

Mrs. Piozzi's concert, with the assistance of Mr. Piozzi's playing, and Miss Hamilton's elegant finger is the most attractive in town.—The last assembly was brilliant in characters and appearance, beyond all others. Among the professional men were Cramer, Cervetto, and Harrison.—

The musical fund concert does not take place this year in the Abbey, but there are to be two concerts at the Pantheon for the purposes of the charity—at which place, the ancient musical concert has commenced under the direction of the marquis of Carmarthen.

The dresses for last month at Paris were, for walking, a robe and petticoat united, of fatten striped green and violet without trimming.—

A long cloak of white fatten, trimmed with fox-skin.

On the neck, a plain fichu, full and projecting.

On the arms, a large muff of Siberian Wolf's skin; ornamented with a knot of Aurora ribband.

The head-dress is a chapeau la l'Espagnole. The brim of black fatten is tucked up on the right side with a loop of rose fatten. The crown is of white fatten, bound with a wreath of rose ribband cut. An aigrette of two large rose and white feathers, and three black is fixed to that part where the brim is tucked up.

The hair is craped on the sides and done in detached curls on the forehead, behind it floats in ringlets.

The shoes rose fatten, trimmed with silver fringe.

*Caraco a la Sultana*—Is made of light violet fatten with long sleeves of the same colour, trimmed, with gauze ruffles cut in points. The skirts are long and cut in the shape of lozenges, there are two necks, the upper is narrow and of violet fatten, the under broad and of white fatten.

Under the Caraco a stomacher and long petticoat, united of white fatten.

A broad girdle of black velvet, on which are two large medallions, gilt and enamelled.

The head-dress a plain cap, ornamented with a knot of Aurora ribband.

The hair dressed en tapet. Four curls on each side, fall exactly on the bosom: behind lose and in separate curls.]

On the neck a fichu jabot, very open.

Circumstances respecting the philosopher Pythagoras. Collected by Mr. Cumberland from ancient authors. Enthalten in Town and Country Magazine for 1789. February p. 79—81. March p. 116—119.

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Circumstances respecting the Philosopher PYTHAGORAS, Collected by Mr. CUMBERLAND from Ancient Authors.

THE parents of Pythagoras put him first under the tuition of Pherecydes of Syrus. Pherecydes did not die till Olymp. LXVI. so that Diogenes Laertius must be flagrantly mistaken in saying that Pythagoras studied under this philosopher till his death. He was very young when he went into Syria for this purpose, for he returned to Samos to his parents, and after studying some time under Hermodamas there, set out upon his travels into Egypt at the age of eighteen.

At this early age he had acquired all the erudition the philosophers of Greece could give him. He had already visited many cities of Syria, and performed his initiations. It is said he had consulted Thales in person, and had been advised by that sage to prosecute his studies among the learned Egyptians. But this is doubtful; it is altogether improbable that he should depart from Samos at the age of eighteen, upon the patriotic motive ascribed to him by Laertius, of avoiding the growing tyranny of his countryman Polycrates; especially when the same biographer informs us that he took letters of recommendation from Polycrates to king Amasis, desiring him to give orders for Pythagoras being instructed by the Egyptian priests.

With this letter Pythagoras repaired to Amasis, and obtained an order to the priests agreeable to the requests of Polycrates; with this he went first to the priests of Heliopolis; they declined the execution of it by referring them to their brothers at Memphis, as being their seniors in the sacerdotal rank; these again evaded the order, and dispatched him to Diospolites; he found these sages as little disposed to compliance as the priests of Heliopolis or Memphis: however as the king's command was urgent, they did not think fit absolutely to disobey it, but took a method which they thought would answer the same purpose, and be-

gan by deterring and alarming the inquisitive youth by their preparatory austerities. Pythagoras had a constitution that could endure hardships, and an ambition that nothing could daunt. He submitted to the ceremony of circumcision, and was initiated into their sacred rites, unintimidated by all the horrors with which they contrived to set them forth.

