people.

Agrippina heard nothing more of the strangers for several days. She had in that time been agreeably surpris'd by receiving an unexpected visit from the wife of Caius Silius, a lady to whom from infancy she had been attached by ties of the strictest friendship. Silius, who commanded one of the detached armies stationed on the
frontiers,

frontiers, no sooner heard of the situation of Agrippina, than he sent his wife guarded by a proper escort to Ubiorum, to soothe by her presence the lonely hours of her friend. Since she was thought worthy of that title, Sofia Galla could not have been destitute of merit; she had already been endeared to Agrippina by many proofs of affection, and the kindness of the present visit served to rivet every tie of mutual attachment.*

Sofia found the situation of Agrippina much more tolerable than she could have imagined. Her house had been fitted up by the Roman artisans in a style of neatness and comfort, and her apartments furnished according to the Roman taste. Here, soon after the arrival of Sofia, she was one morning, when engaged in conversation with her friend, surprised by the sudden entrance of the two stranger youths, who had at the marriage-feast so

* Note X.

much

much attracted her curiosity. Observing in their looks the appearance of perturbation and anxiety, she endeavoured to inspire them with confidence by the kindness of her reception. After a short pause, the elder thus addressed her:—

“ You are the wife of a Roman, but the praises I have heard bestowed upon your virtue inspires me with confidence. I do not however expect that you should protect me, without knowing to whom that protection is extended; for those of your nation understand not the claims of the stranger.”

Agrippina eagerly assured him, that she knew how to respect the rights of hospitality, and that he might depend on her protection. “ My name is of no importance,” resumed the stranger, “ but I will not impose upon you in regard to my situation. This garb which I and my companion have assumed, belongs not to our sex. You see before you an unhappy female,
who

who flies from the vengeance of an offended father to the protecting arms of a beloved husband.

“ The chief from whom I sprung, and he to whom I have been united, are equals in rank and in renown. They long were friends, and when I gave my heart to the hero, my father smiled upon our loves; but alas! no sooner did discord enter into their councils, than he commanded me to withdraw my affections from him to whom they had irrevocably been engaged. Obedience was impossible; nor could I be unfaithful to my vows without tarnishing my honour. My lover urged me to fulfil the promise that had once been sanctioned by duty, my heart impelled me to a compliance with his request; and at the moment when my father had promised me in marriage to a chief who was of his party in the quarrel, I eloped with the object of my affection, and became his wife. The rage of an incensed father still pursues me.

Taking

“Taking advantage of my husband’s absence, he resolves to get me into his power. I have by means of this disguise succeeded in escaping from his emissaries, and could I be concealed under your roof till midnight, should have no doubt of being safe from their pursuit. I adjure you then by your love for the husband you adore, to assist in saving a wretched wife from the miseries of an eternal separation!”

Here the stranger paused; but though her voice was silent, her eyes continued expressively to convey her feelings to the soul of Agrippina. True generosity is prompt in its decisions. Agrippina did not hesitate to promise the desired protection, and immediately conveyed her guests to a place where they would be secure from all intrusion.

At the dead hour of midnight, Agrippina, faithful to her word, attended the fugitives. She urged their remaining in their present place of safety, till the husband of
the

the stranger should be informed where his wife was now concealed, and could come to take her under his own protection. But the proposal was declined, and the German heroine, having thanked her benefactress with tears of genuine gratitude, departed in the assured hope of meeting her beloved lord at an appointed place before the dawn of day.



ADDITIONAL
NOTES.

(A.) p. 66.—(B.) p. 70.—(C.) p. 84.

ARE consolidated into the following short sketch of the life of Marcus Antonius, commonly called Mark Antony, and after his coalition with Octavius and Lepidus, distinguished by the appellation of triumvir. We are informed by Plutarch, that “he was the son of Antony, surnamed the Cretan, a man of no figure or consequence in the political world; but distinguished for his integrity, benevolence, and liberality. His mother’s name was Julia; she was of the family of the Cæsars, and a woman of distinguished merit and modesty. Under her auspices, Mark Antony received his education; when, after the death of his

