

**GLADSTONE
WILLIAM
EWART**

STUDIES ON HOMER AND
THE HOMERIC AGE, VOL. 3
OF 3

William Gladstone
Studies on Homer and the
Homeric Age, Vol. 3 of 3

*http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=24936509
Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age, Vol. 3 of 3:*

Содержание

ADVERTISEMENT	4
I. AGORÈ.	6
II. ILIOS.	180
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	207

W. E. Gladstone

Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age, Vol. 3 of 3

ADVERTISEMENT

Since the Sections which relate to Ethnology passed through the Press, the First Volume of Mr. Rawlinson's Herodotus has appeared. Earlier possession of this important Publication would have emboldened me to proceed a step further in the attempt to specify the probable or possible form of the original Ethnic relation between the Pelasgians and the Hellenes of the Greek Peninsula, but designating the latter as pure Arian, and the former as Arian, with a residue or mixture of Turanian elements.

It has also been since the 'Olympus' was printed, that I have become acquainted with Welcker's recent and unfinished '*Griechische Götterlehre*,' (Göttingen, 1857.) I could have wished to refer to it at various points, and especially to avail myself of the clearer view, which the learned Author has given, of the position of Κρόνος.

Founding himself in part on the exclusive appropriation by Homer of the term Κρονίδης to Jupiter, he enables us to see how Jupiter may have inherited the sole use of the title as being

‘the Ancient of days;’ and how Κρόνος was a formation in the Mythology wholly secondary and posterior to his reputed son. (Welcker, sectt. 27, 8. pp. 140-7.)

Another recent book, M. Alfred Maury’s *Histoire des Religions de la Grèce Antique*, undertakes the useful task of unfolding largely the relations of the Greek religion to the East. But the division of it which deals with Homer specifically is neither complete nor accurate, and affords a new illustration of the proposition which I chiefly desire to establish, namely, that Homer ought to be treated as a separate and independent centre of study.

11, Carlton House Terrace, London,
March 15, 1858.

I. AGORÈ.

THE POLITIES OF THE HOMERIC AGE

It is complained, and perhaps not without foundation, that the study of the ancient historians does not supply the youth of England with good political models: that, if we adjust our sympathies and antipathies according to the division of parties and classes offered to our view in Rome, Athens, or Sparta, they will not be cast in an English mould, but will come out in the cruder forms of oligarchic or democratic prejudice. Now I do not wait to inquire how far these defects may be supplied by the political philosophers, and in particular by the admirable treatise of Aristotle. And it certainly is true, that in general they present to us a state of political ideas and morals greatly deranged: the choice lies between evil on this side in one form, and on that side in another form: the characters, who can be recommended as examples, are commonly in a minority or in exile. Nor do I ask how far we ought to be content, having an admirable range, so to speak, of anatomical models in our hands, to lay aside the idea of attaching our sympathies to what we see. I would rather incite the objector to examine and judge whether we may not find an admirable school of polity, and see its fundamental ideas exhibited under the truest and largest forms, in a quarter where

perhaps it would be the least expected, namely, in the writings of Homer.

As respects religion, arts, and manners, the Greeks of the heroic age may be compared with other societies in the infancy of man. But as respects political science in its essential rudiments, and as respects the application of those principles by way of art to the government of mankind, we may say with almost literal truth that they are the fathers of it; and Homer invites those who study him to come and view it in its cradle, where the infant carries every lineament in miniature, that we can reasonably desire to see developed in manhood.

Strong development of political ideas.

I cannot but deprecate the association established, perhaps unintentionally, by Grote, where, throwing Homer as he does into hotch-pot, so to speak, with the 'legendary age,' he expresses himself in his Preface¹, as follows. 'It must be confessed that the sentimental attributes of the Greek mind – its religious and poetical vein – here appear in disproportionate relief, as compared with its more vigorous and masculine capacities – with those powers of acting, organizing, judging, and speculating, which will be revealed in the forthcoming volumes.' If the sentimental attribute is to be contra-distinguished from the powers, I will not say of speculating, but of acting, organizing, and judging, then I know of nothing less sentimental in the after-

¹ Page xvii.

history of Greece than the characters of Achilles and Ulysses, than the relations of the Greek chiefs to one another and to their people, than the strength and simplicity which laid in those early times the foundation-stones of the Greek national character and institutions, and made them in the social order the just counterparts of the material structures that are now ascribed to the Pelasgians; simple indeed in their elements, but so durable and massive in their combination, as to be the marvel of all time. The influences derived from these sources were of such vitality and depth, that they secured to an insignificant country a predominating power for centuries, made one little point of the West an effective bulwark against the East, and caused Greece to throw out, to the right and left, so many branches each greater than the trunk. Even when the sun of her glory had set, there was yet left behind an immortal spark of the ancient vitality, which, enduring through all vicissitudes, kindled into a blaze after two thousand years; and we of this day have seen a Greek nation, founded anew by its own energies, become a centre of desire and hope at least to Eastern Christendom. The English are not ashamed to own their political forefathers in the forests of the Northward European Continent; and the later statesmen with the lawgivers of Greece were in their day glad, and with reason glad, to trace the bold outline and solid rudiments of their own and their country's greatness in the poems of Homer. Nothing in those poems offers itself, to me at least, as more remarkable, than the deep carving of the political characters; and what is

still more, the intense political spirit which pervades them. I will venture one step farther, and say that, of all the countries of the civilized world, there is no one of which the inhabitants ought to find that spirit so intelligible and accessible as the English: because it is a spirit, that still largely lives and breathes in our own institutions, and, if I mistake not, even in the peculiarities of those institutions. There we find the great cardinal ideas, which lie at the very foundation of all enlightened government: and then we find, too, the men formed under the influence of such ideas; as one among ourselves, who has drunk into their spirit, tells us;

Sagacious, men of iron, watchful, firm,
Against surprise and sudden panic proof.

And again,

The sombre aspect of majestic care,
Of solitary thought, unshared resolve².

It was surely a healthful sign of the working of freedom, that in that early age, despite the prevalence of piracy, even that idea of political justice and public right, which is the germ of the law of nations, was not unknown to the Greeks. It would appear that war could not be made without an appropriate cause, and that the offer of redress made it the duty of the injured to come to terms. Hence the offer of Paris in the Third Iliad is at once readily

² Merope; by Matthew Arnold, pp. 94, 135.

accepted: and hence, even after the breach of the Pact, arises Agamemnon's fear, at the moment when he anticipates the death of Menelaus, that by that event the claim to the restoration of Helen will be practically disposed of, and the Greeks will have to return home without reparation for a wrong, of which the *corpus*, as it were, will have disappeared³.

Before proceeding to sketch the Greek institutions as they are exhibited in Homer, I will give a sketch of the interesting account of them which is supplied by Grote. I cite it more for contrast than for concurrence; but it will assist materially in bringing out into clear relief the points which are of the greatest moment.

Grote's account of the Heroic Polities.

The Greek States of the historic ages, says Grote, always present to us something in the nature of a constitution, as the condition of popular respect towards the government, and of the sense of an obligation to obey it⁴. The man who broke down this constitution, however wisely he might exercise his ill gotten power, was branded by the name of τύραννος, or despot, "as an object of mingled fear and dislike." But in the heroic age there is no system, still less any responsibility⁵: obedience depends on personal reverence towards the king or chief. Into those 'great individual personalities, the race or nation is absorbed⁶.'

³ Il. iv. 160-82.

⁴ Grote's Hist. Greece, vol. ii. p. 83.

⁵ Ibid. p. 84.

⁶ Ibid. p. 102.

Publicity indeed, through the means of the council and assembly, essentially pervades the whole system⁷; but it is a publicity without consequences; for the people, when they have heard, simply obey the orders of the king⁸. Either resistance or criticism is generally exhibited as odious, and is never heard of at all except from those who are at the least subaltern chiefs: though the council and assembly would in practice come to be restraints upon the king, they are not so exhibited in Homer⁹, but are simple *media* for supplying him with information, and for promulgating his resolves¹⁰. The people may listen and sympathize, but no more. In the assembly of the Second Iliad, a ‘repulsive picture’ is presented to us of ‘the degradation of the mass of the people before the chiefs¹¹.’ For because the common soldiery, in conformity with the ‘unaccountable fancy’ which Agamemnon had propounded, made ready to go home, Ulysses belabours them with blows and covers them with scornful reproofs¹²; and the unpopularity of a presumptuous critic, even when he is in substance right, is shown, partly by the strokes that Ulysses inflicts upon Thersites, but still more by the hideous deformities with which Homer has loaded him.

⁷ Ibid. p. 101.

⁸ Ibid. p. 86.

⁹ Ibid. pp. 90, 102.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 92.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 95.

¹² Grote’s Hist. Greece, vol. ii. pp. 94, 96.

It is, I think, in happy inconsistency with these representations, that the historian proceeds to say, that by means of the *Βουλή* and *Ἀγορὴ* we are enabled to trace the employment of public speaking, as the standing engine of government and the proximate cause of obedience, ‘up to the social infancy of the nation¹³.’ But if, in order to make this sentence harmonize with what precedes and follows it, we are to understand that the Homeric poems present to us no more than the dry fact that public speaking was in use, and are to infer that it did not acquire its practical meaning and power until a later date, then I must include it in the general protest which I beg leave to record against the greater part of the foregoing propositions, in their letter and in their spirit, as being neither warranted in the way of inference from Homer, nor in any manner consistent with the undeniable facts of the poems.

Their use of Publicity and Persuasion.

Personal reverence from the people to the sovereign, associated with the duties he discharges, with the high attributes he does or should possess, and with the divine favour, or with a reputed relationship to the gods, attaching to him, constitutes the primitive form in which the relation of the prince and the subject is very commonly cast in the early stages of society elsewhere than among the Greeks. What is sentimental, romantic, archaic, or patriarchal in the Homeric polities is common to them with

¹³ Ibid. p. 105.

many other patriarchal or highland governments. But that which is beyond every thing distinctive not of Greece only, but of Homeric Greece, is, that along with an outline of sovereignty and public institutions highly patriarchal, we find the full, constant, and effective use, of two great instruments of government, since and still so extensively in abeyance among mankind; namely, publicity and persuasion. I name these two great features of the politics and institutions of the heroic age, in order to concentrate upon them the marked attention which I think they deserve. And I venture to give to this paper the name of the Ἄγορῆ, because it was the Greek Assembly of those days, which mainly imparted to the existing polities their specific spirit as well as features. Amid undeveloped ideas, rude methods, imperfect organization, and liability to the frequent intrusion of the strong hand, there lies in them the essence of a popular principle of government, which cannot, I believe, plead on its behalf any other precedent so ancient and so venerable.

As is the boy, so is the man. As is the seed, so is the plant. The dove neither begets, nor yet grows into the eagle. How came it that the prime philosophers of full-grown Greece gave to the science of Politics the very highest place in the scale of human knowledge? That they, kings in the region of abstract thought, for the first and perhaps the only time in the history of the world, came to think they discerned in the turbid eddies of state affairs the image of the noblest thing for man, the noblest that speculation as well as action could provide for him?

Aristotle says that, of all sciences, Πολιτικὴ is ἡ κυριωτάτη καὶ μάλιστα ἀρχιτεκτονική¹⁴; and that ethical science constitutes but a branch of it, πολιτικὴ τις οὔσα. Whence, I ask, did this Greek idea come? It is not the Greece, but it is the Rome of history, which the judgment and experience of the world has taken as its great teacher in the mere business of law and political organization. For so lofty a theory (a theory without doubt exaggerated) from so practical a person as Aristotle, we must assume a corresponding elevation of source. I cannot help believing that the source is to be found rather in the infancy, than in the maturity, of Greek society. As I read Homer, the real first foundations of political science were laid in the heroic age, with a depth and breadth exceeding in their proportions any fabric, however imposing, that the after-time of Greece was able to rear upon them. That after-time was in truth infected with a spirit of political exaggeration, from which the heroic age was free.

We shall have to examine the political picture presented by the heroic age with reference to the various classes into which society was distinguished in its normal state of peace: to the organization of the army in war, and its mixture of civil with military relations: to the institutions which embodied the machinery of government, and to the powers by which that machinery was kept in motion.

Functions of the King.

Let us begin with the King; who constituted at once the highest

¹⁴ Ar. Eth. Nic. i. 2.

class in society, and the centre of its institutions.

The political regimen of Greece, at the period immediately preceding the Trojan war, appears to have been that described by Thucydides, when he says that the tyrannies, which had come in with the increase of wealth, were preceded by hereditary monarchies with limited prerogatives¹⁵: πρότερον δὲ ἦσαν ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς γέρασι πατρικαὶ βασιλεῖαι. And again by Aristotle; βασιλεία ... ἡ περὶ τοὺς ἡρωικοὺς χρόνους ... ἦν ἐκόντων μὲν, ἐπὶ τισὶ δὲ ὠρισμένοις: στρατηγὸς γὰρ ἦν καὶ δικαστὴς ὁ βασιλεὺς, καὶ τῶν περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς κύριος. The threefold function of the King was to command the army, to administer justice chiefly, though not exclusively, between man and man, and to conduct the rites of religion¹⁶.

Independently of sovereignties purely local, we find in Homer traces of a maritime Cretan empire, which had recently passed away: and we find a subsisting Pelopid empire, which appears to have been the first of its kind, at least on the Greek mainland. For the Pelopid sceptre was not one taken over from the Perseids: it was obtained through Mercury, that is, probably through contrivance, from Jupiter: and the difference probably consisted in one or both of these two particulars. It comprehended the whole range of continental Greece, πᾶν Ἄργος, to which are added, either at once or in its progressive extension, the πολλαὶ νῆσοι (Il. ii. 108) of the Minoan empire. Besides

¹⁵ Thuc. i. 13.

¹⁶ Ar. Pol. III. xiv. xv. V. x.

this, it consisted of a double sovereignty: one, a suzerainty or supremacy over a number of chiefs, each of whom conducted the ordinary government of his own dominions; the other, a direct, though perhaps not always an effective control, not only over an hereditary territory, but over the unclaimed residue of minor settlements and principalities in the country. This inference may, I think, be gathered from the fact that we find the force of Agamemnon before Troy drawn exclusively from his Mycenaean dominions, while he had claims of tribute from towns in the south-west of Peloponnesus, which lay at some distance from his centre of power, and which apparently furnished no aid in the war of Troy.

The Pheræ of Diocles lay on the way from Pylos to Sparta: and Pheræ is one of the towns which Agamemnon promised to Achilles. It should, however, be borne in mind that, as the family of names to which Pheræ belonged was one so largely dispersed, we must not positively assume the identity of the two towns.

Degrees in Kingship and in Lordship.

Kingship in Homer is susceptible of degree; it is one thing for the local sovereignties, such as those of Nestor or Ulysses, and another for the great supremacy of Agamemnon, which overrode them. Still the Greek βασιλῆες in the Iliad constitute a class by themselves; a class that comprises the greater leaders and warriors, who immediately surround Agamemnon, the head of the army.

Of by much the greater part even of chiefs and leaders of

contingents, it is plain from the poem that though they were lords (ἄνακτες) of a certain tribe or territory, they were not βασιλῆες or kings.

These chiefs and lords again divide themselves into two classes: one is composed of those who had immediate local heads, such as Phœnix, lord of the Dolopes, under Peleus at Phthia, probably Sthenelus under Diomed, and perhaps also Meriones under Idomeneus: the other is the class of chieftains, to which order the great majority belong, owning no subordination to any prince except to Agamemnon. Among these, again, there is probably a distinction between those sub-chiefs who owned him as a local sovereign, and those who were only subject to him as the head of the great Greek confederation.

It is probable that the subordination of the sub-chief to his local sovereign was a closer tie than that of the local sovereign to the head of Greece. For, according to the evidence supplied by the promises of Agamemnon to Achilles¹⁷, tribute was payable by the lords of towns to their immediate political superior: not a tribute in coined money, which did not exist, nor one fixed in quantity; but a benevolence (δωτίγη), which must have consisted in commodities. Metals, including the precious metals, would, however, very commonly be the medium of acquittance. Again, we find these sub-chiefs invested with dominion by the local sovereign, residing at his court, holding a subaltern command in his army. All these points are combined in the case of Phœnix.

¹⁷ Il. ix. 297.

On the other hand, as to positive duty or service, we know of none that a sovereign like Nestor owed to Agamemnon, except it were to take a part in enterprises of national concern under his guidance. But the distinction of rank between them is clear. Evidently on account of his relation to Agamemnon, Menelaus is βασιλεύτερος, higher in mere kingship, or more a king, than the other chiefs: Agamemnon boasts¹⁸ that he is greatly the superior of Achilles, or of any one else in the army; and in the Ninth Book Achilles seems to refer with stinging, nay, rather with slaying irony, to this claim of greater kingliness for the Pelopids, when he rejects the offer of the hand of any one among Agamemnon's daughters; No! let him choose another son-in-law, who may be worthy of him, and who is more a king than I¹⁹;

ὅστις οἷ τ' ἐπέοικε, καὶ ὃς βασιλεύτερός ἐστιν.

But although one βασιλεύς might thus be higher than another, the rank of the whole body of Βασιλῆες is, on the whole, well and clearly marked off, by the consistent language of the Iliad, from all inferior ranks: and this combination may remind us in some degree of the British peerage, which has its own internal distinctions of grade, but which is founded essentially upon parity, and is sharply severed from all the other orders of the community. We shall presently see how this proposition is made good.

¹⁸ Il. i. 186.

¹⁹ Il. ix. 392.

It thus far appears, that we find substantially, though not very determinately, distinguished, the following forms of larger and lesser Greek sovereignty:

I. That held by Agamemnon, as the head of Greece.

II. The local kings, some of them considerable enough to have other lords or princes (ἄνακτες) under them.

III. The minor chiefs of contingents; who, though not kings, were princes or lords (ἄνακτες), and governed separate states of their own: such as Thoas for Ætolia, and Menestheus for Athens.

IV. The petty and scattered chiefs, of whom we can hardly tell how far any account is taken in the Catalogue, but who belonged, in some sense, to Agamemnon, by belonging to no one else.

First tokens of change in the Heroic Polities.

There are signs, contained in the Iliad itself, that the primitive monarchies, the nature and spirit of which will presently be examined, were beginning to give way even at the time of the expedition to Troy. The growth of the Pelopid empire was probably unfavourable to their continuance. In any case, the notes of commencing change will be found clear enough.

Minos had ruled over all Crete as king; but Idomeneus, his grandson, is nowhere mentioned as the king of that country, of which he appears to have governed a part only. Among obvious tokens of this fact are the following. The cities which furnish the Cretan contingent are all contained in a limited portion of that island. Now, although general words are employed (Il. ii. 649.) to signify that the force was not drawn from these

cities exclusively, yet Homer would probably have been more particular, had other places made any considerable contribution, than to omit the names of them all. Again, Crete, though so large and rich, furnishes a smaller contingent than Pylos. And, once more, if it had been united in itself, it is very doubtful whether any ruler of so considerable a country would have been content that it should stand only as a province of the empire of Agamemnon. In the many passages of either poem which mention Idomeneus, he is never decorated with a title implying, like that of Minos (Κρήτη ἐπίουρος), that he was ruler of the whole island. Indeed, one passage at least appears to bear pretty certain evidence to the contrary. For Ulysses, in his fabulous but of course self-consistent narration to Minerva, shows us that even the Cretan force in Troy was not thoroughly united in allegiance to a single head. ‘The son of Idomeneus,’ he says, ‘endeavoured to deprive me of my share of the spoil, because I did not obey his father in Troas, but led a band of my own:’

οὔνεκ’ ἄρ’ οὐχ ᾧ πατρὶ χαριζόμενος θεράπευον
δήμῳ ἔνι Τρώων, ἀλλ’ ἄλλων ἦρχον ἐταίρων²⁰.

So likewise in the youth of Nestor, two generations back, Augeias appears as the sole king of the Epeans; but, in the Catalogue, his grandson Polyxeinus only commands one out of the four Epean divisions of ten ships each, without any sign of

²⁰ Od. xiii. 265.

superiority: of the other three, two are commanded by generals of the Actorid family, which in the earlier legend appears as part of the court or following of Augeias²¹. And wherever we find in the case of any considerable Greek contingent the chief command divided among persons other than brothers, we may probably infer that there had been a breaking up of the old monarchical and patriarchal system. This point deserves more particular inquiry.

Shown by analysis of the Catalogue.

In the Greek armament, there are twenty-nine contingents in all.

Of these, twenty-three are under a single head; with or without assistants who, where they appear, are described as having been secondary.

²¹ Il. xi. 709, 39, 50.

1. Locrians	with 40 ships.
2. Eubœans	40
3. Athenians	50
4. Salaminians	12
5. Argives	80
6. Mycenians	100
7. Lacedæmonians	60
8. Pyliaus	90
9. Arcadians	60
10. Dulichians &c.	40
11. Cephallenians	12
12. Ætoliars	40
13. Cretans	80
14. Rhodians	9
15. Symeans	3
16. Myrmidons	50
17. Phthians of Phylace	40
18. Phereans, &c.	11
19. Phthians of Methone &c.	7
20. Ormenians &c.	40
21. Argissans &c.	40
22. Cyphians &c.	22
23. Magnesians	40

966 ships.

Under brothers united in command, there were four more contingents:

1. Of Aspledon and Orchomemus,	with 30 ships.
2. Of Phocians	40
3. Of Nisuros, Cos &c.	30
4. Of Tricce &c.	30

130 ships.

In all these cases, comprising the whole armament except from two states, the old form of government seems to have continued. The two exceptions are:

1. Bœotians; with 50 ships, under five leaders.
2. Elians; with 40 ships, under four leaders.

It is quite clear that these two divisions were acephalous. As to the Elians, because the Catalogue expressly divides the 40 ships into four squadrons, and places one under each leader, two of these being of the Actorid house, and a third descended from Augeias. As to the Bœotians, the Catalogue indicates the equality of the leaders by placing the five names in a series under the same category.

An indirect but rather strong confirmation is afforded by the passage in the Thirteenth Book²², where five Greek races or divisions are engaged in the endeavour to repel Hector from the rampart. They are,

1. Bœotians.
2. Athenians (or Ionians), under Menestheus, seconded by Pheidias, Stichios, and Bias.
3. Locrians.
4. Epeans (of Dulichium &c.) under Meges, son of Phyleus, with Amphion, and Drakios. The addition of the patronymic to Meges seems in this place to mark his position; which is distinctly defined as the chief one in the Catalogue, by his being mentioned

²² Il. xiii. 685-700.

there alone.

5. Phthians, under Medon and Podarces. These supplied two contingents, numbered 17 and 19 respectively in the list just given; and they constituted separate commands, though of the same race.

It will be remarked that the Poet enumerates the commanders of the Athenians, Epeans, and Phthians; but not of the Locrians and Bœotians. Obviously, in the case of the Locrians, the reason is, that Oilean Ajax, a king and chief of the first rank, and a person familiar to us in every page, was their leader. Such a person he never mixes on equal terms with secondary commanders, or puts to secondary duties; and the text immediately proceeds to tell us he was with the Telamonian Ajax²³. But why does it not name the Bœotian leader? Probably, we may conjecture, because that force had no one commander in chief, but were an aggregation of independent bodies, whom ties of blood or neighbourhood drew together in the armament and in action.

Having thus endeavoured to mark the partial and small beginnings of disorganization in the ancient form of government, let us now observe the character of the particular spots where they are found. These districts by no means represent, in their physical characteristics, the average character of Greece. In the first place, they are both on the highway of the movement between North and South. In the second, they both are open and

²³ Il. xiii. 701-8.

fertile countries; a distinction which, in certain local positions, at certain stages of society, not only does not favour the attainment of political power, but almost precludes its possession. The Elis of Homer is marked by two epithets having a direct reference to fertility of soil; it is ἰππόβοτος, horse-feeding, and it is also εὐρύχορος, wide-spaced or open. Again, the twenty-nine towns assigned in the Catalogue to the Bœotians far exceed in number those which are named for any other division of Greece. We have other parallel indications; such as the wealth of Orchomenos²⁴; and of Orestius with the variegated girdle. He dwelt in Hyle, one of the twenty-nine, amidst other Bœotians who held a district of extreme fertility²⁵, μάλα πίονα δῆμον ἔχοντες. Now when we find signs like these in Homer, that Elis and Bœotia had been first subjected to revolution, not in the shape of mere change of dynasty, but in the decomposition, so to speak, of their ancient forms of monarchy, we must again call to mind that Thucydides²⁶, when he tells us that the best lands underwent the most frequent social changes by the successions of new inhabitants, names Bœotia, and ‘most of Peloponnesus’ as examples of the kind of district to which his remark applied.

Upon the whole, the organization of the armament for Troy shows us the ancient monarchical system intact in by far the greater part of Greece. But when we come to the Odyssey, we

²⁴ Il. ix. 381.

²⁵ Il. v. 707-10.

²⁶ Thuc. i. 2.

find increasing signs of serious changes; which doubtless were then preparing the way, by the overthrow of old dynasties, for the great Dorian invasion. And it is here worth while to remark a great difference. The mere supervention of one race upon another, the change from a Pelasgian to an Hellenic character, does not appear to have entailed alterations nearly so substantial in the character and stability of Hellenic government, as did the Trojan expedition; which, by depriving societies of their natural heads, and of the fighting men of the population, left an open field to the operation of disorganizing causes.

Strabo has a remarkable passage, though one in which he makes no particular reference to Homer, on the subject of the invasions and displacements of one race by another. These, he says²⁷, had indeed been known before the Trojan war: but it was immediately upon the close of the war, and then after that period, that they gained head: μάλιστα μὲν οὖν κατὰ τὰ Τρωικὰ, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, τὰς ἐφόδους γένεσθαι καὶ τὰς μεταναστάσεις συνέβη, τῶν τε βαρβάρων ἅμα καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὁρμῇ τινὶ χρησαμένων πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀλλοτρίων κατάκτησιν. Of this the *Odyssey* affords some curious indications.

Extended signs in the *Odyssey*.

Among many alleged and some real shades of difference between the poems, we may note two of a considerable political significance: the word *King* in the *Odyssey* has acquired a more

²⁷ B. xii. 8, 4. p. 572.

lax signification, and the word *Queen*, quite unknown to the *Iliad*, has come into free use.

Altered meaning of 'King.'

It will be shown how strictly, in the *Iliad*, the term βασιλεὺς, with its appropriate epithets, is limited to the very first persons of the Greek armament. Now in the *Odyssey* there are but two States, with the organization of which we have occasion to become in any degree acquainted: one of them Scheria, the other Ithaca. Of the first we do not see a great deal, and the force of the example is diminished by the avowedly mythical or romantic character of the delineation: but the fact is worthy of note, that in Scheria we find there are twelve kings of the country, with Alcinous²⁸, the thirteenth, as their superior and head. It is far more important and historically significant that, in the limited and comparatively poor dominions of Ulysses, there are now many kings. For Telemachus says²⁹,

ἀλλ' ἦτοι βασιλῆες Ἀχαιῶν εἰσὶ καὶ ἄλλοι
πολλοὶ ἐν ἀμφιάλω Ἰθάκῃ, νέοι ἦδὲ παλαιοί.

His meaning must be to refer to the number of nobles who were now collected, from Cephallonia and the other dominions of Ulysses, into that island. The observation is made by him in reply to the Suitor Antinous, who had complained of his bold

²⁸ Od. viii. 391. vi. 54.

²⁹ Od. i. 394.

language, and hoped he never would be king in Ithaca³⁰:

μη σέ γ' ἐν ἀμφιάλω Ἰθάκη βασιλῆα Κρονίων
ποιήσειεν, ὃ τοι γενεῆ πατρώϊόν ἐστιν.

It is, I think, clear, that in this place Antinous does not mean merely, 'I hope you will not become one of us,' which might be said in reference merely to the contingency of his assuming the controul of his paternal estates, but that he refers to the sovereignty properly so called: for Telemachus, after having said there are many βασιλῆες in Ithaca, proceeds to say, 'Let one of them be chosen', or 'one of these may be chosen, to succeed Ulysses;'

τῶν κέν τις τόδ' ἔχῃσιν, ἐπεὶ θάνε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

'but let me,' he continues, 'be master of my own house and property.' Thus we have βασιλεὺς bearing two senses in the very same passage. First, it means the noble, of whom there are many in the country, and it is here evidently used in an improper sense; secondly, it means the person who rules the whole of them, and it is here as evidently employed in its original and proper signification. It seems very doubtful, however, whether, even in the Odyssey, the relaxed sense ever appears as a simple title in the singular number. The only signs of it are these; Antinous is told that he is *like* a king³¹ in appearance; and he is also

³⁰ Ibid. 386.

