

Chapter XL: Reign Of Justinian.--Part V.

If we extend our view from the tropic to the mouth of the Tanais, we may observe, on one hand, the precautions of Justinian to curb the savages of Aethiopia, [125] and on the other, the long walls which he constructed in Crimaea for the protection of his friendly Goths, a colony of three thousand shepherds and warriors. [126] From that peninsula to Trebizond, the eastern curve of the Euxine was secured by forts, by alliance, or by religion; and the possession of Lazica, the Colchos of ancient, the Mingrelia of modern, geography, soon became the object of an important war. Trebizond, in after-times the seat of a romantic empire, was indebted to the liberality of Justinian for a church, an aqueduct, and a castle, whose ditches are hewn in the solid rock. From that maritime city, frontier line of five hundred miles may be drawn to the fortress of Circesium, the last Roman station on the Euphrates. [127] Above Trebizond immediately, and five days' journey to the south, the country rises into dark forests and craggy mountains, as savage though not so lofty as the Alps and the Pyrenees. In this rigorous climate, [128] where the snows seldom melt, the fruits are tardy and tasteless, even honey is poisonous: the most industrious tillage would be confined to some pleasant valleys; and the pastoral tribes obtained a scanty sustenance from the flesh and milk of their cattle. The Chalybians [129] derived their name and temper from the iron quality of the soil; and, since the days of Cyrus, they might produce, under the various appellations of Cha daeans and Zanians, an uninterrupted prescription of war and rapine. Under the reign of

Justinian, they acknowledged the god and the emperor of the Romans, and seven fortresses were built in the most accessible passages, to exclude the ambition of the Persian monarch. [130] The principal source of the Euphrates descends from the Chalybian mountains, and seems to flow towards the west and the Euxine: bending to the south-west, the river passes under the walls of Satala and Melitene, (which were restored by Justinian as the bulwarks of the Lesser Armenia,) and gradually approaches the Mediterranean Sea; till at length, repelled by Mount Taurus, [131] the Euphrates inclines its long and flexible course to the south-east and the Gulf of Persia. Among the Roman cities beyond the Euphrates, we distinguish two recent foundations, which were named from Theodosius, and the relics of the martyrs; and two capitals, Amida and Edessa, which are celebrated in the history of every age. Their strength was proportioned by Justinian to the danger of their situation. A ditch and palisade might be sufficient to resist the artless force of the cavalry of Scythia; but more elaborate works were required to sustain a regular siege against the arms and treasures of the great king. His skilful engineers understood the methods of conducting deep mines, and of raising platforms to the level of the rampart: he shook the strongest battlements with his military engines, and sometimes advanced to the assault with a line of movable turrets on the backs of elephants. In the great cities of the East, the disadvantage of space, perhaps of position, was compensated by the zeal of the people, who seconded the garrison in the defence of their country and religion; and the fabulous promise of the Son of God, that Edessa should never be taken, filled the citizens with valiant confidence, and chilled the besiegers with doubt

and dismay. [132] The subordinate towns of Armenia and Mesopotamia were diligently strengthened, and the posts which appeared to have any command of ground or water were occupied by numerous forts, substantially built of stone, or more hastily erected with the obvious materials of earth and brick. The eye of Justinian investigated every spot; and his cruel precautions might attract the war into some lonely vale, whose peaceful natives, connected by trade and marriage, were ignorant of national discord and the quarrels of princes. Westward of the Euphrates, a sandy desert extends above six hundred miles to the Red Sea. Nature had interposed a vacant solitude between the ambition of two rival empires; the Arabians, till Mahomet arose, were formidable only as robbers; and in the proud security of peace the fortifications of Syria were neglected on the most vulnerable side.

[Footnote 125: See Procopius, *Persic.* 1. i. c. 19. The altar of national concern, of annual sacrifice and oaths, which Diocletian had created in the Isla of Elephantine, was demolished by Justinian with less policy than]

[Footnote 126: Procopius *de Edificiis*, 1. iii. c. 7. *Hist.* 1. viii. c. 3, 4. These unambitious Goths had refused to follow the standard of Theodoric. As late as the xvth and xvith century, the name and nation might be discovered between Caffa and the Straits of Azoph, (D'Anville, *Memoires de l'academie*, tom. xxx. p. 240.) They well deserved the curiosity of Busbequius, (p. 321-326;) but seem to have vanished in the more recent account of the *Missions du Levant*, (tom. i.,) Tott,

Peysonnnel, &c.]

[Footnote 127: For the geography and architecture of this Armenian border, see the Persian Wars and Edifices (l. ii. c. 4-7, l. iii. c. 2--7) of Procopius.]