his father, the married Cornelius Lentulus, whom Cicero put to death for engaging in the conspiracy of Catiline. This was the origin of that lasting enmity which subsisted between Cicero and Antony. The latter affirmed, that his mother Julia was even obliged to beg the body of Cicero's wife for interment; but this is not true, for none of those who suffered on the same occasion under Cicero, were refused this privilege. Antony was engaging in his person, and was unfortunate enough to fall into the good graces and friendship of Curio, a man who was devoted to every species of licentiousness; and who, to render Antony the more dependent on him, led him into all manner of excesses. Of course, he was soon deeply involved in debt, and owed at least two hundred and fifty talents, while he was a very young man. Curio was bound for the payment of this money; and his father being informed of it banished Antony from his house. Thus dismissed, he attached himself to Clodius, that pestilent and audacious tribune, who threw the state into such dreadful disorder; till weary of his mad measures, and fearful of his opponents, he passed into Greece, where he employed

ployed himself in military exercises, and the study of eloquence. The Asiatic style was then much in vogue, and Antony fell naturally into it; for it was correspondent with his manners, which were vain, pompous, insolent, and assuining." Having obtained a command of cavalry, he made a campaign in Syria under Gabinius, where he distinguished himself by his courage, no less than by his profusion and licentiousness. He after this returned to Rome, which was now divided between the two parties of Pompey and Cæsar. With Curio and other young men of desperate fortune he joined the party of Cæsar, who supplied them with the means of gratifying that unbounded prodigality which had rendered their circumstances so embarrassed. In the wars of Cæsar against the senate, Antony distinguished himself in every battle that was fought, particularly in that of Pharsalia, where Pompey was defeated, and Rome reduced to subjection. In the absence of Cæsar, Antony now governed Rome, and had a full opportunity of displaying the talents in which he chiefly gloried. Every one who could discover a new and unheard of extravagance, was sure of his favour and protection.

tection. But it is to be remarked that neither his prodigality to players and buffoons, nor his noted intemperance, nor even his chariots drawn by lions, gave such disgust to the people, as the till then unheard-of indecency of carrying about a mistress with an equipage as well appointed as that of his mother! He divorced his wife Antonia to marry Fulvia the widow of Claudius, a woman of high passions, imperious, ambitious, and vindictive. It was to Fulvia, therefore, that Cleopatra was obliged for teaching Antony due submission to female authority. He had gone through such a course of discipline as made him perfectly tractable when he came into her hands.

On the death of Cæsar, having gotten possession of his treasures and private papers, he put himself at the head of the party, despising the youth of Octavius, who was then only eighteen years of age, and who appeared inclined to espouse the cause of the senate; by his promises deceiving Cicero and all who entertained any hopes of the restoration of the constitution. Antony and Octavius soon saw it their mutual interest to come to an understanding; and being joined by Lepidus who was the commander

of a third army, they met in a small island not far from Bologna, and divided between them the empire of the world like a paternal inheritance; whom they should spare and whom they should destroy, it was not so easy to adjust. While each was for saving his respective friends, and putting to death his enemies. At length their resentment against the latter overcame their kindness for the former. Octavius gave up Cicero to Antony, and Antony sacrificed his uncle to Octavius; while Lepidus had the privilege of putting to death his own brother Paulus! Never was any thing so atrocious, or so execrably savage as this commerce of murder; having marked down such as they intended to put to death, (in number three hundred) they cemented their confederacy by the alliance of Octavius with Claudia the daughter of Fulvia. The murder of the great Cicero was the first fruits of this infamous coalition, which was followed by a scene of blood and rapine not to be described. Having thus satiated the passions of avarice and revenge, Antony proceeded to take possession of the provinces allotted to him in the east; where in Cleopatra he might truly be said to meet with a congenial mind. This seducing

seducing and voluptuous beauty, who had captivated the hearts of Cæsar and of Pompey, was resolved that Antony should not escape her chains. She soon obtained the most absolute dominion over his affections, and induced him to make a sacrifice of honour and even of ambition to sensuality. Fulvia, in hopes of withdrawing him from her dangerous rival, set out from Rome, but died by the road; and by her death made way for his marriage with Octavia, the eldest sister of Octavius, which was celebrated soon after his return to Rome.