³¹ Od. xvii. 416.

expressly called βασιλεὺς in the strongly and generally suspected νεκυΐα of the Twenty-fourth Book³². So again, the kingly epithet Διοτρεφής is not used in the singular for any one below the rank of a βασιλεὺς of the Iliad, except once, where, in addressing Agelaus the Suitor, it is employed by Melanthius, the goatherd, one of the subordinate adherents and parasites of that party³³.

This relaxation in the sense of βασιλεὺς, definite and limited as is its application in the Iliad, is no inconsiderable note of change.

New name of Queen.

Equally, or more remarkable, is the introduction in the Odyssey of the words δέσποινα and βασιλία, and the altered use of ἄνασσα.

1. δέσποινα is applied, Od. iii. 403, to the wife of Pisistratus, son of Nestor; to Arete, queen of the Phæacians, Od. vii. 53, 347; to Penelope, Od. xiv. 9, 127, 451; xv. 374, 7; xvii. 83; xxiii. 2.

2. ἄνασσα is applied in the Iliad, xiv. 326, to Ceres only; but in the Odyssey, besides Minerva, in Od. iii. 380, Ulysses applies it twice to Nausicaa, in Od. vi. 149, 175; apparently in some doubt whether she is a divinity or a mortal. I would not however dwell strongly on this distinction between the poems; for we seem to find substantially the human use of the word ἄνασσα in the name of Agamemnon's daughter, Ἰφιάνασσα, which is used in

³² Od. xxiv. 179.

³³ Od. xxii. 136.

3. Βασίλεια is used many times in the Odyssey; and is applied to

a. Nausicaa, Od. vi. 115.

b. Tyro, daughter of Salmoneus, Od. xi. 258; but only in the phrase βασίλεια γυναικῶν, which seems to resemble δῖα γυναικῶν.

c. Arete, queen of the Phæacians, Od. xiii. 59.

d. Penelope, Od. xvi. 332, 7: and elsewhere.

Now it cannot be said that the use of the word is forborne in the Iliad from the want of fit persons to bear it; for Hecuba, as the wife of Priam, and Helen, as the wife of Paris, possibly also Andromache, (though this is much more doubtful³⁴,) were all of a rank to have received it: nor can we account for its absence by their appearing only as Trojans; for the title of βασιλεὺς is frequently applied to Priam, and it is likewise assigned to Paris, though to no other member of the Trojan royal family.

We have also two other cases in the Iliad of women who were queens of some kind. One is that of Hypsipyle, who apparently exercised supreme power³⁵ in Lemnos, but we are left to inference as to its character: the other is the mother of Andromache³⁶,

³⁴ See inf. 'Ilios.'

³⁵ II. vii. 469.

³⁶ II. vi. 395-7. 425.

ἡ βασίλευεν ὑπὸ Πλάκῳ ὕληέσση.

She was what we term a Queen consort, for her husband Eetion was alive at the time. In the *Odyssey* we are told that Chloris, whom Neleus married, reigned at Pylos; ἡ δὲ Πύλου βασίλευε, *Od.* xi. 285. In this place the word βασιλεύειν may perhaps imply the exercise of sovereign power. Be this as it may, the introduction of the novel title of Queen betokens political movement.

There are other signs of advancing change in the character of kingship discernible from the *Odyssey*, which will be more conveniently considered hereafter. In the meantime, the two which are already before us are, it will be observed, exactly in the direction we might expect from the nature of the Trojan war, and from the tradition of Strabo. We have before us an effort of the country amounting to a violent, and also an unnaturally continued strain; a prolonged absence of its best heads, its strongest arms, its most venerated authorities: wives and young children, infants of necessity in many cases, remain at home. It was usual no doubt for a ruler, on leaving his country, to appoint some guardian to remain behind him, as we see from the case of Agamemnon, (*Od.* iii. 267,) and from the language of Telemachus, (*Od.* xv. 89); but no regent, deputy, or adviser, could be of much use in that stage of society. Again, in every class of every community, there are boys rapidly passing into manhood; they form unawares a new generation, and the heat of their young blood, in the absence of vigorous and established controul, stirs, pushes forward, and

innovates. Once more, as extreme youth, so old age likewise was ordinarily a disqualification for war. And as we find Laertes and Peleus, and Menœtius, with Admetus, besides probably other sovereigns whom Homer has not named to us, left behind on this account, so there must have been many elderly men of the class of nobles (ἀριστῆες, ἔξοχοι ἄνδρες) who obtained exemption from actual service in the war. There is too every appearance that, in some if not all the states of Greece, there had been those who escaped from service on other grounds; perhaps either from belonging to the elder race, which was more peculiarly akin to Troy, or from local jealousies, or from the love of ease. For in Ithaca we find old men, contemporaries and seniors of Ulysses, who had taken no part in the expedition; and there are various towns mentioned in different parts of the poems, which do not appear from the Catalogue to have made any contribution to the force. Such were possibly the various places bearing the name of Ephyre, and with higher likelihood the towns offered by Agamemnon to be made over to Achilles³⁷.

Disorganization caused by the War.

³⁷ There is a *nexus* of ideas attached to these towns that excites suspicion. It would have been in keeping with the character of Agamemnon to offer them to Achilles, on account of his having already found he could not control them himself. No one of them appears in the Catalogue. Nor do we hear of them in the Nineteenth Book, when the gifts are accepted. It seems, however, just possible that the promise by Menelaus of the hand of his daughter Hermione to Neoptolemus may have been an acquittance of a residue of debt standing over from the original offer of Agamemnon, out of which the seven towns appear to have dropped by consent of all parties.

Again, as Cinyres³⁸ the ruler of Cyprus, and Echeolus³⁹ the son of Anchises, obtained exemption by means of gifts to Agamemnon, so may others, both rulers and private individuals, have done. But the two main causes, which would probably operate to create perturbation in connection with the absence of the army, were, without much doubt, first, the arrival of a new race of youths at a crude and intemperate manhood; and secondly, the unadjusted relations in some places of the old Pelasgian and the new Hellenic settlers. Their differences, when the pressure of the highest established authority had been removed, would naturally in many places spring up afresh. In conformity with the first of these causes, the Suitors as a body are called very commonly νεοὶ ὑπερηνορέοντες⁴⁰, 'the domineering youths.' And the circumstances under which Ulysses finds himself, when he has returned to Ithaca, appear to connect themselves also with the latter of the above-named causes. But, whatever the reasons, it is plain that his position had become extremely precarious. Notwithstanding his wealth, ability, and fame, he did not venture to appeal to the people till he had utterly destroyed his dangerous enemies; and even then it was only by his promptitude, strength of hand, and indomitable courage, that he succeeded in quelling a most formidable sedition.

³⁸ Il. xi. 20.

³⁹ Il. xxiii. 296.

⁴⁰ Od. ii. 324, 331, *et alibi*. The epithet is, I think, exactly rendered by another word very difficult to translate into English, the Italian *prepotenti*.

Nothing, then, could be more natural, than that, in the absence of the sovereigns, often combined with the infancy of their children, the mother should become the depositary of an authority, from which, as we see by other instances, her sex does not appear to have excluded her: and that if, as is probable, the instances were many and simultaneous, this systematic character given to female rule should have its formal result on language in the creation of the word Queen, and its twin phrase δέσποινα, or Mistress. The extension of the word ἄνασσα from divinities to mortals might result from a subaltern operation of the same causes.

In the very same manner, the diminished force of authority at its centre would increase the relative prominence of such among the nobles as remained at home. On reaching to manhood, they would in some cases, as in Ithaca, find themselves practically independent. The natural result would be, that having, though on a small scale, that is to say, so far probably as their own properties and neighbourhoods respectively were concerned, much of the substance of sovereignty actually in their hands, they should proceed to arrogate its name. Hence come the βασιλῆες of Ithaca and the islands near it; some of them young men, who had become adult since the departure of Ulysses, others of them old, who, remaining behind him, had found their position effectively changed, if not by the fact of his departure, yet by the prolongation of his absence.

The relaxed use, then, of the term βασιλεὺς in the Odyssey,

and the appearance of the term βασιλεία and of others in a similar category, need not qualify the proposition above laid down with respect to the βασιλεύς of the Iliad. He, as we shall see from the facts of the poem, stands in a different position, and presents to us a living picture of the true heroic age⁴¹.

Altered idea of the Kingly office.

This change in the meaning of the word King was accompanied by a corresponding change in the idea of the great office which it betokened. It had descended from a more noble to a less noble type. I do not mean by this that it had now first submitted to limitations. The βασιλεύς of the Greeks was always and essentially limited: and hence probably it was, that the usurper of sole and indefinite power in the state was so essentially and deeply odious to the Greeks, because it was felt that he had plundered the people of a treasure, namely, free government, which they and their early forefathers had possessed from time immemorial.

It is in the Odyssey that we are first startled by meeting not only a wider diffusion and more lax use of the name of king, but together with this change another one; namely, a lower conception of the kingly office. The splendour of it in the Iliad is

⁴¹ I need hardly express my dissent from the account given of the βασιλεύς and ἄναξ in the note on Grote's History of Greece, vol. II. p. 84. There is no race in Troas called βασιλεύτατον. Every βασιλεύς was an ἄναξ; but many an ἄναξ was not a βασιλεύς. It is true that an ἄναξ might be ἄναξ either of freemen or of slaves; but so he might of houses (Od. i. 397), of fishes (Il. xiii. 28), or of dogs (Od. xvii. 318).

always associated with duty. In the simile where Homer speaks of corrupt governors, that draw down the vengeance of heaven on a land by crooked judgments, it is worthy of remark, that he avoids the use of the word βασιλεύς⁴²:

ὄτε δὴ ῥ' ἄνδρεςσι κοτεσσάμενος χαλεπήνη,
οἷ βίη εἰν ἀγορῇ σκολίας κρίνωσι θέμιστας.

The worst thing that is even hinted at as within the limits of possibility, is slackness in the discharge of the office: it never degenerates into an instrument of oppression to mankind. But in the *Odyssey*, which evidently represents with fidelity the political condition of Greece after the great shock of the Trojan war, we find that kingship has come to be viewed by some mainly with reference to the enjoyment of great possessions, which it implied or brought, and as an object on that account of mere ambition. Not of what we should call absolutely vicious ambition: it is not an absolute perversion, but it is a clear declension in the idea, that I here seek to note

ἢ φῆς τοῦτο κάκιστον ἐν ἀνθρώποισι τετύχθαι;
οὐ μὲν γάρ τι κακὸν βασιλευμένῃ· αἰψὰ τέ οἱ δῶ
ἀφνειὸν πέλεται, καὶ τιμηέστερος αὐτός.⁴³

This general view of the office as one to be held for the

⁴² Il. xvi. 386.

⁴³ Od. i. 391-3.

personal enjoyment of the incumbent, is broadly distinguished from such a case as that in the Iliad, where Agamemnon, offering seven cities to Achilles⁴⁴, strives to tempt him individually by a particular inducement, drawn from his own undoubtedly rather sordid mind;

οἳ κέ ἐ δωτίνησι θεὸν ὦς τιμήσουσιν.

The moral causes of this change are in a great degree traceable to the circumstances of the war, and we seem to see how the conception above expressed was engendered in the mind of Mentor, when he observes⁴⁵, that it is now useless for a king to be wise and benevolent like Ulysses, who was gentle like a father to his people, in order that, like Ulysses, he may be forgotten: so that he may just as well be lawless in character, and oppressive in action. The same ideas are expressed by Minerva⁴⁶ in the very same words, at the second Olympian meeting in the Odyssey. It would therefore thus appear, that this particular step downwards in the character of the governments of the heroic age was owing to the cessation, through prolonged absence, of the influence of the legitimate sovereigns, and to consequent encroachment upon their moderate powers.

Instance of a bad King.

And it is surely well worthy of remark that we find in this

⁴⁴ Il. ix. 155.

⁴⁵ Od. ii. 230-4.

⁴⁶ Od. v. 8-12.

very same poem the first exemplification of the character of a bad and tyrannical monarch, in the person of a certain king Echetus; of whom all we know is, that he lived somewhere upon the coast of Epirus, and that he was the pest of all mortals that he had to do with. With great propriety, it is the lawless Suitors who are shown to be in some kind of relation with him; for in the Eighteenth *Odyssey* they threaten⁴⁷ to send Irus, who had annoyed them in his capacity of a beggar, to king Echetus, that he might have his nose and ears cut off, and be otherwise mutilated. The same threat is repeated in the Twenty-first Book against Ulysses himself, and the line that conveys it reappears as one of the Homeric *formulae*⁴⁸;

εἰς Ἐχέτην βασιλῆα, βροτῶν δηλήμονα πάντων.

Probably this Echetus was a purchaser of slaves. It is little likely that the Suitors would have taken the trouble of sending Irus away, rather than dispose of him at home, except with the hope of a price; as they suggest to Telemachus to ship off Theoclymenus and Ulysses (still disguised) to the Sicels, among whom they will sell well⁴⁹.

Kingship in the age of Hesiod.

The kingship, of which the features were so boldly and fairly defined in the Homeric age, soon passed away; and was hardly to

⁴⁷ Od. xviii. 83-6 and 114.

⁴⁸ Od. xxi. 308.

⁴⁹ Od. xx. 382, 3.

be found represented by any thing but its φθορά, the τυραννίς or despotism, which neither recognised limit nor rested upon reverence or upon usage, but had force for its foundation, was essentially absolute, and could not, according to the conditions of our nature, do otherwise than rapidly and ordinarily degenerate into the positive vices, which have made the name of tyrant ‘a curse and a hissing’ over the earth. In Hesiod we find what Homer nowhere furnishes; an odious epithet attached to the whole class of kings. The θεῖοι βασιλῆες of the heroic age have disappeared: they are now sometimes the αἰδοῖοι still, but sometimes the δωρόφαγοι, the gift-greedy, instead. They desire that litigation should increase, for the sake of the profits that it brings them⁵⁰;

μέγα κυδαίνων βασιλῆας
δωροφάγους, οἳ τήνδε δίκην ἐθέλουσι δικάσσαι.

The people has now to expiate the wickedness of these corrupted kings;

ὄφρ’ ἀποτίση
δῆμος ἀτασθαλίας βασιλέων·

A Shield of Achilles, manufactured after the fashion of the Hesiodic age, would not have given us, for the pattern of a king, one who stood smiling in his fields behind his reapers as they

⁵⁰ Hesiod Ἔργ. i. 39. 258. cf. 262.

felled the corn⁵¹. Yet while Hesiod makes it plain that he had seen kingship degraded by abuse, he has also shown us, that his age retained the ideas both that justice was its duty, and that persuasion was the grand basis of its power. For, as he says in one of his few fine passages⁵², at the birth of a king, the Muses pour dew upon his tongue, that he may have the gift of gentle speech, and may administer strict justice to the people. He then, or the ancient writer who has interpolated him, goes on to describe the work of royal oratory, in thoughts chiefly borrowed from the poems of Homer. But the increase of wealth, and the multiplication of its kinds through commerce, mocked the simple state of the early kings, and tempted them into a rapacity, before which the barriers of ancient custom gave way: and so, says Thucydides⁵³, τὰ πολλὰ τυραννίδες ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι καθίσταντο, τῶν προσόδων μειζόνων γιγνομένων. The germ of this evil is just discernible in the Agamemnon of the Iliad: and it is marked by the epithet of Achilles, who, when angry, still knows how to strike at the weakest point of his character, by calling him δημόβορος βασιλεὺς⁵⁴, a king who eat up, or impoverished, those under his command. Whether the charge was in any great degree deserved or not, we can hardly say.

⁵¹ Il. xviii. 556.

⁵² Hes. Theog. 80-97.

⁵³ Thuc. i. 13.

⁵⁴ Il. i. 231.

Helen certainly gives to the Achæan king a better character⁵⁵. But however that may be, the reproach was altogether personal to the man. The reverence due and paid to the office must have been immense, when Ulysses, alone, and armed only with the sceptre of Agamemnon, could stem the torrent of the flying soldiery, and turn them back upon the place of meeting.

Veneration long adhering to the name.

Even in the Iliad, indeed, we scarcely find the strictly patriarchal king. The constitution of the state has ceased to be modelled in any degree on the pattern of the family. The different classes are united together by relations which, though undefined and only nascent, are yet purely political. Ulysses, in his character of king, had been gentle *as* a father⁵⁶; but the idea which makes the king even metaphorically the father of his people is nowhere, I think, to be found in Homer: it was obsolete. Ethnical, local, and dynastic changes, often brought about by war, had effaced the peculiar traits of patriarchal kingship, with the exception of the old title of ἄναξ ἄνδρῶν; and had substituted those heroic monarchies which retained, in a larger development, so much of what was best in the still older system. As even these monarchies had begun, before the Trojan war, to be shaken here and there, and as the Odyssey exhibits to us the state of things when apparently their final knell had sounded, so, in the age of Hesiod,

⁵⁵ Il. iii. 179.

⁵⁶ Od. ii. 47.

that iron age, when Commerce had fairly settled in Greece, and had brought forth its eldest-born child Competition⁵⁷, they had become a thing of the past. Yet they were still remembered, and still understood. And it might well be that, long after society had outgrown the forms of patriarchal life, men might nevertheless cling to its associations; and so long as those associations were represented by old hereditary sovereignties, holding either in full continuity, or by ties and traditions not absolutely broken, much of the spirit of the ancient system might continue to subsist; political freedom respecting the tree, under the shadow of which it had itself grown up.

It should be easier for the English, than for the nations of most other countries, to make this picture real to their own minds; for it is the very picture before our own eyes in our own time and country, where visible traces of the patriarchal mould still coexist in the national institutions with political liberties of more recent fashion, because they retain their hold upon the general affections.

And, indeed, there is a sign, long posterior to the account given by Hesiod of the heroic age, and distinct also from the apparently favourable notice by Thucydides of the πατρικὰ βασιλείαι, which might lead to the supposition that the old name of king left a good character behind it. It is the reverence which continued to attend that name, notwithstanding the evil association, which events could not fail to establish between it and the usurpations

⁵⁷ Hesiod. Ὕμν. 17-24.

(τυραννίδες). For when the office of the βασιλεὺς had either wholly disappeared, as in Athens, or had undergone essential changes, as in Sparta, so that βασιλεία no longer appears with the philosophical analysts as one of the regular kinds of government, but μοναρχία is substituted, still the name remained⁵⁸, and bore for long long ages the traces of its pristine dignity, like many another venerable symbol, with which we are loath to part, even after we have ceased either to respect the thing it signifies, or perhaps even to understand its significance.

Such is a rude outline of the history of the office. Let us now endeavour to trace the portrait of it which has been drawn in the Iliad of Homer.

Notes of Kingship in the Iliad.

1. The class of βασιλῆες has the epithet θεῖοι, which is never used by Homer except to place the subject of it in some special relation with deity; as for (*a*) kings, (*b*) bards, (*c*) the two protagonists, Achilles and Ulysses, (*d*) several of the heroes who predeceased the war, (*e*) the herald in Il. iv. 192; who, like an ambassador in modern times, personally represents the sovereign, and is therefore Διὸς ἄγγελος ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν, Il. i. 334.

2. This class is marked by the exclusive application to it of the titular epithet Διοτρεφής; which, by the relations with Jupiter which it expresses, denotes the divine origin of sovereign power.

⁵⁸ The title is stated to have been applied in Attica even to the decennial archons. Tittmann, Griechische Staatsverfassungen, b. ii. p. 70.

The word Διογενής has a bearing similar to that of Διοτρεφής, but apparently rather less exclusive. Although at first sight this may seem singular, and we should perhaps expect the order of the two words to be reversed, it is really in keeping; for the gods had many reputed sons of whom they took no heed, and to be brought up under the care of Jupiter was therefore a far higher ascription, than merely to be born or descended from him.

3. To the βασιλεὺς, and to no one else, is it said that Jupiter has intrusted the sceptre, the symbol of authority, together with the prerogatives of justice⁵⁹. The sceptre or staff was the emblem of regal power as a whole. Hence the account of the origin and successive deliveries of the sceptre of Agamemnon⁶⁰. Hence Ulysses obtained the use of it in order to check the Greeks and bring them back to the assembly, ii. 186. Hence we constantly hear of the sceptre as carried by kings: hence the epithet σκηπτούχοι is applied to them exclusively in Homer, and the sceptre is carried by no other persons, except by judges, and by herald-serjeants, as their deputies.

4. The βασιλῆες are in many places spoken of as a class or order by themselves; and in this capacity they form the βουλή or council of the army. Thus when Achilles describes the distribution of prizes by Agamemnon to the principal persons of the army, he says⁶¹,

⁵⁹ Il. ii. 205.

⁶⁰ Il. ii. 101.

⁶¹ Il. ix. 334.

ἄλλα δ' ἀριστήεσσι δίδου γέρα, καὶ βασιλεῦσιν.

In this place the Poet seems manifestly to distinguish between the class of kings and that of chiefs.

When he has occasion to speak of the higher order of chiefs who usually met in council, he calls them the γέροντες⁶², or the βασιλῆες⁶³: but when he speaks of the leaders more at large, he calls them by other names, as at the commencement of the Catalogue, they are ἀρχοὶ, ἡγεμόνες, or κοίρανοι: and, again, ἀριστῆες⁶⁴. In two places, indeed, he applies the phrase last-named to the members of that select class of chiefs who were also kings: but there the expression is ἀριστῆες Παναχαιῶν⁶⁵, a phrase of which the effect is probably much the same as βασιλῆες Ἀχαιῶν: the meaning seems to be those who were chief over all orders of the Greeks, that is to say, chiefs even among chiefs. Thus Agamemnon would have been properly the only βασιλεὺς Παναχαιῶν.

The same distinction is marked in the proceedings of Ulysses, when he rallies the dispersed Assembly: for he addressed coaxingly, whatever king *or* leading man he chanced to overtake⁶⁶.

⁶² Il. ii. 53 *et alibi*.

⁶³ Il. xix. 309. ii. 86.

⁶⁴ Il. ii. 487, 493. xx. 303.

⁶⁵ Il. ii. 404, and vii. 327. On the force of Παναχαιοὶ, see Achæis, or Ethnology, p. 420.

⁶⁶ Il. ii. 188.

ὄντινα μὲν βασιλῆα καὶ ἔξοχον ἄνδρα κιχείη,

5. The rank of the Greek βασιλεῖς is marked in the Catalogue by this trait; that no other person seems ever to be associated with them on an equal footing in the command of the force, even where it was such as to require subaltern commanders. Agamemnon, Menelaus, Nestor, Ulysses, the two Ajaxes, Achilles, are each named alone. Idomeneus is named alone as leader in opening the account of the Cretans, ii. 645, though, when he is named again, Meriones also appears (650, 1), which arrangement seems to point to him as only at most a quasi-colleague, and ὀπάων. Sthenelus and Euryalus are named after Diomed (563-6), but it is expressly added,

συμπάντων δ' ἠγεῖτο βοῆν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης.

Thus his higher rank is not obscured. Again, we know that, in the case of Achilles, there were five persons, each commanding ten of his fifty ships (Il. xvi. 171), of whom no notice is taken in the Catalogue (681-94), though it begins with a promise to enumerate all those who were in command of the fleet (493), and in the case of the Elians he names four leaders who had exactly the same command, each over ten ships (618). It thus appears natural to refer his silence about the five to the rank held by Achilles as a king.

ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας;

So much for the notes of this class in the Iliad.

Though we are not bound to suppose, that Homer had so rigid

a definition of the class of kings before his mind as exists in the case of the more modern forms of title, it is clear in very nearly every individual case of a Greek chieftain of the Iliad, whether he was a βασιλεύς or not.

The Nine Greek Kings of the Iliad.

The class clearly comprehends:

1. Agamemnon, Il. i. 9, and in many places.
2.
Menelaus
3. Nestor from Il. xix. 310, 311, where they remain with Achilles, while the other βασιλῆες, ver. 309, are sent away. Also for Ulysses, see xiv. 379; and various places in the Odyssey.
4. Ulysses
5.
Idomeneus

6. Achilles, Il. i. 331. xvi. 211.

7. Diomed, Il. xiv. 27, compared with 29 and 379.

8. Ajax Telamonius, Il. vii. 321 connected with 344.

9. Ajax, son of Oileus.

Among the indications, by which the last-named chief is shown to have been a βασιλεύς, are those which follow. He is summoned by Agamemnon (Il. ii. 404-6) among the γέροντες ἀριστῆες Παναχαιῶν: where all the abovenamed persons appear (except Achilles), and no others. Now the γέροντες or elders are summoned before in ver. 53 of the same book, and are called in ver. 86 the σκηπτοῦχοι βασιλῆες. Another proof of the rank of Oilean Ajax is the familiar manner in which his

name is associated on terms of equality, throughout the poem, with that of Ajax Telamonius.

But the part of the poem, which supplies the most pointed testimony as a whole with respect to the composition of the class of kings, is the Tenth Book.

Here we begin with the meeting of Agamemnon and Menelaus (ver. 34). Next, Menelaus goes to call the greater Ajax and Idomeneus (53), and Agamemnon to call Nestor (54, 74). Nestor awakens Ulysses (137); and then Diomed (157), whom he sends to call Oilean Ajax, together with Meges (175). They then conjointly visit the φύλακες or watch, commanded by Thrasymedes, Meriones, and others (ix. 80. x. 57-9). Nestor gives the watch an exhortation to be on the alert, and then reenters within the trench, followed by the Argeian kings (194, 5);

τοὶ δ' ἅμ' ἔποντο
Ἀργείων βασιλῆες, ὅσοι κεκλήατο βουλήν.

The force of the term βασιλῆες, as marking off a certain class, is enhanced by the lines which follow, and which tell us that with them, the kings τοῖς δ' ἅμα, went Meriones and Thrasymedes by special invitation (196, 7);

αὐτοὶ γὰρ κάλεον συμμητιάσθαι.

Now in this narrative it is not stated that each of the persons, who had been called, joined the company which visited the watch: but all who did join it are evidently βασιλῆες. But we

are certain that Oilean Ajax was among them, because he is mentioned in ver. 228 as one of those in the Council, who were anxious to accompany Diomed on his enterprise.

Ajax Oileus therefore makes the ninth King on the Greek side in the Iliad.

These nine King-Chiefs, of course with the exception of Achilles, appear in every Council, and appear either absolutely or almost alone.

The line between them, and all the other chiefs, is on the whole preserved with great precision. There are, however, a very few persons, with regard to whom the question may possibly be raised whether they passed it.

Certain doubtful cases.

1. Meges, son of Phyleus, and commander of the Dulichian Epeans, was not in the first rank of warriors; for he was not one of the ten who, including Menelaus, were ready to accept Hector's challenge⁶⁷. Neither was he a member of the ordinary Council; but on one occasion, that of the Night-council, he is summoned. Those who attended on this occasion are also, as we have seen, called kings⁶⁸. And we have seen that the term has no appearance of having been loosely used: since, after saying that the kings followed Nestor to the council, it adds, that with them

⁶⁷ Il. vii. 167-70.

⁶⁸ Il. x. 175, connected with 195.

went Meriones and Antilochus⁶⁹.

But when Diomed proceeds to ask for a companion on his expedition, six persons are mentioned (227-32) as having been desirous to attend him. They are the two Ajaxes, Meriones, Thrasymedes, Menelaus, and Ulysses. Idomeneus and Nestor are of course excepted on account of age. It seems plain, however, that Homer's intention was to include the whole company, with those exceptions only. He could not mean that one and one only of the able-bodied warriors present hung back. Yet Meges is not mentioned; the only one of the persons summoned, who is not accounted for. I therefore infer that Homer did not mean to represent him as having attended; and consequently he is in all likelihood not included among the βασιλῆες by v. 195.

2. Phœnix, the tutor and friend of Achilles, is caressingly called by him Διοτρεφῆς⁷⁰ in the Ninth Book; but the petting and familiar character of the speech, and of the whole relation between them, would make it hazardous to build any thing upon this evidence.

In the Ninth Book it may appear probable that he was among the elders who took counsel with Agamemnon about the mission to Achilles, but it is not positively stated; and, even if it were, his relation to that great chieftain would account for his having appeared there on this occasion only (Il. ix. 168). It is remarkable that, at this single juncture, Homer tells us that Agamemnon

⁶⁹ Il. x. 196, 7.

⁷⁰ Il. ix. 607.

collected not simply the γέροντες, but the γέροντες ἀολλέες, as if there were persons present, who did not belong to the ordinary Council (Il. ix. 89).