[Footnote 128: The country is described by Tournefort, (*Voyage au Levant*, tom. iii. lettre xvii. xviii.) That skilful botanist soon discovered the plant that infects the honey, (Plin. xxi. 44, 45:) he observes, that the soldiers of Lucullus might indeed be astonished at the cold, since, even in the plain of Erzerum, snow sometimes falls in June, and the harvest is seldom finished before September. The hills of Armenia are below the fortieth degree of latitude; but in the mountainous country which I inhabit, it is well known that an ascent of some hours carries the traveller from the climate of Languedoc to that of Norway; and a general theory has been introduced, that, under the line, an elevation of 2400 toises is equivalent to the cold of the polar circle, (Remond, *Observations sur les Voyages de Coxe dans la Suisse*, tom. ii. p. 104.)]

[Footnote 129: The identity or proximity of the Chalybians, or Chaldaeana may be investigated in Strabo, (l. xii. p. 825, 826,) Cellarius, (*Geograph. Antiq.* tom. ii. p. 202--204,) and Freret, (*Mem. de Academie*, tom. iv. p. 594) Xenophon supposes, in his romance, (*Cyropaed* l. iii.,) the same Barbarians, against whom he had fought in his retreat, (*Anabasis*, l. iv.)]

[Footnote 130: Procopius, *Persic.* 1. i. c. 15. *De Edific.* 1. iii. c. 6.]

[Footnote 131: *Ni Taurus obstet in nostra maria venturus*, (Pomponius Mela, iii. 8.) Pliny, a poet as well as a naturalist, (v. 20,) personifies the river and mountain, and describes their combat. See the course of the Tigris and Euphrates in the excellent treatise of D'Anville.]

[Footnote 132: Procopius (*Persic.* 1. ii. c. 12) tells the story with the tone, half sceptical, half superstitious, of Herodotus. The promise was not in the primitive lie of Eusebius, but dates at least from the year 400; and a third lie, the Veronica, was soon raised on the two former, (Evagrius, 1. iv. c. 27.) As Edessa has been taken, Tillemont must disclaim the promise, (*Mem. Eccles.* tom. i. p. 362, 383, 617.)]

But the national enmity, at least the effects of that enmity, had been suspended by a truce, which continued above fourscore years. An ambassador from the emperor Zeno accompanied the rash and unfortunate Perozes, [1321] in his expedition against the Nephthalites, [1322] or white Huns, whose conquests had been stretched from the Caspian to the heart of India, whose throne was enriched with emeralds, [133] and whose cavalry was supported by a line of two thousand elephants. [134] The Persians [1341] were twice circumvented, in a situation which made valor useless and flight impossible; and the double victory of the Huns was achieved by military stratagem. They dismissed their royal captive

after he had submitted to adore the majesty of a Barbarian; and the humiliation was poorly evaded by the casuistical subtlety of the Magi, who instructed Perozes to direct his attention to the rising sun. [1342] The indignant successor of Cyrus forgot his danger and his gratitude; he renewed the attack with headstrong fury, and lost both his army and his life. [135] The death of Perozes abandoned Persia to her foreign and domestic enemies; [1351] and twelve years of confusion elapsed before his son Cabades, or Kobad, could embrace any designs of ambition or revenge. The unkind parsimony of Anastasius was the motive or pretence of a Roman war; [136] the Huns and Arabs marched under the Persian standard, and the fortifications of Armenia and Mesopotamia were, at that time, in a ruinous or imperfect condition. The emperor returned his thanks to the governor and people of Martyropolis for the prompt surrender of a city which could not be successfully defended, and the conflagration of Theodosiopolis might justify the conduct of their prudent neighbors. Amida sustained a long and destructive siege: at the end of three months the loss of fifty thousand of the soldiers of Cabades was not balanced by any prospect of success, and it was in vain that the Magi deduced a flattering prediction from the indecency of the women [1361] on the ramparts, who had revealed their most secret charms to the eyes of the assailants. At length, in a silent night, they ascended the most accessible tower, which was guarded only by some monks, oppressed, after the duties of a festival, with sleep and wine. Scaling-ladders were applied at the dawn of day; the presence of Cabades, his stern command, and his drawn sword, compelled the Persians to vanquish; and before it was sheathed, fourscore thousand of the

inhabitants had expiated the blood of their companions. After the siege of Amida, the war continued three years, and the unhappy frontier tasted the full measure of its calamities. The gold of Anastasius was offered too late, the number of his troops was defeated by the number of their generals; the country was stripped of its inhabitants, and both the living and the dead were abandoned to the wild beasts of the desert. The resistance of Edessa, and the deficiency of spoil, inclined the mind of Cabades to peace: he sold his conquests for an exorbitant price; and the same line, though marked with slaughter and devastation, still separated the two empires. To avert the repetition of the same evils, Anastasius resolved to found a new colony, so strong, that it should defy the power of the Persian, so far advanced towards Assyria, that its stationary troops might defend the province by the menace or operation of offensive war. For this purpose, the town of Dara, [137] fourteen miles from Nisibis, and four days' journey from the Tigris, was peopled and adorned; the hasty works of Anastasius were improved by the perseverance of Justinian; and, without insisting on places less important, the fortifications of Dara may represent the military architecture of the age. The city was surrounded with two walls, and the interval between them, of fifty paces, afforded a retreat to the cattle of the besieged. The inner wall was a monument of strength and beauty: it measured sixty feet from the ground, and the height of the towers was one hundred feet; the loopholes, from whence an enemy might be annoyed with missile weapons, were small, but numerous; the soldiers were planted along the rampart, under the shelter of double galleries, and a third platform, spacious and secure, was raised on the summit of the towers. The

