

Chapter XLII: State Of The Barbaric World.--Part I.

State Of The Barbaric World.--Establishment Of The Lombards
On the Danube.--Tribes And Inroads Of The Sclavonians.--
Origin, Empire, And Embassies Of The Turks.--The Flight Of
The Avars.--Chosroes I, Or Nushirvan, King Of Persia.--His
Prosperous Reign And Wars With The Romans.--The Colchian Or
Lazic War.--The Aethiopians.

Our estimate of personal merit, is relative to the common faculties of mankind. The aspiring efforts of genius, or virtue, either in active or speculative life, are measured, not so much by their real elevation, as by the height to which they ascend above the level of their age and country; and the same stature, which in a people of giants would pass unnoticed, must appear conspicuous in a race of pygmies. Leonidas, and his three hundred companions, devoted their lives at Thermopylae; but the education of the infant, the boy, and the man, had prepared, and almost insured, this memorable sacrifice; and each Spartan would approve, rather than admire, an act of duty, of which himself and eight thousand of his fellow-citizens were equally capable. [1] The great Pompey might inscribe on his trophies, that he had defeated in battle two millions of enemies, and reduced fifteen hundred cities from the Lake Maeotis to the Red Sea: [2] but the fortune of Rome flew before his eagles; the nations were oppressed by their own fears, and the invincible legions which he commanded, had been formed by the habits of conquest and the discipline of ages. In this view, the character

of Belisarius may be deservedly placed above the heroes of the ancient republics. His imperfections flowed from the contagion of the times; his virtues were his own, the free gift of nature or reflection; he raised himself without a master or a rival; and so inadequate were the arms committed to his hand, that his sole advantage was derived from the pride and presumption of his adversaries. Under his command, the subjects of Justinian often deserved to be called Romans: but the unwarlike appellation of Greeks was imposed as a term of reproach by the haughty Goths; who affected to blush, that they must dispute the kingdom of Italy with a nation of tragedians pantomimes, and pirates. [3] The climate of Asia has indeed been found less congenial than that of Europe to military spirit: those populous countries were enervated by luxury, despotism, and superstition; and the monks were more expensive and more numerous than the soldiers of the East. The regular force of the empire had once amounted to six hundred and forty-five thousand men: it was reduced, in the time of Justinian, to one hundred and fifty thousand; and this number, large as it may seem, was thinly scattered over the sea and land; in Spain and Italy, in Africa and Egypt, on the banks of the Danube, the coast of the Euxine, and the frontiers of Persia. The citizen was exhausted, yet the soldier was unpaid; his poverty was mischievously soothed by the privilege of rapine and indolence; and the tardy payments were detained and intercepted by the fraud of those agents who usurp, without courage or danger, the emoluments of war. Public and private distress recruited the armies of the state; but in the field, and still more in the presence of the enemy, their numbers were always defective. The want of national spirit was supplied by the

precarious faith and disorderly service of Barbarian mercenaries.

Even military honor, which has often survived the loss of virtue and freedom, was almost totally extinct. The generals, who were multiplied beyond the example of former times, labored only to prevent the success, or to sully the reputation of their colleagues; and they had been taught by experience, that if merit sometimes provoked the jealousy, error, or even guilt, would obtain the indulgence, of a gracious emperor. [4] In such an age, the triumphs of Belisarius, and afterwards of Narses, shine with incomparable lustre; but they are encompassed with the darkest shades of disgrace and calamity. While the lieutenant of Justinian subdued the kingdoms of the Goths and Vandals, the emperor, [5] timid, though ambitious, balanced the forces of the Barbarians, fomented their divisions by flattery and falsehood, and invited by his patience and liberality the repetition of injuries. [6] The keys of Carthage, Rome, and Ravenna, were presented to their conqueror, while Antioch was destroyed by the Persians, and Justinian trembled for the safety of Constantinople.

[Footnote 1: It will be a pleasure, not a task, to read Herodotus, (l. vii. c. 104, 134, p. 550, 615.) The conversation of Xerxes and Demaratus at Thermopylae is one of the most interesting and moral scenes in history. It was the torture of the royal Spartan to behold, with anguish and remorse, the virtue of his country.]

[Footnote 2: See this proud inscription in Pliny, (Hist. Natur. vii.