Octavia was the widow of Marcellus, a man of high rank and great reputation, by whom she had one son and three daughters; but she was younger than Cleopatra, equalled her in beauty, and was as remarkable for the possession of every virtue, as her rival was odious for every crime. She had one daughter by Antony called Antonia, who was after married to Drusus the son of Livia; but his children by Fulvia were no less the objects of her maternal care. The purity of Octavia's mind did not suit the dissolute Antony, who, in renewing his infamous connection with Cleopatra, completed his ruin. Octavia wa long
the

the peace-maker between her husband and her brother. "The eyes of all," said she, "upon an occasion of this nature, are necessarily turned on me, who am the wife of Antony and the sister of Cæsar; and should these chiefs, misled by hasty counsels involve the whole in war, whatever may be the event, it will be unhappy for me." Antony's injurious treatment of such a woman excited general indignation; and the distribution he made of the provinces that had been conquered by the Roman arms to his children by Cleopatra, increased the public discontent. While Antony continued to waste his giddy hours in every species of luxury and dissipation with her abandoned rival, Octavia devoted herself to the care and education of his children; nor after he had paid the forfeit of his folly and his crimes at the battle of Actium, did his virtuous widow forsake the charge of his unhappy orphans. Of his two sons by Fulvia, the elder was indeed put to death by Octavius; but Lucius the younger was brought up with the children of Octavia, and married to her daughter Marcella, as related in the text.

(D.) p. 85.—Ovation

Was an inferior species of triumph, in which the general entered the city, not in a triumphal chariot, but on foot, or on horseback, crowned with myrtle; and instead of a bullock, sacrificed a sheep.

(F.) p. 95.

The passage alluded to, is thus translated by DRYDEN:

- “ ÆNEAS here beheld, of form divine,
 “ A godlike youth in glitt’ring armour shine,
 “ With great Marcellus keeping equal pace;
 “ But gloomy were his eyes, dejected was his face.
 “ He saw, and wond’ring, ask’d his airy guide,
 “ What, and of whence, was he who prefs’d the
 “ hero’s side?
 “ His son, or one of his illustrious name:
 “ How like the former, and almost the same!
 “ Observe the crowds that compass him around;
 “ All gaze, and all admire, and raise a shouting sound.
 “ But hov’ring mists around his brows are spread,
 “ And night with fable shades involves his head.
 “ Seek not to know (the ghost reply’d with tears)
 “ The sorrows of thy sons in future years.
 “ This youth (the blissful vision of a day)
 “ Shall just be shewn on earth, and snatch’d away.
 “ The gods too high had rais’d the Roman state:
 “ (Were but their gifts as permanent as great!)
 “ What

- “ What groans of men shall fill the Martian field !
 “ How fierce a blaze his flaming pile shall yield !
 “ What fun’ral pomp shall floating Tyber see,
 “ When rising from his bed he views the sad solemnity !
 “ No youth shall equal hopes of glory give ;
 “ No youth afford so great a cause to grieve .
 “ The Trojan honour, and the Roman boast ;
 “ Admir’d when living, and adorn’d when lost !
 “ Mirror of ancient faith in early youth !
 “ Undaunted worth, inviolable truth !
 “ No foe, unpunish’d, in the fighting field
 “ Shall dare thee foot to foot with sword and shield ;
 “ Much less in arms oppose thy matchless force,
 “ When thy sharp spurs shall urge thy foaming horse .
 “ Ah, should’st thou break thro’ fate’s severe decree ;
 “ A new Marcellus shall arise in thee !
 “ Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,
 “ Mix’d with the purple roses of the spring :
 “ Let me with fun’ral flow’rs his body strow ;
 “ This gift which parents to their children owe,
 “ This unavailing gift at least I may bestow !” }

(G.) p. 104.

The exact period of our Saviour’s birth has been a matter of dispute to the commentators, some asserting it to have taken place three and others four years, before that which is commemorated by the Christian world as the year

of

of our Lord. But as the exact time of the event is of no real importance, the vulgar æra has been in the text adopted.

(H.) p. 109.

Virgines Vestales.