exterior wall appears to have been less lofty, but more solid; and each tower was protected by a quadrangular bulwark. A hard, rocky soil resisted the tools of the miners, and on the south-east, where the ground was more tractable, their approach was retarded by a new work, which advanced in the shape of a half-moon. The double and treble ditches were filled with a stream of water; and in the management of the river, the most skilful labor was employed to supply the inhabitants, to distress the besiegers, and to prevent the mischiefs of a natural or artificial inundation. Dara continued more than sixty years to fulfil the wishes of its founders, and to provoke the jealousy of the Persians, who incessantly complained, that this impregnable fortress had been constructed in manifest violation of the treaty of peace between the two empires. [1371]

[Footnote 1321: Firouz the Conqueror--unfortunately so named. See St. Martin, vol. vi. p. 439.--M.]

[Footnote 1322: Rather Hephthalites.--M.]

[Footnote 133: They were purchased from the merchants of Adulis who traded to India, (Cosmas, Topograph. Christ. l. xi. p. 339;) yet, in the estimate of precious stones, the Scythian emerald was the first, the Bactrian the second, the Aethiopian only the third, (Hill's Theophrastus, p. 61, &c., 92.) The production, mines, &c., of emeralds, are involved in darkness; and it is doubtful whether we possess any of the twelve sorts known to the ancients, (Goguet, Origine des Loix, &c.,

part ii. 1. ii. c. 2, art. 3.) In this war the Huns got, or at least Perozes lost, the finest pearl in the world, of which Procopius relates a ridiculous fable.]

[Footnote 134: The Indo-Scythae continued to reign from the time of Augustus (Dionys. Perieget. 1088, with the Commentary of Eustathius, in Hudson, Geograph. Minor. tom. iv.) to that of the elder Justin, (Cosmas, Topograph. Christ. 1. xi. p. 338, 339.) On their origin and conquests, see D'Anville, (sur l'Inde, p. 18, 45, &c., 69, 85, 89.) In the second century they were masters of Larice or Guzerat.]

[Footnote 1341: According to the Persian historians, he was misled by guides who used the old stratagem of Zopyrus. Malcolm, vol. i. p. 101.--M.]

[Footnote 1342: In the Ms. Chronicle of Tabary, it is said that the Moubedan Mobed, or Grand Pontiff, opposed with all his influence the violation of the treaty. St. Martin, vol. vii. p. 254.--M.]

[Footnote 135: See the fate of Phirouz, or Perozes, and its consequences, in Procopius, (Persic. 1. i. c. 3--6,) who may be compared with the fragments of Oriental history, (D'Herbelot, Bibliot. Orient. p. 351, and Texeira, History of Persia, translated or abridged by Stephens, 1. i. c. 32, p. 132--138.) The chronology is ably ascertained by Asseman. (Bibliot. Orient. tom. iii. p. 396--427.)]

[Footnote 1351: When Firoze advanced, Khoosh-Nuaz (the king of the Huns) presented on the point of a lance the treaty to which he had sworn, and exhorted him yet to desist before he destroyed his fame forever. Malcolm, vol. i. p. 103.--M.]

[Footnote 136: The Persian war, under the reigns of Anastasius and Justin, may be collected from Procopius, (Persic. l. i. c. 7, 8, 9,) Theophanes, (in Chronograph. p. 124--127,) Evagrius, (l. iii. c. 37,) Marcellinus, (in Chron. p. 47,) and Josue Stylites, (apud Asseman. tom. i. p. 272--281.)]

[Footnote 1361: Gibbon should have written "some prostitutes." Proc Pers. vol. 1 p. 7.--M.]

[Footnote 137: The description of Dara is amply and correctly given by Procopius, (Persic. l. i. c. 10, l. ii. c. 13. De Edific. l. ii. c. 1, 2, 3, l. iii. c. 5.) See the situation in D'Anville, (l'Euphrate et le Tigre, p. 53, 54, 55,) though he seems to double the interval between Dara and Nisibis.]