27.) Few men have more exquisitely tasted of glory and disgrace; nor could Juvenal (Satir. x.) produce a more striking example of the vicissitudes of fortune, and the vanity of human wishes.]

[Footnote 3: This last epithet of Procopius is too nobly translated by pirates; naval thieves is the proper word; strippers of garments, either for injury or insult, (Demosthenes contra Conon Reiske, Orator, Graec. tom. ii. p. 1264.)]

[Footnote 4: See the third and fourth books of the Gothic War: the writer of the Anecdotes cannot aggravate these abuses.]

[Footnote 5: Agathias, l. v. p. 157, 158. He confines this weakness of the emperor and the empire to the old age of Justinian; but alas! he was never young.]

[Footnote 6: This mischievous policy, which Procopius (Anecdot. c. 19) imputes to the emperor, is revealed in his epistle to a Scythian prince, who was capable of understanding it.]

Even the Gothic victories of Belisarius were prejudicial to the state, since they abolished the important barrier of the Upper Danube, which had been so faithfully guarded by Theodoric and his daughter. For the defence of Italy, the Goths evacuated Pannonia and Noricum, which they left in a peaceful and flourishing condition: the sovereignty was claimed by the emperor of the Romans; the actual possession was

abandoned to the boldness of the first invader. On the opposite banks of the Danube, the plains of Upper Hungary and the Transylvanian hills were possessed, since the death of Attila, by the tribes of the Gepidae, who respected the Gothic arms, and despised, not indeed the gold of the Romans, but the secret motive of their annual subsidies. The vacant fortifications of the river were instantly occupied by these Barbarians; their standards were planted on the walls of Sirmium and Belgrade; and the ironical tone of their apology aggravated this insult on the majesty of the empire. "So extensive, O Caesar, are your dominions, so numerous are your cities, that you are continually seeking for nations to whom, either in peace or in war, you may relinquish these useless possessions. The Gepidae are your brave and faithful allies; and if they have anticipated your gifts, they have shown a just confidence in your bounty." Their presumption was excused by the mode of revenge which Justinian embraced. Instead of asserting the rights of a sovereign for the protection of his subjects, the emperor invited a strange people to invade and possess the Roman provinces between the Danube and the Alps and the ambition of the Gepidae was checked by the rising power and fame of the Lombards. [7] This corrupt appellation has been diffused in the thirteenth century by the merchants and bankers, the Italian posterity of these savage warriors: but the original name of Langobards is expressive only of the peculiar length and fashion of their beards. I am not disposed either to question or to justify their Scandinavian origin; [8] nor to pursue the migrations of the Lombards through unknown regions and marvellous adventures. About the time of Augustus and Trajan, a ray of historic light breaks on the darkness of their antiquities, and

they are discovered, for the first time, between the Elbe and the Oder. Fierce, beyond the example of the Germans, they delighted to propagate the tremendous belief, that their heads were formed like the heads of dogs, and that they drank the blood of their enemies, whom they vanquished in battle. The smallness of their numbers was recruited by the adoption of their bravest slaves; and alone, amidst their powerful neighbors, they defended by arms their high-spirited independence. In the tempests of the north, which overwhelmed so many names and nations, this little bark of the Lombards still floated on the surface: they gradually descended towards the south and the Danube, and, at the end of four hundred years, they again appear with their ancient valor and renown. Their manners were not less ferocious. The assassination of a royal guest was executed in the presence, and by the command, of the king's daughter, who had been provoked by some words of insult, and disappointed by his diminutive stature; and a tribute, the price of blood, was imposed on the Lombards, by his brother the king of the Heruli. Adversity revived a sense of moderation and justice, and the insolence of conquest was chastised by the signal defeat and irreparable dispersion of the Heruli, who were seated in the southern provinces of Poland. [9] The victories of the Lombards recommended them to the friendship of the emperors; and at the solicitations of Justinian, they passed the Danube, to reduce, according to their treaty, the cities of Noricum and the fortresses of Pannonia. But the spirit of rapine soon tempted them beyond these ample limits; they wandered along the coast of the Hadriatic as far as Dyrrachium, and presumed, with familiar rudeness to enter the towns and houses of their Roman allies, and to seize the