Again, in the Nineteenth Book, we are told (v. 303) that the γέροντες Ἀχαιῶν assembled in the encampment of Achilles, that they might urge him to eat. He refused; and he sent away the ‘other kings;’ but there remained behind the two Atreidæ, Ulysses, Nestor, and Idomeneus, ‘and the old chariot-driving Phœnix.’ The others are mentioned without epithet, probably because they had just been described as kings; and Phœnix is in all likelihood described by these epithets, for the reason that the term βασιλῆες would not include him (xix. 303-12).

On the whole then, and taking into our view that Phœnix was as a lord, or ἄναξ, subordinate to Peleus, and that he was a sub-commander in the contingent of Achilles, we may be pretty sure that he was not a βασιλεύς; if that word had, as has I think been sufficiently shown, a determinate meaning.

3. Though Patroclus was in the first rank of warriors he is nowhere called βασιλεύς or Διοτρεφής; but only Διογενής, which is a word apparently used with rather more latitude. The subordinate position of Menœtius, the father of Patroclus, makes it improbable that he should stand as a king in the Iliad. He appears to have been lieutenant to Achilles over the whole body of Myrmidons.

4. Eurypylus son of Euæmon⁷¹, commander of a contingent

⁷¹ Il. ii. 736, 7. vii. 167. xi. 819.

of forty ships, and one of the ten acceptors of the challenge, is in one place addressed as Διοτρεφής. It is doubtful whether he was meant to be exhibited as a βασιλεύς, or whether this is a lax use of the epithet; if it is so, it forms the only exception (apart from ix. 607) to the rule established by above thirty passages of the Iliad.

Upon the whole, then the evidence of the Iliad clearly tends to show that the title βασιλεύς was a definite one in the Greek army, and that it was confined to nine persons; perhaps with some slight indistinctness on the question, whether there was or was not a claim to that rank on the part of one or two persons more.

Conditions of Kingship in the Iliad.

Upon viewing the composition of the class of kings, whether we include in it or not such cases as those of Meges or Eurypylus, it seems to rest upon the combined basis of

1. Real political sovereignty, as distinguished from subaltern chiefship;
2. Marked personal vigour; and
3. *Either*,
 - a. Considerable territorial possessions, as in the case of Idomeneus and Oilean Ajax;
 - b. Extraordinary abilities though with small dominions, as in the case of Ulysses; or, at the least,
 - c. Preeminent personal strength and valour, accepted in like manner as a compensation for defective political

weight, as in the case of Telamonian Ajax.

Although the condition of commanding considerable forces is, as we see, by no means absolute, yet, on the other hand, every commander of as large a force as fifty ships is a βασιλεύς, except Menestheus only, an exception which probably has a meaning. Agapenor indeed has sixty ships; but then he is immediately dependent on Agamemnon. The Bœotians too have fifty; but they are divided among five leaders.

Among the bodily qualities of Homeric princes, we may first note beauty. This attribute is not, I think, pointedly ascribed in the poems to any person, except those of princely rank. It is needless to collect all the instances in which it is thus assigned. Of some of them, where the description is marked, and the persons insignificant, like Euphorbus and Nireus⁷², we may be the more persuaded, that Homer was following an extant tradition. Of the Trojan royal family it is the eminent and peculiar characteristic; and it remains to an observable degree even in the case of the aged Priam⁷³. Homer is careful⁷⁴ to assert it of his prime heroes; Achilles surpasses even Nireus; Ulysses possesses it abundantly, though in a less marked degree; it is expressly asserted of Agamemnon; and of Ajax, who, in the *Odyssey*, is almost brought into competition with Nireus for the second honours; the terms of description are, however, distinguishable

⁷² Il. xvii. 51. ii. 673.

⁷³ Il. xxiv. 631.

⁷⁴ Il. ii. 674. Od. xvi. 175. Il. iii. 224, 169, 226, and Od. xi. 469.

one from the other.

Again, with respect to personal vigour as a condition of sovereignty, it is observed by Grote⁷⁵ that ‘an old chief, such as Peleus and Laertes, cannot retain his position.’ There appears to have been some diversity of practice. Nestor, in very advanced age, and when unable to fight, still occupies his throne. The passage quoted by Grote to uphold his assertion with respect to Peleus falls short of the mark: for it is simply an inquiry by the spirit of Achilles, whether his father is still on the throne, or has been set aside on account of age, and the question itself shows that, during the whole time of the life of Achilles, Peleus, though old, had not been known to have resigned the administration of the government. Indeed his retention of it appears to be presumed in the beautiful speech of Priam to Achilles (Il. xxiv. 486-92).

Custom of resignation in old age.

At the same time, there is sufficient evidence supplied by Homer to show, that it was the more usual custom for the sovereign, as he grew old, either to associate his son with him in his cares, or to retire. The practice of Troy, where we see Hector mainly exercising the active duties of the government – for he feeds the troops⁷⁶, as well as commands them – appears to have corresponded with that of Greece. Achilles, in the Ninth Iliad,

⁷⁵ Hist. vol. ii. p. 87.

⁷⁶ Il. xvii. 225.

plainly implies that he himself was not, as a general, the mere delegate of his father; since he invites Phoenix to come and share his kingdom with him.

But the duties of counsel continued after those of action had been devolved: for Priam presides in the Trojan ἀγορή, and appears upon the walls, surrounded by the δημογέροντες, who were, apparently, still its principal speakers and its guides. And Achilles⁷⁷, when in command before Troy, still looked to Peleus to provide him with a wife.

I find a clear proof of the general custom of retirement, probably a gradual one, in the application to sovereigns of the term αἴζητοι. This word is commonly construed in Homer as meaning youths: but the real meaning of it is that which in humble life we convey by the term able-bodied; that is to say, those who are neither in boyhood nor old age, but in the entire vigour of manhood. The mistake as to the sense of the term has created difficulties about its origin, and has led Döderlein to derive it from αἴθω, with reference, I suppose, to the heat of youth, instead of the more obvious derivation from α and ζάω, expressing the height of vital power. A single passage will, I think, suffice to show that the word αἴζητος has this meaning: which is also represented in two places by the paraphrastic expression αἰζητός ἀνὴρ⁷⁸. In the Sixteenth Iliad, Apollo appears to Hector under the form of Asius (716):

⁷⁷ Il. ix. 394.

⁷⁸ Il. xvii. 520. Od. xii. 83.

ἀνέρι εἰσάμενος αἰζηῷ τε κρατερῷ τε.

Now the Asius in question was full brother to Hecuba, the mother of Hector and eighteen other children; and he cannot, therefore, be supposed to have been a youth. The meaning of the Poet appears clearly to be to prevent the supposition, which would otherwise have been a natural one in regard to Hector's uncle, that this Asius, in whose likeness Apollo the unshorn appeared, was past the age of vigour and manly beauty, which is designated by the word αἰζης.

Force of the term αἰζης.

There is not a single passage, where this word is used with any indication of meaning youths as contra-distinguished from mature men. But there is a particular passage which precisely illustrates the meaning that has now been given to αἰζης. In the Catalogue we are told that Hercules carried off Astyoche⁷⁹:

πέρσας ἄστεα πολλὰ Διοτρεφῶν αἰζηῶν.

Pope renders this in words which, whatever be their intrinsic merit, are, as a translation, at once diffuse and defective:

‘Where mighty towns in ruins spread the plain,
And saw their blooming warriors early slain.’

Cowper wholly omits the last half of the line, and says,

⁷⁹ Il. ii. 660.

‘After full many a city laid in dust’...

Chapman, right as to the epithet, gives the erroneous meaning to the substantive:

‘Where many towns of princely youths he levelled with the ground.’

Voss, accurate as usual, appears to carry the full meaning:

‘Viele Städt’ austilgend der gottbeseligten Männer.’

This line, in truth, affords an admirable touchstone for the meaning of two important Homeric words. The vulgar meaning takes Διοτρεφῶν αἰζήων as simply illustrious youths. What could Homer mean by cities of illustrious youths? Is it their sovereigns or their fighting population? Were their sovereigns all youths? Were their fighting population all illustrious? In no other place throughout the Iliad, except one, where the rival reading ἀρηιθῶν is evidently to be adopted, does the Poet apply Διοτρεφῆς to a mass of men⁸⁰. If, then, the sovereigns be meant, it is plain that they could not all be youths, and therefore αἰζηος does not mean a youth. But now let us take Διοτρεφῆς in its strict sense as a royal title only; then let us remember that thrones were only assumed on coming to manhood, as is plain from the case of Telemachus, who, though his father, as it was feared, was dead, was not in possession of the sovereign power. ‘May Jupiter,’ says Antinous to him, ‘never make you the βασιλεὺς in Ithaca: which

⁸⁰ Nor is it applied in the Odyssey to any bodies more numerous than the thirteen ‘kings’ of Scheria, Od. v. 378; and to them in the character of kings.

is your right,' or 'which would fall to you by birth'⁸¹:

ὁ τοι γενεῇ πατρώϊόν ἐστιν.

When Telemachus answers, by proposing that one of the nobles should assume the sovereignty. Lastly, upon declining into old age, it was, for the most part, either as to the more active cares, or else entirely, relinquished. Then the sense of Il. ii. 660 will come out with Homer's usual accuracy and completeness. It will be that Hercules sacked many cities of prince-warriors, or vigorous and warlike princes.

Thus, then, it was requisite that the Homeric βασιλεὺς should be a king, a *könig*, a man of whom we could say that actually, and not conventionally alone, he *can*, both in mind and person. Such was the theory and such the practice of the Homeric age. There is not a single Greek sovereign, with the honourable exception of Nestor, who does not lead his subjects into battle; not one who does not excel them all in strength of hand, scarcely any who does not also give proofs of superior intellect, where scope is allowed for it by the action of the poem. Over and above the work of battle, the prince is likewise peerless in the Games. Of the eight contests of the Twenty-third Book, seven are conducted only by the princes of the armament. The single exception is remarkable: it is the boxing match, which Homer calls πυγμαχίη ἀλεγεινή⁸², an epithet that he applies to no other of the matches except the

⁸¹ Od. i. 386.

⁸² Il. xxiii. 653.

wrestling.

But his low estimation of the boxing comes out in another form, the value of the prizes. The first prize is an unbroken mule: the second, a double-bowled cup, to which no epithet signifying value is attached. But for the wrestlers (a contest less dangerous, and not therefore requiring, on this score, greater inducement to be provided,) the first prize was a tripod, worth twelve oxen; and the second, a woman slave, worth four. What, then, was the relative value of an ox and a mule not yet broken? Mules, like oxen, were employed simply for traction. They were better, because more speedy in drawing the plough⁸³; but, then, oxen were also available for food, and we have no indication that the former were of greater value. Without therefore resting too strictly on the number twelve, we may say that the prize of wrestling was several times more valuable than that of boxing. Again, the second prize of the foot-race was a large and fat ox, equal, probably, to the first prize of the boxing-match⁸⁴. Epeus, who wins the boxing-match against the prince Euryalus, third leader of the Argives, was evidently a person of traditional fame, from the victory he obtains over an adversary of high rank. But Homer has taken care to balance this by introducing a confession from the mouth of Epeus himself, that he was good for nothing in battle⁸⁵;

⁸³ Il. x. 352.

⁸⁴ Il. xxiii. 750.

⁸⁵ Il. xxiii. 670.

ἢ οὐχ ἄλις, ὅτι μάχης ἐπιδεύομαι;

an expression which, I think, the Poet has used, in all likelihood, for the very purpose of shielding the superiority of his princes, by showing that this gift of Epeus was a single, and as it were brutal, accomplishment.

Accomplishments of the Kings.

As with the games, so with the more refined accomplishments. There are but four cases in which we hear of the use of music and song from Homer, except the instances of the professional bards. One of these is the boy, who upon the Shield of Achilles plays and sings, in conducting the youths and maidens as they pass from the vineyard with the grapes. It is the bard, who plays to the dancers; but his dignity, and the composure always assigned to him, probably would not allow of his appearing in motion with such a body, and on this account the *παῖς* may be substituted; of whose rank we know nothing. In the other cases, the three persons mentioned are all princes: Paris is the first, who had the lighter and external parts of the character of a gentleman, and who was of the highest rank, yet to whom it may be observed only the instrument is assigned, and not the song. The second is the sublime Achilles, whose powerful nature, ranging like that of his Poet through every chord of the human mind and heart, prompts him to beguile an uneasy solitude by the Muse; and who is found in the Ninth Iliad⁸⁶ by the Envoys,

⁸⁶ Il. ix. 186.

soothing his moody spirit with the lyre, and singing, to strains of his own, the achievements of bygone heroes. Again, thirdly, this lyre itself, like the iron globe of the Twenty-third Book, had been among the spoils of King Eetion.

But the royal and heroic character must with Homer, at least when exhibited at its climax, be all comprehensive. As it soars to every thing above, so, without stooping, must it be master of every thing beneath it. Accordingly, the Poet has given it the last touch in the accomplishments of Ulysses. As he proves himself a wood-cutter and ship-builder in the island of Calypso, so he is no stranger to the plough and the scythe; and he fairly challenges⁸⁷ Eurymachus the Suitor to try which of them would soonest clear the meadow of its grass, which drive the straightest furrow down a four-acre field.

So much for the corporeal accomplishments of the Greek kings and princes; of their intellectual powers we shall have to treat in considering the character of the governments of the heroic age.

The Kings as Gentlemen.

But these accomplishments, mental and bodily, are not vulgarly heaped upon his characters by Homer, as if they were detailed in a boarding-school catalogue. The Homeric king should have that which incorporates and harmonizes them all: he should be emphatically a gentleman, and that in a sense

⁸⁷ Od. xviii. 366-75.

not far from the one familiar to the Christian civilization of Europe. Nestor, Diomed, Menelaus, are in a marked manner gentlemen. Agamemnon is less so; but here Homer shows his usual discrimination, for in Agamemnon there is a sordid vein, which most of all mars this peculiar tone of character. It is, however, in the two superlative heroes of the poems, that we see the strongest development of those habits of feeling and action, which belong to the gentleman. It will be admitted that one of these traits is the love of that which is straightforward, truthful, and above-board. According to the vulgar conception of the character of Ulysses, he has no credit for this quality. But whatever the Ulysses of Virgil or of Euripides may be, the Ulysses of Homer, though full of circumspection, reserve, and even stratagem in dealing with enemies and strangers, has nothing about him of what is selfish, tricky, or faithless. And, accordingly, it is into his mouth that Homer has put the few and simple words, which rebuke the character of the informer and the tale-bearer, with a severity greater perhaps even than, under the circumstances, was necessary. When he is recognised by Euryclea, he strictly enjoins upon her the silence, on which all their lives at the moment depended. Hurt by the supposition that she could (in our homely phrase) be likely to blab, she replies that she will hold herself in, hard as stone or as iron. She adds, that she will point out to him which of the women in the palace are faithful, and which are guilty. No, he replies; I will observe

them for myself; that is not your business⁸⁸:

μαῖα, τίη δὲ σὺ τὰς μυθήσσαι; οὐδέ τί σε χρή·
εὔ νυ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ φράσομαι καὶ εἴσομ' ἐκάστην·
ἀλλ' ἔχε σιγῆ μῦθον, ἐπίτρεψον δὲ θεοῖσιν.

Achilles as a Gentleman.

As Homer has thus sharply exhibited Ulysses in the character of a gentleman with respect to truth⁸⁹, so he has made the same exhibition for Achilles with respect to courtesy: protesting, as it were, in this manner by anticipation against the degenerate conceptions of those characters, which were to reproduce and render current through the world Achilles as a brute, and Ulysses as a thorough knave. But let us see the residue of the proof.

In the first Iliad, when the wrath is in the first flush of its heat, the heralds Talthylus and Eurybates are sent to his encampment, with the appalling commission to bring away Briseis. On entering, they remain awe-struck and silent. Though, in much later times, we know that

The messenger of evil tidings
Hath but a losing office,

⁸⁸ Od. xix. 500-2.

⁸⁹ In Od. xxii. 417, he applies to Euryclaea for the information, which he had before declined. This is after the trial of the Bow: the other was before it was proposed, and when the Chief probably reckoned on having himself more time for observation than proved to be the case.

he at once relieves them from their embarrassment, and bids them personally welcome;

χαίρετε, κήρυκες, Διὸς ἄγγελοι, ἡδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν
ἄσσον ἴτ'⁹⁰.

And he desires Patroclus to bring forth the object of their quest. More extraordinary self-command and considerateness than this, never has been ascribed by any author to any character.

Again, when in the Ninth Book he is surprised in his seclusion by the envoys Phœnix, Ulysses, and Ajax, though he is prepared to reject every offer, he hails them all personally, without waiting to be addressed and with the utmost kindness⁹¹, as of all the Greeks the dearest to him even in his wrath; he of course proceeds to order an entertainment for them. But the most refined of all his attentions is that shown to Agamemnon in the Twenty-third Book. Inferior to Ajax, Diomed, and Ulysses, Agamemnon could not enter into the principal games, to be beaten by any abler competitor, without disparagement to his office: while there would also have been a serious disparagement of another kind in his contending with a secondary person. Accordingly, Achilles at the close makes a nominal match for the use of the sling – of which we never hear elsewhere in the poems

⁹⁰ Il. i. 334.

⁹¹ Il. ix. 197.

— and, interposing after the candidates are announced, but before the actual contest, he presents the chief prize to Agamemnon, with this compliment; that there need be no trial, as every one is aware already how much he excels all others in the exercise.

Yet these great chiefs, so strong and brave and wise, so proud and stern, so equipped in arts, manners, and accomplishments, can upon occasion weep like a woman or a child. Ulysses, in the island of Calypso daily pours forth his ‘waterfloods’ as he strains his vision over the sea; and he covers up his head in the halls of Alcinous, while Demodocus is singing, that his tears may flow unobserved. And so Achilles, fresh from his fierce vengeance on the corpse of Hector, yet, when the Trojan king⁹² has called up before his mind the image of his father Peleus, at the thought now of his aged parent, and now of his slaughtered friend, sheds tears as tender as those of Priam for his son, and lets his griefs overflow in a deep compassion for the aged suppliant before him. Nor is it only in sorrow that we may remark a high susceptibility. The Greek chieftains in general are acutely sensible of praise and of blame. Telemachus⁹³ is delighted when Ægyptius commends him as a likely looking youth: and even Ulysses, first among them all in self-command, is deeply stung by the remark of the saucy Phæacian on his appearance, and replies upon the offender with excellent sense, but with an extraordinary pungency⁹⁴. A

⁹² Il. xxiv. 486.

⁹³ Od. ii. 33, 5.

⁹⁴ Od. viii. 159. and seqq.

similar temper is shown in all the answers of the chieftains to Agamemnon when he goes the round of the army⁹⁵.

Rights of Hereditary Succession.

The hereditary character of the royal office is stamped upon almost every page of the poems; as nearly all the chiefs, whose lineage we are able to trace, have apparently succeeded their fathers in power. The only exception in the order, of which we are informed, is one where, probably on account of the infancy of the heir, the brother of the deceased sovereign assumes his sceptre. In this way Thyestes, uncle to Agamemnon, succeeded his father Atreus, and then, evidently without any breach of regularity, transmitted it to Agamemnon.

And such is probably the reason why, Orestes being a mere child⁹⁶, a part of the dignity of Agamemnon is communicated to Menelaus. For in the Iliad he has a qualified supremacy; receives jointly with Agamemnon the present of Euneus; is more royal, higher in rank, than the other chieftains: we are also told of him⁹⁷, μέγα πάντων Ἀργείων ἦνασσε; and he came to the second meeting of γέροντες in the Second Book αὐτόματος, without the formality of a summons.

In a case like that of Thyestes, if we may judge from what actually happened, the uncle would perhaps succeed instead

⁹⁵ Il. iv. 231 and seqq.

⁹⁶ Od. i. 40.

⁹⁷ Il. x. 32.

of the minor, whose hereditary right would in such case be postponed until the next turn.

The case of Telemachus in the *Odyssey* is interesting in many ways, as unfolding to us the relations of the family life of the period. Among other points which it illustrates, is that of the succession to sovereignty. It was admitted by the Suitors, that it descended to him from his father⁹⁸. Yet there evidently was some special, if not formal act to be done, without which he could not be king. For Antinous expresses his hope that Jupiter will never make Telemachus king of Ithaca. Not because the throne was full, for, on the contrary, the death of Ulysses was admitted or assumed to have occurred⁹⁹; but apparently because this act, whatever it was, had not been performed in his case.

Perhaps the expressions of Antinous imply that such a proceeding was much more than formal, and that the accession of Telemachus to the supreme dignity might be arrested by the dissent of the nobles. The answer too of the young prince¹⁰⁰ (τῶν κέν τις τόδ' ἔχῃσιν) seems to be at least in harmony with the idea that a practice, either approaching to election, or in some way involving a voluntary action on the part of the subjects or of a portion of them, had to be gone through. But the personal dignity of the son of Ulysses was unquestioned. Even the Suitors pay a certain regard to it in the midst of their insolence: and when

⁹⁸ ὃ τοι γενεῆ πατρώϊόν ἐστιν, *Od.* i. 387.

⁹⁹ *Od.* i. 396. ii. 182.

¹⁰⁰ *Od.* i. 396.

the young prince goes into the place of assembly¹⁰¹, he takes his place upon his father's seat, the elders spontaneously making way for him to assume it.

Rights of primogeniture.

It may, however, be said with truth, that Telemachus was an only son, and that accordingly we cannot judge from his case whether it was the right of the eldest to succeed. Whether the rights of primogeniture were acknowledged among the Greeks of the heroic age, is a question of much interest to our own. For, on the one hand, there is a disposition to canvass and to dispute those rights. On the other hand, we live in a state of society, to which they probably have contributed more largely than any other specific cause, after the Christian religion, to give its specific form. Homer has supplied us with but few cases of brotherhood among his greater characters. We see, however, that Agamemnon everywhere bears the character of the elder, and he appears to have succeeded in that capacity to the throne of Atreus, while Menelaus, the younger, takes his inheritance in virtue of his wife. Tyro, in the Eleventh Odyssey, is said to have borne, on the banks of the Enipeus, the twins Pelias and Neleus. In this passage the order in which the children are named is most probably that of age¹⁰². We find Pelias reigning in Iolcus, a part of the original country of the Æolids: while Neleus emigrates,

¹⁰¹ Od. ii. 82.

¹⁰² Od. xi. 254, 6.

and, either by or before marrying Chloris, becomes king of Pylos in the south of Greece¹⁰³. Of the two brothers Protesilaus and Podarces, the former, who is also the elder, commands the force from Phylace. He was, however, braver, as well as older. This statement of the merits, ages, and positions of the two brothers raises a question applicable to other cases where two brothers are joined without ostensible discrimination in command. Of these there are four in the Catalogue. The first is that of Ascalaphus and Ialmenus, whom their mother Astyoche bore clandestinely to Mars, ὑπερώϊον εἰσαναβᾶσα. The expression seems to imply, that it was at a single birth. But even by this supposition we do not get rid of the idea of seniority in this case; nor can we suppose all the pairs to have been twins. We naturally therefore ask, whether this conjunction implied equality in command? We may probably venture to answer, without much doubt, in the negative. On the one hand, there is nothing unlikely in the supposition that the first named of two brothers was the eldest, and had the chief command. While on the other hand it is certain, that there is no case of two coequal commanders except it be among these four, which are all cases of brothers; and which, under the interpretation which seems the most natural one they can receive, would bear fresh testimony to the prevalence of the custom of primogeniture. Again, among the sons of Nestor, who are exhibited to us as surrounding him in the Third Odyssey, we may perhaps find, from the offices assigned to them at the

¹⁰³ Od. xi. 281.

solemn sacrifice and otherwise, decisive signs of primogeniture. Pisistratus steps forward to greet Telemachus on his arrival, and leads him to his seat¹⁰⁴, sleeps near him under the portico, and accompanies him on his journey. But these functions appertain to him because he was the bachelor (ἡΐθεος) of the family, as we are appropriately told in reference to his taking a couch near the guest, while the married persons always slept in some separate and more private part of the palace¹⁰⁵. Pisistratus, therefore, was probably the youngest son. But it is also pretty clear that Thrasymedes was the eldest. For in the sacrifice he strikes the fatal blow at the ox: while Stratus and Echephron bring it up, Aretus holds the ewer and basin, Perseus holds the lamb, Pisistratus cuts up the animal and Nestor performs the religious rites of prayer and sacrifice¹⁰⁶.

And again, when Pisistratus brings up Telemachus and the disguised Minerva, he places them, evidently as in the seat of honour, ‘beside his brother Thrasymedes and his father.’

This is in perfect consonance with our finding Thrasymedes only, together with Antilochus who fell, selected for service in the Trojan war.

Upon this question, again, an important collateral light is cast by Homer’s mythological arrangements. They are, in fact, quite conclusive on the subject of primogeniture among the Hellenes.

¹⁰⁴ Od. iii. 36.

¹⁰⁵ Od. iii. 402. Il. vi. 242-50.

¹⁰⁶ Od. iii. 439-46 and 454.

The Olympian order is founded upon it. It is as the eldest of the three Kronid brothers, and by no other title, that Jupiter stands at the head of the Olympian community. With respect to the lottery, he is but one of three. His being the King of Air invests him with no right to command the King of Sea. In the Fifteenth Book, as he is of nearly equal force, Neptune declines to obey his orders until reminded by Iris of his seniority. The Erinues, says the Messenger Goddess, attend upon the elder. That is to say, his rights lie at the foundation of the moral order. Upon this suggestion, the refractory deity at once succumbs¹⁰⁷. And, reciprocally, Jupiter in the Thirteenth Odyssey recognises the claim of Neptune to respect as the *oldest* and best (of course after himself) of the gods¹⁰⁸. —

Thus exalted and severed in rank, thus beautiful in person, thus powerful in hand and mind, thus associated with the divine fountain of all human honours, the Greek Βασιλεύς of the Iliad has other claims, too, to be regarded as representing, more nearly perhaps than it has ever been represented by any other class of monarchs, a benignant and almost ideal kingship. The light of these great stars of heroic society was no less mild than it was bright; and they might well have supplied the basis of that idea of the royal character, which has given it so extraordinary a hold over the mind of Shakspeare, and led him to adorn it by such noble effusions of his muse.

¹⁰⁷ Il. xv. 204-7.

¹⁰⁸ Od. xiii. 141.

Function of the King as Priest.

The Homeric King appears before us in the fourfold character of Priest, Judge, General, and Proprietor.

It has already been remarked, that no priest appears among the Greeks of the Troic age; and, in conformity with this view, we find Agamemnon in the Iliad, and Nestor in the Odyssey, charged with the actual performance of the rite of sacrifice; nor is it apparently committed to any other person than the head of the society, assisted by his κήρυκες, officers who acted as heralds and as serjeants, or by his sons.

But while this was the case in regard to what may be called state sacrifices, which were also commonly banquets, we likewise learn, as to those of a more private character, that they must have been performed by the head of the household. To slay an animal for food is in every case to sacrifice him (ἱερεύειν) whether in the camp, the palace of Nestor, the unruly company of the Suitors, or the peaceful cottage of Eumelus; and every animal ready for the knife was called an ἱερόϊον¹⁰⁹.

As Judge and as General.

The judicial office of the king is made known to us, first, by the character of Minos. While on earth, he had direct communications from Jupiter, which probably referred to the administration of justice; and, in the Shades beneath, we find him actually exercising the office of the judge. Nothing with

¹⁰⁹ Od. xiv. 74. 94.

which we become acquainted in Homer has the semblance of criminal justice, except the fines for homicide; and even these have no more than the semblance only. The punishment was inflicted, like other fines, as an adjustment or compensation¹¹⁰ between man and man, and not in satisfaction of the offence against public morality, peace, or order.

In the Second Iliad, the remonstrance of Ulysses with the commonalty declares that it is the king, and to the king alone, to whom Jupiter has committed the sceptre and the administration of justice, that by these he may fulfil his regal office¹¹¹:

εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω,
εἷς βασιλεὺς, ᾧ ἔδωκε Κρόνου παῖς ἀγκυλομήτεω
σκῆπτρόν τ' ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφίσιν ἐμβασιλεύῃ.

Now the sceptre is properly the symbol of the judicial authority, as we know from the oath of Achilles¹¹²:

νῦν αὐτέ μιν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
ἐν παλάμῃς φορέουσι δικασπόλοι, οἷτε θέμιστας
πρὸς Διὸς εἰρύαται.

From the combined effect of the two passages it is clear that the duties of the judicature, the determination of relative rights

¹¹⁰ II. xviii. 498.