[Footnote 1371: The situation (of Dara) does not appear to give it strength, as it must have been commanded on three sides by the mountains, but opening on the south towards the plains of Mesopotamia. The foundation of the walls and towers, built of large hewn stone, may be traced across the valley, and over a number of low rocky hills which branch out from the foot of Mount Masius. The circumference I conceive

to be nearly two miles and a half; and a small stream, which flows through the middle of the place, has induced several Koordish and Armenian families to fix their residence within the ruins. Besides the walls and towers, the remains of many other buildings attest the former grandeur of Dara; a considerable part of the space within the walls is arched and vaulted underneath, and in one place we perceived a large cavern, supported by four ponderous columns, somewhat resembling the great cistern of Constantinople. In the centre of the village are the ruins of a palace (probably that mentioned by Procopius) or church, one hundred paces in length, and sixty in breadth. The foundations, which are quite entire, consist of a prodigious number of subterraneous vaulted chambers, entered by a narrow passage forty paces in length. The gate is still standing; a considerable part of the wall has bid defiance to time, &c. M Donald Kinneir's Journey, p. 438.--M]

Between the Euxine and the Caspian, the countries of Colchos, Iberia, and Albania, are intersected in every direction by the branches of Mount Caucasus; and the two principal gates, or passes, from north to south, have been frequently confounded in the geography both of the ancients and moderns. The name of Caspian or Albanian gates is properly applied to Derbend, [138] which occupies a short declivity between the mountains and the sea: the city, if we give credit to local tradition, had been founded by the Greeks; and this dangerous entrance was fortified by the kings of Persia with a mole, double walls, and doors of iron. The Iberian gates [139] [1391] are formed by a narrow passage of six miles in Mount Caucasus, which opens from the northern side of Iberia, or

Georgia, into the plain that reaches to the Tanais and the Volga. A fortress, designed by Alexander perhaps, or one of his successors, to command that important pass, had descended by right of conquest or inheritance to a prince of the Huns, who offered it for a moderate price to the emperor; but while Anastasius paused, while he timorously computed the cost and the distance, a more vigilant rival interposed, and Cabades forcibly occupied the Straits of Caucasus. The Albanian and Iberian gates excluded the horsemen of Scythia from the shortest and most practicable roads, and the whole front of the mountains was covered by the rampart of Gog and Magog, the long wall which has excited the curiosity of an Arabian caliph [140] and a Russian conqueror. [141] According to a recent description, huge stones, seven feet thick, and twenty-one feet in length or height, are artificially joined without iron or cement, to compose a wall, which runs above three hundred miles from the shores of Derbend, over the hills, and through the valleys of Daghestan and Georgia.

Without a vision, such a work might be undertaken by the policy of Cabades; without a miracle, it might be accomplished by his son, so formidable to the Romans, under the name of Chosroes; so dear to the Orientals, under the appellation of Nushirwan. The Persian monarch held in his hand the keys both of peace and war; but he stipulated, in every treaty, that Justinian should contribute to the expense of a common barrier, which equally protected the two empires from the inroads of the Scythians. [142]

[Footnote 138: For the city and pass of Derbend, see D'Herbelot, (Bibliot. Orient. p. 157, 291, 807,) Petit de la Croix. (Hist. de Gengiscan, l. iv. c. 9,) Histoire Genealogique des Tatars, (tom. i. p. 120,) Olearius, (Voyage en Perse, p. 1039--1041,) and Corneille le Bruyn, (Voyages, tom. i. p. 146, 147:) his view may be compared with the plan of Olearius, who judges the wall to be of shells and gravel hardened by time.]

[Footnote 139: Procopius, though with some confusion, always denominates them Caspian, (Persic. l. i. c. 10.) The pass is now styled Tatar-topa, the Tartar-gates, (D'Anville, Geographie Ancienne, tom. ii. p. 119, 120.)]

[Footnote 1391: Malte-Brun. tom. viii. p. 12, makes three passes: 1. The central, which leads from Mosdok to Teflis. 2. The Albanian, more inland than the Derbend Pass. 3. The Derbend--the Caspian Gates. But the narrative of Col. Monteith, in the Journal of the Geographical Society of London. vol. iii. p. i. p. 39, clearly shows that there are but two passes between the Black Sea and the Caspian; the central, the Caucasian, or, as Col. Monteith calls it, the Caspian Gates, and the pass of Derbend, though it is practicable to turn this position (of Derbend) by a road a few miles distant through the mountains, p. 40.--M.]

[Footnote 140: The imaginary rampart of Gog and Magog, which was seriously explored and believed by a caliph of the ninth century,

appears to be derived from the gates of Mount Caucasus, and a vague report of the wall of China, (Geograph. Nubiensis, p. 267-270. Memoires de l'Academie, tom. xxxi. p. 210--219.)]

[Footnote 141: See a learned dissertation of Baier, de muro Caucaseo, in Comment. Acad. Petropol. ann. 1726, tom. i. p. 425-463; but it is destitute of a map or plan. When the czar Peter I. became master of Derbend in the year 1722, the measure of the wall was found to be 3285 Russian orgyioe, or fathom, each of seven feet English; in the whole somewhat more than four miles in length.]