They began then to regard him with more benignity and respect, and when they found him learning their language with surprizing rapidity, and conforming to their discipline with the most rigid exactness, they looked upon him with surprize and admiration; they now resolved to hold nothing from talents so extraordinary, and a temper so conformable; he learned their three sorts of letters; they admitted him to their sacrifices, and disclosed the most secret rites of their religion, mysteries never imparted before to any foreigner.

He resided in Egypt a long time, during which he read the books of the ancient priests, and there he discovered the sources of the Grecian theology, and how erroneous the system was, which they had derived from these sources. He is supposed henceforth to have held the gods of the heathens in contempt, and to have entertained suitable ideas of the Divine Being.

Having perfected himself in the geometry and astronomy of the Egyptians, and acquired the observations of infinite ages, as Valerius Maximus expresses it, he determined upon exploring new and more distant scenes in search of knowledge, and from Egypt went to Babylon.

His recommendations from Egypt secured him a reception from the Chaldees and Magi. Here he was a disciple of Nazaratus the Assyrian; and we are told by Porphyry, that he was purified by Zabratius from all defilements of his former life. By what particular mode of discipline this purification was effected, Porphyry does not explain.

From Babylon he pushed his travels into Persia, and was instructed by the Magi in their religion and way of living. From them he received those rules of diet which he afterwards prescribed to his disciples, with various opinions of things clean and unclean which were among his maxims.

These conform to the present practice among the Brahmins, which may well be supposed to have been inviolably preserved from that seperate and sacred cast from times of high antiquity; for what invention can be devised to secure the longevity of any system, better than that upon which the sacerdotal order of Brahmins is established?

By the Persian Magi he was instructed in many particulars of Jewish knowledge, chiefly their interpretations of dreams. We have Cicero's authority for this part of his travels, and Valerius Maximus says the Persian Magi taught him a most complete system of ethics; that they likewise instructed him in the motions and courses of the heavenly bodies, their properties and effects, and the influence every star respectively is supposed to have.

In the course of these travels he passed more than twenty years; he then turned his face homewards, taking the life of Crete in his way: here and at Lacedæmon he perused their famous code of laws, and having now completed the great tour of science, and stored his mind with all the hidden stores of oriental knowledge, he presented himself for the first time to the admiring eyes of Greece, assembled at the Olympic games.

A spectacle no doubt it was for universal admiration and respect. An understanding so enriched and full of its meridian vigour, was an object that the wisest of his contemporaries might look up to with veneration little short of idolatry. Pythagoras, in this attitude, surrounded by the Grecian sages on the field of the Olympic games, whilst every eye was fixed with rapture and delight upon one of the most perfect forms in nature, began to pour forth the wonders of his doctrine. Astonishment seized the hearers, and almost doubting if it was a mortal that had been discoursing, they with one voice applauded his wisdom, and demanded by what title he would in future be addressed. Pythagoras answered, that their seven sages had taken the name of wise men or sophists; for his part he left them in possession of a distinction they so well merited; he wished to be no other ways remembered or described, than as a *lover of wisdom*; his pretensions did not go to the possession of it; and if they would call him a *Philosopher* he

he would be contented with the appellation.

From this time the name of *philosopher* became a title of honour among the learned, whilst that of *sophist* sunk into universal contempt.

[To be concluded in our next.]

#### THOUGHTS ON THE ILIAD.

THE expedition of the Greeks against Troy, has supplied a subject to an heroic poem, which remains the wonder of all times, and the unrivalled standard of the epic art.

It must be owned no poet ever made a happier choice, for what could be more interesting to a Grecian reader than the recital of an action founded in justice and terminated in success.

The event itself was magnificent; a coalition of the Grecian states in vindication of an injured prince, who was one of their number.

Had it recorded the expedition of one great monarch against another, it is easy to comprehend how much that brilliant variety of character, which now gives such dramatic lustre to the composition, would have lost by the nature of such a subject; whereas the emulation of the rival leaders constitutes that compound action, that striking contrast and discrimination of character, which render the Iliad so peculiarly enchanting.