¹¹¹ II. ii. 204.

¹¹² II. i. 237.

between the members of the community, constituted, at least in great part, the primary function of sovereignty. Still the larger conception of it, which includes the deliberative office, is that presented to us in the speech of Nestor to Agamemnon, on the occasion of the Council which followed the Night-assembly¹¹³.

καί τοι Ζεὺς ἐγγυάλιξεν
σκῆπτρόν τ', ἠδὲ θέμιστας, ἵνα σφίσι βουλευῆσθα.

The judicial function might, however, even in the days of Homer, be exercised by delegation. For in the Assembly graven on the Shield, while the parties contend, and the people sympathize some with one and some with the other, it is the γέροντες, or elders, who deliver judgment¹¹⁴. Of these persons each holds the sceptre in his hands. The passage, Il. i. 237, seems to speak of one sceptre held by many persons: this scene on the Shield exhibits to us several sceptres. In the simile of the crooked judgments, a plurality of judges¹¹⁵ are referred to. But as we never hear of an original and independent authority, like that of Il. ii. 204, in the senators or nobles, it seems most likely that they acted judicially by an actual or virtual delegation from the king.

The duty of the king to command his troops is inscribed on every page of the Iliad; and the only limit to it seems to have

¹¹³ Il. ix. 98.

¹¹⁴ Il. xviii. 506.

¹¹⁵ Il. xvi. 386.

been, that upon the approach of old age it was delegated to the heir, or to more than one of the family, even before the entire withdrawal of the sire from public cares. The martial character of the sovereign was indeed ideally distinguishable from his regal one; for Agamemnon was¹¹⁶

ἀμρότερον, βασιλεύς τ' ἀγαθός, κρατερός τ'
αἰχμητής.

Still, martial excellence was expected of him. When Hippolochus despatched his son Glaucus to Troy, he enjoined him always to be valiant, and always to excel his comrades in arms¹¹⁷.

Lastly, the king was a proprietor. Ulysses had very large landed property, and as many herds and flocks, says Eumæus in a spirit of loyal exaggeration, as any twenty chiefs alive¹¹⁸. And Homer, who always reserves his best for the Lycians, has made Sarpedon declare, in an incomparable speech, the virtual condition on which estates like these were held. He desires Glaucus to recollect, why it is that they are honoured in Lycia with precedence at banquets, and with greater portions than the rest, why looked upon as deities, why endowed with great estates of pasture and corn land by the banks of Xanthus; it is that they may the more boldly face the burning battle, and be great in the eyes and in the minds of their companions. So entirely is the idea

¹¹⁶ Il. iii. 179.

¹¹⁷ Il. vi. 207.

¹¹⁸ Od. xiv. 98.

of dignity and privilege in the Homeric king founded upon the sure ground of duty, of responsibility, and of toil¹¹⁹.

What Hippolochus taught, and Sarpedon stated, is in exact correspondence with the practical part of the narrative of Glaucus in the Sixth Book. When Bellerophon had fully approved himself in Lycia by his prowess, the king of the country gave him his daughter in marriage, together with one half of his kingdom; and the Lycians presented him with a great and fertile demesne.

As proprietor; the τέμενος.

This estate is called τέμενος; a name never applied in Homer but to the properties of deities and of rulers. He uses the word with reference to the glebe-lands of

Spercheius, Il. xxiii. 148.

Venus, Od. viii. 362.

Ceres, Il. ii. 696.

Jupiter, Il. viii. 48.

And to the domains of

Bellerophon, Il. vi. 194.

Æneas (promised by the Trojan community if he should slay Achilles), Il. xx. 184.

Meleager, Il. ix. 574.

Sarpedon and Glaucus, Il. xii. 313.

The βασιλεὺς on the Shield, Il. xviii. 550.

¹¹⁹ Il. xii. 310-28.

Iphition (πολέων ἡγήτωρ λαῶν), II. xx. 391.

Alcinous, Od. vi. 293.

Ulysses, Od. xi. 184, and xvii. 299.

On the other hand, the merely rich man (II. xi. 68) has an ἄρουρα, not a τέμενος; and the farm of Laertes is called ἀγρός, not τέμενος. And why? Because it was a private possession, acquired by him apparently out of savings (Od. xxiv. 206);

ὄν ῥά ποτ' αὐτὸς

Λαέρτης κτεάτισσεν, ἐπεὶ μάλα πόλλ' ἐμόγησεν.

The word τέμενος is probably from τέμνω, or from the same root with that verb, and signifies land which, having been cut off from the original common stock, available for the uses of private persons, has been set apart for one of the two great public purposes, of government or of religion.

Revenues and burdens on them.

Besides their great estates, the kings appear to have had at least two other sources of revenue. One of these was not without resemblance in form to what we now call customs'-duties, and may have contained their historical germ. In the Book of Genesis, where the sons of Jacob go down to buy corn in Egypt, they carry with them a present for the ruler; and doubtless the object of this practice was to conciliate the protection to which, as foreigners, and perhaps as suspected persons, avowedly seeking their own gain, they would not otherwise have had a claim. 'Take

of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present; a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds¹²⁰.' In conformity with the practice thus exemplified, when Euneus in the Seventh Iliad despatches his ships from Lemnos to sell wine to the Greek army, in return for which they obtain slaves, hides, and other commodities, he sends a separate supply, χίλια μέτρα, as a present to the two sons of Atreus¹²¹. Agamemnon indeed is, in the Ninth Book, slyly twitted by Nestor with the largeness of the stores of wine, that he had contrived to accumulate.

So likewise we find that certain traders, sailing to Scheria, made a present to Alcinous, as the sovereign, of the captive Eurymedusa. When we compare this with the case of Euneus, the gift obviously appears to have been a consideration for permission to trade¹²².

The other source of revenue traceable in the Iliad was one sure to lead to the extensive corruptions, which must already have prevailed in the time of Hesiod. It consisted in fees upon the administration of justice. In the suit described upon the shield, the matter at issue is a fine for homicide. But quite apart, as it would seem, from this fine, there lie in the midst, duly 'paid into court,' two talents of gold, to be given at the close to him, of all the judges, who should deliver the most upright, that is the most

¹²⁰ Gen. xliiii. 11.

¹²¹ Il. vii. 467-75.

¹²² Od. vii. 8-11.

approved, judgment¹²³:

τῷ δόμεν ὃς μετὰ τοῖσι δίκην ἰθύντατα εἴποι.

However righteous the original intention of a payment in this form, it is easy to estimate its practical tendencies, and curious to remark how early in the course of time they were realized.

On the other hand, the great possessions of the king were not given him for his own use alone. Over and above the general obligation of hospitality to strangers, it was his duty to entertain liberally the principal persons among his subjects. Doubtless this provided the excuse, which enabled the Suitors to feast upon the stores of Ulysses, without the shame, in the very outset, of absolute rapine. And it would appear from the *Odyssey* that Alitherses¹²⁴ and other friends of the royal house, frequented the table there as well as its enemies, though not perhaps so constantly.

In the *Seventh Iliad*, after his fight with Hector, Ajax¹²⁵ repairs, not invited, but as if it were a matter of course, to share the hospitality of Agamemnon. In the *Ninth Book*, Nestor urges Agamemnon to give a feast to the elders, as a duty of his office:

ἔοικέ τοι, οὔτοι ἀεικέες¹²⁶,

adding, and then to take their counsel. But perhaps the

¹²³ *Il.* xviii. 508.

¹²⁴ *Od.* xvii. 68.

¹²⁵ *Il.* vii. 313.

¹²⁶ *Il.* ix. 70.

ordinary exercise of this duty is best exhibited in the case of Alcinous, who is discovered by Ulysses on his arrival entertaining his brother kings in his palace¹²⁷.

πολέεσσι δ' ἀνάσσεις¹²⁸,

I have not here taken specific notice of the δώτιναι, or tributes, which, as Agamemnon promised, Achilles was to receive, from the seven cities, that it was proposed to place under his dominion. The expression is¹²⁹,

οἳ κέ ἐ δωτίνησι θεὸν ὧς τιμήσουσιν,
καὶ οἱ ὑπὸ σκήπτρῳ λιπαρὰς τελέουσι θέμιστας.

The connection of the ideas in the two lines respectively would appear to show, that the δώτιναι may be no more than the fees payable to the sovereign on the administration of justice.

Thus then the king might draw his ordinary revenues mainly from the following sources:

First and principally, the public τέμενος, or demesne land.

Next, his own private acquisitions, such as the ἀγρὸς of Laertes.

Thirdly, the fees on the administration of justice.

Fourthly, the presents paid for licenses to trade.

¹²⁷ Od. vii. 49, 108.

¹²⁸ Ibid. 73.

¹²⁹ Il. ix. 155.

The position of Agamemnon.

The position of Agamemnon, the greatest king of the heroic age, constitutes in itself too considerable a feature of Greek polity at that period to be dismissed without especial notice.

He appears to have united in himself almost every advantage which could tend to raise regal power to its *acmè*. He was of a house moving onward in its as yet unbroken career of accumulating greatness: he was the head of that house, supported in Lacedæmon by his affectionate brother Menelaus; and the double title of the two was fortified with twin supports, by their marriages with Clytemnestra and Helen respectively. This family was at the head of the energetic race which ruled, and deserved to rule, in the Greek peninsula; and which apparently produced such large and full developments of personal character, as the world has never seen, either before or since, at so infantine a stage of civilization. There were various kings in the army before Troy, but among them all the race of Pelopids was the most kingly¹³⁰. Agamemnon possessed the courage, strength, and skill of a warrior, in a degree surpassed only by the very greatest heroes of his nation; and (according to Homer) evidently exceeding that of Hector, the chief Trojan warrior opposed to him. He must have been still in the flower of his age; and though neither gifted with extraordinary talents, nor with the most popular or attractive turn of character, yet he possessed in a high degree the

¹³⁰ Il. x. 239.

political spirit, the sense of public responsibility, the faculty of identifying himself with the general mind and will. Avarice and irresolution appear to have been the two most faulty points in his composition.

His dominions were the largest which, up to that time, had been known in that portion of the world: including Greece, from Mount Olympus to the Malean Cape, reaching across to the islands on the coast of Asia Minor, and even capable of being held to include the island of Cyprus. Before Troy, his troops were πολὺ πλεῖστοι καὶ ἄριστοι (Il. ii. 577), which must imply, as his ships were not greatly more numerous than those of some other contingents, that they were of large size; and he also supplied the Arcadians, who had none of their own, (v. 612.) Lastly, he bore upon him the mellow brightness of the patriarchal age, signified by the title ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν.

Thucydides was not an antiquarian, or he would have left on his history more marks of his researches in that department. But he seems to have formed with care the opinions which he expresses on archaic Greece, in the admirable introduction to his great work. Among them he says that, as he conceives, the fear of Agamemnon operated more powerfully than the oath given to Tyndareus¹³¹, or than good will, in the formation of the confederacy which undertook the war of Troy.

It seems clear from Homer, that the name and fame of Agamemnon were known far beyond the limits of Greece, and

¹³¹ Thuc. i. 9.

that the reputation of being connected with him was thought to be of value. For Menelaus, on his return from Pharos to Egypt, erected there a funeral mound in his honour¹³², ἵν' ἄσβεστον κλέος εἶη; which he would not have done in a country, to whose inhabitants that monarch was unknown. And again, when Ulysses is challenged by the Cyclops to declare, to what and to whom he and his crew belong, he makes the reply, that they are the subjects of Agamemnon, the son of Atreus¹³³:

λαοὶ δ' Ἀτρεΐδew Ἀγαμέμνονος εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι,
τοῦ δὴ νῦν γε μέγιστον ὑπουράνιον κλέος ἐστίν.

Ulysses evidently conceives the fame of the great monarch, thus enhanced by success, to have been likely to supply any one who belonged to him with a defence against the formidable monster, before whom he stood.

Governing motives of the War.

The statements of Homer respecting the position of Agamemnon and the motives of the war, fall short of, but are not wholly at variance with, the opinion which has been expressed by Thucydides. Of the oath to Tyndareus Homer knows nothing: but he tells us of the oath, by which the Greek chieftains had bound themselves to prosecute the expedition. Before setting out, they had a solemn ceremonial at Aulis; they offered sacrifices,

¹³² Od. iv. 584.

¹³³ Od. ix. 263.

they made libations, they swore, they pledged hands¹³⁴, they saw a portent, and had it interpreted by Calchas¹³⁵. But all this only shows that the Atreidæ were conscious how formidable an enterprise they were about, and how they desired accordingly that their companion kings should, after having once embarked, be as deeply pledged as possible to go forward. It does not tell us what was the original inducement to enter into the undertaking. Again, it does not appear that the Greeks in general cared much about the abduction or even the restoration of Helen. The only passage directly touching the point is the one in which Agamemnon¹³⁶ expresses his opinion that, if Menelaus should die of his wound, the army would probably return home. It seems as if Agamemnon thought, that without doubt they would then be in honour released from their engagement, and that they would at once avail themselves of their freedom. The hope of booty, however, would do much; and the members of a conquering race unite together with great facility for purposes of war, through a mixture of old fellow-feeling and the love of adventure, as well as through anticipation of spoil. On the other hand, it was evidently no small matter to organize the expedition: much time was consumed; a friendly embassy to Troy had been tried without success; the ablest princes, Nestor and Ulysses, were employed in obtaining cooperation. The general conclusion, I think, is, that a

¹³⁴ Il. ii. 303-7. 339-41.

¹³⁵ Ibid. 308, 322.

¹³⁶ Il. iv. 169-72.

combination of hope, sympathy, respect, and fear, but certainly a very strong personal feeling, whatever its precise ingredients may have been, towards the Pelopid house, must have operated largely in the matter. And it is in this spirit that we should construe the various declarations of Homer respecting those who came to the war, as courting the Atreidæ, and as acting for their honour; namely these,

χάριν Ἀτρείδησι φέροντες. Od. v. 307.

Ἄγαμέμνονι ἦρα φέροντες. Il. xiv. 132.

τιμὴν ἀρνύμενοι Μενελάῳ σοί τε, κυνῶπα. Il. i. 159.

Before Troy, Agamemnon is always regarded by others as responsible for the expedition, and it is plain that he so regards himself. The use of his sceptre by Ulysses in the great effort to stem the torrent of the retiring multitude, is highly significant of the influence belonging to his station; and when Ulysses argues with the leaders, he rests his case on the importance of knowing the whole mind of Agamemnon, while he strongly dwells on his royal authority, and on the higher authority of heaven as its foundation.

His position, however, did not place him above the influence of jealousy and fear: for he was gratified when he saw Achilles and Ulysses, the first of his chieftains, at variance¹³⁷. And his weight and authority depended for their efficacy on reason, and

¹³⁷ Od. vii. 77.

on the free will of the Greeks. Agamemnon takes Briseis from Achilles by an act of force; but he nowhere seeks to move the army, or the individuals composing it, upon that principle; nor does the prolongation of the service appear to have been placed beyond the judgment of the particular chiefs and of the troops. Achilles not only declares that he will go, but says he will advise others to go with him¹³⁸, and asks Phoenix to remain in his tent for the purpose. The deference paid to the Head is a deference according to measure; and the measure is that of his greater responsibility, his heavier stake in the war¹³⁹. His functions in regard to the host are, to think for and advise it in council, and to stimulate it by exhortation and example in the field. If we may rely on Homer, it was essentially, so far as regarded the relation between the general in chief and the rest of the body, a free military organization.

Personal Character of Agamemnon.

The Agamemnon of Homer does not appear to be intended by the Poet for a man of genius. But on this very account, the dominance of political ideas in his mind is more remarkable. On political grounds he is ready to give up Chryseis¹⁴⁰. On political grounds he quells his own avarice, and slays Trojans instead of taking ransom for them¹⁴¹. He deeply feels the responsibilities of

¹³⁸ II. ix. 356-63, 417-20.

¹³⁹ II. iv. 415-8.

¹⁴⁰ II. i. 117.

¹⁴¹ II. vi. 45-62.

his station, and care banishes his sleep. The amiable trait in his character is his affection for Menelaus, and in this, as in many other respects, he recalls the Jupiter of Homer, whose selfishness is nowhere relieved, except by paternal affection.

Further, Agamemnon, though without genius, is a practitioner in finesse. In his love of this art, I fear, he resembles the tribe of later politicians. He resembles them, too, in outwitting himself by means of it: he is 'hoist upon his own petard.' This seems to be, in part at least, the explanation of his unhappy device in the Second Iliad, to prepare the people for an attack on Troy, by counselling them to go home forthwith. The breakdown of his scheme is, as it were, the first-fruits of retribution for his ἄτη in the First Book. —

As, upon the whole, there is no idea of selfishness involved in the prerogatives of the Homeric king, so is it clear that, except as against mere criminals, there is no general idea of coercion. The Homeric king reigns with the free assent of his subjects — an assent indeterminate, but real, and in both points alike resembling his kingly power. The relation between ruler and ruled is founded in the laws and condition of our nature. Born in a state of dependence, man, when he attains to freedom and capacity for action, finds himself the debtor both of his parents and of society at large; and is justly liable to discharge his debt by rendering service in return. Of this we have various indications in Homer, with respect to parents in particular. Those who die

young, like Simoeisius by the hand of Ajax¹⁴², die before they have repaid to their parents the cost, that is the care, of their education (θρεπτρά). In a most remarkable and characteristic passage. Phoenix describes how, when he was young, some deity restrained his wrath against his father, and shows the infamy that would attend the taking away of that life, in a country where voluntary homicide, in general, was regarded more as a misfortune than a crime¹⁴³:

ὅς ῥ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ
δήμου θῆκε φάτιν, καὶ ὄνειδεα πόλλ' ἀνθρώπων,
ὥς μὴ πατροφόνος μετ' Ἀχαιοῖσιν καλεοίμην.

The reciprocal obligations of father and son are beautifully shown by Andromache in her lament over Hector, when she speaks of her child¹⁴⁴:

οὔτε σὺ τούτῳ
ἔσσεαι, Ἴκτορ, ὄνειαρ, ἐπεὶ θάνες, οὔτε σοὶ οὔτος.

The relation of sovereign and subject free.

As to the relation between the subject and the sovereign authority, it seems everywhere to be taken for granted. In the

¹⁴² Il. iv. 473-9.

¹⁴³ Il. ix. 459.

¹⁴⁴ Il. xxii. 485. Od. xxiv. 434.

Twenty-fourth Odyssey, the object of those who march against Ulysses is not to put down authority, but to avenge the deaths of their sons and brothers. But there appears nowhere in Homer the idea that in this relation could be involved a difference of interest, or even of opinion, between class and class, between governors and governed. The king or chief was uplifted to set a high example, to lead the common counsels to common ends, to conduct the public and common intercourse with heaven, to decide the strifes of individuals, to defend the borders of the territory from invasion. That the community at home, or any regularly subsisting class of it, could require repression or restraint from the government, was an idea happily unknown to the Homeric times.

Those classes, indeed, were few and simple. There was, first of all, the king; and round him his family and his κήρυκες, the serjeants or heralds, who were his immediate, and apparently his only immediate, agents. They conveyed his orders; they assisted him in the Assembly, in sacrifice, and in banquets. They appear to be the only executive officers that are found in Homer. With these was the Bard, apparently also an indispensable member of royal households. Both were recognised among the established professions.

Next to the kings and other sovereigns, we must place the chief proprietors of the country. In the Odyssey, we find the members of the aristocracy having their own estates and functions, and sustaining the part of γέροντες, or leaders in

the Assembly. The judicial office, as we have seen from the Shield and otherwise, was in their hands, probably by delegation. But it would appear, that the distinction between them and the sovereign family was rather a broad one; since, in almost every case, we seem to find the prince contracting a marriage beyond his own borders. Laertes brings Anticlea¹⁴⁵ from the neighbourhood of Parnassus; Theseus marries Ariadne from Crete; Agamemnon and Menelaus, belonging to Mycenæ, are united to the daughters of the king of Sparta; of the two daughters of Icarius, Ulysses in Ithaca married Penelope, and Eumelus in Pheræ married Iphthime (Od. iv. 797); one of the two, at least, and perhaps both, must have married from a considerable distance; Menelaus sends his beautiful daughter Hermione to be the wife of Neoptolemus in Thessaly: and the only instance, even apparently in the opposite sense, seems to be that of his son Megapenthes, who married a Spartan damsel, the daughter of Alector. But then Megapenthes was not legitimate; he was born of a slave-mother, and therefore he was not a prince¹⁴⁶. All these facts seem to show us that the royal houses formed a network among themselves, spread over Greece, and keeping pretty distinct from the aristocracy: a circumstance which may, in some degree, help to explain the wonderful patience and constancy of Penelope.

¹⁴⁵ Od. xi. 85.

¹⁴⁶ Od. iv. 10-12.

Other classes of the community.

Next to the nobles, and in the third place, we may class what we should now call trades and professions: observing, however, that, in Homer's time, both the useful arts and the fine arts had a social dignity, as compared with that of wealth and station, which the former have long ago lost, and which the later have not retained in as full manner as perhaps might be desired, not for their own advantage merely, but to secure due honour for labour, and the humanizing effect of this kind of labour in particular for society at large. I draw the proof of their estimation in the heroic age, first, from the manner in which they are combined under the common designation of δημοεργοὶ, and arranged in a mixed order, the preference being only given by a more emphatic description to the bard¹⁴⁷:

τῶν, οἳ δημοεργοὶ ἔασιν,
μάντιν, ἢ ἰητῆρα κακῶν, ἢ τέκτονα δούρων,
ἢ καὶ θέσπιν ἀοιδόν, ὃ κεν τέρπησιν ἀείδων;

Here I take τέκτονα δούρων to represent the entire class of artificers, of whom many are named in Homer; in a poor country like Ithaca, depending very much on the use of boats for fishing and for its communications, the carpenters might naturally represent the whole.

And next, from the manner in which these arts were practised

¹⁴⁷ Od. xvii. 383.

by princes, it seems plain that there was nothing in the pursuit of them inconsistent with high rank. The physicians, or surgeons rather, of the Greek army, Podaleirius and Machaon, were themselves princes and commanders of a contingent: and even Paris, who was not the man to demean himself by employments beneath his station, seems to have taken the chief share in the erection of his own palace¹⁴⁸:

τά ῥ' αὐτὸς ἔτευξε σὺν ἀνδράσιν, οἱ τὸτ' ἄριστοι
ἦσαν ἐνὶ Τροίῃ ἐριβόλακι τέκτονες ἄνδρες.

Again, the bard of Agamemnon was appointed quasi-guardian¹⁴⁹ to Clytemnestra in her husband's absence: and Phemius, the bard of Ulysses¹⁵⁰, proceeded to the Assembly of the Twenty-fourth Odyssey in order to prevent any tumult, together with Medon the herald, who addressed the people accordingly. The heralds, or serjeants, are also recognised as δημοεργοί¹⁵¹. Again, Alitherses, being the μάντις or seer of the island, and apparently the only one, takes part in the debates both of the Second and of the Twenty-fourth Books.

The professions, then, thus far are five:

1. Seers.

¹⁴⁸ Il. vi. 314.

¹⁴⁹ Od. iii. 267.

¹⁵⁰ Od. xvii. 263. xxiv. 439.

¹⁵¹ Od. xix. 135.

2. Surgeons.
3. Artificers.
4. Bards.
5. Heralds.

We may remark the absence of priests and merchants. Not that merchants were unknown: we find them mentioned by Euryalus the Phæacian, as πρηκτῆρες, but their business was esteemed sordid; it too much resembled that of the kidnapper or swindler, and it is the reproach of seeming to belong to this class that smartly stings Ulysses¹⁵². And even the merchant Mentès, whose form was assumed by Pallas, belonged to the Taphians, a tribe of pirates¹⁵³. As yet, neither the order of priests would seem to have been completely taken over from the Pelasgians, nor the class of merchants formed in imitation of the Phœnicians.

Slaves in the Homeric age.

After the classes we have named, come the great mass of the population, who till the ground and tend the live stock for themselves or their employers, if free, and for their lords if slaves. The fisherman, too, is distinctly noticed¹⁵⁴ in Ithaca. Mr. Grote classes with the free husbandmen the artisans¹⁵⁵, and separates both of them from the θῆτες, or hired labourers, and the slaves. It appears to me, however, that we ought to distinguish the

¹⁵² Od. viii. 161.

¹⁵³ Od. i. 183.

¹⁵⁴ Od. xxiv.

¹⁵⁵ Hist. Greece ii. p. 84.

artisans from the mere husbandmen, as having been in a higher station. On the other hand, I see no passage in Homer which clearly gives to the husbandmen as a class a condition superior to that of the hired servants, or even, perhaps, the slaves. The evidence of the poems is not clear as to the existence or extent of a peasant proprietary. We must beware of confounding those conceptions of a slavery maintained wholesale for the purposes of commerce, which our experience supplies, with its earliest form, in which the number of slaves would seem to have been small, and their ranks to have been recruited principally by war, with slight and casual aid from kidnapping. In those times, the liability to captivity would seem to have affected all men alike, independently of all distinctions whether in rank or in blood. The sons of Priam were sold into slavery like any one else: the only difference was, that, in proportion to the wealth of the parents, there was a better chance of ransom. It would appear that the slaves of Homer were properly, even when not indoor, yet domestic. The women discharged the indoor and household offices: except that a few men performed strictly personal services about their masters, as *δρηστίηρες* and as carvers¹⁵⁶ (*θεράποντε δαήμονε δαιτροσυνάων*). But the men-slaves were more largely employed out of doors in the care of flocks and herds, fields and vineyards. Thus, the slaves were in

¹⁵⁶ Od. xvi. 248, 253, also *δαιτρος*, Od. i. 141. There were likewise in Scheria nine *αἰσυμνήται*, who made arrangements for the dance. These were public officers (*δήμιοι*) and may fairly be rendered 'masters of the ceremonies.' (Od. viii. 258.)

a different position apparently from the freemen, for they seem to have been gathered as servants and attendants round the rich. It would appear, however, from the case of Eumæus, who had a slave of his own, Mesaulios¹⁵⁷, that they might hold property for themselves. Again, not Eumæus only, but in the Twenty-fourth Odyssey Dolius and his six sons, sit down to table together with Ulysses, and fondly clasp his hands. They bear arms too; and this could not have been very strange, for Homer describes the arming of the sons without remark, while he calls both the father and Laertes, on account of their old age¹⁵⁸, ἀναγκαῖοι πολεμισταί. The moral deterioration of slaves is noticed very strongly by Eumæus himself¹⁵⁹, though not with reference to himself. We have, however, no reason to suppose that their outward condition was inferior to that of the free labouring population in any thing, except that we must presume they did not take part in the assemblies or in war. When Achilles¹⁶⁰ in the infernal regions compares the highest condition there with the lowest on earth, he does not choose the slave, but the labourer for hire (θητεύμεν is his expression), as the type of a depressed condition upon earth. The state of the hired servant probably resembled that of the slave in being dependent upon others, and fell beneath it in the point of security. This is the more likely,

¹⁵⁷ Od. xiv. 449-52.

¹⁵⁸ Od. xxiv. 498.

¹⁵⁹ Od. xvii. 320-3.

¹⁶⁰ Od. xi. 489-91.

because the point of the passage turns on the poverty of the employer,

ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βιοτὸς πολὺς εἶη,

as constituting the misery of the servant.

Indeed, if we consider the matter a little further, we shall perhaps see the greater reason to think, that the expression θητεύμεν has been chosen otherwise than at random. What do we mean by a hired servant, at a period in the movement of society when money did not exist? We can only mean one who was paid by food, clothes, and lodging, like a slave, but who was not, like a slave, permanently attached to his master or his master's estate. The difference between the two would thus lie in the absence of the permanent tie: a difference much more against the θῆς, than in his favour.

The position, then, of the slaves was probably analogous to that of domestic servants among ourselves, who practically forfeit the active exercise of political privileges, but are in many respects better off than the mass of those who depend on bodily labour. It doubtless grew out of the state of things in which slaves were practically servants, and servants of the rich, that masters, or ἄνακτες¹⁶¹, were regarded as constituting the wealthy class of the community.

Supply of military service.