“Virgins consecrated to the worship of Vesta, a priesthood derived from Alba; for Rhea Sylvia, the mother of Romulus, was a vestal originally from Troy, Virg. *Æn.* xi. 296. The vestal virgins were chosen first by the kings, and after their expulsion by the Pontifex Maximus; who, according to the papian law, when a vacancy was to be supplied, selected from among the people twenty girls above six and below sixteen years of age, free from any bodily defect, whose father and mother were both alive, and free-born citizens. It was determined by lot in an assembly of the people, which of those twenty should be appointed. Then the Pontifex Maximus went and took her on whom the lot fell, from her parents. The Pontifex Maximus might choose any one he thought proper, with the consent of her parents, and the requisite qualifications. The vestal virgins

virgins were bound to their ministry for thirty years. For the first ten they learned the sacred rites; for the next ten, they performed them; and for the last ten, they taught the younger virgins. The oldest was called Maxima. After thirty years service they might leave the temple, and marry; which, however, was seldom done, and always reckoned ominous.

The office of the vestal virgins was, 1st, to keep the sacred fire always burning, watching it in the night-time alternately, and whoever allowed it to go out was scourged. This accident was always esteemed unlucky, and expiated by offering extraordinary sacrifices. The fire was lighted up again, not from another fire, but from the rays of the sun; in which manner it was renewed every year on the 1st of March, that day being anciently the beginning of the year.—2d, To keep the secret pledge of the empire; supposed to have been the palladium or the penates of the Roman people, kept in the innermost recess of the temple, visible only to the virgins, or rather to the Vestales Maxima alone; sometimes removed from the temple of Vesta by the virgins, when tumult and slaughter prevailed in the city, or in case of a fire. Their
prayers

prayers and vows were always thought to have great influence with the gods. In their devotions they worshipped the god Fascinus to guard them from envy. The vestal virgins wore a long white robe, bordered with purple; their heads were decorated with fillets, and ribbons. When first chosen, their hair was cut off and buried under an old lotes or lote tree in the city, but it was afterwards allowed to grow. The vestal virgins enjoyed singular honours and privileges. The prætors and consuls when they met them in the street, lowered their fasces, and went out of the way to shew them respect. They had a licitor to attend them in public, at least after the time of the triumvirate; Plutarch says always. They rode in a chariot, set in a distinguished place at the spectacles; were not forced to swear, unless they inclined, and by none other but Vesta. They might make their testament, although under age; for they were not subject to the power of a parent or guardian, as other women. They could free a criminal from punishment, if they met him accidentally, and their interposition was always greatly respected. They had a salary from the public. They were held

in such veneration, that testaments and the most important deeds were committed to their care, and they enjoyed all the privileges of matrons who had three children.

“ When the vestal virgins were forced thro’ indisposition to leave the *Atrium Vestæ*, probably a house adjoining to the temple, and to the palace of Numa, if not a part of it, where the virgins lived, they were entrusted to the care of some venerable matron. If any vestal violated her vow of chastity, after being tried and sentenced by the Pontifex, she was buried alive with funeral solemnities, in a place called the *Campus Sceleratus*, near the Porta Collina; and her paramour scourged to death in the Forum; which method of punishment is said to have been first contrived by Tarquinius Priscus. The commission of this crime was thought to forbode some dreadful calamity of the state, and therefore was always expiated with extraordinary sacrifices.”

Adams’s Antiquities.

(1.) p. 113.

The toga was a loose woollen robe which covered the whole body; round, and close at
the

the bottom, but open at the top down to the girdle, and without sleeves. None but Roman citizens were permitted to wear the toga, and banished persons were prohibited the use of it. The colour of the toga was white, except in mourning, when it was changed for one of black or some dark colour. Under the toga was a vest or tunic, with or without sleeves, as the fashion varied. Young men when they assumed the toga, or manly robe, received from their parents a tunic, embroidered in a particular manner. This change of dress took place at the age of 16 or 17, and was deemed an event of great importance to the Roman youth, forming a sort of new æra in their existence.

(κ.) p. 119.

The pulvinar appears to have been a sort of balcony commanding a view of the circus, the place appropriated to the horse and chariot races, fighting of wild beasts, &c. The circensian games here mentioned were instituted by Julius Cæsar, to be celebrated annually on the 4th or 5th of April; and to him did the populace owe the magnificent edifice of the
 circus;

mile in circumference, and furrounded with porticos three stories high. Before the games began, the images of the gods were led along in procession on carriages, or on men's shoulders, with a great train of attendants, some on horseback and some on foot. Next followed the dancers, musicians, &c. When the procession was over, the consuls and priests performed sacred rites. The shows exhibited were chariot and horse races, wild beasts fighting with one another, or with men, who sometimes undertook to amuse the spectators with this savage sport voluntarily for hire; but as few could be brought thus to risk their lives of their own accord, the number wanted to furnish out the entertainment was supplied from those who had been condemned to punishment for real or imputed crimes!