The justice of the undertaking fortifies the poet with a moral, secures the good opinion of his readers, and interests them cordially in his cause; it is so permanent a pledge for their good wishes, that it enables him to throw into the scale of the Trojans every episode of pity, every ornament of magnanimity and valor, which can beautify his poem without the danger of creating false prejudices in behalf of the offenders; in short we can mourn for Hector, and not regret the victory of Achilles.

If Homer found these incidents ready to his hands, their combination was supremely happy; if he created them, his invention was almost miraculous.

The period at which he wrote was no less fortunate, being neither too remote to impair the interest of his subject, nor

so near the time of action as to confine his fancy to the limits of strict historical truth.

So wonderful an assemblage of parts meet in this work, that there is not a passion in the human breast but will find its ruling interest gratified by the perusal; and it is so happily contrived that the combination of those parts, multitudinous as they are, never violates the uniformity of design; the subject remains simple and entire: our ideas never stray from the main object of the poem, though they are continually carried out upon excursions through the regions of earth and heaven, upon the strongest pinnacles of fancy.

The manner in which Homer employs his deities, with the machinery that accompanies them, gives an amazing brilliancy to the picturesque and descriptive powers of the poem, the virtues, vices, prejudices, passions of those imaginary beings set them on a level with human nature, so far as to give us an interest in their situations, which a juster representation of superior essences could not impart; while their immortality and power are engines in the poet's hands, whose influence is unlimited by the laws of nature; these extraordinary personages, at the same time that they take a part very essential to the action of the drama, bring about the incidents by those sudden and supernatural means, which mortal heroes of the most romantic sort could not so readily effect.

This is an advantage on the part of a heathen poet, for which the christian has no substitute; for those moderns, who in order to create surprize have invented capricious beings to produce extravagant events, above the reach of human powers, and below the dignity of divine, violate our reason while they strive to amuse our fancy; but the pagan theorist can find a deity for every purpose without giving scandal to the believer, or revolting the philosopher.

Amongst the numberless excellencies of the Iliad there is none more to be admired than the correct precision with which Homer draws his characters and preserves them uniformly through the poem; an excellence in which Virgil and the other Roman poets in general are greatly his inferiors. With Homer's heroes we have more than historical acquaintance, we are made intimate with

memoration of the noble services that brave people rendered the crown of England. To insult a Welshman on St. David's day is therefore gross ingratitude.

If the Londoners who, under the impression of vulgar prejudices, abuse not only all foreigners, but even the inhabitants of different counties of England, would take the trouble of perusing Daniel De Foe's satire, called, "The true born Englishman," they would find, that though they may fairly boast of their municipal rights and privileges, they have no great cause to plume their pride either on their genealogies or their virtues; for the truth is that a London family is generally a mixture of all bloods and nations. Yet there is nothing more common than to hear the spurious offspring of a Portuguese Jew begotten perhaps upon the body of a Savoyard Roman Catholic, boast of his being a staunch protestant, a sound whig, and a true-born Englishman: roar for Magna Charta, declaim on the bill of rights—and talk of the blood which his noble ancestors lost in opposing regal tyranny, and fighting for the liberties of his country. Indeed such persons have been generally the most violent and most severe against foreigners, as well as against the Irish, Scotch, and Welsh, who are equally entitled to every privilege and blessing the constitution can bestow; but of late two public prints, whose duty should be to inculcate liberality of sentiments, have degenerated into the vile meanness of national and personal abuse.

One of these papers being notoriously conducted by a clergyman, may be considered as a melancholy proof of degeneracy. This unchristian-like priest has descended from the pulpit to conduct a news-paper. Has laid aside his sermons to become a writer of libels; and instead of acting as a peace-maker to the subjects of his king, has done every thing in his power to promote dissension.—What is this but relinquishing God to serve Mammon: and does not such conduct call for animadversion from the Bishop of his diocese?