I stop for a moment to observe, that the view here taken of

¹⁶¹ Od. xiii. 223.

the comparatively restricted numbers and sphere of the slaves in heroic Greece may serve in some degree to answer the question, why do we not hear of them in the army of the Iliad? As men of equal blood with the Greeks themselves, they would perhaps be dangerous comrades in arms. As persons established in charge of the property of the lord, there would be a strong motive to leave them behind for its care. It is very difficult to judge how far the state of heroic Greece bore any resemblance to the feudal system of the later middle ages, and whether it did not present a more substantial correspondence with the allodial system of the earlier. We have before us a large number of independent proprietors, each bound by usage probably to render personal service, but we have nothing that resembles the obligation to bring so many retainers into the field with reference to the size of the estate. And accordingly, in the Iliad we do not find many merely personal retainers. The menial services in the tent of Achilles are performed by the women-captives, or by Patroclus in person. After Patroclus was dead, his tent was attended only by Automedon, his charioteer, and by one other warrior. Agamemnon had no other male attendants that we hear of, except his two herald-serjeants, Talthybius and Eurybates, who discharged a double function¹⁶²:

τὼ οἱ ἕσαν κήρυκε καὶ ὀτρηνῶ θεράποντε.

We may infer from the poems, that each independent

¹⁶² Il. i. 321.

family furnished one or more of its members, drawn by lot, to serve in the expedition¹⁶³. Such is the declaration of the pseudo-Myrmidon to Priam: and again, in the *Odyssey* we find Ægyptius¹⁶⁴ of Ithaca had sent one son to Troy, while he kept three at home. The inference is strengthened¹⁶⁵ by the negative evidence of the Twenty-fourth *Odyssey*. There¹⁶⁶ Dolius the slave appears with no less than six sons: but no mention is made of any member of his family as having attended Ulysses to Troy, although, if there had been such a person, some reference to him here, in the presence of Ulysses just returned, would have been most appropriate. Indeed, the six are introduced as ‘the sons’ of Dolius, which of itself almost excludes the idea of his having sent any son to the war.

Again, we see that the whole mass of the soldiery attended the assemblies, and were there addressed by kings and chiefs in terms which seemed to imply a brotherhood. They are ‘friends, Danaan heroes, satellites of Mars¹⁶⁷,’ and it is hard to suppose such words could be addressed to persons held in slavery, however mild, familiar, or favourable. The employment of these terms may suggest a comparison with our own modes of public address, according to which the word ‘Gentlemen’ would be commonly

¹⁶³ Il. xxiv. 396-400.

¹⁶⁴ Od. ii. 17.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 474.

¹⁶⁶ Od. xxiv. 387. 497.

¹⁶⁷ Il. ii. 110.

used, though the audience should be composed in great part of the humbler class. But all these words are so many proofs of that political freedom, pervading the community and the spirit of its institutions as a whole, which exacts this kind of homage from the great and wealthy on public occasions.

It was a natural and healthful sign of the state of political society, that slavery was held to be odious. But it was odious on account of its effects on the mind, and not because it entailed cruelty or oppression. There is not, I think, a single passage in the poems which in any degree conveys the impression either of hardship endured, or of resentment felt, by any slave of the period.

As to a peasant proprietary.

Neither, as has been said, is there any thing in Homer, which clearly exhibits to us a peasant-proprietary; or entitles us positively to assert that the land was cultivated to a great extent by small proprietors, each acting independently for himself. On the one hand, as has been remarked, we do not find large numbers of personal retainers and servants about the great men: but, on the other hand, Homer does not paint for us a single picture of the independent peasant. In the similes, in the legends, on the Shield of Achilles, in Ithaca, we hear much of large flocks and herds, of great proprietors, of their harvest-fields and their vineyards, but nothing of the small freeman, with property in land sufficient for his family, and no more. The rural labour, which he shows us in action, is organized on a large scale.

The question, what after all was the actual condition of the Greek people in the age of the *Troica*, is thus left in great obscurity. It is indeed at once the capital point, and the one of which history, chronicle, and poem commonly take the least notice. Upon the whole it would appear most reasonable, while abstaining from too confident assertion, to suppose,

1. That, as respected primogeniture and the disposition of landed property, society was aristocratically organized.

2. That this aristocratic organization, being founded on military occupation, embraced a rather wide range of greater and of smaller proprietors.

3. That these proprietors, by superior wealth, energy, and influence, led the remainder of the population.

4. That there may have existed a peasant-proprietary class in considerable numbers, neither excluded from political privilege nor exempt from military service, but yet not combined, under ordinary circumstances, by any community of interest or of hardship; led, not unwillingly, by the dominant Achæan race; and by no means forming a social element of such interest or attractiveness, in the view of the Poet, as to claim a marked place or vivid delineation, which it certainly has not received, on his canvass.

5. That the cultivation of the greater estates was carried on by hired labourers and by slaves, between which two classes, for that period, no very broad line of distinction can be drawn.

It is not within the scope of this work to enter largely upon the

‘political economy’ of the Homeric age. But, as being itself an important feature of polity, it cannot be altogether overlooked; and this appears to be the place for referring to it.

Political Economy of the Homeric age.

There has been, of late years, debate and research respecting the name given to the important science, which treats of the creation and distribution of wealth. The phrase ‘political economy,’ which has been established by long usage, cannot be defended on its merits. The name Chrematistic has been devised in its stead; an accurate, but perhaps rather dry definition, which does not, like the names Πολιτικὴ and Ἡθικὴ, and like the exceptionable title it is meant to displace, take the human being, who is the real subject of the science, into view. Homer has provided us beforehand with a word which, as it appears to me, retrenches the phrase ‘economy’ precisely in the point where retrenchment is required. The Ulysses of the Fourteenth Odyssey, in one of his fabulous accounts of himself as a Cretan, states¹⁶⁸,

ἔργον δέ μοι οὐ φίλον ἔσκεν
οὐδ’ οἰκωφελίη, ἥτε τρέφει ἀγλαὰ τέκνα.

And I believe that, were it not too late to change a name, ‘political œcophely’ precisely expresses the idea of the science, which, having its fountain-head in good housekeeping, treats,

¹⁶⁸ Od. xiv. 222.

when it has reached its expansion and maturity, of the ‘Wealth of Nations.’

It was not surprising, that the Greeks of the heroic age should have a name for the business of growing wealthy; for it was one to which Hellenes, as well as Pelasgians, appear to have taken kindly. Of this we find various tokens. Though the spirit of acquisition had not yet reached the point, at which it becomes injurious to the general development of man, we appear to have in the distinguished house of the Pelopids at least one isolated example of its excess. We have the friendly testimony of Nestor, as well as the fierce invective of Achilles¹⁶⁹, to show that in Agamemnon it constituted a weakness: and he is distinguished in war from the other great chieftains¹⁷⁰, by his habit of forthwith stripping those whom he had slain. But Ulysses also, to whom we may be certain that Homer did not mean in this matter to impute a fault, was, according to Eumæus¹⁷¹, richer than any twenty; and after making every allowance for friendly exaggeration, we cannot doubt that Homer meant us to understand that, in the wealth of those days, he was very opulent. The settlement from time to time of Phœnicians in Greece, and the ready docility of the Hellenes in the art of navigation, are signs to the same effect. The idea of wealth again is deeply involved in the name of ὄλβος, which appears to mean a god-given felicity: and μάκαρ is

¹⁶⁹ Il. ix. 70-73, 330-3. i. 121.

¹⁷⁰ Il. xi. 100, 110.

¹⁷¹ Od. xiv. 96-104.

the epithet in common of the gods, the rich man, and the happy man¹⁷². Not that the Greeks of those times were, in a greater degree than ourselves, the slaves of wealth, but that they spoke out in their simplicity, here, as also with other matters, what we keep in the shade; and thus they made a greater show of particular propensities, even while they had less of them in reality.

But, even more than from particular signs, I estimate the capacity of the Homeric Greeks for acquisition from the state of facts in the poems. Here we observe a remarkable temperance, and even a detestation of excess, in all the enjoyments of the senses, combined with the possession, not only of a rude abundance in meat, corn, and wine, but with the principle of ornament, largely, though inartificially, established in their greater houses and gardens; with considerable stores of the precious as well as the useful metals, and of fine raiment; and with the possession of somewhat rich works of art, both in metal and embroidery. This picture seems to belong to a stage, although a very early one, in a process of rapid advance to material wealth and prosperity. The wealth and the simplicity of manners, taken together, would seem to imply that they had not yet had time to be corrupted by it, and consequently that, by their energy and prudence, they had gathered it promptly and with ease.

The precious metals not a measure of value.

The commercial intercourse of the age, however, was still

¹⁷² The gods, Il. i. 599 *et alibi*. The rich man, Il. xi. 68. Od. i. 217. The happy man, Od. vi. 158. xi. 482. Il. iii. 182. xxiv. 377.

an intercourse of barter. There can hardly be a stronger sign of the rudeness of trading relations, than the Homeric use of the word χρεῖος. It signifies both the obligation to pay a debt regularly contracted for value received (Od. iii. 367), and the liability to sustain retaliation after an act of rapine (Il. xi. 686, 8). The possession of the precious metals was probably confined to a very few. Both these, and iron, which apparently stood next to them in value, formed prizes at the Games; in which, speaking generally, only kings and chiefs took part. A certain approximation had been made towards the use of them as money, that is, as the measure of value for other commodities. For, as they were divided into fixed quantities, those quantities were in all likelihood certified by some mark or stamp upon them. Nor do we ever find mere unwrought gold and silver estimated or priced in any other commodity. The arms of Glaucus are indeed ἑκατομβοῖα¹⁷³, and they are χρύσεια. But this means gilded or adorned with gold; an object made of gold would with Homer be παγχρύσεος. Such are the θύσανοι, the gold drops or tassels of Minerva's Ægis; each of which is worth an hundred oxen. Thus gold, when manufactured, even if not when in mass, had its value expressed in oxen¹⁷⁴.

It is possible that gold and silver may, to a limited extent, have been used as a standard, or as a medium of exchange. The payment of the judge's fee in the Eighteenth Iliad suggests,

¹⁷³ Il. vi. 236.

¹⁷⁴ Il. ii. 448, 9.

though it does not absolutely require, this supposition. Like writing in the Homeric age, like printing when it was executed from a mould among the Ancients, the practice may have existed essentially, but in a form and on a scale that deprived it of importance, by limiting its extent.

Oxen in some degree a measure of value.

The arms of Glaucus and Diomed, and the drops of Minerva's Ægis, are, as we have seen, valued or priced in oxen. The tripod, which was the first prize for the wrestlers of the Twenty-third Book, was valued at twelve oxen: the captive woman, who was the second, accomplished in works of industry, was worth four¹⁷⁵.

But Laertes gave for Euryclea no less than twenty oxen, or rather the value of twenty oxen (ἑικοσάβοια δ' ἔδωκεν, Od. i. 431). We need not ascribe the difference in costliness to the superior merit of Euryclea; but we may presume the explanation to be, that Laertes, in time of peace, paid for Euryclea the high price of an importing market; whereas the Greeks, in a state of war before Troy, had probably more captives than they knew how to feed. They were, at any rate, in the country of production: and the price was low accordingly.

When we find it said that a woman slave was estimated at four oxen, we are not enabled at once to judge from such a statement whether oxen were a measure of value, or whether the meaning simply was, that a man, who wanted such a slave, would give four

¹⁷⁵ Il. xxiii. 702-5.

oxen for her. But the case of Euryclea clears up this point. For what Laertes gave was not the twenty oxen, but something equal to them, something in return for which they could ordinarily be had. Again, Lycaon brought Achilles the value of a hundred oxen, a hundred oxen's worth¹⁷⁶. In this case, then, oxen are used as a medium for the expression of value.

In a passage of the *Odyssey*, we find that the Suitors, when they try to make terms with Ulysses in his wrath, promise as follows by the mouth of Eurymachus¹⁷⁷;

τιμὴν ἀμφὶς ἄγοντες ἔεικοσάβοιον ἕκαστος,
χαλκὸν τε χρυσὸν τ' ἀποδώσομεν, εἰσόκε σὸν κῆρ
ἰανθῆ.

This has been rendered as a double engagement to pay the oxen and the metals. It seems to me, from the construction of the passage, as if it would be more properly understood to be a declaration, that they would each of them bring him a compensation of the value of twenty oxen in gold, and in copper. If Eurymachus had meant to express the restoration of the live stock of Ulysses, it is not likely that he would have spoken of oxen only, especially in the goat-feeding and swine-feeding Ithaca.

There is another passage in the poems, which seems to carry a similar testimony one point further. When Euneus sends ships

¹⁷⁶ Il. xxi. 79.

¹⁷⁷ Od. xxii. 57-9.

with wine to the Greek camp, the Greeks pay him for his wine, some with copper, some with iron, some with hides, some with slaves, and some with oxen. Slaves, as we have seen, would probably be redundant in the camp. The same would be eminently the case with respect to hides; since they would be redundantly supplied by the animals continually slaughtered for the subsistence of the army. Even as to the metals, we need not feel surprise at the passage; for they were acquired largely by spoil, and not greatly needed by the force, since wear and tear scarcely constitute an element in the question of supply for those times. But it is certainly more startling that any of the Greeks should have sold oxen to the crews of Euneus. Neither in that age nor in this would any merchants carry away oxen from a vast and crowded camp, where they would be certain to be in the highest demand. I therefore presume the meaning to be as follows; that those particular Greeks, who happened to have more oxen than they wanted at the moment, sold them to the people of the ships; and that the people of the ships took these oxen, in exchange for wine, not intending to carry them away, but to sell them again, perhaps against hides or slaves on the spot, as the live cattle would be certain to find a ready and advantageous market among other Greeks of the army.

Oxen therefore, in that age, seem to have come nearer, than any other commodity, to the discharge of the functions now performed by the precious metals: for they were both used to express value, and probably purchased not for use only, but also

with a view to re-sale. Thus the Homeric evidence, with respect to them, is in conformity with the testimony of Æschylus in the *Agamemnon*, who seems to represent the ox as the first sign imprinted upon money¹⁷⁸.

The precious metals themselves were much employed for both personal ornament and for art. This was, no doubt, their proper and established application; and when they are stored, they are stored in common with other metals not of the same class, and with a view, in all likelihood, to manufacture.

Relative scarcity of metals.

It appears clear, from the Homeric poems, that silver was more rare than gold. It is used, when used at all, in smaller quantities: and it much more rarely appears in the accounts of stored-up wealth. A like inference may be drawn, perhaps, from the books of Moses; and it corresponds with the anticipations we should reasonably form from the fact that gold is found in a native state, and, even when mixed with other material, is more readily fitted for use. The extensive employment of silver only arrives, when society is more advanced, and when the use of money is more familiar and minute. Payments in the precious metals on a somewhat large scale precede those for smaller transactions. We are not however to infer, from the greater rarity of silver, that it was more valuable than gold: the value depending, not on the comparative quantities only, but upon the compound ratio of

¹⁷⁸ *Agam.* 37.

the quantities as compared with the demand. It would however appear from a passage in the account of the funeral games, that gold, if not silver, was then much less esteemed than it now is. For, while a silver bowl was the first prize of the foot-race, a large and fat ox (perhaps worth three ordinary ones) was the second, and a half talent of gold was only the third¹⁷⁹.

The position of iron, however, relatively to the other metals, was very different in the heroic age from what it now is: and probably its great rarity was due, like that of silver, to the difficulty of bringing the metal into a state fit for use; which could more readily be effected with copper, with tin, or with κῦανος, in whatever sense it is to be interpreted. Iron, however, would appear to have been more valuable than these metals; greatly more valuable, in particular, than copper, which is now worth from fifteen to twenty times as much as iron. A mass of crude iron is produced at the funeral games as a prize; and iron made into axe-heads forms another. No other metal, below the rank of gold and silver, is ever similarly employed in an unmanufactured state. —

Let us now turn to a brief view of the polity and organization of the army.

We perceive the organization of the Greek communities in a double form: both as a community, properly so called, in time of peace, a picture supplied by the Odyssey; and likewise as an army, according to the delineations of the Iliad.

¹⁷⁹ Il. xxiii. 740-51.

Mode of government of the army.

The differences are worth noting: but they do not seem to touch fundamental principles. Agamemnon governed the army by the ordinary political instruments, not by the rules of military discipline. Aristotle¹⁸⁰ quotes from the Iliad of his own day and place, and as proceeding from the mouth of Agamemnon, the words,

πᾶρ γὰρ ἐμοὶ θάνατος·

and Grote founds upon this citation the remark, that ‘the Alexandrian critics effaced many traces of the old manners.’ But was this really a trace of the old manners? Is there a single passage now remaining of the Iliad, a single thought, a single word, which at all corresponds with the idea that Agamemnon had in his own hands, in the shape of a defined prerogative, the power of capital punishment? Aristotle certainly accepts the passage, and contrasts this military power of Agamemnon with the restraints upon him in the peaceful sphere of the ἀγορή; but I am by no means sure that English institutions do not afford us the aid of far more powerful analogies for appreciating the real political spirit of the Homeric poems, than any that even Aristotle could draw in his own day from the orientalizing government of Alexander. I do not, however, so much question the passage, as the construction put upon it. The prerogatives of the Greek kings were founded in general duty and feeling, not in law. When

¹⁸⁰ Pol. iii. 14. 5.

Ulysses belaboured Thersites, it was not in the exercise of a determinate right, but in obedience to the dictates of general prudence, which, upon a high emergency, the general sense approved. Doubtless, if Agamemnon had caught a runaway from the ranks, he might have slain him; but is it supposed that Ulysses might not? What was the meaning of the advice of Nestor, to put the poltroons in the middle of the ranks, but that their comrades about them should spear them if they should try to run? There is no criminal justice, in the proper sense of the term, though there is civil justice, in either of the Homeric poems; the wrongs of man to man are adjusted or requited by the latter form of remedy, but the ideas on which the former rests were unknown: there is no king's peace, more than there is a king's highway: the sanctions of force are added upon occasion to the general authority of office by those who bear it, according to the suggestions of their common sense. Had it been otherwise, Ulysses would never have put the wretched women in his household, who could not, like the Suitors their paramours, be politically formidable, to a death, which fully entitled him to say with the Agamemnon of the citation, πὰρ γὰρ ἐμοὶ θάνατος. The general reverence for rank and station, the safeguard of publicity, and the influence of persuasion, are the usual and sufficient instruments for governing the army, even as they governed the civil societies of Greece. In the Assembly of the army, the quarrel with Achilles takes place: in the Assembly arises the tumultuary impulse to return home: in the Assembly, that impulse having been checked, it is

deliberately resolved to see what they can do by fighting: in the Assembly it is determined to ask a truce for burials, and to erect the rampart: in the nocturnal Assembly that Council is appointed to sit, which sends the abortive mission to Achilles. Every great measure affecting the whole body is, as we shall find, adopted in the Assembly: and, finally, it is here that Agamemnon explicitly confesses and laments his fault, and that the reconciliation with Achilles is ratified.

We may therefore take the polity, so to speak, of the Greek army into a common view with that of the Ithacan ἀγορή; but first it will be well to sketch its military organization.

Its military composition.

Next to the βασιλῆες came the ἔξοχοι ἄνδρες (Il. ii. 188), or ἀριστῆες, of the Greek army. They are pretty clearly distinguished from the kings in the speech of Achilles (ix. 334); when, after describing the niggardliness of Agamemnon with respect to booty, he goes on to say, which I understand to mean, he gave to these two classes prizes different, i. e. proportioned to their respective stations.

ἄλλα δ' ἀριστήεσσι δίδου γέρα καὶ βασιλεῦσιν

The language of the Catalogue pointedly marks the same distinction in other words. At the beginning, the Poet invites the Muses to tell him (ver. 487),

οἵτινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν,

and at the close he says (ver. 760),

οὔτοι ἄρ' ἠγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν.

These two verses appear to be in evident correspondence with each other: and if so, we may the more confidently rely on the language as carefully chosen to describe the two classes, first the kings as κοίρανοι (cf. Il. ii. 204, 207), and, secondly, the ἀριστῆες as ἠγεμόνες.

This class, it is probable, consisted,

First, of the leaders of the minor and less significant contingents.

Secondly, of lieutenants, or those who are named in the Catalogue as holding inferior commands under the great leaders (such as Meriones, Sthenelus, and Euryalus).

But, below the ἠγεμόνες of the Catalogue, there would appear to have been several grades of minor officers, in command of smaller subdivisions of the army. These would seem to have been described by a general name, ἠγεμόνες. When Nestor (ii. 362) advises the distribution of the army according to φῦλα and φρήτραι, it will, he says, have the advantage of showing not only which of the soldiers, but which of the officers were good, and which bad. Probably therefore there were officers of each φῦλον, if not even, under these, of each φρήτρη.

Of the Greeks nine are named in Il. xi. 301-3, who were slain by Hector at once, before he went among the privates (πληθύς). Of these nine no one is mentioned in any other part of the poem; and since at the same time they are expressly declared to be ἠγεμόνες, we may safely look upon them as examples

of the class of minor or secondary officers. From their names, which have a strong Hellenic colour¹⁸¹, we may venture at least to conjecture, that this class was chiefly Achæan, or of Achæan rank, and that the Pelasgian blood of the army was principally among the common soldiers.

The maritime order of the armament, which required a commander for each vessel, necessarily involved the existence of a class of what we may call subaltern officers.

When Helen describes the chieftains to Priam from the tower, of whom Idomeneus is one, she proceeds (Il. iii. 231);

ἀμφὶ δέ μιν Κρητῶν ἀγοὶ ἡγερέθονται.

Again, when Achilles went with fifty ships to Troy, he divided his 2500 men under five ἡγεμόνες, whom he appointed to give the word of command (σημαίνειν) under him. The force thus arranged formed five στίχες or ranks, Il. xvi. 168-72: and here the private persons are expressly called ἑταῖροι (ver. 170). Most probably these ἀγοὶ of the Cretans, and these five Myrmidon leaders, are to be considered as belonging to a class below the ἀριστῆες, yet above the subalterns.

Lastly, we have to notice the privates, so to speak, of the Greek army, who are called by the several names of λαὸς (Il. ii. 191. i. 54), δῆμος (ii. 198), and πληθὺς (ii. 278).

In their military character they are indeed a mass of atoms, undistinguishable from one another, but yet distinguished

¹⁸¹ Vid. Achæis or Ethnology, p. 574.

by their silence and order, which was founded probably on confidence in their leaders.

The descriptions of fighting men.

No private or nameless¹⁸² person of the Greek army, however, on any occasion performs any feat, either great or small: these are always achieved by the men of birth and station: and the three designations we have mentioned, the only ones which are used to designate the whole mass of the soldiery, represent them to us as a community bearing arms, rather than as an army in any sense that is technical or professional.

All these were entitled to attend the ἀγορῆ, or Assembly, if they pleased. And accordingly, on the first Assembly that Achilles attended after renouncing his wrath, we find that, from the great interest of the occasion, even those persons were present who did not usually appear: namely, the pilots of the ships, and others who probably had charge of them while ashore, together with those who managed the provisioning of the force (ταμίαι), or, in our language, the commissariat (Il. xix. 42-5).

In their strictly military capacity they were, however, divided into

1. ἵππῆες, who fought in chariots, commonly (Il. xxiii. 334-40) with two horses. When there were three (xvi. 467-75), the outrunner was called παρήγορος. The chariot of Hector was drawn by four horses (viii. 185), but we have no such case among

¹⁸² Even the instance, in Il. xiii. 211, of a nameless person who had simply been wounded is a rare, if not indeed the single, exception.

the Greeks. Two persons went in each chariot; of whom the inferior (ἡνίοχος) drove, and the superior (παρέβασκε) stood by him free to fight. But probably none of these ἱππῆες were of the mere πληθὺς of the army, or common soldiery.

2. ἀσπισταί, the heavy-armed, of the σταδίη ὑσμίνη. These use the longer spear, the axe, the sword, or the stone.

3. ἀκοντίσται, using the lighter spear (Il. xv. 709. xxiii. 622. Od. xviii. 261).

4. τοξόται (Il. ii. 720. iii. 79).

Again, the men are distinguished by epithets according to merit; each being ἔξοχος, μεσῆεις, or χειριότερος (Il. xii. 269), or even κακός; and with the last-named the precaution is taken to place them in the midst of their comrades.

The policy of Nestor, which recommended the muster of the whole army, with a view to stronger mutual support among those who had peculiar ties, was entirely in harmony with what we meet elsewhere in the poems. For instance, in the defence of the rampart in the Thirteenth Book, we find Bœotians, Athenians, and Locrians¹⁸³, who were neighbours, all mentioned as fighting side by side.

All ranks apparently went to the Assemblies as freemen, and were treated there by their superiors with respect. It was not those of the common sort in general, but only such as were clamorous for the tumultuary breaking up of the Assembly, that Ulysses went so far as to hit (ἐλάσασκε) with the staff he bore, the

¹⁸³ Il. xiii. 685.

supreme sceptre of Agamemnon. In addressing them he used the word δαϊμόνιε, the same word which he employed to their superiors, the kings and chiefs (Il. ii. 190, 200). When they heard a speech that they approved of, they habitually and immediately shouted in applause¹⁸⁴,

Ἄργεῖοι δὲ μέγ' ἴαχον ...
μῦθον ἐπαινήσαντες Ὀδυσσῆος θείοιο·

and they commented freely among themselves on what occurred (Il. ii. 271 and elsewhere).

The modes of warfare in the heroic age were very simple: the open battle was a battle of main force, as regarded both the chieftains and the men, relieved from time to time by a sprinkling of panics. But besides the battle, there was another and a more distinguished mode of fighting: that of the λόχος or ambuscade. And the different estimate of the two, which reverses the popular view, is eminently illustrative of the Greek character.

The λόχος or ambuscade.

In that epitome of human life, which Homer has presented to us on the Shield of Achilles, martial operations are of course included. The collective life of man is represented by two cities, one for peace and the other for war. Two armies appear beneath the walls of the latter; and one of these takes its post in an

¹⁸⁴ Il. ii. 333.

ambush¹⁸⁵. Whenever persons were to be appointed out of an army for this duty, the noblest and bravest were chosen. Hence Achilles launches the double reproach against Agamemnon, that he has never had spirit enough to arm either with the soldiery at large for battle, or with the chiefs and prime warriors for ambuscade¹⁸⁶. And the reason why the ambuscade stood thus high as the duty and the privilege of the best, is explained in an admirable speech of Idomeneus. It is simply because it involves a higher trial, through the patience it requires, of moral as opposed to animal courage.

The Cretan leader supposes the case to have occurred, when all the flower of the army are picked for an ambush. 'There,' he says, 'is the true criterion of valour;

ἔνθα μάλιστα ἀρετὴ διαίδεται ἀνδρῶν·

and there it soon appears who is the hero, and who the coward; for the flesh of the poltroon turns to one colour and another, nor can he settle his mind so as to sit quiet, for his knees yield under him, and he shifts from resting on one foot to resting on the other; his heart is fluttering in his breast, and his teeth chatter, as he gives himself up for lost: but the brave man, from the moment when he takes his place in the ambush, neither changes colour, nor is over nervous; but only prays that the time may soon come

¹⁸⁵ Il. xviii. 509, 13, 20.

¹⁸⁶ Il. i. 226.

for him to mingle in the fearful fight¹⁸⁷.' Then he goes on to commend Meriones as one suited for such a trial.

In exact conformity with what we should expect from these descriptions, it appears that Ulysses was the warrior who was preeminent in the λόχος, while Achilles towered so immeasurably above all others in the field. When the Greeks were concealed in the cavity of the Horse, and Helen came down from the city imitating the voices of their wives, Menelaus and Diomed were on the point of either going forth, or answering; but Ulysses restrained them. One Anticlos was still unwilling to be silent; and Ulysses, resolutely gagging him with his hand, 'saved the lives of all the Achæans¹⁸⁸.' In all this we again see how the poems of Homer are, like the Shield, an epitome of life. All the points of capital and paramount excellence, for which he could find no place in the hero of the one poem, he has fully represented in the hero of the other; and he has so exhausted, between the two, the resources of our nature, and likewise its appliances as they were then understood, that, had he produced yet a third Epic, not even he could have furnished a third protagonist to form its centre, who should have been worthy to count with Achilles and Ulysses among the undying ideals of human greatness.

We have now considered the Greek community of the heroic age, as it was divided in time of peace into classes, and as in time

¹⁸⁷ Il. xiii. 276-86.

¹⁸⁸ Od. iv. 277-88.

of war it resolved all its more potent and energetic elements into the form of a military order.

We have also examined the position and functions of the king; who was at once a person, a class, and a great political institution. It remains to consider two other political institutions of heroic Greece, which not only, with the king, made up the whole machinery both of civil and military administration for that period, but likewise supplied the essential germ, at least, of that form of constitution, on which the best governments of the continent of Europe have, two of them within the last quarter of a century, been modelled, with such deviations as experience has recommended, or the change of times has required. I mean the form of government by a threefold legislative body, having for one of its members, and for its head, a single person, in whose hands the executive power of the state is lodged. This form has been eminently favoured in Christendom, in Europe, and in England; and it has even survived the passage of the Atlantic, and the transition, in the United States of America, to institutions which are not only republican, but highly democratic.