captives who had escaped from their audacious hands. These acts of hostility, the sallies, as it might be pretended, of some loose adventurers, were disowned by the nation, and excused by the emperor; but the arms of the Lombards were more seriously engaged by a contest of thirty years, which was terminated only by the extirpation of the Gepidae. The hostile nations often pleaded their cause before the throne of Constantinople; and the crafty Justinian, to whom the Barbarians were almost equally odious, pronounced a partial and ambiguous sentence, and dexterously protracted the war by slow and ineffectual succors. Their strength was formidable, since the Lombards, who sent into the field several myriads of soldiers, still claimed, as the weaker side, the protection of the Romans. Their spirit was intrepid; yet such is the uncertainty of courage, that the two armies were suddenly struck with a panic; they fled from each other, and the rival kings remained with their guards in the midst of an empty plain. A short truce was obtained; but their mutual resentment again kindled; and the remembrance of their shame rendered the next encounter more desperate and bloody. Forty thousand of the Barbarians perished in the decisive battle, which broke the power of the Gepidae, transferred the fears and wishes of Justinian, and first displayed the character of Alboin, the youthful prince of the Lombards, and the future conqueror of Italy. [10]

[Footnote 7: *Gens Germana feritate ferocior*, says Velleius Paterculus of the Lombards, (ii. 106.) *Langobardos paucitas nobilitat. Plurimis ac valentissimis nationibus cincti non per obsequium, sed praeliis et perilitando, tuti sunt*, (Tacit. de Moribus German. c. 40.) See likewise

Strabo, (l. viii. p. 446.) The best geographers place them beyond the Elbe, in the bishopric of Magdeburgh and the middle march of Brandenburg; and their situation will agree with the patriotic remark of the count de Hertzberg, that most of the Barbarian conquerors issued from the same countries which still produce the armies of Prussia. *

Note: See Malte Brun, vol. i. p 402.--M]

[Footnote 8: The Scandinavian origin of the Goths and Lombards, as stated by Paul Warnefrid, surnamed the deacon, is attacked by Cluverius, (Germania, Antiq. l. iii. c. 26, p. 102, &c.) a native of Prussia, and defended by Grotius, (Prolegom. ad Hist. Goth. p. 28, &c.) the Swedish Ambassador.]

[Footnote 9: Two facts in the narrative of Paul Diaconus (l. i. c. 20) are expressive of national manners: 1. Dum ad tabulam luderet--while he played at draughts. 2. Camporum viridantia lina. The cultivation of flax supposes property, commerce, agriculture, and manufactures]

[Footnote 10: I have used, without undertaking to reconcile, the facts in Procopius, (Goth. l. ii. c. 14, l. iii. c. 33, 34, l. iv. c. 18, 25,) Paul Diaconus, (de Gestis Langobard, l. i. c. 1-23, in Muratori, Script. Rerum Italicarum, tom. i. p. 405-419,) and Jornandes, (de Success. Regnorum, p. 242.) The patient reader may draw some light from Mascou (Hist. of the Germans, and Annotat. xxiii.) and De Buat, (Hist. des Peuples, &c., tom. ix. x. xi.)]

The wild people who dwelt or wandered in the plains of Russia, Lithuania, and Poland, might be reduced, in the age of Justinian, under the two great families of the Bulgarians [11] and the Sclavonians. According to the Greek writers, the former, who touched the Euxine and the Lake Maeotis, derived from the Huns their name or descent; and it is needless to renew the simple and well-known picture of Tartar manners. They were bold and dexterous archers, who drank the milk, and feasted on the flesh, of their fleet and indefatigable horses; whose flocks and herds followed, or rather guided, the motions of their roving camps; to whose inroads no country was remote or impervious, and who were practised in flight, though incapable of fear. The nation was divided into two powerful and hostile tribes, who pursued each other with fraternal hatred. They eagerly disputed the friendship, or rather the gifts, of the emperor; and the distinctions which nature had fixed between the faithful dog and the rapacious wolf was applied by an ambassador who received only verbal instructions from the mouth of his illiterate prince. [12] The Bulgarians, of whatsoever species, were equally attracted by Roman wealth: they assumed a vague dominion over the Sclavonian name, and their rapid marches could only be stopped by the Baltic Sea, or the extreme cold and poverty of the north. But the same race of Sclavonians appears to have maintained, in every age, the possession of the same countries. Their numerous tribes, however distant or adverse, used one common language, (it was harsh and irregular,) and were known by the resemblance of their form, which deviated from the swarthy Tartar, and approached without attaining the lofty stature and fair complexion of the German. Four thousand six hundred villages [13]