To the OBSERVER.

SIR,

WE are all frightened to death in this part of the country, by the horrid

accounts we have read in a morning paper which we suppose must be true, as we are told it is written by a parson. We have read of the roaring bulls of Babylon; the bulls of Colchis who guarded the Golden Fleece; but the Irish bulls, according to the parson's account, exceed them all—and we offer up daily prayers to preserve us from their horns.

Yours,

The TABBIES of RICHMOND.

*Circumstances respecting the Philosopher PYTHAGORAS, collected by Mr. CUMBERLAND from Ancient Authors.*

(Concluded, from p. 81.)

IT has been already observed that Pythagoras on his return from the East, took the island of Crete in his way; here he visited the famous philosopher Epimenides.

Porphry and Jamblichus must be greatly out in their chronology when they make Epimenides one of Pythagoras's scholars; Laertius's account is more probable, who says he was one of Pythagoras's masters, which naturally accounts for that philosopher's seeking an interview with him in Crete, as he did afterwards with Pherecydes on his death-bed in Syria.

In this interview Pythagoras no doubt gave on account to Epimenides of the many marvellous things he had learned in his travels, and so far the disciple may be said to have instructed the master. Epimenides himself was no small adept in the marvellous, and propagated a story through Greece of his having slept fifty-seven years in a cave; and that upon waking after his long repose he resumed his research for some sheep which his father had sent him upon more than half a century before. The story does not say that he found those sheep; he returned however to his father's house, and was rather surprized upon discovering a new generation in possession, who knew no more of Epimenides than they did of his sheep. His sleeping philosopher, however filled up the gap in his life pretty well, for Xenophanes says he lived to one hundred and fifty-seven years of age; and the Cretans, who are liars upon record, stretch their

their account to two hundred and ninety-nine years, modestly stopping short of three centuries.

Deducting therefore fifty-seven years of sleep, during which he probably made no very great advances in science, he might have occasion to go to school, when he waked, and though an old man, might be a young scholar under Pythagoras, if the credibility of the above story can once be admitted.

From the Olympic games Pythagoras repaired to Samos, and opened school in a place called in the time of Antiphio, (who is quoted by Laertius) *Pythagore Hemicyclius*.

Here he began a practice he continued in Italy of retiring to a cave without the town for the purpose of study, but in fact the idea was, like most others of his, oriental. Hermits have it to this day, and if mortification is used to recommend religion, solitude may be chosen to set off wisdom. Pythagoras in a cave visited in the dead of night, with awful reverence and credulity, might pass stories upon his hearers, which he could not risk in the face of the sun and the streets of the city.

He was not, however, so far sequestered from the concerns of the world, as to enjoy himself in his cave, under the tyranny of Polyocrates, now more oppressive than at his departure for Egypt. He thereupon resolved to go into Italy and took Delos in his way. Here he wrote the verses on the sepulchre of Apollo which Porphyry records. From Delos he passed to Philius, the ancient country of his family; and at Philius, Cicero informs us, he expounded several points of his new philosophy to the tyrant Leo, who being struck with his doctrine, demanded of him what branch of science he principally professed.

Pythagoras replied that he professed none;—but was a *philosopher*.

The name was new to Leo and he desired to be informed of its signification—and wherein philosophers differed from other professors of the learned sciences.

Pythagoras answered—"That it appeared to him men were drawn to different objects and pursuits in life, as the Greeks were to their Olympic games, some for glory, some for gain. "At the same time," says he, "you must have ob-

served that others attend without any view to either, for curiosity and amusement only; so we, who are travellers and adventurers, as it were, from another life and another nature, come amongst mankind, indifferent to the ordinary allurements of avarice or ambition, and studious of nothing but the truth and essence of things. Such may be called lovers of wisdom, or in one word *philosophers*—and, like the unconcerned spectators described, have no other interests to pursue, but the acquisitions of knowledge and the rational enjoyments of a contemplative mind."

In this reply he glances at his doctrine of the metempsychosis.