Contests of agility and strength, as running, leaping, boxing, &c. were likewise exhibited at the circus.—*Adams's Antiquities.*

Frequent allusions to these favourite amusements are to be met with in the writings of St. Paul, as in 1 Cor. ix. 24.; xv. 32.; Eph. vi. 11.

(L.) p. 121.

Claudius is represented by Suetonius as having been, even after the expiration of his minority, under the direction of a pedagogue, of whom he complained that "he was a barbarous wretch, and formerly a master mule-driver, that was retained as his governor, on purpose to correct him feverely on every trifling occasion." By another writer, he is said to have had the historian Sallust for his preceptor. Be this as it may, his manners and appearance were so little flattering to his family, that "when he assumed the manly robe, he was carried in a chair at midnight into the capitol, without the usual ceremony."—*Suet.*

(M.) p. 130.

Sempronius Gracchus is represented by Tacitus as "descended from a noble family; a man possessed of talents, and adorned with eloquence; but eloquence viciously applied. By his wit and rare accomplishments he seduced an affection, of Julia, even in the life-time of her husband Agrippa. Nor did his passion stop there: when she was afterwards married to Tiberius,

Tiberius; he was still a persevering adulterer, and by secret artifices poisoned the mind of the wife against her husband. The letter to Augustus, in which she treated the character of Tiberius with contempt, was generally thought to be his composition." This was an offence which could never meet with forgiveness from wounded pride.

After passing fourteen years in dismal solitude in an island on the coast of Africa, he met his death from the hands of assassins, sent by Tiberius to dispatch him. His appearance was such as to excite compassion even from his murderers. The gay seducer of Julia is represented by Tacitus as having been found by his assassins "standing on the point of a prominent neck of land, with a countenance fixed in sorrow and despair. As soon as the ruffians approached, he required a short delay that he might write the sentiments of a dying man to his wife Alliaria. Had this memorial of his regret and penitence been preserved, it would probably have afforded a convincing proof of the power of conscience, and might have been of some use in destroying those dangerous illusions, which lead to a belief in the all conquering

quering power of love. After fourteen years of exile Sempronius thought no longer of his mistress; but even in the hour of death his unfortunate wife was remembered with tenderness and affection. Having performed this last duty, he resumed his fortitude, and calmly presented his neck to the murderer's stroke, "in his last moments," says the historian, "worthy of the Sempronian name!"

(o.) and (p.) p. 161.

There is no article in which the Romans appear to have been more extravagantly luxurious, than in the number and size of their villas. Pliny has left a particular description of several that belonged to him; particularly of that in Tuscany, which seems to have been his principal seat. The apartments are by many supposed not to have been all under one roof, but scattered about in different parts of the garden, and united with each other by covered porticos. To those who are unacquainted with the subject, the following account of the smallest of these villas, may not be altogether unacceptable:

“ My

“ My villa is large enough to afford conveniences, without being extensive. The porch before it is plain, but not mean, through which you enter into a portico in the form of the letter D, which includes a small, but agreeable area. This affords a very commodious retreat in bad weather, not only as it is inclosed with windows, but particularly as it is sheltered by an extraordinary projection of the roof. From the middle of this portico you pass into an inward court extremely pleasant, and from thence into a handsome hall which runs out towards the sea; so that when there is a south-west wind, it is gently washed with the waves, which spend themselves at the foot of it. On every side of this hall, there are either folding-doors or windows equally large; by which means you have a view from the front and the two sides as it were of three different seas. From the back part you see the middle court, the portico, and the area; and by another view you look through the portico into the porch, from whence the prospect is terminated by the woods and mountains, which are seen at a distance. On the left-hand of this hall lies a large drawing-room; and beyond that a second