The Greek Βουλὴ or Council.

Of these two Greek institutions, we will examine first the βουλὴ, or Council.

It was the usage of the Greeks to consider, in a small preliminary meeting of principal persons, which was called the βουλὴ, of the measures to be taken in managing the Assembly, or ἀγορὴ.

To the persons, who were summoned thither, the name of γέροντες appears to have been officially applied. It had thus become dissociated from the idea of age, its original signification: for Nestor was the only old man among the Greek senators. Idomeneus, indeed, was near upon old age: Ulysses was elderly (ὠμογέρων¹⁸⁹), apparently not under fifty. The majority would seem to have been rather under middle life; so that γέρων was, when thus employed, a title, not a description. The βουλή was composed of the men of greatest rank and weight; and no more required an advanced age among the qualifications for it, than does the presbyterate of the Christian Church, though it too signifies eldership.

Before the great assembly of the Second Book, we are told, not that Agamemnon thought it would be well, as it were for the nonce, to consult the kings or seniors of the expedition; but, in language which indicates a fixed practice, that the choice of the place for the meeting was on this occasion by the ship of Nestor, whose great age possibly either made nearness convenient, or entitled him to this mark of honour:

βουλή δὲ πρῶτον μεγαθύμων ἴξε γερόντων
Νεστορέη παρὰ νηϊ Πυλαιγενέος βασιλῆος. II. ii. 53.

These γέροντες were summoned¹⁹⁰ again by Agamemnon

¹⁸⁹ II. xxiii. 791.

¹⁹⁰ II. ii. 408-9.

before the sacrifice of the Second Book, which preceded the enumeration. On this occasion they are not called a βουλή; probably because they were not called for consultation.

The Council meets again in the Ninth Book¹⁹¹, by appointment of the Assembly, and sends the mission to Achilles¹⁹². In the same night, and perhaps under the same authority, the expedition of Ulysses and Diomed is arranged.

There is no βουλή indeed in the First Book, and none in the great Assembly of the Nineteenth: but then both of these were summoned by Achilles, not by Agamemnon, and neither of them were called for properly deliberative purposes¹⁹³.

Again, Ulysses, in urging the Greeks not to quit the assembly of the Second Book prematurely, reminds them that they ought to know fully the views of Agamemnon, and that they have not all had the advantage of learning those views in the βουλή.

In the Seventh Book, the Council held under the roof of Agamemnon forms the plan for a pause to bury the dead, and erect the rampart. Accordingly, when just afterwards a herald arrives with a proposal from Troy, he finds the Greeks in their Assembly, doubtless an Assembly held to sanction the project of the kings. That this amounted to an institution of the Greeks, we may further judge from the familiar manner, in which Nestor mentions it in the Odyssey to Telemachus, on seeing him for the

¹⁹¹ Il. ix. 10. 89.

¹⁹² Il. x. 195.

¹⁹³ Il. i. 54. xix. 41.

first time, (Od. iii. 127). 'Ulysses and I,' he says, 'never differed: οὔτε ποτ' εἰν ἀγορῇ δίχ' ἐβάζομεν, οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ¹⁹⁴.

Among other causes, which might tend to promote the establishment of the Greek βουλή or Council, we may perhaps reckon with propriety the inability of the old to discharge the full duties of sovereignty in the heroic age. Bodily force usually undergoes a certain amount of decay, before the mind has passed out of its ripeness; and both kings and subordinate lords, who had ceased to possess the strength that was requisite for bearing the principal burdens of government, might still make their experience available for the public good in the Council; even as we find that in Troas the brothers of Priam, with others advanced in life, were the principal advisers of the Assembly¹⁹⁵.

The βουλή in time of peace.

I admit that we have no example to give of the use of the βουλή by the Greeks during peace, so precise as those which the Iliad supplies for time of war. But even in war we do not find it except before Assemblies, which had deliberative business to transact. Now the only deliberative Greek ἀγορῆ which we meet with in time of peace is that of the Twenty-fourth Odyssey. The absence of a sovereign and a government in Ithaca at that time, and the utter discord of the principal persons, made a Council quite impossible, and left no measure open except a direct appeal

¹⁹⁴ Il. vii. 344, 382.

¹⁹⁵ Il. iii. 146-53.

to the people.

It appears however clear, that the action of the βουλή was not confined to war. For we not only find the γέροντες on the Shield¹⁹⁶, who sit in the ἀγορῆ, exercising exclusively the office of judges, but they are also distinctly noticed as a class or order¹⁹⁷ in the Ithacan Assembly, who had a place in it set apart for themselves. Nor are we without a proof which, though conveyed in few words, is complete, of the conjunction of the Council with the sovereign in acts of government. For when Ulysses in his youth undertook the mission to Messene, in the matter of the sheep that had been carried off from Ithaca, he did it under the orders of Laertes, together with his council¹⁹⁸:

πρὸ γὰρ ἦκε πατήρ ἄλλοι τε γέροντες.

And Nausicaa meets her father Alcinous, on his way to the βουλή of the Phæacians.

Upon the whole, the βουλή seems to have been a most important auxiliary instrument of government; sometimes as preparing materials for the more public deliberations of the Assembly, sometimes intrusted, as a kind of executive committee, with its confidence; always as supplying the Assemblies with an intellectual and authoritative element, in a concentrated form, which might give steadiness to its tone,

¹⁹⁶ Il. xviii. 506.

¹⁹⁷ Od. ii. 14.

¹⁹⁸ Od. xxi. 21.

and advise its course with a weight adequate to so important a function.

Opposition in the βουλή.

The individuals who composed this Council were of such a station that, when they acted separately, King Agamemnon himself might have to encounter resistance and reproof from them in various instances. Accordingly, upon the occasion when Agamemnon made a survey of the army, and when he thought fit to rebuke Ulysses for slackness, that chieftain remonstrated with him something more than freely (ὑποδρᾶ ἰδὼν) both in voice and manner. So far from trusting to his authority, Agamemnon made a soothing and even an apologetic reply¹⁹⁹. Again, when on the same occasion he reprovved Diomed²⁰⁰, Sthenelus defended his immediate Chief in vainglorious terms. These the more refined nature of Diomed himself induced him at once to disclaim, but they do not appear to have been considered as involving any thing in the nature of an offence against the station of Agamemnon. Again, though Diomed on this occasion restrained his lieutenant, yet, when he meets Agamemnon in the Assembly of the Ninth Book, he frankly tells him that Jupiter, who has given him the honours of the sceptre, has not endowed him with the superior power that springs from determined

¹⁹⁹ Il. iv. 329-63.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 385-418.

courage²⁰¹; and even the passionate invectives of Achilles in the First Book bear a similar testimony, because they do not appear to have been treated as constituting any infringement of his duty.

In the βουλή²⁰², Nestor takes the lead more than Agamemnon. As to the Assembly, the whole plan in the Second Iliad is expressly founded upon the supposition, that the army was accustomed to hear the chiefs argue against, and even overthrow, the proposals of Agamemnon. His advice that they should return home, which Grote²⁰³ considers only an unaccountable fancy and a childish freak, is however capable of being regarded in this view, that, before renewing active operations without Achilles, it was thought wise to test the feeling of the army, and that it could not be more effectually tried than by a recommendation from the commander-in-chief that they should re-embark for Greece. The plan was over-refined; and it may even seem ridiculous, because it failed, and simply kindled an ungovernable passion, which would not listen to debate. But the proposal does not bear that character in the Ninth Book, where the same suggestion is renewed, without the previous knowledge of the chiefs, in the same words, and at a time when the Greeks were in far worse condition.

When Agamemnon made it in order to be overruled it took effect: when he made it in good earnest, it failed. If then the

²⁰¹ Il. ix. 37.

²⁰² Cf. Od. xi. 512.

²⁰³ Hist. of Greece, vol. ii. 95, 97.

Greeks could be retained contrary to his wish in the Ninth Book, it might be misjudged, but could hardly be absurd, to expect a similar result in the Second, when they had less cause for discouragement.

And why did it take effect? Simply because the Assembly, instead of being the simple medium²⁰⁴ through which the king acted, was the arena on which either the will of the people might find a rude and tumultuary vent, or, on the other hand, his royal companions in arms could say, as Diomed says, ‘I will use my right and resist your foolish project in debate; which you ought not to resent.’

Ἄτρείδη, σοὶ πρῶτα μαχήσομαι ἀφραδέοντι,
ἦ θέμις ἐστίν, ἄναξ, ἀγορῆ· σὺ δὲ μή τι χολωθῆς.

The proposal of Agamemnon had been heard in silence²⁰⁵, the mode by which the army indicated its disinclination or its doubt. But the counter proposal of Diomed, to fight to the last, was hailed with acclamation²⁰⁶;

οἱ δ’ ἄρα πάντες ἐπίαχον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν,
μῦθον ἀγασσάμενοι Διομήδεος ἱπποδάμοιο·

so that the Assembly was then ripe for the plan of Nestor,

²⁰⁴ Grote ii. 104.

²⁰⁵ II. ix. 30.

²⁰⁶ Ibid. 50.

which at once received its approval²⁰⁷:

ὡς ἔφαθ'· οἱ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον, ἦ δ' ἐπίθοντο.

Subsequently, in the βουλή of the same Book, Nestor tells Agamemnon that it is his duty to listen as well as to speak, and to adopt the plans of others when they are good (100-2). At the same time, the aged chieftain appears to submit himself to the judgment of Agamemnon in the Council²⁰⁸. His expressions are perhaps matter more of compliment than of business; and at any rate we do not find any like terms used in the Assembly.

It was a happy characteristic of heroic Greece, that while she abounded in true shame, she had no false shame. It was not thought that a king, who had done wrong, compromised his dignity by atonement; but, on the contrary, that he recovered it. So says Ulysses, in the Assembly of the Nineteenth Iliad²⁰⁹;

οὐ μὲν γάρ τι νεμεσσητὸν βασιλῆα
ἄνδρ' ἀπαρέσσασθαι, ὅτε τις πρότερος χαλεπήνη.

This passage at once establishes in the most pointed manner both the right to chide the head of the army, and the obligation incumbent on him, as on others, where he had given offence to make amends.

Thus then a large liberty of speech and judgment on the part

²⁰⁷ Il. ix. 79.

²⁰⁸ Ibid. 97.

²⁰⁹ Il. xix. 182.

of the kings or chiefs, when they differed from Agamemnon, would appear to be established beyond dispute, a liberty which in certain cases resulted in his being summarily overruled. I cannot therefore here subscribe even to the measured statement of Mure, who, admits the liberty of remonstrance, but asserts also the sovereignty of the will of Agamemnon. Much less to the very broad assertions of Grote, that the resolutions of Agamemnon appear uniformly to prevail in the Council, and that the nullity of positive function is still more striking in the Agorè²¹⁰.

To that institution it is now time for us to turn.

Influence of Speech.

The trait which is truly most worthy of note in the politics of Homeric Greece, is also that which is so peculiar to them; namely, the substantive weight and influence which belonged to speech as an instrument of government; and of this power by much the most remarkable development is in its less confined and more popular application to the Assembly.

This power of speech was essentially a power to be exercised over numbers, and with the safeguards of publicity, by man among his fellow-men. It was also essentially an instrument addressing itself to reason and free will, and acknowledging their authority. No government which sought its power in force, as opposed to reason, has at any time used this form of deception. The world has seen absolutism deck itself with the titles and mere

²¹⁰ Grote's Hist. vol. ii. pp. 90, 2.

forms of freedom, or seek shelter under its naked abstractions: but from the exercise of free speech as an instrument of state, it has always shrunk with an instinctive horror.

One mode of proving the power of speech in the heroic age is, by showing what place it occupied in the thoughts of men, as they are to be gathered from their language. Another mode is, by pointing to its connection, in practical examples, with this or that course of action, adopted or shunned. A third is, by giving evidence of the earnestness with which the art was prosecuted, and the depth and comprehensiveness of the conceptions from which it derived its form.

We shall presently trace the course of public affairs, as they were managed by the Greeks of the heroic age in their public assemblies. For the present, let us endeavour to collect the true sense of Homer respecting oratory from his language concerning it, from the characters with whom he has particularly connected it, and from the knowledge which he may be found to have possessed of its resources.

Although it is common to regard the Iliad as a poem having battle for its theme, yet it is in truth not less a monument of policy than of war; and in this respect it is even more broadly distinguished, than in most others, from later epics.

The adjectives in Homer are in very many cases the key to his inner mind: and among them all there is none of which this is more true, than the grand epithet *κυδιάνειρα*. He confines it strictly to two subjects, battle and debate, the clash of swords and

the wrestling of minds. Of Achilles, he says in the First Book²¹¹,
(490)

οὔτε ποτ' εἰς ἀγορὴν πωλέσκετο κυδιάνειραν,
οὔτε ποτ' ἐς πόλεμον.

In every other passage where he employs the word, it is attached to the substantive μάχη. Thus with him it was in two fields, that man was to seek for glory; partly in the fight, and partly in the Assembly.

The intellectual function was no less essential to the warrior-king of Homer, than was the martial; and the culture of the art of persuasion entered no less deeply into his early training. How, says Phoenix to Achilles, shall I leave you, I, whom your father attached to you when you were a mere child, without knowledge of the evenhanded battle, or of the assemblies, in which men attain to fame,

οὔπω εἰδόθ' ὁμοίου πολέμοιο
οὐτ' ἀγορέων, ἵνα τ' ἄνδρες ἀριπρέπεες τελέθουσιν.

So he sent me to teach you the arts both of speech and fight²¹²,
μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι, πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων.

²¹¹ He uses the epithet for battle in II. iv. 225, 6. 124, 7. 113, 8. 448, 12. 325, 13. 270, 14. 155, and 24. 391.

²¹² II. ix. 438-43.

Even so Ulysses, in the under-world, relates to Achilles the greatness of Neoptolemus in speech, not less than in battle, (Od. xi. 510-16.)

Nay, the ἀγορὴ of little Ithaca, where there had been no Assembly for twenty years, is with Homer the ἀγορὴ πολύφημος²¹³. In a description, if possible yet more striking than that of Phœnix, Homer places before us the orator at his work. 'His hearers behold him with delight; he speaks with tempered modesty, yet with confidence in himself (ἀσφαλέως); he stands preeminent among the assembled people, and while he passes through the city, they gaze on him as on a god²¹⁴. From a passage like this we may form some idea, what a real power in human society was the orator of the heroic age; and we may also learn how and why it was, that the great Bard of that time has also placed himself in the foremost rank of oratory for all time.

It is in the very same spirit that Ulysses, in the same most remarkable speech given in the *Odyssey*²¹⁵, sets forth the different accomplishments by which human nature is adorned. The three great gifts of the gods to man are, first, corporeal beauty, strength and bearing, all included in the word φύη; secondly, judgment or good sense (φρένες), and thirdly, the power of discourse, or ἀγορητύς. To one man, the great gift last named is the compensation for the want of corporeal excellence.

²¹³ Od. ii. 150.

²¹⁴ Od. viii. 170-3.

²¹⁵ Od. viii. 166-85.

To another is given beauty like that of the Immortals; but then his comeliness is not crowned by eloquence: ἀλλ' οὐ οἱ χάρις ἀμφιπεριστέφεται ἐπέεσσιν. For χάρις in Od. xi. 367 we have μορφὴ ἐπέων.

Varied descriptions of Oratory.

In full conformity with this strongly developed idea, the Poet places before us the descriptions of a variety of speakers. There is Thersites²¹⁶, copious and offensive, to whom we must return. There is Telemachus, full of the gracious diffidence of youth²¹⁷, but commended by Nestor for a power and a tact of expression beyond his years. There is Menelaus, who speaks with a laconic ease²¹⁸. There are the Trojan elders, or δημογέροντες, who from their experience and age chiefly guide the Assembly, and whose volubility and shrill small thread of voice²¹⁹ Homer compares to the chirping of grasshoppers. Then we have Nestor the soft and silvery, whose tones of happy and benevolent egotism flowed sweeter than a stream of honey²²⁰. In the hands of an inferior artist, Phoenix must have reproduced him; but an absorbing affection for Achilles is the key-note to all he says; even the account in his speech of his own early adventures is evidently meant as a warning on the effects of rage: this intense earnestness

²¹⁶ Il. ii. 212.

²¹⁷ Od. iii. 23, 124.

²¹⁸ Il. iii. 213.

²¹⁹ Il. iii. 150.

²²⁰ Il. i. 248.

completely prevents any thing like sameness, and thus the two garrulities stand perfectly distinct from one another, because they have (so to speak) different centres of gravity. Lastly, we have Ulysses, who, wont to rise with his energies concentrated within him, gives no promise of display: but when his deep voice issues from his chest, and his mighty words drive like the flakes of snow in winter²²¹, then indeed he soars away far above all competitors.

It is very unusual for Homer to indulge thus largely in careful and detailed description. And even here he has left the one superlative, as well as other considerable, orators, undescribed. The eloquence of Achilles is left to describe itself; and to challenge comparison with all the choicest patterns both of power and beauty in this kind, that three thousand years since Homer, and all their ebbing and flowing tides, have brought within the knowledge of man. Although he modestly describes himself as beneath Ulysses in this accomplishment, yet in truth no speeches come near to his. But Homer's resources are not even now exhausted. The decision of Diomed, the irresolution of Agamemnon, the bluntness of Ajax, are all admirably marked in the series of speeches allotted to each. Indeed Homer has put into the mouth of Idomeneus, whom he nowhere describes as an orator at all, a speech which is quite enough to establish his reputation in that capacity. (Il. xiii. 275-94.)

In reviewing the arrangements Homer has made, we shall find one feature alike unequivocal and decisive. The two persons, to

²²¹ Il. iii. 216, 23.

whom he has given supremacy in oratory, are his two, his only two godlike heroes (θεῖοι), the Achilles and the Ulysses, each of whom bears up, like the Atlas of tradition, the weight of the epic to which he principally belongs.

How could Homer have conceived thoughts like these, if government in his eyes had rested upon either force or fraud? Moreover, when he speaks of persuasion and of strength or valour, of the action of the tongue and that of the hand, he clearly does not mean that these elements are mixed in the ordinary conduct of a sovereign to his subjects: he means the first for peace, the latter for war; the first to be his sole instrument for governing his own people, the latter for their enemies alone.

If, again, we endeavour to estimate the importance of Speech in the heroic age by the degree in which the faculty was actually cultivated, we must take the achievements of the Poet as the best indicators of the capacities of the age. The speeches which Homer has put into the mouths of his leading orators should be tolerably fair representatives of the best performances of the time. Nor is it possible that in any age there should be in a few a capacity for making such speeches, without a capacity in many for receiving, feeling, and comprehending them. Poets of modern times have composed great works, in ages that stopped their ears against them. 'Paradise Lost' does not represent the time of Charles the Second, nor the 'Excursion' the first decades of the present century. The case of the orator is entirely different. His work, from its very inception, is inextricably mixed up with

practice. It is cast in the mould offered to him by the mind of his hearers. It is an influence principally received from his audience (so to speak) in vapour, which he pours back upon them in a flood. The sympathy and concurrence of his time is with his own mind joint parent of his work. He cannot follow nor frame ideals, his choice is, to be what his age will have him, what it requires in order to be moved by him, or else not to be at all. And as when we find the speeches in Homer, we know that there must have been men who could speak them, so, from the existence of units who could speak them, we know that there must have been crowds who could feel them.

The orations of the Poems.

Now if we examine those orations, we shall, I think, find not only that they contain specimens of transcendent eloquence which have never been surpassed, but likewise that they evince the most comprehensive knowledge, and the most varied and elastic use, of all the resources of the art. If we seek a specimen of invective, let us take the speeches of Achilles in the debate of the First Iliad. If it is the loftiest tone of terrible declamation that we desire, I know not where (to speak with moderation) we can find any thing that in grandeur can surpass the passage (Il. xvi. 74-9) beginning,

οὐ γὰρ Τυδειδέω Διομήδεος ἐν παλάμησιν
μαίνεται ἐγχείη, κ. τ. λ.

But if it is solemnity that is sought, nothing can, I think, excel the $\nu\alpha\iota \mu\acute{\alpha} \tau\acute{o}\delta\epsilon \sigma\kappa\eta\pi\tau\rho\nu$. (II. i. 233-44.)

What more admirable example of comprehensive statement, which exhausts the case, and absolutely shuts up the mouth of the adversary, than in the speech of Ulysses to Euryalus, who has reproached him with looking like a sharper? That speech consists of twenty lines: and I think any one who attempts to give a really accurate summary of it will be apt to find that his epitome, if it be at all complete, has become unawares a paraphrase. Nor is Homer less successful in showing us, how he has sounded the depths of pathos. For though the speeches of Priam to Achilles in the Twenty-fourth Iliad are spoken privately, and from man to man only, and are therefore not in the nature of oratory properly so called, they are conclusive, *a fortiori*, as to his knowledge of the instruments by which the human affections might be moved so much more easily, when the speaker would be assisted at once by the friendliness and by the electric sympathies of a multitude.

Repartee and Sarcasm.

All these are direct instruments of influence on the mind and actions of man. But of assaults in flank Homer is quite as great a master. He shows a peculiar genius for that which is properly called repartee; for that form of speech, which flings back upon the opponent the stroke of his own weapon, or on the supplicant the plea of his own prayer. There was one Antimachus, a Trojan, who had grown wealthy, probably by the bribes which he received from Paris in consideration of his

always opposing, in the Trojan Agorè, the restoration of Helen to the Greeks. His sons are mastered by Agamemnon in the field. Aware that he had a thirst for money, they cry, 'Quarter, Agamemnon! we are the sons of rich Antimachus: *he* will pay well for our lives.' 'If,' replies the king, 'you are the sons of that Antimachus, who, when Menelaus came as envoy to Troy, advised to take and slay him, here and now shall ye expiate your father's infamy²²².' Compare with this the yet sharper turn of Ulysses on Leiodes in the *Odyssey*: 'Spare me, Ulysses! I have done no ill in your halls; I stopped what ill I could; I was but Augur to the Suitors.' Then follows the stern reply. 'If thou dost avow that thou art Augur to the Suitors, then often in prayer must thou have augured my destruction, and desired my wife for thine own; wherefore thou shalt not escape the painsome bed of death²²³.'

But the weapons of sarcasm, from the lightest to the weightiest, are wielded by Homer with almost greater effect than any others. As a sample of the former, I take the speech of Phœnix when he introduces, by way of parable, the Legend of Meleager. 'As long as Meleager fought, all was well; but when rage took possession of him – which (I would just observe) now and then bewilders other great minds also – then,' and so onward.

But for the great master of this art, Homer has chosen Achilles. As with his invectives he grinds to powder, so with the

²²² Il. xi. 122-42.

²²³ Od. xxii. 310-25.

razor edge of the most refined irony he cuts his way in a moment to the quick. When Greece, in the person of the envoy-kings, is at his feet, and he has spurned them away, he says, ‘No: I will go home: you can come and see me depart – if you think it worth your while.’

ὄψεται, ἦν ἐθέλησθα, καὶ αἶ κέν τοι τὰ μεμήλη.

Of this passage, Il. ix. 356-64, the following translation may give a very imperfect idea²²⁴:

Of fight with Hector will I none;
Tomorrow, with the rising sun,
Each holy rite and office done,
I load and launch my Phthian fleet;
Come, if thou thinkest meet,
See, if thou carest for the sight,
My ships shall bound in the morning's light,
My rowers row with eager might,
O'er Helle's teeming main.
And, if Poseidon give his grace,
Then, with but three revolving days,
I see my home again;
My home of plenty, that I left

²²⁴ The version of Voss is very accurate, but, I think, lifeless. The version of Cowper is at this point not satisfactory: he weakens, by exaggerating, the delicate expression μεμήλη: Look thou forth at early dawn, And, if such spectacle delight thee aught, Thou shalt behold me cleaving with my prows, &c. The version of Pope simply omits the line! Tomorrow we the favouring gods implore: Then shall you see our parting vessels crowned, And hear with oars the Hellespont resound.

To fight with Troy; of sense bereft!

The plenty of his house (ἔστι δέ μοι μάλα πολλὰ) is the finishing stroke of reply on Agamemnon, who had thought that his resentment, unsatisfied in feeling, could be appeased with gifts.

In the same speech occurs the piercing sarcasm²²⁵:

ἦ μοῦνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
Ἄτρειδαι;

The Greeks had come to Troy to recover the wife of Menelaus: and while they were there, Agamemnon took for a concubine the intended wife of Achilles. Was it, he asks, the privilege of the sons of Atreus alone among mankind to love their wives? Agamemnon, too, being the chief of the two; who had laid hold on Briseis, as he had meant to keep Chryseis, in disparagement of his own marriage bed. Nor can the reader of this passage fail, I think, to be struck with the wonderful manner in which it combines a stately dignity, and an unimpeachable solidity of argument, with the fierceness of its personal onslaught.

The faculty of debate in Homer.

If the power of oratory is remarkable in Homer, so likewise is the faculty of what in England is called debate. Here the orator is a wrestler, holding his ground from moment to moment; adjusting his poise, and delivering his force, in exact proportion

²²⁵ Il. ix. 340.

to the varying pressure of his antagonist. In Homer's debates, every speech after the first is commonly a reply. It belongs not only to the subject, but to the speech that went before: it exhibits, given the question and the aims of the speaker, the exact degree of ascent or descent, of expansion or contraction, of relaxation or enhancement, which the circumstances of the case, in the state up to which they were brought by the preceding address, may require. In the Assembly of the First Book, five, nay, six, successive speeches of Achilles and Agamemnon²²⁶ bring their great contention to its climax. But the discussion with the Envoys deserves very particular notice.

The discussion of the Ninth Iliad.

Ulysses begins a skilled harangue to the offended hero with a most artful and well-masked exaggeration of the martial fury of Hector. He takes care only to present it as part of a general picture, which in other parts is true enough; but he obviously relies upon it as a mode of getting within the guard of Achilles. He next touches him upon the point, to which Priam afterwards made a yet higher appeal; the tender recollection of his father Peleus, who had warned him how much more arduous was the acquisition of self-command, than that of daring. He then recites the gifts of Agamemnon: and, encouraged perhaps by the kind greeting that, with his companions, he had received, he closes by urging that, however hateful Agamemnon may be,

²²⁶ Il. i. 106-244.

yet, in pity for the other Greeks, both high and low, and in anticipation of their gratitude, he ought to arm. I shall not attempt to analyse the wonderful speech of Achilles which follows, and to which some references have already been made. Suffice it to say, that it commences with an intimation to Ulysses that it will, in the opinion of the speaker, be best for all parties if he tells out his mind plainly: an indirect and courteous reproof to Ulysses for having thought to act upon him by tact and by the processes of a rhetorician. After this follows such a combination of argument, declamation, invective, and sarcasm as, within the same compass, I do not believe all the records of the world can match. But the general result of the whole is the announcement that he will return to Phthia the very next morning; together with an absolute, unconditional rejection of all gifts and proffers, until the outrage of Agamemnon is entirely wiped away²²⁷:

πρίν γ' ἀπὸ πᾶσαν ἔμοι δόμεναι θυμαλγέα λώβην.

When he has concluded, all his hearers, abashed by his masculine wrath, are silent for a while. Then Phoenix, in the longest speech of the poem, pours forth his unselfish and warm, but prolix and digressive affection. This speech displays far less of rhetorical resource, than that of Ulysses. Ulysses had conceded, as it were, the right of Achilles to an unbounded resentment against Agamemnon (300): Phoenix, on the contrary, by parable, menaces him with retribution from the Erinūs,

²²⁷ Il. ix. 387.

unless he shall subdue the mighty soul within him. But Achilles, touched in his better nature, gives way a little to the more ethical appeal, where he had been inflexible and invulnerable before the intellectual and rhetorical address. He now bids Phoenix come himself, and sleep in his encampment: there they can consider together, in the morning, whether to go or to stay (618). Still he announces, that nothing will induce him to quit the ships for the field (609). Next comes blunt Ajax into the *palæstra*; deprecates the wasting of time; is for taking back the answer, bad as it may be: Achilles has evidently made up his mind; and cares not a rush for all or any of them. ‘What,’ says the simple man-mountain, ‘the homicide of a brother or child is atoned for by a fine, and yet here is all this to-do about a girl. Aye, and a single girl; when we offer seven of the very best, and ever so much besides.’ Having thus reached the *acmè* of his arts, he now aims at the friendly feeling of Achilles, and in a single word bids him be placable to men whom he has admitted beneath his roof, and whom he owns for as loyal friends as the whole army could find him.