In his progress towards Italy Pythagoras went to Delphi, that he might give the more authority to his precepts, upon pretence of his having received them from the priestess Theoclea.

In Italy he established himself during life, and taught there forty years wanting one, in his colleges at Metapontum, Heraclea, and Croton.

He staid twenty years at Croton before he went to Metapontum. Mylo the famous Olympic victor was one of his scholars at the former of these places.

The fame of his doctrines drew a prodigious resort to his college; no less than six hundred disciples attended his lectures nightly. He imposed rules of preparation and a system of discipline, for his students, admirably contrived to inspire them with veneration for his person and to train their minds to the exercise of patience and respect. He prescribed a probationary silence of five years, during which initiation they were not once admitted to the sight of their master, who in the mean time, like an invisible and superior spirit, governed them after the most absolute manner by mandates, which they never heard but through the channel of his subordinate agents. At length they were ushered with much ceremony into the awful presence.

Such a course of discipline could not fail to prepare every mind, capable of undergoing it, for the marvellous stories, which at certain times he introduced into his lectures touching the doctrine of the metempsychosis, and the revelation of his own divinity. He scrupled not to tell them that he was the Apollo of the Hyperboreans, and he corroborated his assertion

assertion by exposing to view his thigh composed of solid gold. His food, which was of the simplest sort was conveyed to him in his recess in a manner so secret, that he was not discovered to be subject to the common appetites and necessities of human nature. His person was most comely and commanding; and his dress of studied cleanliness and simplicity. He was always clad in milk white garments of the purest wool. He told them his soul had passed through several antecedent forms, and that it had originally received from Mercury when it inhabited the body of Æthelides son of that God, the privilege of migrating after the death of one body into that of another, with the faculty of remembering all the actions of its præterient states. That these transmigrations were not immediate, but after intervals, in which his soul visited the regions of the other world, and was admitted to the society of departed spirits. That in virtue of this prerogative, it passed after some time from the body of Æthelides to that of Euphorbus, who was wounded by Menelaus at the siege of Troy, and in his person was conscious of what had occurred in that of his predecessor. That it next appeared on earth in the person of Hermotimus, who gave proofs of his reminiscence, by appealing to the shield suspended in the temple of Apollo by the hands of Menelaus. From Hermotimus it passed into one Pyrrhus a fisherman, retaining the like consciousness; and lastly had lodged itself where it now was, possessing all the accumulated recollection of its past transmigrations.

Daring as these fictions were, still they were credited; for the powers of his mind were wonderful, and the authority he had established over his hearers by superior wisdom and ingenious device was unbounded. The curious researches of his study in the East, and the passion he had there contracted for the marvellous and supernatural, inspired him with the ambition of passing himself upon the world for something above human. He had gained on the credulity of his disciples with such art, that he found it would bear whatever he thought proper to impose. He was sensible he transcended all men living in wisdom and he resolved to assume a superiority of nature also.

The idea of transmigration was not started by Pythagoras, it was of Eastern origin; but too far out of sight for any then alive to trace it to its source. He told his scholars he should re-visit the earth in two hundred and six years after his death.

In mathematics, astronomy, and moral philosophy, he was an unrivalled master. His Golden Verses deserved the name. His principles were temperate, moral, humane, and above all things pacifying and conciliatory. When he admitted a disciple into his presence, he took him ever after into his most cordial friendship and confidence; and men esteemed it the highest honour of their lives to have passed their probation in the school of Pythagoras and to be allowed access to his person.

After he had staid twenty years at Croton he removed to the Metapontum, where he had a magnificent house which was afterwards converted into a Temple to Ceres, and a school which was called the Museum. Here he was visited by the famous Abaris, priest of the Hyperborean Apollo; and his fabulous historians give out, that having taken Abaris's arrow he rode upon it through the air to Taurominium in one day, though distant from Metapontum some days sailing.

Hearing that his aged master Pherecydes was dying of a loathsome disease in Delos, he went thither and exerted all his art to recover him; and when he was dead, having buried him with all the ceremonies due to a father, he returned to Italy.