[Footnote 142: See the fortifications and treaties of Chosroes, or Nushirwan, in Procopius (Persic. l. i. c. 16, 22, l. ii.) and D'Herbelot, (p. 682.)] VII. Justinian suppressed the schools of Athens and the consulship of Rome, which had given so many sages and heroes to mankind. Both these institutions had long since degenerated from their primitive glory; yet some reproach may be justly inflicted on the avarice and jealousy of a prince, by whose hand such venerable ruins were destroyed.

Athens, after her Persian triumphs, adopted the philosophy of Ionia and the rhetoric of Sicily; and these studies became the patrimony of a city, whose inhabitants, about thirty thousand males, condensed, within the period of a single life, the genius of ages and millions. Our sense of the dignity of human nature is exalted by the simple recollection, that Isocrates [143] was the companion of Plato and Xenophon; that

he assisted, perhaps with the historian Thucydides, at the first representation of the Oedipus of Sophocles and the Iphigenia of Euripides; and that his pupils Aeschines and Demosthenes contended for the crown of patriotism in the presence of Aristotle, the master of Theophrastus, who taught at Athens with the founders of the Stoic and Epicurean sects. [144] The ingenuous youth of Attica enjoyed the benefits of their domestic education, which was communicated without envy to the rival cities. Two thousand disciples heard the lessons of Theophrastus; [145] the schools of rhetoric must have been still more populous than those of philosophy; and a rapid succession of students diffused the fame of their teachers as far as the utmost limits of the Grecian language and name. Those limits were enlarged by the victories of Alexander; the arts of Athens survived her freedom and dominion; and the Greek colonies which the Macedonians planted in Egypt, and scattered over Asia, undertook long and frequent pilgrimages to worship the Muses in their favorite temple on the banks of the Ilissus. The Latin conquerors respectfully listened to the instructions of their subjects and captives; the names of Cicero and Horace were enrolled in the schools of Athens; and after the perfect settlement of the Roman empire, the natives of Italy, of Africa, and of Britain, conversed in the groves of the academy with their fellow-students of the East. The studies of philosophy and eloquence are congenial to a popular state, which encourages the freedom of inquiry, and submits only to the force of persuasion. In the republics of Greece and Rome, the art of speaking was the powerful engine of patriotism or ambition; and the schools of rhetoric poured forth a colony of statesmen and legislators. When the

liberty of public debate was suppressed, the orator, in the honorable profession of an advocate, might plead the cause of innocence and justice; he might abuse his talents in the more profitable trade of panegyric; and the same precepts continued to dictate the fanciful declamations of the sophist, and the chaster beauties of historical composition. The systems which professed to unfold the nature of God, of man, and of the universe, entertained the curiosity of the philosophic student; and according to the temper of his mind, he might doubt with the Sceptics, or decide with the Stoics, sublimely speculate with Plato, or severely argue with Aristotle. The pride of the adverse sects had fixed an unattainable term of moral happiness and perfection; but the race was glorious and salutary; the disciples of Zeno, and even those of Epicurus, were taught both to act and to suffer; and the death of Petronius was not less effectual than that of Seneca, to humble a tyrant by the discovery of his impotence. The light of science could not indeed be confined within the walls of Athens. Her incomparable writers address themselves to the human race; the living masters emigrated to Italy and Asia; Berytus, in later times, was devoted to the study of the law; astronomy and physic were cultivated in the musaeum of Alexandria; but the Attic schools of rhetoric and philosophy maintained their superior reputation from the Peloponnesian war to the reign of Justinian. Athens, though situate in a barren soil, possessed a pure air, a free navigation, and the monuments of ancient art. That sacred retirement was seldom disturbed by the business of trade or government; and the last of the Athenians were distinguished by their lively wit, the purity of their taste and language, their social manners, and some traces, at

least in discourse, of the magnanimity of their fathers. In the suburbs of the city, the academy of the Platonists, the lycaeum of the Peripatetics, the portico of the Stoics, and the garden of the Epicureans, were planted with trees and decorated with statues; and the philosophers, instead of being immured in a cloister, delivered their instructions in spacious and pleasant walks, which, at different hours, were consecrated to the exercises of the mind and body. The genius of the founders still lived in those venerable seats; the ambition of succeeding to the masters of human reason excited a generous emulation; and the merit of the candidates was determined, on each vacancy, by the free voices of an enlightened people. The Athenian professors were paid by their disciples: according to their mutual wants and abilities, the price appears to have varied; and Isocrates himself, who derides the avarice of the sophists, required, in his school of rhetoric, about thirty pounds from each of his hundred pupils. The wages of industry are just and honorable, yet the same Isocrates shed tears at the first receipt of a stipend: the Stoic might blush when he was hired to preach the contempt of money; and I should be sorry to discover that Aristotle or Plato so far degenerated from the example of Socrates, as to exchange knowledge for gold. But some property of lands and houses was settled by the permission of the laws, and the legacies of deceased friends, on the philosophic chairs of Athens. Epicurus bequeathed to his disciples the gardens which he had purchased for eighty minae or two hundred and fifty pounds, with a fund sufficient for their frugal subsistence and monthly festivals; [146] and the patrimony of Plato afforded an annual rent, which, in eight centuries, was gradually increased from three to one