were scattered over the provinces of Russia and Poland, and their huts were hastily built of rough timber, in a country deficient both in stone and iron. Erected, or rather concealed, in the depth of forests, on the banks of rivers, or the edges of morasses, we may not perhaps, without flattery, compare them to the architecture of the beaver; which they resembled in a double issue, to the land and water, for the escape of the savage inhabitant, an animal less cleanly, less diligent, and less social, than that marvellous quadruped. The fertility of the soil, rather than the labor of the natives, supplied the rustic plenty of the Sclavonians. Their sheep and horned cattle were large and numerous, and the fields which they sowed with millet or panic [14] afforded, in place of bread, a coarse and less nutritive food. The incessant rapine of their neighbors compelled them to bury this treasure in the earth; but on the appearance of a stranger, it was freely imparted by a people, whose unfavorable character is qualified by the epithets of chaste, patient, and hospitable. As their supreme god, they adored an invisible master of the thunder. The rivers and the nymphs obtained their subordinate honors, and the popular worship was expressed in vows and sacrifice. The Sclavonians disdained to obey a despot, a prince, or even a magistrate; but their experience was too narrow, their passions too headstrong, to compose a system of equal law or general defence. Some voluntary respect was yielded to age and valor; but each tribe or village existed as a separate republic, and all must be persuaded where none could be compelled. They fought on foot, almost naked, and except an unwieldy shield, without any defensive armor; their weapons of offence were a bow, a quiver of small poisoned arrows, and a long rope,

which they dexterously threw from a distance, and entangled their enemy in a running noose. In the field, the Sclavonian infantry was dangerous by their speed, agility, and hardiness: they swam, they dived, they remained under water, drawing their breath through a hollow cane; and a river or lake was often the scene of their unsuspected ambushade. But these were the achievements of spies or stragglers; the military art was unknown to the Sclavonians; their name was obscure, and their conquests were inglorious. [15]

[Footnote 11: I adopt the appellation of Bulgarians from Ennodius, (in Panegyri. Theodorici, Opp. Sirmond, tom. i. p. 1598, 1599,) Jornandes, (de Rebus Geticis, c. 5, p. 194, et de Regn. Successione, p. 242,) Theophanes, (p. 185,) and the Chronicles of Cassiodorus and Marcellinus. The name of Huns is too vague; the tribes of the Cutturgurians and Utturgurians are too minute and too harsh. * Note: The Bulgarians are first mentioned among the writers of the West in the Panegyric on Theodoric by Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia. Though they perhaps took part in the conquests of the Huns, they did not advance to the Danube till after the dismemberment of that monarchy on the death of Attila. But the Bulgarians are mentioned much earlier by the Armenian writers. Above 600 years before Christ, a tribe of Bulgarians, driven from their native possessions beyond the Caspian, occupied a part of Armenia, north of the Araxes. They were of the Finnish race; part of the nation, in the fifth century, moved westward, and reached the modern Bulgaria; part remained along the Volga, which is called Etel, Etil, or Athil, in all the Tartar languages, but from the Bulgarians, the Volga. The power of the eastern

Bulgarians was broken by Batou, son of Tchingiz Khan; that of the western will appear in the course of the history. From St. Martin, vol. vii p. 141. Malte-Brun, on the contrary, conceives that the Bulgarians took their name from the river. According to the Byzantine historians they were a branch of the Ougres, (Thunmann, Hist. of the People to the East of Europe,) but they have more resemblance to the Turks. Their first country, Great Bulgaria, was washed by the Volga. Some remains of their capital are still shown near Kasan. They afterwards dwelt in Kuban, and finally on the Danube, where they subdued (about the year 500) the Slavo-Servians established on the Lower Danube. Conquered in their turn by the Avars, they freed themselves from that yoke in 635; their empire then comprised the Cutturgurians, the remains of the Huns established on the Palus Maeotis. The Danubian Bulgaria, a dismemberment of this vast state, was long formidable to the Byzantine empire.