This instance of friendship is the last public act recorded in his life.

The manner of his death is variously reported as well as the age at which he died; the most probable account fixes it at eighty years.

As to the catastrophe of his death, the relation most to be credited, informs us that one Cylon of Croton, a rich, ambitious, and disorderly man, having offered himself to the college and being rejected by Pythagoras, was so enraged thereby, that having collected a hired mob, he assaulted the house of Mylo when Pythagoras and his disciples were there assembled, and burnt the house with every body in it two or three excepted, who narrowly escaped. Pythagoras, to whom his disciples even in the last extremity paid

paid a filial reverence and attention, was solicited to make his escape; but not being willing to expose himself to the people, as a fugitive to preserve life, when his friends were on the point of perishing, he resisted their entreaties, and was burnt to death.

Others contend that he escaped from the flames and was killed in pursuit. Some relate that he took refuge in the Muses' Temple at Metapontum, where being kept from visuals forty days he was starved: and other historians with as little probability on their side say, that being pursued into a bean-plot, he there stopped, because he would not pass over prohibited ground, and yielded his throat to his pursuers.

After his death his surviving disciples were dispersed into Greece and the neighbouring countries.

*Letters on figurative Passages of the Scriptures, from original Considerations, upon the Principles of Common Sense.*

#### LETTER IV.

*Upon the TRINITY from John i. 1. In the beginning was the Word, &c. There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, &c. John, Epistle i. 6, 7, 8.*

*To the Editor of the Town and Country Magazine.*

SIR,

TO examine the doctrine of the Trinity as asserted in the Holy Scriptures (not a Trinity of persons), it will be necessary to enquire what kind of knowledge they afford of the existence of the Deity, whether speculative or practical, intimate or abstruse. By scriptural analogy as well as by parity of reason, the most perfect degree of knowledge must be the object of the highest powers of intellect, exalted by goodness, truth, and virtue. It is on this account that both the Old and New Testaments affirm of all degrees of men ignorant, or not enjoying the Supreme Good, that they are not in being! that they are

dead and buried in graves and corruption; or else that they exist in the very lowest scale of being; in a state of sleep, blindness, alienation from God, &c. Or that their lives are merely a simulacrum: that on this account, figuratively speaking, they are giants, bulls, foxes, dogs, scorpions, &c. &c. And that they are dead while they live. It is then, as being is ever supposed, *well being*, that in scripture is called life; and a privation of this, death. It follows then that the doctrine, Spirit, or life of Christ, which was before Abraham, is the Creator of all living things, or subjects, in a scriptural view. And there is no beginning of real being ascribed to any person till this creation in some proportion has taken place. It being then only true to us, that in the beginning was, or is the Word, and that all things are made by him when we begin to have a true knowledge of ourselves as creatures, or dependent or peaceable subjects. But if this creation, &c. is said by the literalists to belong to the creation of outward matter, it will not agree with the phraseology of the Apostle, Gal. iii. 21. Ephes. i. 20, 21. who not only says that all things were created by Jesus Christ, but that they are quickened or made alive by him; that they were before shut up under sin; are reconciled to God, &c. which can never accord with the idea of the material heavens, the earth, or the sea, which cannot in any sense be said to have been shut up under sin, &c. unless we could suppose inanimate objects capable of committing transgression, which would be absurd in the extreme. It has been falsely imagined from the phrase in the Old Testament, intimating that the Lord cursed the earth for the sake of man, that the material earth was a partaker in his crime! that the force of nature is weakened in consequence, &c. &c. The first part of this misconception ariseth from ignorance of composition, want of distinction between fact and figure; and the latter is every year obviated by experience. All this to the eye of discernment is easily unriddled, when it is considered that as man is a compound being, consisting of an animal, sensitive; a rational soul, all that is addressed to the former is addressed to the Adamic nature, or the first man of the earth, earthy; and all that is addressed to the latter is