thousand pieces of gold. [147] The schools of Athens were protected by the wisest and most virtuous of the Roman princes. The library, which Hadrian founded, was placed in a portico adorned with pictures, statues, and a roof of alabaster, and supported by one hundred columns of Phrygian marble. The public salaries were assigned by the generous spirit of the Antonines; and each professor of politics, of rhetoric, of the Platonic, the Peripatetic, the Stoic, and the Epicurean philosophy, received an annual stipend of ten thousand drachmae, or more than three hundred pounds sterling. [148] After the death of Marcus, these liberal donations, and the privileges attached to the thrones of science, were abolished and revived, diminished and enlarged; but some vestige of royal bounty may be found under the successors of Constantine; and their arbitrary choice of an unworthy candidate might tempt the philosophers of Athens to regret the days of independence and poverty. [149] It is remarkable, that the impartial favor of the Antonines was bestowed on the four adverse sects of philosophy, which they considered as equally useful, or at least, as equally innocent. Socrates had formerly been the glory and the reproach of his country; and the first lessons of Epicurus so strangely scandalized the pious ears of the Athenians, that by his exile, and that of his antagonists, they silenced all vain disputes concerning the nature of the gods. But in the ensuing year they recalled the hasty decree, restored the liberty of the schools, and were convinced by the experience of ages, that the moral character of philosophers is not affected by the diversity of their theological speculations. [150]

[Footnote 143: The life of Isocrates extends from Olymp. lxxxvi. 1. to cx. 3, (ante Christ. 436--438.) See Dionys. Halicarn. tom. ii. p. 149, 150, edit. Hudson. Plutarch (sive anonymus) in Vit. X. Oratorum, p. 1538--1543, edit. H. Steph. Phot. cod. cclix. p. 1453.]

[Footnote 144: The schools of Athens are copiously though concisely represented in the Fortuna Attica of Meursius, (c. viii. p. 59--73, in tom. i. Opp.) For the state and arts of the city, see the first book of Pausanias, and a small tract of Dicaearchus, in the second volume of Hudson's Geographers, who wrote about Olymp. cxvii. (Dodwell's Dissertia sect. 4.)]

[Footnote 145: Diogen Laert. de Vit. Philosoph. 1. v. segm. 37, p. 289.]

[Footnote 146: See the Testament of Epicurus in Diogen. Laert. 1. x. segm. 16--20, p. 611, 612. A single epistle (ad Familiares, xiii. 1.) displays the injustice of the Areopagus, the fidelity of the Epicureans, the dexterous politeness of Cicero, and the mixture of contempt and esteem with which the Roman senators considered the philosophy and philosophers of Greece.]

[Footnote 147: Damascius, in Vit. Isidor. apud Photium, cod. ccxlii. p. 1054.]

[Footnote 148: See Lucian (in Eunuch. tom. ii. p. 350--359, edit. Reitz,) Philostratus (in Vit. Sophist. 1. ii. c. 2,) and Dion Cassius,

or Xiphilin, (lxxi. p. 1195,) with their editors Du Soul, Olearius, and Reimar, and, above all, Salmasius, (ad Hist. August. p. 72.) A judicious philosopher (Smith's Wealth of Nations, vol. ii. p. 340--374) prefers the free contributions of the students to a fixed stipend for the professor.]

[Footnote 149: Brucker, Hist. Crit. Philosoph. tom. ii. p. 310, &c.]

[Footnote 150: The birth of Epicurus is fixed to the year 342 before Christ, (Bayle,) Olympiad cix. 3; and he opened his school at Athens, Olmp. cxviii. 3, 306 years before the same aera. This intolerant law (Athenaeus, l. xiii. p. 610. Diogen. Laertius, l. v. s. 38. p. 290. Julius Pollux, ix. 5) was enacted in the same or the succeeding year, (Sigonius, Opp. tom. v. p. 62. Menagius ad Diogen. Laert. p. 204. Corsini, Fasti Attici, tom. iv. p. 67, 68.) Theophrastus chief of the Peripatetics, and disciple of Aristotle, was involved in the same exile.]