Malte-Brun, Prec. de Geog Univ. vol. i. p. 419.--M. ----According to Shafarik, the Danubian Bulgaria was peopled by a Slavo Bulgarian race. The Slavish population was conquered by the Bulgarian (of Uralian and Finnish descent,) and incorporated with them. This mingled race are the Bulgarians bordering on the Byzantine empire. Shafarik, ii 152, et seq.--M. 1845]

[Footnote 12: Procopius, (Goth. l. iv. c. 19.) His verbal message (he owns him self an illiterate Barbarian) is delivered as an epistle. The style is savage, figurative, and original.]

[Footnote 13: This sum is the result of a particular list, in a curious

Ms. fragment of the year 550, found in the library of Milan. The obscure geography of the times provokes and exercises the patience of the count de Buat, (tom. xi. p. 69--189.) The French minister often loses himself in a wilderness which requires a Saxon and Polish guide.]

[Footnote 14: Panicum, milium. See Columella, l. ii. c. 9, p. 430, edit. Gesner. Plin. Hist. Natur. xviii. 24, 25. The Samaritans made a pap of millet, mingled with mare's milk or blood. In the wealth of modern husbandry, our millet feeds poultry, and not heroes. See the dictionaries of Bomare and Miller.]

[Footnote 15: For the name and nation, the situation and manners, of the Sclavonians, see the original evidence of the vith century, in Procopius, (Goth. l. ii. c. 26, l. iii. c. 14,) and the emperor Mauritius or Maurice (Stratagemat. l. ii. c. 5, apud Mascon Annotat. xxxi.) The stratagems of Maurice have been printed only, as I understand, at the end of Scheffer's edition of Arrian's Tactics, at Upsal, 1664, (Fabric. Bibliot. Graec. l. iv. c. 8, tom. iii. p. 278,) a scarce, and hitherto, to me, an inaccessible book.]

I have marked the faint and general outline of the Sclavonians and Bulgarians, without attempting to define their intermediate boundaries, which were not accurately known or respected by the Barbarians themselves. Their importance was measured by their vicinity to the empire; and the level country of Moldavia and Wallachia was occupied by the Antes, [16] a Sclavonian tribe, which swelled the titles of

Justinian with an epithet of conquest. [17] Against the Antes he erected the fortifications of the Lower Danube; and labored to secure the alliance of a people seated in the direct channel of northern inundation, an interval of two hundred miles between the mountains of Transylvania and the Euxine Sea. But the Antes wanted power and inclination to stem the fury of the torrent; and the light-armed Slavonians, from a hundred tribes, pursued with almost equal speed the footsteps of the Bulgarian horse. The payment of one piece of gold for each soldier procured a safe and easy retreat through the country of the Gepidae, who commanded the passage of the Upper Danube. [18] The hopes or fears of the Barbarians; their intense union or discord; the accident of a frozen or shallow stream; the prospect of harvest or vintage; the prosperity or distress of the Romans; were the causes which produced the uniform repetition of annual visits, [19] tedious in the narrative, and destructive in the event. The same year, and possibly the same month, in which Ravenna surrendered, was marked by an invasion of the Huns or Bulgarians, so dreadful, that it almost effaced the memory of their past inroads. They spread from the suburbs of Constantinople to the Ionian Gulf, destroyed thirty-two cities or castles, erased Potidaea, which Athens had built, and Philip had besieged, and repassed the Danube, dragging at their horses' heels one hundred and twenty thousand of the subjects of Justinian. In a subsequent inroad they pierced the wall of the Thracian Chersonesus, extirpated the habitations and the inhabitants, boldly traversed the Hellespont, and returned to their companions, laden with the spoils of Asia. Another party, which seemed a multitude in the eyes of the Romans, penetrated, without opposition,