The leverage of this straightforward speech, which is only saved by kindness from falling into rudeness, again produces an initial movement towards concession on the part of the great hero. He replies in effect to Ajax, ‘You have spoken well: I like your way of going to work: but my heart swells and boils with the shame inflicted on me before the Greeks by Agamemnon. Tell them then’ – there is now no announcement of setting sail; nay, there is no longer any need for debate in the morning whether

to set sail or not – ‘tell them that I fight no more, till Hector, carrying slaughter and fire, shall reach this camp, these ships. Keen as he may be, it will then be time enough for ME to stay his onward path.’

Such is the remarkable course of this debate. But Ulysses, when they return to Agamemnon – meaning probably to bring him and all the Greeks fairly to bay – takes no notice of the partial relaxations of the iron will of Achilles, but simply reports that he has threatened to set sail. Then comes the turn of Diomed. ‘You were wrong to cringe to him. Of himself, he is arrogant enough: you have made him worse. Let him alone; he will come when he thinks proper, or when Providence wills it; and no sooner. My advice is that we sleep and eat now, and fight at dawn. I, at any rate, will be there, in the foremost of the battle.’

Function of the Assembly.

We will now proceed to consider the nature and place of the ἀγορῆ or Assembly, in the heroic age: and a view of the proceedings on several occasions will further illustrate the great and diversified oratorical resources of the Poet.

A people cannot live in its corporate capacity without intermission, and the king is the standing representative of the community. But yet the ἀγορῆ, or Assembly, is the true centre of its life and its vital motion, as the monarch is of its functional or administrative activity; and the greatest ultimate power, which the king possesses, is that of influence upon his subjects collected there, through the combined medium of their reverence for his

person, and of his own powers of persuasion. In the case of the army before Troy, to the strength of these ordinary motives is added, along with a certain spirit of resentment for injury received in the person of Helen, the hope of a rich booty on the capture of the city, and the principle of pure military honour, never perhaps more powerfully drawn than in the Iliad, nor with greater freedom from extravagances, by which it is sometimes made to ride over the heads of duty and justice, its only lawful superiors.

First, it would appear to have belonged to the Assembly, not indeed to distribute the spoil, but to consent to its distribution by the chief commander, and his brother-leaders. To the former it is imputed in the Ninth Book. But in the First Book Achilles says to him in the Assembly, We the Greeks (Ἄχαιοι) will requite you three and four-fold, when Troy is taken²²⁸. It is probable that he here means to speak of the chiefs alone, (but only so far as the act of distribution is concerned,) because Thersites uses the very same expression (ὅς τοι Ἄχαιοι πρωτίστῳ δίδομεν²²⁹) in the Second Book. Therefore the division of booty was probably made on the king's proposal, with the aid of the chiefs, but with the general knowledge and consent of the army, and in right of that consent on their part.

It must be remembered all along, that the state of political society, which Homer represents to us, is that in which the

²²⁸ Il. i. 127.

²²⁹ ii. 227.

different elements of power wear their original and natural forms; neither much altered as yet by the elaborate contrivances of man, nor driven into their several extremes by the consequences of long strife, greedy appetite, and furious passions, excited by the temptations which the accumulation of property presents.

In those simple times, when the functions of government were few, and its acts, except perhaps the trial of private causes, far between, there was no formal distribution of political rights, as if they could be made the object of ambitious or contentious cupidity: but the grand social power that moved the machine was in the determinations of the ἀγορῆ, however informally declared.

Grote has observed, that in the Homeric ἀγορῆ no division of affirmative and negative voices ever takes place. It would require a volume to discuss all that this remark involves and indicates. I will however observe that the principle surely cannot be made good from history or in philosophy, that numbers prevail by an inherent right. Decision by majorities is as much an expedient, as lighting by gas. In adopting it as a rule, we are not realizing perfection, but bowing to imperfection. We follow it as best for us, not as best in itself. The only *right* to command, as Burke has said, resides in wisdom and virtue. In their application to human affairs, these great powers have commonly been qualified, on the one hand by tradition and prepossession, on the other hand by force. Decision by majorities has the great merit of avoiding, and that by a test perfectly definite, the last resort to violence;

and of making force itself the servant instead of the master of authority. But our country still rejoices in the belief, that she does not decide all things by majorities. The first Greeks neither knew the use of this numerical dogma, nor the abuse of it. They did not employ it as an instrument, and in that they lost: but they did not worship it as an idol, and in that they greatly gained. Votes were not polled in the Olympus of Homer; yet a minority of influential gods carry the day in favour of the Greeks against the majority, and against their Head. There surely could not be a grosser error than to deny every power to be a real one, unless we are able both to measure its results in a table of statistics, and to trace at every step, with our weak and partial vision, the precise mode by which it works towards its end.

Great decisions all taken there.

We have seen, in the first place, that all the great decisions of the War were taken in the Assembly of the Greeks. And here the first reflection that arises is, how deeply this method of political action must have been engrained in their habits and ideas, when it could survive the transition from peace to war, and, notwithstanding its palpable inconveniences in a camp, form the practical rule of its proceedings under the eye of the enemy.

The force of this consideration is raised to the utmost height by the case of the Night Assembly in the Ninth Book. The Trojans, no longer confined to their walls, are lying beside a thousand watch-fires, just outside the rampart. Some important measure is absolutely demanded on the instant by the downcast

condition of the less than half-beaten, but still thoroughly discouraged army. Yet not even under these circumstances would Agamemnon act individually, or with the kings alone. He sends his heralds round the camp (II. ix. 11), to summon an Assembly noiselessly, and man by man. Can there be a more conclusive proof of the vigour, with which the popular principle entered into the idea of the Homeric polities? If it be said that such an operation could hardly be effected at night without stir, I reply that if it be so, the argument for the power and vitality of the Assembly is but strengthened: for Homer was evidently far more careful to speak in harmony with the political tone of his country than to measure out time by the hour and minute, or place by the yard, foot, and inch; as valuing not the latter methods less, but the former more.

κλήδην εἰς ἀγορὴν κικλήσκειν ἄνδρα ἕκαστον,
μηδὲ βοᾶν·

The Greek army, in fact, is neither more nor less than, so to speak, the State in uniform. As the soldier of those days was simply the citizen armed, so the armament was the aggregate of armed citizens, who, in all except their arms and the handling of them, continued to be what they had been before. But when we find that in such great emergencies political ideas did not give way to military expediency, we cannot, I think, but conclude that those ideas rested on broad and deep foundations.

It further tends to show the free nature of the relation between the Assembly and the Commander-in-chief, that it might be summoned by others, as well as by him. We are told explicitly in the First Book, that Achilles called it together, as he did again in the Nineteenth for the Reconciliation. On the second of these occasions, it may have been his purpose that the reparation should be as public as had been the insult: at any rate there was a determination to make the reconciliation final, absolute, and thorough. But, at the former time, the act partook of the nature of a moral appeal from Agamemnon to the army. It illustrated, in the first place, the principle of publicity so prevalent in the Greek politics. That which Calchas had to declare, he must declare not in a 'hole and corner,' but on his responsibility, liable to challenge, subject to the δῆμου φάτις if he told less than the truth, as well as to the resentment of the sovereign if he should venture on divulging it entire. But secondly, it shows that Achilles held the Greeks at large entitled and bound to be parties to the transaction. He meant that the Greeks should see his wrong. Perhaps he hoped that they would intercept its infliction. This at any rate is clear: he commenced the debate with measured reproofs of Agamemnon²³⁰; but afterwards he rose, with a wider scope, to a more intense and a bitterer strain²³¹.

When he found that the monarch was determined, and when he had repressed the access of rage which tempted him to

²³⁰ Il. i. 121-9.

²³¹ Ibid. 149-71.

summary revenge, he began to use language not now of mere invective against Agamemnon, but of such invective as tended to set him at odds with the people. Then further on, perhaps because they did not echo back his sentiments, and become active parties to the terrible fray, he both taunts and threatens them. For he begins²³², ‘Coward that thou art! Never hast thou dared to arm with the people for the fight, or with the leaders for the ambush.’ And then²³³. ‘Devourer of the people! over what nobodies thou rulest! or surely this would be the last of your misdeeds.’ Again, in the peroration²³⁴, ‘By this mighty oath, every man among you shall lament the absence of Achilles.’

Opposition in the Agorè.

It has often been asserted that the principle of popular opposition in debate is only represented by Thersites. But let us proceed step by step. It is at any rate clear enough that opposition by the confederate kings is at once sufficiently represented in Achilles; and that it is not represented by him alone, since in the Assembly of the Ninth Book, Diomed both strongly reprehended Agamemnon, and proposes a course diametrically the reverse of his; which course was forthwith adopted by the acclamations of the army.

The case of Thersites.

²³² Ibid. 225.

²³³ Ibid. 231.

²³⁴ Ibid. 239.

Let us now pass on to Thersites. There is no more singular picture in the Iliad, than that which he presents to us. It well deserves examination in detail.

Homer has evidently been at pains to concentrate upon this personage all that could make him odious to the hearers of his song, while nevertheless he puts into his mouth not only the cant of patriotism, but also a case that would perhaps have been popular, had he not averted the favour of the army by his insolent vulgarity.

Upon its merits, too, it was a tolerable case, but not a good one; for he was wrong in supposing Achilles placable; and again wrong in advising that the Greeks, now without Achilles, should give way before the Trojans, to whom they were still superior in war.

He is in all things the reverse of the great human ideals of Homer. As, in the pattern kings and heroes, moral, intellectual, and corporeal excellences, each in the highest degree, must be combined, so Thersites presents a corresponding complication of deformities to view. As to the first, he is the most infamous person (ἀίσχιστος) in the army; and he relies for his influence, not on the sense and honour of the soldiers, but on a vein of gross buffoonery; which he displays in the only coarse allusion that is to be found in all the speeches of the poems. As to the second head, his voluble speech is as void of order as of decency²³⁵. As to the third, he is lame, bandy-legged²³⁶, hump-

²³⁵ Il. ii. 213.

backed, round-shouldered, peak-headed, and lastly, (among the *καρηκομῶντες*,) he is bald, or indeed worse, for on his head a hair is planted here and there²³⁷. Lastly, hateful to all²³⁸, he is most of all hateful to, as well as spiteful against, the two paramount heroes of the poems, Achilles and Ulysses: an observation inserted with equal ingenuity and significance, because Homer, by inserting it, effectually cuts off any favour which Thersites might otherwise have gained with his hearers from seeming to take the side of the wronged Achilles. It is also worthy of note, as indicating how Homer felt the strength of that bond which unites together all great excellences of whatever kind. Upon a slight and exterior view, the two great characters of Achilles and Ulysses appear antagonistic, and we might expect to find their likes and dislikes running in opposite directions. But as, in the Ninth Book, Ulysses is declared by Achilles to be one of those whom he loves best among the Greeks²³⁹, so here they are united in carrying to the highest degree a common antipathy to Thersites.

While depriving the wretch of all qualities that could attract towards him the slightest share of sympathy, Homer has taken care to leave Thersites in full possession of every thing that was necessary for his trade; an ample flow of speech (213), and no

²³⁶ *φορκός*. See Buttmann, Liddell and Scott. Commonly rendered 'squinting.'

²³⁷ Il. ii. 214-19.

²³⁸ Ibid. 275, 220.

²³⁹ Il. ix. 198.

small power of vulgar invective (215).

Again, the quality of mere scurrility assigned to Thersites, and well exemplified in his speech, stands alike distinguished in Homer from the vein of fun, which he can open in the grave Ulysses of the *Odyssey*, even while he is under terror of the Cyclops; and from that tremendous and perhaps still unrivalled power of sarcasm, of which we have found the climax in Achilles.

In the short speech of Thersites, Homer has contrived to exhibit striking examples of malice (vv. 226, 234), coarseness (232), vanity (vv. 228, 231, 238), cowardice (236); while it is a tissue of consummate impudence throughout. Of this we find the finest stroke at the end of it, where he says²⁴⁰,

ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐκ Ἀχιλῆϊ χόλος φρεσὶν, ἀλλὰ μεθήμων·
ἦ γὰρ ἄν, Ἀτρείδη, νῦν ὕστατα λωβήσαιο²⁴¹.

For here the wretch apes Achilles, whom (for the sake of damaging Agamemnon) he affects to patronize, and, over and above the pretension to speak of his feelings as if he had been taken into his confidence on the occasion, he actually closes with the very line which Achilles, at the moment of high passion, had used in the Assembly of the First Book (i. 232).

If we consider the selection of topics each by themselves, with reference to effect, the speech is not without a certain

²⁴⁰ In 237 he appears to follow what Achilles had said i. 170.

²⁴¹ Il. ii. 241, 2.

εὐστοχία: he hits the avarice of Agamemnon hard (226); and his responsibility as a ruler (234): while pretending to incite the courage of the Greeks (235), he flatters their home-sickness and faint-heartedness by counselling the return (236); and, in supporting Achilles, he plausibly reckons on being found to have taken the popular side. But if we regard it, as every speech should be regarded, with reference to some paramount purpose, it is really senseless and inconsequent. Dwelling as he does upon the wrong done to Achilles, and asserting the placability of that chieftain, he ought to have ended with recommending an attempt to compensate and appease him; instead of which he recommends the Return, which had been just abandoned. But the real extravagance of the speech comes out only in connection with his self-love; when, like many better men, he wholly loses whatever sense of the ridiculous he might possess. It is not only 'the women whom we give you' (227); 'the service which we render you' (238), but it is also 'the gold²⁴² that some Trojan may bring to ransom his son, whom I, or else some other Greek, may have led captive.' I, Thersites, or some other Greek! The only Greek, of whom we hear in the Iliad as having made and sold on ransom captives during the war, is Achilles²⁴³; and it is with him that Thersites thus couples himself. Upon this, Ulysses, perceiving that he stands in opposition to the prevailing sentiment of the Assembly, silences him by a judicious application of the

²⁴² Il. ii. 229-31.

²⁴³ xxi. 40, 79. xxii. 44.

sceptre to his back and shoulders: yet not even Thersites does he silence by force, until he has first rebuked him by reasoning²⁴⁴.

Such are the facts of the case of Thersites. Are we to infer from it, with Grote, that Homer has made him ugly and execrable because he was a presumptuous critic, though his virulent reproaches were substantially well founded, and that his fate, and the whole circumstances of this Assembly, show 'the degradation of the mass of the people before the chiefs²⁴⁵?'

In rallying the Greeks, says the distinguished historian²⁴⁶, Ulysses flatters and soothes the chiefs, but drives the people with harsh reprimand and blows. Now surely, as to the mere matter of fact, this is not quite so. It is not the people, but those whom he caught carrying the matter by shouts, instead of returning to hear reason in the Assembly, that he struck with the sceptre²⁴⁷:

ὄν δ' αὖ δῆμου τ' ἄνδρα ἴδοι, βοόωντά τ' ἐφεύροι·

and it may be observed, that he addresses all classes alike by the word δαμόνιε²⁴⁸; which, though a term of expostulation, is not one of disrespect.

If Thersites represented the principle of reasoning in the public Assembly, we might well see in the treatment of him the degradation of the people. But it is railing, and not reasoning,

²⁴⁴ 246-56.

²⁴⁵ Grote's Hist. Greece, vol. ii. 95, 6.

²⁴⁶ Ibid. pp. 96, 98.

²⁴⁷ II. ii. 198.

²⁴⁸ Ibid. 190, 200.

that he represents; and Homer has separated widely between this individual and the mass of the army, by informing us that in the general opinion Ulysses had rendered a service, even greater than any of his former ones, by putting down Thersites. 'Ulysses has done a thousand good things in council and in war: but this is the best of all, that he has stopped the scoundrel in his ribaldry²⁴⁹.'

Thersites spoke not against Agamemnon only, but against the sense of the whole army (212); and the ground of the proceeding of Ulysses is not laid in the fact of his having resisted Agamemnon, or Agamemnon with the whole body of the kings; but in the manner of his speech, and in his having acted alone and against the general sentiment. Above all, we must recollect the circumstances, under which Ulysses ventured to chastise even this rancorous and foul-mouthed railer. It was at a moment of crisis, nay, of agony. The rush from the Assembly to the ships did not follow upon an orderly assent to a proposal, such as was generally given; but it resulted from a tumultuous impulse, like that of blasts tossing the sea, or sweeping down upon the cornfield (Il. ii. 144-54). If therefore Ulysses employs the sceptre of Agamemnon to smite those who were shouting in aid of this ruinous tumult (ii. 198), we need not take this for a sample of what would be done in ordinary circumstances, more than the fate of Wat Tyler for a type of British freedom under the Plantagenets. Odious too as was Thersites, yet the army, amidst a preponderating sentiment of approval, still appear to have felt

²⁴⁹ vv. 271-8.

some regret at his mishap²⁵⁰;

οἱ δὲ, καὶ ἀχνύμενοί περ, ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἦδὺ γέλασσαν·

for the first words would suggest, that they knew how to value the liberty of thought, which had been abused, disgraced, and consequently restrained, in his person. Surely it would be most precipitate to conclude, from a case like this, that the debates of the Assemblies were formal, and that they had nothing to do but to listen to a sham discussion, and to register or follow decrees which were substantially those of Agamemnon only.

I believe that the mistake involved in the judgment we have been canvassing is a double one: a mistake of the relation of Agamemnon to the other kings and chiefs; and a mistake of the relation of the sovereigns generally to their subjects. Agamemnon was strong in influence and authority, but he had, as we have already seen, nothing like a despotic control over the other kings. The kings were strong in personal ability, in high descent, in the sanction of Jupiter, in possession, and in tradition: but all their strength, great as it was, lay as a general rule in the direction of influence, and not in that of violence.

I do not think, however, that we ought to be contented with the merely negative mode of treatment for the case of Thersites. I cannot but conceive that, upon an impartial review, it may teach more, than is drawn from it by merely saying that it does not prove the Assembly to have been an illusion. We must assume

²⁵⁰ Il. ii. 270.

that Homer's picture, if not historical, at least conformed to the laws of probability. Now, what is the picture? That the buffoon of the army, wholly without influence, capable of attracting no respect, when the mass of the people had overcome their homeward impulse, had returned to the Assembly, and were awaiting the proposition of the kings, first continues to rail (ἐκκολῶα) while every one else is silent, and then takes upon himself the initiative in recommending the resumption of the project, which they had that moment abandoned. If such conduct could be ascribed by the Poet to a creature sharp-witted enough, and as careful as others of his own back, does not the very fact presuppose that freedom of debate was a thing in principle at least known and familiar?

Agorè on the Shield in Il. xviii.

In the scene depicted on the Shield of Achilles, new evidence is afforded us that the people took a real part in the conduct of public affairs. The people are in Assembly. A suit is in progress. The matter is one of homicide; and the guilty person declares that he has paid the proper fine, while his antagonist avers that he has not received it. Each presses for a judicial decision. The people sympathizing, some with one, and some with the other, cheer them on.

Λαοὶ δ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἐπήπυον, ἀμφὶς ἄρωγοί·
κήρυκες δ' ἄρα λαὸν ἐρήπυον²⁵¹.

²⁵¹ Il. xviii. 502.

I understand the latter words as declaring, not that the heralds forbade and put a stop to the cheering of the people, but either that they kept it within bounds, or rather that, when the proper time came for the judges to speak, these, the heralds, procured silence. According to the meaning of ἐρητύω in Il. ii. 211,

ἄλλοι μὲν ῥ' ἕζοντο, ἐρήτυθεν δὲ καθ' ἕδρας.

Now of the cheering of the people I venture to say, not that it raises a presumption of, but that it actually constitutes, their interference. The rule of every tolerably regulated assembly, charged with the conduct of important matters, is to permit no expressions of approval or otherwise during the proceedings, except from the parties immediately belonging to the body. The total exclusion of applause in judicial cases belongs to a state of mind and manners different from that of the heroic age. But the exclusion of all applause by mere strangers to the business rests upon a truth common to every age; namely, that such applause constitutes a share in the business, and contributes to the decision. It will be remembered how the cries of the Galleries became one of the grievous scandals of the first revolution in France, and how largely they affected the determinations of the National Assembly. The irregular use of such a power is a formidable invasion of legislative or judicial freedom: the allowed possession of the privilege amounts to participation in the office of the statesman or the judge, and demonstrates the substantive position of the λαός, or people, in the Assemblies of

the heroic age.

But apparently their function was not completed by merely encouraging the litigant, with whom each man might chance to sympathize. For we are told not only that the Judges, that is to say, the γέροντες, delivered their opinions consecutively, but likewise that there lay in the sight of all two golden talents, to be given to him who should pronounce the fairest judgment (xviii. 508);

τῷ δόμεν, ὅς μετὰ τοῖσι δίκην ἰθύντατα εἴποι.

Thus it is plain that the judge who might do best was to get the two talents: but who was to give them? Not the γέροντες or elders themselves, surely; for among them the competition lay. There could be but one way in which the disposal of this fee could be settled: namely, by the general acclamation of the people, to be expressed, after hearing the respective parties, in favour of him whose sentiments they most approved. And those, to whom it may seem strange to speak of vote by acclamation, should remember, that down to this day, in all deliberative assemblies, an overpowering proportion of the votes are votes by acclamation, or by the still less definite test of silence. The small minority of instances, when a difference of opinion is seriously pressed, are now settled by arithmetic; they would then have been adjusted by some prudent appeal to the general will, proceeding from a person of ability and weight. Indeed even now, in cases when the numbers approximate to those of the Greek army, there can be no *bonâ fide* decision by arithmetic.

The demand, however, that dissension shall be the only allowed criterion of liberty, is one which really worsens the condition of human nature beyond what the truth of experience requires.

Decisions in Assemblies of Il. vii. and ix.

And finally, what shall we say to the direct evidence of Agamemnon himself? Idæus²⁵², the Trojan herald, arrives with the offer to restore the stolen property, but not Helen. He is received in dead silence. After a pause, Diomed gives utterance to the general feeling. 'Neither will we have the goods without Helen, nor yet Helen with the goods. Troy is doomed.' The Assembly shouts its approbation. Agamemnon immediately addresses himself to the messenger; 'Idæus, you hear the sense of the Achæans, how they answer you; and I think with them.' At the least this is a declaration as express as words can make it, and proceeding out of the mouth of the rival authority, to the effect that the acclamation of the Assembly was, for all practical purposes, its vote, and that it required only concurrence from the king, to invest it with the fullest authority. In the Ninth Iliad, as we have seen, the vote held good even without that concurrence²⁵³.

We may now, I hope, proceed upon the ground that we are not to take the ill success of a foulmouthed scoundrel, detested by the whole army, as a sample of what would have happened to

²⁵² Il. vii. 381.

²⁵³ Sup. p. [100](#).

the people, or even a part of them, when differing in judgment from their king. But what shall we say to the argument, that no case is found where a person of humble condition takes part in the debates of the Assemblies? No doubt the conduct of debates was virtually in the hands of those whose birth, wealth, station, and habits of life gave them capacity for public affairs. Even in the nineteenth century, it very rarely happens that a working man takes part in the proceedings of a county meeting: but no one would on that account suppose that such an assembly can be used as the mere tool of the class who conduct the debate, far less of any individual prominent in that class. If we cannot conceive freedom without perpetual discord, the faithful performance of the duty of information and advice without coercion and oppression, it is a sign either of our narrow-mindedness, or of our political degeneracy; but a feeble eye does not impair the reality of the object on which it may happen to be fixed.

Still we may admit that among the numerous assemblies of the Iliad, there is no instance where assent is given by one part of the Assembly, and withheld by the other. There is, as we have seen, a clear and strong case where the opinion of the commander-in-chief is rejected, and that of an inferior commander adopted in its stead. This in my opinion goes far to prove all that is necessary. We have from the Odyssey, however, the means of going further still.

Only, before leaving the Iliad, let us observe the terms in which the Greek Assemblies are addressed by the kings: they are

denominated friends and heroes; names which at least appear to imply their title to judge, or freely to concur, at least as much as such a title was recognised in the ancient councils and assemblies of the Anglo-saxons. Was this appearance a mockery? I do not say we should compare it with the organized, secure and regular privileges of a few nations in modern days. But it would be a far greater mistake to treat it as an idle form, or as otherwise than a weighty reality.

Division in the Drunken Assembly.

From what is related in that poem to have occurred after the capture of Troy, it becomes abundantly clear that the function of the Greek Assembly was not confined to listening. The army met in what, for the sake of distinction, we may call the Drunken Assembly²⁵⁴. Now, the influence of wine upon its proceedings is amply sufficient to show that its acts were the acts of the people: for Homer never allows his chiefs to be moved from their self-possession by the power of liquor.

There was a marked difference of opinion on that occasion: the people took their sides; *δίχα δέ σφισιν ἦνδανε βουλή* (Od. iii. 150). One half embarked; the residue staid behind with Agamemnon (155-7). The moiety, which had sailed away, split again (162); and a portion of them went back to Agamemnon. We see, indeed, throughout the Odyssey, how freely the crews of Ulysses spoke or acted, when they thought fit, in opposition

²⁵⁴ Od. iii. 139.

to his views. If it be said, we must not argue from the unruly speeches of men in great straits at sea, the answer is, first, that their necessities might rather tend to induce their acquiescence in a stricter discipline; and secondly, that their liberty, and even license, are not out of keeping with the general tone of the relations between freemen of different classes, as exhibited to us elsewhere in the Homeric poems.

It may, indeed, be said, that the divisions of the Greeks in the final proceedings at Troy were divisions, not of the men, but of the chiefs. This, however, upon the face of the text, is very doubtful. We see from the tale of the Pseudo-Ulysses, in the Thirteenth Odyssey (265, 6), that there were parties and separate action in the Greek contingents: and it is probably to these that Nestor may allude, when he recommends the Review in order that the responsibility of the officers may be brought home to them individually. Now, in the case before us, the first division is thus described. Menelaus exhorted all the Greeks (πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς) to go home: Agamemnon disagreed (141, 3): while they were contesting the point, the Assembly rose in two parties (vv. 149, 50);

οἱ δ' ἀνόρουσαν ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ
ἦχῃ θεσπεσίῃ· δίχα δέ σφισιν ἦνδανε βουλή.

There is no intimation here that the people in dividing simply followed their chiefs. Nay, the tone of the description is such as

obliges us to understand that the movement was a popular one, and took its rise from the debate: so that, even if the chiefs and their men kept together respectively, as they may have done, still the chiefs may probably have followed quite as much as they led. Again, when the second separation takes place, it is thus described, ‘One portion returned, under Ulysses, to Agamemnon. Prognosticating evil, I made sail homewards with the whole body of my ships, which followed me. Diomed did the same, and (ὠρσε δ’ ἑταίρους) invited his men (to do it). And after us at last came Menelaus.’ (vv. 162-8). Now here instruction is given us on three points:

1. Diomed urged his men; therefore it was not a mere matter of course that they should go.

2. Nestor mentions especially that his division all kept together (σὺν νηυσὶν ἀολλέσιν); therefore this did not always happen.

3. It is very unlikely that the part, which is first named as having returned with Ulysses, should have been confined to his own petty contingent.

Thus it is left in great doubt, whether the chiefs and men did uniformly keep together: and the tenour of the narrative favours the supposition, that the men at least contributed materially to any joint conclusions.

Ithacan Assembly of Od. ii.

As, in the first Assembly of the Iliad, Achilles acts his personal quarrel in the public eye, and lodges a sort of tacit appeal against Agamemnon, so, in that of the Odyssey, Telemachus does the

like with reference to the Suitors. It is there that he protests against their continued consumption of his substance; that he rejects their counter-proposal for the dismissal of his mother on their behalf, and that he himself finally propounds the voyage to the mainland²⁵⁵. There too we find a most distinct recognition by Mentor, his guardian, of the powers and rights of the people; for he loudly complains of their sitting silent, numerous as they are²⁵⁶, instead of interposing to rebuke the handful of Suitors that were the wrongdoers. But if, according to the genius and usages of the heroic age, the people had nothing to do but to listen and obey their betters, the expectation that they should have risen to defend a minor against the associated aristocracy of the country would have been absurd, and could not have been expressed, as we find it expressed, by Mentor.

It is true indeed, as has been observed by Tittmann²⁵⁷, that this Assembly makes no effective response to the appeal of Telemachus; and that the Suitor Antinous is allowed to declare in it his own intention, and that of his companions, to continue their lawless proceedings. But what we see in the *Odyssey* is not the normal state of the heroic polities: it is one of those polities disorganized by the absence of its head, with a people, as the issue proves, deeply tainted by disloyalty. Yet let us see what, even in this state of things, was still the weight of the Agorè.