The Gothic arms were less fatal to the schools of Athens than the establishment of a new religion, whose ministers superseded the exercise of reason, resolved every question by an article of faith, and condemned the infidel or sceptic to eternal flames. In many a volume of laborious controversy, they exposed the weakness of the understanding and the corruption of the heart, insulted human nature in the sages of antiquity, and proscribed the spirit of philosophical inquiry, so repugnant to the doctrine, or at least to the temper, of an humble

believer. The surviving sects of the Platonists, whom Plato would have blushed to acknowledge, extravagantly mingled a sublime theory with the practice of superstition and magic; and as they remained alone in the midst of a Christian world, they indulged a secret rancor against the government of the church and state, whose severity was still suspended over their heads. About a century after the reign of Julian, [151] Proclus [152] was permitted to teach in the philosophic chair of the academy; and such was his industry, that he frequently, in the same day, pronounced five lessons, and composed seven hundred lines. His sagacious mind explored the deepest questions of morals and metaphysics, and he ventured to urge eighteen arguments against the Christian doctrine of the creation of the world. But in the intervals of study, he personally conversed with Pan, Aesculapius, and Minerva, in whose mysteries he was secretly initiated, and whose prostrate statues he adored; in the devout persuasion that the philosopher, who is a citizen of the universe, should be the priest of its various deities. An eclipse of the sun announced his approaching end; and his life, with that of his scholar Isidore, [153] compiled by two of their most learned disciples, exhibits a deplorable picture of the second childhood of human reason. Yet the golden chain, as it was fondly styled, of the Platonic succession, continued forty-four years from the death of Proclus to the edict of Justinian, [154] which imposed a perpetual silence on the schools of Athens, and excited the grief and indignation of the few remaining votaries of Grecian science and superstition. Seven friends and philosophers, Diogenes and Hermias, Eulalius and Priscian, Damascius, Isidore, and Simplicius, who dissented from the religion of their

sovereign, embraced the resolution of seeking in a foreign land the freedom which was denied in their native country. They had heard, and they credulously believed, that the republic of Plato was realized in the despotic government of Persia, and that a patriot king reigned over the happiest and most virtuous of nations. They were soon astonished by the natural discovery, that Persia resembled the other countries of the globe; that Chosroes, who affected the name of a philosopher, was vain, cruel, and ambitious; that bigotry, and a spirit of intolerance, prevailed among the Magi; that the nobles were haughty, the courtiers servile, and the magistrates unjust; that the guilty sometimes escaped, and that the innocent were often oppressed. The disappointment of the philosophers provoked them to overlook the real virtues of the Persians; and they were scandalized, more deeply perhaps than became their profession, with the plurality of wives and concubines, the incestuous marriages, and the custom of exposing dead bodies to the dogs and vultures, instead of hiding them in the earth, or consuming them with fire. Their repentance was expressed by a precipitate return, and they loudly declared that they had rather die on the borders of the empire, than enjoy the wealth and favor of the Barbarian. From this journey, however, they derived a benefit which reflects the purest lustre on the character of Chosroes. He required, that the seven sages who had visited the court of Persia should be exempted from the penal laws which Justinian enacted against his Pagan subjects; and this privilege, expressly stipulated in a treaty of peace, was guarded by the vigilance of a powerful mediator. [155] Simplicius and his companions ended their lives in peace and obscurity; and as they left no disciples,

they terminate the long list of Grecian philosophers, who may be justly praised, notwithstanding their defects, as the wisest and most virtuous of their contemporaries. The writings of Simplicius are now extant. His physical and metaphysical commentaries on Aristotle have passed away with the fashion of the times; but his moral interpretation of Epictetus is preserved in the library of nations, as a classic book, most excellently adapted to direct the will, to purify the heart, and to confirm the understanding, by a just confidence in the nature both of God and man.

[Footnote 151: This is no fanciful aera: the Pagans reckoned their calamities from the reign of their hero. Proclus, whose nativity is marked by his horoscope, (A.D. 412, February 8, at C. P.,) died 124 years, A.D. 485, (Marin. in Vita Procli, c. 36.)]

[Footnote 152: The life of Proclus, by Marinus, was published by Fabricius (Hamburg, 1700, et ad calcem Bibliot. Latin. Lond. 1703.) See Saldas, (tom. iii. p. 185, 186,) Fabricius, (Bibliot. Graec. l. v. c. 26 p. 449--552,) and Brucker, (Hist. Crit. Philosoph. tom. ii. p. 319--326)]

[Footnote 153: The life of Isidore was composed by Damascius, (apud Photium, sod. ccxlii. p. 1028--1076.) See the last age of the Pagan philosophers, in Brucker, (tom. ii. p. 341--351.)]

[Footnote 154: The suppression of the schools of Athens is recorded by John Malala, (tom. ii. p. 187, sub Decio Cos. Sol.,) and an anonymous

Chronicle in the Vatican library, (apud Aleman. p. 106.)]