from the Straits of Thermopylae to the Isthmus of Corinth; and the last ruin of Greece has appeared an object too minute for the attention of history. The works which the emperor raised for the protection, but at the expense of his subjects, served only to disclose the weakness of some neglected part; and the walls, which by flattery had been deemed impregnable, were either deserted by the garrison, or scaled by the Barbarians. Three thousand Sclavonians, who insolently divided themselves into two bands, discovered the weakness and misery of a triumphant reign. They passed the Danube and the Hebrus, vanquished the Roman generals who dared to oppose their progress, and plundered, with impunity, the cities of Illyricum and Thrace, each of which had arms and numbers to overwhelm their contemptible assailants. Whatever praise the boldness of the Sclavonians may deserve, it is sullied by the wanton and deliberate cruelty which they are accused of exercising on their prisoners. Without distinction of rank, or age, or sex, the captives were impaled or flayed alive, or suspended between four posts, and beaten with clubs till they expired, or enclosed in some spacious building, and left to perish in the flames with the spoil and cattle which might impede the march of these savage victors. [20] Perhaps a more impartial narrative would reduce the number, and qualify the nature, of these horrid acts; and they might sometimes be excused by the cruel laws of retaliation. In the siege of Topirus, [21] whose obstinate defence had enraged the Sclavonians, they massacred fifteen thousand males; but they spared the women and children; the most valuable captives were always reserved for labor or ransom; the servitude was not rigorous, and the terms of their deliverance were speedy and moderate.

But the subject, or the historian of Justinian, exhaled his just indignation in the language of complaint and reproach; and Procopius has confidently affirmed, that in a reign of thirty-two years, each annual inroad of the Barbarians consumed two hundred thousand of the inhabitants of the Roman empire. The entire population of Turkish Europe, which nearly corresponds with the provinces of Justinian, would perhaps be incapable of supplying six millions of persons, the result of this incredible estimate. [22]

[Footnote 16: Antes eorum fortissimi.... Taysis qui rapidus et vorticosus in Istri fluenta furens devolvitur, (Jornandes, c. 5, p. 194, edit. Murator. Procopius, Goth. 1. iii. c. 14, et de Edific. 1 iv. c. 7.) Yet the same Procopius mentions the Goths and Huns as neighbors to the Danube, (de Edific. 1. v. c. 1.)]

[Footnote 17: The national title of Anticus, in the laws and inscriptions of Justinian, was adopted by his successors, and is justified by the pious Ludewig (in Vit. Justinian. p. 515.) It had strangely puzzled the civilians of the middle age.]

[Footnote 18: Procopius, Goth. 1. iv. c. 25.]

[Footnote 19: An inroad of the Huns is connected, by Procopius, with a comet perhaps that of 531, (Persic. 1. ii. c. 4.) Agathias (l. v. p. 154, 155) borrows from his predecessors some early facts.]

[Footnote 20: The cruelties of the Sclavonians are related or magnified by Procopius, (Goth. 1. iii. c. 29, 38.) For their mild and liberal behavior to their prisoners, we may appeal to the authority, somewhat more recent of the emperor Maurice, (Stratagem. 1. ii. c. 5.)]

[Footnote 21: Topirus was situate near Philippi in Thrace, or Macedonia, opposite to the Isle of Thasos, twelve days' journey from Constantinople (Cellarius, tom. i. p. 676, 846.)]

[Footnote 22: According to the malevolent testimony of the Anecdotes, (c. 18,) these inroads had reduced the provinces south of the Danube to the state of a Scythian wilderness.]

In the midst of these obscure calamities, Europe felt the shock of revolution, which first revealed to the world the name and nation of the Turks. [2211] Like Romulus, the founder [2212] of that martial people was suckled by a she-wolf, who afterwards made him the father of a numerous progeny; and the representation of that animal in the banners of the Turks preserved the memory, or rather suggested the idea, of a fable, which was invented, without any mutual intercourse, by the shepherds of Latium and those of Scythia. At the equal distance of two thousand miles from the Caspian, the Icy, the Chinese, and the Bengal Seas, a ridge of mountains is conspicuous, the centre, and perhaps the summit, of Asia; which, in the language of different nations, has been styled Imaus, and Caf, [23] and Altai, and the Golden Mountains, [2311] and the Girdle of the Earth. The sides of the hills were productive