cond of a smaller size, which has one window to the rising and another to the setting sun; this has likewise a prospect of the sea, but being at a greater distance, is less incommoded by it. Contiguous to this is a room forming the segment of a circle, the windows of which are so placed as to receive the sun the whole day: in the walls are contrived a sort of cases, which contain a collection of such authors, whose works can never be read too often. From hence you pass into a bed-chamber through a passage, which being boarded and suspended as it were over a stove, which runs underneath, tempers the heat which it receives and conveys to all parts of this room. The remaining side of the house is appropriated to the use of my slaves and freed-men; but, however, most of the apartments in it are sufficiently neat to entertain any of my friends, who are inclined to be my guests. In the opposite wing is a room ornamented in a very elegant taste; next to which lies another room, which, though large for a parlour, makes but a moderate dining-room. Beyond this is a bed-chamber together with its anti-chamber, the height of which renders it cool in summer, as its being sheltered

sheltered on all sides from the winds makes it warm in winter. To this apartment another of the same sort is joined by one common wall. From thence you enter into the grand and spacious cooling-room belonging to the baths, from the opposite walls of which two circular basins project, large enough to swim in. Contiguous to this is the perfuming-room, then the sweating room, and beyond that the furnace which conveys the heat to the baths: adjoining are two other little bathing-rooms, which are fitted up in an elegant rather than costly manner. Annexed to this is a warm bath of extraordinary workmanship, wherein one may swim, and have a prospect at the same time of the sea."

The rest of the description is too long for insertion; it must, however, be observed, that though Pliny professes only to describe a part of this *small villa*, he gives in that part a list of *more than forty rooms!*

(Q.) p. 173.

When the rites of paganism gave place to a purer system, the gods of silver and of brass were necessarily banished from the tables of all who had embraced the doctrines of Christianity,
but

but the social meal was still held sacred; and when the families of believers assembled at the social board, they were reminded of the presence of the true and invisible GOD by a solemn invocation of the Deity. At the conclusion of the repast, the Divine Being whom they acknowledged as the giver of all good, was again addressed with feelings of suitable reverence and gratitude: and as gratitude and love to GOD were united in the mind of every true christian with benevolence and charity to man, those who had abundance did not forget upon these occasions to distribute to the wants of the destitute. The custom of consecrating every meal by asking a blessing and returning thanks continued almost to our own times to be very generally observed, and is not as yet *entirely* fallen into disuse. May those who ought to set the example prevent its ever becoming obsolete!

(R.) p. 174.

The following very ingenious arguments are adduced by Pliny, is an apology for thus reading what he intended for publication:—"It is not," says he, "whilst I am reading, but when I am read, that I aim at approbation; and

and for that reason I omit no sort of method that can render my performances more correct. In the first place, I frequently revise my compositions in private; afterwards I read them to two or three friends, and then give them to others to make their remarks. If after this I have any doubt concerning the justness of their observations, I carefully weigh them again with a friend or two; and last of all, I recite them to a more numerous assembly. This is the time, believe me, when I find myself best able to exercise all the severity of the most rigid criticism, for my attention rises in proportion to my solicitude; as nothing so much awakens the judgment, as that reverence and modest timidity which one feels upon those occasions. I never recite my works publicly, but only before a select number of friends, whose presence I respect, and whose judgment I value; in a word, whose opinions I observe as if they were so many individuals I had separately consulted, at the same time that I stand as much in fear of them, as I should of the most numerous assembly. What Cicero says of composing, will, in my opinion, hold true of that awe we have of the public. It is the most rigid critic imaginable.

imaginable. The very thoughts of reciting, the notion of entering an assembly, and the reverential concern when one is there; each of these circumstances tend to improve and perfect an author's performance. Upon the whole, therefore, I cannot repent of a custom which I have experienced to be so exceedingly beneficial; and am so far from being discouraged by the trifling objections of these censors, that I beg you would point out to me, if there be yet any other method of correction, that I may add to this; for nothing can sufficiently satisfy my care to render my compositions finished. I reflect, what an arduous undertaking it is to resign any work into the hands of the public; and I cannot but be persuaded, that frequent and many consultations must go to the finishing of a performance, which one desires the world should universally and for ever admire."—*Pliny's Epistles*, vol. ii. p. 489.

(s.) p. 189.

The triumphal robe was of purple, enriched with embroidery in gold and silver, in the form of palm branches. It was worn over an embroidered tunic, ornamented in a manner equally superb.—*Adams's Antiquities*.