[Footnote 155: Agathias (l. ii. p. 69, 70, 71) relates this curious story Chosroes ascended the throne in the year 531, and made his first peace with the Romans in the beginning of 533--a date most compatible with his young fame and the old age of Isidore, (Asseman. Bibliot. Orient. tom. iii. p. 404. Pagi, tom. ii. p. 543, 550.)]

About the same time that Pythagoras first invented the appellation of philosopher, liberty and the consulship were founded at Rome by the elder Brutus. The revolutions of the consular office, which may be viewed in the successive lights of a substance, a shadow, and a name, have been occasionally mentioned in the present History. The first magistrates of the republic had been chosen by the people, to exercise, in the senate and in the camp, the powers of peace and war, which were afterwards translated to the emperors. But the tradition of ancient dignity was long revered by the Romans and Barbarians. A Gothic historian applauds the consulship of Theodoric as the height of all temporal glory and greatness; [156] the king of Italy himself congratulated those annual favorites of fortune who, without the cares, enjoyed the splendor of the throne; and at the end of a thousand years, two consuls were created by the sovereigns of Rome and Constantinople, for the sole purpose of giving a date to the year, and a festival to the people. But the expenses of this festival, in which the wealthy and the vain aspired to surpass their predecessors, insensibly arose to the enormous sum of fourscore thousand pounds; the wisest senators declined

a useless honor, which involved the certain ruin of their families, and to this reluctance I should impute the frequent chasms in the last age of the consular Fasti. The predecessors of Justinian had assisted from the public treasures the dignity of the less opulent candidates; the avarice of that prince preferred the cheaper and more convenient method of advice and regulation. [157] Seven processions or spectacles were the number to which his edict confined the horse and chariot races, the athletic sports, the music, and pantomimes of the theatre, and the hunting of wild beasts; and small pieces of silver were discreetly substituted to the gold medals, which had always excited tumult and drunkenness, when they were scattered with a profuse hand among the populace. Notwithstanding these precautions, and his own example, the succession of consuls finally ceased in the thirteenth year of Justinian, whose despotic temper might be gratified by the silent extinction of a title which admonished the Romans of their ancient freedom. [158] Yet the annual consulship still lived in the minds of the people; they fondly expected its speedy restoration; they applauded the gracious condescension of successive princes, by whom it was assumed in the first year of their reign; and three centuries elapsed, after the death of Justinian, before that obsolete dignity, which had been suppressed by custom, could be abolished by law. [159] The imperfect mode of distinguishing each year by the name of a magistrate, was usefully supplied by the date of a permanent aera: the creation of the world, according to the Septuagint version, was adopted by the Greeks; [160] and the Latins, since the age of Charlemagne, have computed their time from the birth of Christ. [161]

[Footnote 156: Cassiodor. Variarum Epist. vi. 1. Jornandes, c. 57, p. 696, dit. Grot. Quod summum bonum primumque in mundo decus dicitur.]

[Footnote 157: See the regulations of Justinian, (Novell. cv.,) dated at Constantinople, July 5, and addressed to Strategius, treasurer of the empire.]

[Footnote 158: Procopius, in Anecdot. c. 26. Aleman. p. 106. In the xviiiith year after the consulship of Basilius, according to the reckoning of Marcellinus, Victor, Marius, &c., the secret history was composed, and, in the eyes of Procopius, the consulship was finally abolished.]

[Footnote 159: By Leo, the philosopher, (Novell. xciv. A.D. 886-911.) See Pagi (Dissertat. Hypatica, p. 325--362) and Ducange, (Gloss, Graec p. 1635, 1636.) Even the title was vilified: consulatus codicilli. vilescunt, says the emperor himself.]

[Footnote 160: According to Julius Africanus, &c., the world was created the first of September, 5508 years, three months, and twenty-five days before the birth of Christ. (See Pezron, Antiquite des Tems defendue, p. 20--28.) And this aera has been used by the Greeks, the Oriental Christians, and even by the Russians, till the reign of Peter I The period, however arbitrary, is clear and convenient. Of the 7296 years which are supposed to elapse since the creation, we shall find 3000

of ignorance and darkness; 2000 either fabulous or doubtful; 1000 of ancient history, commencing with the Persian empire, and the Republics of Rome and Athens; 1000 from the fall of the Roman empire in the West to the discovery of America; and the remaining 296 will almost complete three centuries of the modern state of Europe and mankind. I regret this chronology, so far preferable to our double and perplexed method of counting backwards and forwards the years before and after the Christian era.]

[Footnote 161: The aera of the world has prevailed in the East since the vith general council, (A.D. 681.) In the West, the Christian aera was first invented in the vith century: it was propagated in the viiith by the authority and writings of venerable Bede; but it was not till the xth that the use became legal and popular. See l'Art de Veriner les Dates, Dissert. Preliminaire, p. iii. xii. Dictionnaire Diplomatique, tom. i. p. 329--337; the works of a laborious society of Benedictine monks.]