of minerals; and the iron forges, [24] for the purpose of war, were exercised by the Turks, the most despised portion of the slaves of the great khan of the Geougen. But their servitude could only last till a leader, bold and eloquent, should arise to persuade his countrymen that the same arms which they forged for their masters, might become, in their own hands, the instruments of freedom and victory. They sallied from the mountains; [25] a sceptre was the reward of his advice; and the annual ceremony, in which a piece of iron was heated in the fire, and a smith's hammer [2511] was successively handled by the prince and his nobles, recorded for ages the humble profession and rational pride of the Turkish nation. Bertezena, [2512] their first leader, signaled their valor and his own in successful combats against the neighboring tribes; but when he presumed to ask in marriage the daughter of the great khan, the insolent demand of a slave and a mechanic was contemptuously rejected. The disgrace was expiated by a more noble alliance with a princess of China; and the decisive battle which almost extirpated the nation of the Geougen, established in Tartary the new and more powerful empire of the Turks. [2513] They reigned over the north; but they confessed the vanity of conquest, by their faithful attachment to the mountain of their fathers. The royal encampment seldom lost sight of Mount Altai, from whence the River Irtysh descends to water the rich pastures of the Calmucks, [26] which nourish the largest sheep and oxen in the world. The soil is fruitful, and the climate mild and temperate: the happy region was ignorant of earthquake and pestilence; the emperor's throne was turned towards the East, and a golden wolf on the top of a spear seemed to guard the entrance of his tent. One of the

successors of Bertezena was tempted by the luxury and superstition of China; but his design of building cities and temples was defeated by the simple wisdom of a Barbarian counsellor. "The Turks," he said, "are not equal in number to one hundredth part of the inhabitants of China. If we balance their power, and elude their armies, it is because we wander without any fixed habitations in the exercise of war and hunting. Are we strong? we advance and conquer: are we feeble? we retire and are concealed. Should the Turks confine themselves within the walls of cities, the loss of a battle would be the destruction of their empire. The bonzes preach only patience, humility, and the renunciation of the world. Such, O king! is not the religion of heroes." They entertained, with less reluctance, the doctrines of Zoroaster; but the greatest part of the nation acquiesced, without inquiry, in the opinions, or rather in the practice, of their ancestors. The honors of sacrifice were reserved for the supreme deity; they acknowledged, in rude hymns, their obligations to the air, the fire, the water, and the earth; and their priests derived some profit from the art of divination. Their unwritten laws were rigorous and impartial: theft was punished with a tenfold restitution; adultery, treason, and murder, with death; and no chastisement could be inflicted too severe for the rare and inexpiable guilt of cowardice. As the subject nations marched under the standard of the Turks, their cavalry, both men and horses, were proudly computed by millions; one of their effective armies consisted of four hundred thousand soldiers, and in less than fifty years they were connected in peace and war with the Romans, the Persians, and the Chinese. In their northern limits, some vestige may be discovered of the form and

situation of Kamptchatka, of a people of hunters and fishermen, whose sledges were drawn by dogs, and whose habitations were buried in the earth. The Turks were ignorant of astronomy; but the observation taken by some learned Chinese, with a gnomon of eight feet, fixes the royal camp in the latitude of forty-nine degrees, and marks their extreme progress within three, or at least ten degrees, of the polar circle.

[27] Among their southern conquests the most splendid was that of the Nephthalites, or white Huns, a polite and warlike people, who possessed the commercial cities of Bochara and Samarcand, who had vanquished the Persian monarch, and carried their victorious arms along the banks, and perhaps to the mouth, of the Indus. On the side of the West, the Turkish cavalry advanced to the Lake Maeotis. They passed that lake on the ice. The khan who dwelt at the foot of Mount Altai issued his commands for the siege of Bosphorus, [28] a city the voluntary subject of Rome, and whose princes had formerly been the friends of Athens. [29] To the east, the Turks invaded China, as often as the vigor of the government was relaxed: and I am taught to read in the history of the times, that they mowed down their patient enemies like hemp or grass; and that the mandarins applauded the wisdom of an emperor who repulsed these Barbarians with golden lances. This extent of savage empire compelled the Turkish monarch to establish three subordinate princes of his own blood, who soon forgot their gratitude and allegiance. The conquerors were enervated by luxury, which is always fatal except to an industrious people; the policy of China solicited the vanquished nations to resume their independence and the power of the Turks was limited to a period of two hundred years. The revival of their name and dominion in the

southern countries of Asia are the events of a later age; and the dynasties, which succeeded to their native realms, may sleep in oblivion; since their history bears no relation to the decline and fall of the Roman empire. [30]

[Footnote 2211: It must be remembered that the name of Turks is extended to a whole family of the Asiatic races, and not confined to the Assena, or Turks of the Altai.--M.]