(T.) p. 201.

(r.) p. 201.

The triumph of the selfish over the social principle appears in no instance more striking than in the desertion of infants; a practice so very common among the heathens, as neither to have excited surprise nor abhorrence. The number of helpless little innocents that were exposed to perish, exceeds what could be believed, were the fact not ascertained by the best authorities: nor was any attempt made to save or to provide for these destitute beings, till the benevolent spirit of Christianity expanded the human heart; and by giving a higher view of the dignity of human nature than philosophy had ever taught, exalted all that bore the human form into objects of tenderness and love.

(v.) p. 260.

From the time of Agrippina's retiring to Ubi-
orum Oppidum, till her return to the Roman
camp, the only event recorded by the historians
is the birth of her daughter. But though her
part in the scenes that are in this chapter in-
troduced, is merely conjectural, the description
of German manners will be found so exactly to
correspond

correspond with that given by Tacitus, that the picture may be depended upon as genuine. The adventures of Thufnela are related likewise by the Roman historian in nearly the same terms as she is represented relating them to Agrippina; and therefore, tho' the interview between the German heroine and the Roman princess may never actually have taken place, the truth of history cannot properly be said to have been violated. Who now believes that the long speeches which the historians have thought fit to put into the mouths of their princes and warriors were ever spoken? Are they not universally considered as a medium of illustration, more animated and therefore more impressive than any other mode in which the same ideas could have been conveyed? All that the critic requires, is, that nothing should be thus introduced which is not strictly characteristic.

(w) p. 269.

It may be useful to the young reader to remark, that where the reasoning faculty is, either from want of cultivation, (as in the savage state) or from the indolence of luxury, (as in the

the

the refined) permitted to lie dormant, the mind must necessarily be impelled to seek relief from the wretchedness of vacuity, by whatever means it can be procured. To the person destitute of internal resources, the doom of earning his bread by the sweat of his brow is in reality a blessing. Constant employment on the objects of perception, if it do not much expand the reasoning powers, is in so far favourable to their improvement, as it keeps the passions in subjection, and gives a constant exercise to the faculty of attention. which, where it has no such opportunities of exertion, must be awakened by the aid of powerful stimulants. Here, as in many instances, the extremes of barbarism and of civilization may be observed to meet. Idleness is considered as his peculiar privilege by the savage as much as by the fine gentleman: but idleness must necessarily produce ennui; and to get rid of such a troublesome companion, the same devices seem to have occurred to both. "To devote," says Tacitus in his account of the Germans, "both day and night to deep drinking, is a disgrace to no man; disputes, as will be the case with people in liquor, frequently arise; *and the quarrel often ends*

in

in scenes of blood! Even without the exercise of liquor, in their sober moments, strange as it may appear! *they have recourse to dice, as to a serious and regular business,* with the most desperate spirit committing their whole substance to chance; and when they have lost their all, putting their liberty, and even their persons upon the last hazard of the dye! *Such is the effect of a ruinous and inveterate habit!* They are victims to *folly*, and they call themselves *men of honour!*"

Unfortunate men! yet who shall say that *they* were without excuse. The light of science had never beamed on their benighted minds,

“Fair knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
“Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er enroll.”

They were necessarily, and not by choice, without object or pursuit that was capable of giving constant and ample employment to all the glorious faculties, with which nature had endowed them. For the barbarian, therefore, some apology may be made.

(x.) p. 285.

Whether Sofia Gallia, the wife of Silius, was the sister or cousin of Asinius Gallus, does clearly appear;

appear; but the part he took on a future occasion, when the unfortunate *Sofia* was, on account of her friendship for *Agrippina*, persecuted by *Tiberius*, leaves no room to doubt of their being connected; *Afinius Gallus*, by his marriage with *Vipsania*, was now the brother-in-law of *Agrippina*. If *Socia* was his sister, she was the daughter of *Afinius Pollio*, the distinguished orator and confidential friend of *Augustus*, whose name has been immortalized by *Horace* and *Virgil*. *Pollio's* intimacy with *Augustus* must have introduced his children, even in infancy, to the acquaintance of *Agrippina*. Hence, perhaps, the origin of that strong attachment which they had for each other.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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