[Footnote 2212: Assena (the wolf) was the name of this chief. Klaproth, *Tabl. Hist. de l'Asie* p. 114.--M.]

[Footnote 23: From Caf to Caf; which a more rational geography would interpret, from Imaus, perhaps, to Mount Atlas. According to the religious philosophy of the Mahometans, the basis of Mount Caf is an emerald, whose reflection produces the azure of the sky. The mountain is endowed with a sensitive action in its roots or nerves; and their vibration, at the command of God, is the cause of earthquakes. (D'Herbelot, p. 230, 231.)]

[Footnote 2311: Altai, i. e. Altun Tagh, the Golden Mountain. Von Hammer *Osman Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 2.--M.]

[Footnote 24: The Siberian iron is the best and most plentiful in the world; and in the southern parts, above sixty mines are now worked by the industry of the Russians, (Strahlenberg, *Hist. of Siberia*, p. 342,

387. Voyage en Siberie, par l'Abbe Chappe d'Auteroche, p. 603--608, edit in 12mo. Amsterdam. 1770.) The Turks offered iron for sale; yet the Roman ambassadors, with strange obstinacy, persisted in believing that it was all a trick, and that their country produced none, (Menander in Excerpt. Leg. p. 152.)]

[Footnote 25: Of Irgana-kon, (Abulghazi Khan, Hist. Genealogique des Tatars, P ii. c. 5, p. 71--77, c. 15, p. 155.) The tradition of the Moguls, of the 450 years which they passed in the mountains, agrees with the Chinese periods of the history of the Huns and Turks, (De Guignes, tom. i. part ii. p. 376,) and the twenty generations, from their restoration to Zingis.]

[Footnote 2511: The Mongol Temugin is also, though erroneously, explained by Rubruquis, a smith. Schmidt, p 876.--M.]

[Footnote 2512: There appears the same confusion here. Bertezena (Berte-Scheno) is claimed as the founder of the Mongol race. The name means the gray (blauliche) wolf. In fact, the same tradition of the origin from a wolf seems common to the Mongols and the Turks. The Mongol Berte-Scheno, of the very curious Mongol History, published and translated by M. Schmidt of Petersburg, is brought from Thibet. M. Schmidt considers this tradition of the Thibetane descent of the royal race of the Mongols to be much earlier than their conversion to Lamaism, yet it seems very suspicious. See Klaproth, Tabl. de l'Asie, p. 159. The Turkish Bertezena is called Thou-men by Klaproth, p. 115. In 552,

Thou-men took the title of Kha-Khan, and was called Il Khan.--M.]

[Footnote 2513: Great Bucharia is called Turkistan: see Hammer, 2. It includes all the last steppes at the foot of the Altai. The name is the same with that of the Turan of Persian poetic legend.--M.]

[Footnote 26: The country of the Turks, now of the Calmucks, is well described in the Genealogical History, p. 521--562. The curious notes of the French translator are enlarged and digested in the second volume of the English version.]

[Footnote 27: Visdelou, p. 141, 151. The fact, though it strictly belongs to a subordinate and successive tribe, may be introduced here.]

[Footnote 28: Procopius, Persic. 1. i. c. 12, 1. ii. c. 3. Peyssonel, Observations sur les Peuples Barbares, p. 99, 100, defines the distance between Caffa and the old Bosphorus at xvi. long Tartar leagues.]

[Footnote 29: See, in a Memoire of M. de Boze, (Mem. de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tom. vi. p. 549--565,) the ancient kings and medals of the Cimmerian Bosphorus; and the gratitude of Athens, in the Oration of Demosthenes against Leptines, (in Reiske, Orator. Graec. tom. i. p. 466, 187.)]

[Footnote 30: For the origin and revolutions of the first Turkish empire, the Chinese details are borrowed from De Guignes (Hist.

des Huns, tom. P. ii. p. 367--462) and Visdelou, (Supplement a la
Bibliotheque Orient. d'Herbelot, p. 82--114.) The Greek or Roman hints
are gathered in Menander (p. 108--164) and Theophylact Simocatta, (l.
vii. c. 7, 8.)]