²⁵⁵ Od. ii. 212.

²⁵⁶ Od. ii. 239-41.

²⁵⁷ Griech. Staatsv. b. ii. p. 57.

First, when Telemachus desires to make an initial protest against the acts of the Suitors, he calls it to his aid. Secondly, though at the outset of the discussion no concession is made to him, yet he gains ground as it proceeds. The speech of Antinous, the first Suitor who addresses the Assembly (Od. ii. 85-128), is in a tone of sheer defiance, and treats his attempt as a jest and as an insult (v. 86). The next is that of Eurymachus; who, while deriding the omens, yet makes an advance by appealing to Telemachus to take the matter into his own hands, and induce his mother to marry one among them (178-207). The third, that of Leiocritus, contains a further slight approximation; for it conveys an assent to his proposed voyage, and recommends that Mentor and Alitherses shall assist him in making provision for it (242-56). Thus even here we see that progression, which may always be noticed in the Homeric debates; and the influence under which it was effected must surely have been an apprehension of the Assembly, to which both Telemachus, and still more directly Mentor, had appealed.

Thirdly, however, we perceive in this very account the signs of the disordered and distracted state of the public mind. For, beyond a sentiment of pity for Telemachus when he bursts into tears (v. 81), they make no sign of approval or disapproval. We miss in Ithaca the well-known cheers of the Iliad, the

οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἐπίαχον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.

They are dismissed without having made a sign; just as it is in the Assembly of the First Iliad (an exception in that poem);

where the mind of the masses, puzzled and bewildered, is not in a condition to enable them to interfere by the distinct expression of their sympathies²⁵⁸.

There are, however, two other instances of Assemblies in the *Odyssey*.

Phæacian Assembly of Od. viii.

The first of these is the Assembly of the Phæacians in the Eighth Book; which we may safely assume to be modelled generally according to the prevailing manners.

The petition²⁵⁹ of Ulysses to Alcinous is, that he may be sent onwards to his home. The king replies, that he will make arrangements about it on the following day²⁶⁰. Accordingly, the Assembly of the Phæacian people is called: Minerva herself, under the form of the herald, takes the pains to summon the principal persons²⁶¹. Alcinous then proposes that a ship shall be got ready, with a crew of fifty-two picked men²⁶². For his part he

²⁵⁸ *Od.* ii. 257. *Il.* i. 305.

²⁵⁹ *Od.* vii. 151.

²⁶⁰ *Od.* vii. 189-94, 317.

²⁶¹ *Od.* viii. 7-15.

²⁶² The number deserves remark. Fifty, as we know from the Catalogue, was a regular ship's crew of rowers. What were the two? Probably a commander, and a steersman. The dual is used in both the places where the numbers are mentioned (*κρινάσθων*, *ver.* 36, *κρινθέντε*, 48, *βήτην*, 49). There are other passages where the dual extends beyond the number two, to three and four. See Nitzsch, in *loc.* But the use of it here with so large a number is remarkable, and may be best explained by supposing that it refers to the *δύο*, who were the principal men of the crew, and that

will give to this crew, together with the kings, an entertainment at the palace before they set out²⁶³. This is all done without debate. Then comes the banquet, and the first song of Demodocus. The company next return to the place of assembly, for the games. It is here that Ulysses is taunted by Euryalus²⁶⁴. In his reply he appeals to his character as a suppliant; but he is the suppliant of the king and all the people, not of the king, nor even of the king and his brother kings, alone²⁶⁵;

ἤμαι, λισσόμενος βασιλῆά τε, πάντα τε δῆμον.

We must therefore assume that Alcinous, in his proposal, felt that he was acting according both to precedent and the general opinion. He does not order any measure to be taken, but simply gives his opinion in the Assembly about providing a passage, which is silently accepted (ver. 46). Yet I cannot but take it for a sign of the strong popular infusion in the political ideas of the age, when we find that even so slight a measure, as the dispatch of Ulysses, was thought fit to be proposed and settled there.

But we have weightier matter disposed of in the Twenty-fourth Odyssey, which affords us an eighth and last example of the Greek Assembly, its powers, and usages.

the fifty are not regarded as forming part of the subject of the verb. If this be so, the passage shows us in a very simple form the rudimentary nautical order of the Greek ships.

²⁶³ Od. viii. 38.

²⁶⁴ Od. viii. 158-64.

²⁶⁵ Od. viii. 157.

The havock made of the Suitors by Ulysses is at last discovered after the bodies have been disposed of; and upon the discovery, the chiefs and people repair in a mass to the open space where Assemblies were held, and which bears the same name with them²⁶⁶. Here the people are addressed on the one side by Eueithes, father of the leading Suitor Antinous, on the other, by Medon the herald, and Alitherses, son of Mastor the Seer. And here we are supplied with further proofs, that the Assemblies were not wholly unaccustomed to act according to their feelings and opinions. There is no sign of perplexity or confusion; but there is difference of sentiment, and each party acts upon its own. More than half the meeting loudly applaud Alitherses, and break up, determined not to meddle in the affair²⁶⁷. The other party keep their places, holding with Eueithes; they then go to arm, and undertake the expedition against Ulysses. Having lost their leader by a spear's throw of Laertes, for which Minerva had supplied him with strength, they fall like sheep before the weapons of their great chief and his son. Yet, though routed, they are not treated as criminals for their resistance; but the poem closes by informing us that Minerva, in the form of Mentor²⁶⁸, negotiated a peace between the parties²⁶⁹.

²⁶⁶ Probably the strictly proper name of the Assembly, as distinguished from the place of meeting, is ἄγυρις or πανήγυρις (as Od. iii. 131), but the name common to the two prevails.

²⁶⁷ Od. xxiv. 463.

²⁶⁸ Od. xxiv. 546.

²⁶⁹ Besides all the particulars which have been cited, we have incidental notices

Councils or Assemblies of Olympus.

Since the Assemblies of Olympus grow out of the polytheistic form of the Greek religion, we must treat them as part of its human element, and as a reflection of the heroic life. There will therefore be an analogy perceptible between the relation of Jupiter to the other Immortals in the Olympian Assembly, and that of the Greek Sovereign to all or some of those around him. But as the deities meet in the capacity of rulers, we should seek this analogy rather in the relation between Agamemnon and the kings, or between the local sovereign and his elders (γέροντες), than between either of the two respective heads, and the mass of those whom he ruled. This analogy is in substance sustained by the poems. The sovereignty of Jupiter undoubtedly stands more elevated, among the divinities of Olympus, than that of Agamemnon, or any other of his kings, on earth. It includes more of the element of force, and it approximates more nearly to a positive supremacy. Accordingly, whatever indicates freedom in Olympus will tend *a fortiori* to show, that the idea of freedom in debate was, at least as among the chiefs, familiar here below. Yet even in Olympus the other chief deities could murmur, argue, and object. The power of Jupiter is exhibited at its zenith in the

scattered about the poems, which tend exactly in the same direction. For example, when Chryses prays for the restitution of his daughter, his petition is addressed principally to the two Atridæ, but it is likewise addressed to the whole body of Ἀχαιοὶ (Il. i. 15), that is, either to the entire army, or at any rate to all the kings; or, to all the members of the Achæan race. This we may compare with the application of the prayer of Ulysses in Scheria to the king and people.

Assembly of the Eighth Iliad, when he violently threatens all that disobey, and challenges the whole pack to try their strength with him. The vehemence with which he spoke produced the same intimidatory effect upon the gods, as did the great speech of Achilles upon the envoys: and the result upon the minds of the hearers in the two cases respectively, is described in lines which, with the exception of a single word, precisely correspond²⁷⁰. Still, immediately after Jupiter has given the peremptory order not to assist either party, Minerva answers, Well, we will not fight – which she never had done – but we will advise; and this Jupiter at once and cheerfully permits²⁷¹. But there is more than this. Be the cause what it may, the personal will of Jupiter, fulfilled as to Achilles²⁷², is not fulfilled as to Troy. The Assembly of the Fourth Book is opened with a proposal from him, that Troy shall stand²⁷³. From this he recedes, and it is decided that the city shall be destroyed; while the only reservation he makes is not at all on behalf of the Trojans, but simply on behalf of his own freedom to destroy any other city he may dislike, however dear it may chance to be to Juno.

The position of Agamemnon, of which Jupiter is in a great degree a reflection, bears a near resemblance to that of a political leader under free European, and, perhaps it may be

²⁷⁰ Il. viii. 28, 9. ix. 430, 1.

²⁷¹ Il. viii. 38-40.

²⁷² Il. i. 5.

²⁷³ Il. iv. 17-19.

said, especially under British, institutions. Its essential elements are, that it is worked in part by accommodation, and in part by influence.

Besides its grand political function, the ἀγορὴ is, as we have seen, in part a judicial body. But the great safeguard of publicity attends the conduct of trials, as well as the discussion of political affairs. The partialities of people who manifest their feelings by visible signs is thus prevented, on the one hand, by the cultivation of habitual self-respect, from passing into fury, and on the other hand, from degenerating into baseness.

It is perhaps worthy of notice, as assisting to indicate the substantive and active nature of the popular interest in public affairs, that where parties were formed in the Assemblies, those who thought together sat together. Such appears to be the intimation of the line in the Eighteenth Iliad (502),

λαοὶ δ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἐπήπυσον, ἀμφὶς ἀρωγοί.

As the ἀμφὶς ἀρωγοὶ expresses their sentiments, ἀμφοτέρωθεν can hardly signify any thing other than that they sat separately on each side of the Assembly. A similar arrangement seems to be conveyed in the Twenty-fourth Odyssey, where we find that the party of the Suitors remained in a mass (τοὶ δ' ἄθροοι αὐτόθι μίμνον, v. 464.) I think this circumstance by no means an unimportant one, as illustrative of the capacity, in which the people attended at the Assemblies for either political or judicial purposes.

Judicial functions of the Assembly.

The place of Assemblies is also the place of judicature. But the supremacy of the political function is indicated by this, that the word ἀγορή, which means the Assembly for debate, thus gives its own designation to the place where both functions were conducted. At the same time, we have in the word Themis a clear indication that the original province of government was judicial. For that word in Homer signifies the principles of law, though they were not yet reduced to the fixed forms of after-times; but on the other hand Themis was also a goddess, and she had in that capacity the office of summoning and of dissolving Assemblies²⁷⁴. Thus the older function, as often happens, came in time to be the weaker, and had to yield the precedence to its more vigorous competitor.

But in Homer's time, though they were distinguished, they were not yet divided. On the Shield of Achilles, the work of Themis²⁷⁵ is done in full Assembly: and this probably signifies the custom of the time. But in the Eleventh Iliad, Patroclus passes by the ships of Ulysses²⁷⁶,

ἵνα σφ' ἀγορή τε θέμις τε
ἦην.

And, in the description of the Cyclopes, the line is yet more

²⁷⁴ Od. ii. 68, 9.

²⁷⁵ Il. xviii. 497.

²⁷⁶ Il. xi. 807.

clearly drawn; for it is said²⁷⁷,

τοῖσιν δ' οὔτ' ἀγοραὶ βουλευφόροι, οὔτε θέμιστες.

In that same place, too, the public solemnities of religion were performed: and though in the Greek camp it was doubtless placed at the centre of the line with a view to security, its position most aptly symbolized also its moral centrality, as the very heart of the national life. At the spot where the Assemblies were held were gathered into a focus the religious, as well as the patriotic sentiments of the country.

The fact is, that everywhere in Homer we find the signs of an intense corporate or public life, subsisting and working side by side with that of the individual. And of this corporate life the ἀγορὴ is the proper organ. If a man is to be described as great, he is always great in debate and on the field; if as insignificant and good for nothing, then he is of no account either in battle or in council. The two grand forms of common and public action are taken for the criteria of the individual.

When Homer wished to describe the Cyclopes as living in a state of barbarism, he says, not that they have no kings, or no towns, or no armies, or no country, but that they have no Assemblies, and no administration of justice, which, as we have seen, was the primary function of the Assemblies. And yet all, or nearly all the States had Kings. The lesson to be learned is, that in heroic Greece the King, venerable as was his title, was

²⁷⁷ Od. ix. 112-15.

not the fountainhead of the common life, but only its exponent. The source lay in the community, and the community met in the Agorè. So deeply imbedded is this sentiment in the mind of the Poet, that it seems as if he could not conceive an assemblage of persons having any kind of common function, without their having, so to speak, a common soul too in respect of it.

The common Soul or Τῖς in Homer.

Of this common soul the organ in Homer is the Τῖς or 'Somebody;' by no means one of the least remarkable, though he has been one of the least regarded, personages of the poems. The Τῖς of Homer is, I apprehend, what in England we now call public opinion. We constantly find occasions, when the Poet wants to tell us what was the prevailing sentiment among the Greeks of the army. He might have done this didactically, and described at length the importance of popular opinion, and its bearings in each case. He has adopted a method more poetical and less obtrusive. He proceeds dramatically, through the medium of a person, and of a formula:

ὧδε δέ τις εἴπεσκεν, ἰδὼν ἐς πλήσιον ἄλλον.

It may, however, not seem worthy of remark, considering the amount of common interest among the Greeks, that he should find an organ for it in his Τῖς. But when he brings the Greeks and Trojans together in the Pact, though it is only for the purpose of a momentary action, still he makes an integer *pro hâc vice* of the two nations, and provides them with a common Τῖς (Il. iii. 319):

ὧδε δέ τις εἵπεσκεν Ἀχαιῶν τε Τρώων τε.

We find another remarkable exemplification in the case of the Suitors in the *Odyssey*. Dissolute and selfish youths as they are, and competitors with one another for a prize which one only can enjoy, they are nevertheless for the moment banded together in a common interest. They too, therefore, have a collective sentiment, and a ready organ for it in a *Τῖς* of the *Odyssey* (*Od.* ii. 324), who speaks for the body of Suitors:

ὧδε δέ τις εἵπεσκε νέων ὑπερηγορέοντων.

All these are, in my view, most striking proofs of the tenacious hold, which the principle of a public or corporate life for all aggregations of men had taken upon the mind of Homer, and upon Greece in the heroic age. Nor can I help forming the opinion, that in all probability we may discern in the Homeric *Τῖς* the primary ancestor of the famous Greek Chorus. It is the function of the Chorus to give utterance to the public sentiment, but in a sense apt, virtuous, and pious. Now this is what the Homeric *Τῖς* usually does; but of course he does on behalf of the community, what the Chorus does as belonging to the body of actors.

It is then surely a great error, after all we have seen, to conclude that, because the political ideas and practices of those times did not wear the costumes now in fashion, they were without their own real vitality, and powerful moral influence upon the minds and characters of men.

Imperfect organization of the Heroic Polities.

But, on the other hand, in repelling these unsound and injurious notions, we must beware of assuming too much of external resemblance between the heroic age and the centuries either of modern Christendom or even of historic Greece and Rome. All the determinate forms of public right are the growth of long time, of dearbought experience, and of proved necessity. Right and force are supplements to one another; but the proportions, in which they are to be mingled, are subject to no fixed rule. If the existence of rights, both popular and regal, in the heroic age is certain, their indeterminateness is glaring and conspicuous. But the shape they bore, notwithstanding the looseness of its outline, was quite adequate to the needs of the time. We must not, in connection with the heroic age, think of public life as a profession, of a standing mass of public affairs, of legislation eternally in arrear, of a complex machinery of government. There were no regular regencies in Greece during the Trojan war. There was no Assembly in Ithaca during the long absence of Ulysses²⁷⁸, before the one called by Telemachus, and reported in the Second Book of the Odyssey. We have seen, however, in what way this lack of machinery told upon the state of Greece by encouraging faction, and engendering revolution. The strain of the Trojan expedition was too great for a system so artless and inorganic. The state of Ithaca in the Odyssey is

²⁷⁸ Tittmann Griech. Staatsv. b. ii. p. 56.

politically a state almost of anarchy; though the symptoms of that disease were milder by far then, than they could now be. The condition of the island shows us what its polity had been, rather than what it was. But for all ordinary occasions it had sufficed. For Assemblies met only when they had something to do; and rarely indeed would such junctures arrive. Infractions of social order and social rights, which now more commonly take place by fraud, were then due almost wholly to violence. And violence, from its nature, could hardly be the subject of appeal to the Assembly: as a general rule, it required to be repaid on the instant, and in the same coin. Judicial questions would not often be of such commanding interest, as to divide a people into two opinions; nor the parties to them wealthy enough to pay two talents to the successful judge. Great controversies, affecting allegiance and the succession, must of necessity in all ages be rare; and of a disputed succession in Greece the poems can hardly be said to offer us an instance. We find, however, in the last Book of the Odyssey, that, according to the ideas of that period, when a question as to the sovereignty did arise, the people needed no instructor as to the first measure they were to take. They repaired, as if by a common and instinctive impulse, to the Agorè; in which lay deposited their civil rights and their old traditions, like the gems of the wealth of Greece in the shrine of the Archer Apollo²⁷⁹.

²⁷⁹ Il. ix. 404.

II. ILIOS.

THE TROJANS COMPARED AND CONTRASTED WITH THE GREEKS

We have perhaps been accustomed to contemplate the Trojans too exclusively, either as enemies of the Greeks, or else as constituting, together with them, one homogeneous chapter of antiquity, which we might be content to examine as a whole, without taking notice of specific differences. Let us now endeavour to inquire what were the relations, other than those of mere antagonism in the war, between the two nations; what points they embraced, and what affinities or discords they disclose. The direct signs of kindred between Troy and Greece have already been considered; but the examination into points of contrast and resemblance as respects religion, polity, and character, will assist us in judging how far a key to those affinities and discords is to be found in the different interfusion and proportion, in the two cases, of ethnical elements which they possessed in common.

We have seen in another place²⁸⁰ that the Greeks, or Achæans, and the Trojans, were akin by the Hellic element, which appears

²⁸⁰ Achæis, or Ethnology, sect. ix. p. 496.

to establish a connection chiefly as regarded the royal house, and other ruling houses, of Troy. On the other hand it has seemed clear, from many sources, that the main affinity between the bulk of the two nations was Pelasgian. As respects the ethnological question, the supposition most consonant to the evidence as a whole appears to me to be, that in Troas we find Hellic families, possessed of dominion over a Pelasgian people: in Greece we find Hellic tribes, placed in dominant juxtaposition with Pelasgic tribes, of prior occupancy; constituting, as is probable, whole classes of the community, and mingling with and powerfully modifying the aggregate composition so as to produce a mixed result; while in Troy, though the ruling houses are probably a different order, and there may be found here and there the tokens of this influence, yet the general face of society, and the substance of manners and institutions, are Pelasgian. It will be recollected, that even in Greece we trace two forms of Hellic diffusion. Sometimes the descendants of the Helli appear as single families, like the *Æolids*; sometimes as races, like the *Achæans*. The state of facts here supposed as to Troy is in accordance with the former class of indications within Greece itself.

Upon the footing supplied by these assumptions, I shall treat the comparison of the two countries as to religion, policy, social usages, and moral ideas and practice.

We have already been obliged, in considering the respective shares of the Hellenic and Pelasgian factors in the compound

Greek character, to anticipate in some degree the conclusions with regard to the religion of the Trojans in its general character, which I will now proceed more fully to explain and illustrate.

We have found three conspicuous deities, of worship apparently supreme and universal: Jupiter, Minerva, and Apollo. After these comes Neptune, of a more doubtful position when we pass out of the Hellenic and Phœnician circles; and Latona with Diana, who, doubtless from the vantage ground of early tradition, take rank alike with an Hellenic and a Pelasgian people. We have also supposed Ceres to be of immemorial standing as a deity of the Pelasgians; and Venus to have made great way among them.

Greek names of deities found also in Troas.

Passing on from the consideration of Pelasgian religion at large, it will now be requisite to show, with particular reference to Troy, how far we find the names of the Greek divinities recognised there; nor must we omit to consider, in what degree identity of name implies identity of person and function.

1. Jupiter had a *τέμενος*, or portion of consecrated land, on Mount Gargarus; and there Onetor was his priest²⁸¹. He is, with the Trojans as with the Greeks, the first and greatest of the gods²⁸². He himself attests their abundant liberality in sacrifices offered to himself²⁸³. The Greek Jupiter is Olympian; the Trojan

²⁸¹ Il. viii. 47, 8.

²⁸² Il. iii. 298.

²⁸³ Il. iv. 48.

Jupiter is Jupiter of Ida. Except as to abode, there is no difference to be discerned between the features of the two.

2. We have no direct indication, in the Iliad, of the worship of Neptune by the Trojans. But the legend of his employment under Laomedon must be taken to imply that his divinity was acknowledged in that country: confirmed as it is by his sharing with Jupiter and Apollo the destruction of the Greek rampart after the conclusion of the war²⁸⁴.

3. In the case of Juno, I have elsewhere noticed²⁸⁵ the three passages, which alone appear to establish a faint connection between her and the Trojans.

4. Minerva had a temple on Pergamus; and was served there by a priestess, Theano; who, as the wife of Antenor, was of the very next rank to Priam and his house. The goddess is addressed, on the occasion of the procession of the Sixth Book, in a strain which seems to acknowledge her possession of supreme power²⁸⁶: the defender of cities, excellent among goddesses, she is entreated to have pity on Troy, to break the lance of Diomed, and to grant that he himself may fall.

5. Apollo would appear to be the favourite among the great deities of the country. He, like Minerva, has a temple in the citadel²⁸⁷. Chryses is his priest at Chryse, and there too he has

²⁸⁴ Il. xxi. 442 seqq. vii. 459. xii. 17.

²⁸⁵ Olympus, sect. iii. p. 197.

²⁸⁶ Il. vi. 298-300. 305-10.

²⁸⁷ Il. v. 446.

a temple. He is the special protector of Cilla and of Tenedos²⁸⁸. With Minerva, he is indicated as the recipient of supreme honour²⁸⁹. The Lycian name, so prevalent in Troas, establishes a special connection with him. In the Iliad, he seems to be the ordinary and immediate Providence to the Trojan chiefs, as Minerva is to the Greek ones. At the same time, he carries no sign of exclusive nationalism; he bears no hatred to the Greeks; but, after the restitution and propitiation, he at once accepts the prayer, and stays the pestilence²⁹⁰.

6. Latona must have been known among the Trojans; because Homer has represented her as contending on the Trojan side in the war of the gods, and as engaged in tending the wounded Æneas within the temple of Apollo on Pergamus.

7. The same reasons apply also to Diana: and we moreover find, that she instructed the Trojan Scamandrius in the huntsman's art²⁹¹.

8. Venus is eminently Trojan. Her relation to this people is marked by her favour towards Paris: her passion for Anchises: her sending a personal ornament as a marriage gift to Andromache; her ministerial charge over the body of Hector (Il. xxiii. 184-7); her being chosen as the model to which Trojan beauties are compared, while Diana is the favourite standard

²⁸⁸ Il i. 37-9.

²⁸⁹ Il. vii. 540. xiii. 827.

²⁹⁰ Il. i. 457.

²⁹¹ Il. v. 49.

for the Greek woman. It is also marked by her zealous, though feeble, partizanship in favour of Troy among the Immortals: and by the biting taunts of Pallas, of Helen, and of Diomed²⁹².

9. Vulcan is not only known, but has a *cult* in Troy: for Dares is his priest, and is a person of great wealth and consideration, one of whose sons he delivers from death in battle, to comfort the old man in his decline²⁹³.

10. Mars. Of this deity it would seem, that he has been given by Homer to the Pelasgians, mainly because of his so strongly marked Thracian character, and his want of recognition among the Hellenes, who had a higher deity of war in Minerva. I have touched elsewhere upon his equivocal position as between the two parties to the war. It corresponds with that of the Thracians, who appear to form a point of intersection, so to speak, for the Hellic and Pelasgian races. Those of the plain of Adrianople are, like the Pelasgi, horse-breeders, dwelling in a fertile country: the ruder portion are among the mountains to the north and west.

11. Mercury. One sign only of the ordinary agency of this deity in Troas is exhibited; he gives abundant increase to the flocks of Phorbas²⁹⁴.

12. Earth (Γαῖα) would appear to have been recognised as an object of distinct worship in Troas: for when Menelaus proposes the Pact, he invites the Trojans to sacrifice a black lamb to her,

²⁹² Il. v. 421-5. 348-51. iii. 405-9.

²⁹³ Il. v. 9. and 20-4.

²⁹⁴ Il. xiv. 490.

and a white one to the Sun; while the Greeks will on their part offer up a lamb to Jupiter. The proposal is at once accepted; and the heralds are sent by Hector to the city for the lambs²⁹⁵, which seems to be conclusive as to the acknowledgment of these two deities in Troy.

13. The Sun. Besides that the passage last quoted for Earth is also conclusive for the Sun, we have another token of his relation to Troy, in the unwillingness with which he closes the day, when with his setting is to end the glory of Hector and of his country²⁹⁶.

We have thus gone through the list of the greater Greek deities, and have found them all acknowledged in Troas, with the following exceptions: 1. of Ceres, whom we may however suspect, from her Pelasgian character, to have been worshipped there under some name or form; 2. of Aidoneus; and 3. of Persephone. These exceptions will be further noticed.

Again, among the thirteen who have been identified as objects of Trojan worship, we find one, namely, Γαῖα, of whom we can hardly say that she was worshipped in Greece; though she was invoked, as by Agamemnon in the Nineteenth Book, and by Althea in the Ninth, to add a more solemn sanction to oaths.

14. Together with her, we may take notice of a fourteenth deity, apparently of great consideration in Troy, namely, the River Scamander. He bears a marked sign of ancient worship, in having a divine appellation, Xanthus, as well as his terrestrial

²⁹⁵ Il. iii. 103. 116.

²⁹⁶ Il. xviii. 239.

one, Scamander. He had an ἄρήτηρ, by name Dolopion. To him, according to the speech of Achilles, the Trojans sacrificed live horses. He enters into the division of parties among the gods about the war, and fights vigorously against Achilles, until he is at length put down by Hephæstus, or Vulcan. As a purely local deity, however, he has of course no place in the Greek mythology.

15. Though we have no direct mention of the translation of Tithonus by Ἥως, or Aurora, yet, as Homer gives Tithonus a place both in the genealogy of the Dardanidæ, and likewise by the side of Aurora, we may consider that, by thus recognising the translation, he also points out Aurora as an acknowledged member of the supernatural order in Troas.

Several among these names call for more particular notice: especially those of Vulcan, Earth, and Scamander.

Worship of Vulcan in Troas.

The case of Vulcan, and his place in Troy, may serve to remind us of a proposition somewhat general in its application; this namely, that, in classifying the Trojan divinities, Homer need not have intended to imply that the same name must in all cases carry exactly the same attributes. We must here bear in mind, that probably all, certainly almost all, of the properly Olympian gods, were Greek copies modified from Oriental or from traditive originals. But as these conceptions were propagated in different quarters, each country would probably add or take away, or otherwise alter, in conformity with its own ruling tendencies.

Hence when we find a Vulcan in Greece, and a Vulcan in Troas, it by no means follows, that each of them presented the same features and attributes. If Homer believed them to be derived from a common original in Egypt or elsewhere, that would be a good and valid reason for his describing them by the same name, though the Trojan Vulcan might not present all the Hellenic traits, nor *vice versâ*. In some cases, such as those of Jupiter, Apollo, Minerva, Diana, and Venus, there is such a correspondence of attributes entering into the portraiture of the respective deities in the two countries, that their identity, at least so far as the evidence goes, seems quite unimpaired and unequivocal. But we have no means of showing from the poems, that the Trojan Hephæstus corresponded with the Greek one. Indeed when we find no mention of his being actually worshipped in Greece, and at the same time learn that he had a priest in Troas, the presumption arises, that different conceptions of him prevailed in the two countries. Again, there is nowhere assigned to him as a Greek deity any such exercise of power, as that by which he saves Idæus, a son of his priest Dares, from imminent death on the field of battle.

These general considerations, which tend to show that the identity of name in a Trojan and a Greek deity may be compatible with much of dissimilarity in the popular development of the functions, will relieve us from difficulties, which we should otherwise have had to meet, in accounting for the place of some of the Olympian divinities in Trojan worship. We have found

reason to suppose, that Vulcan may have come into Greece through Phœnicia. But the Trojans appear to have had very little connection with Phœnicia. The precious *κειμήλιον* of Priam, the cup that he carried to Achilles, was not Phœnician but Thracian²⁹⁷. The only token of intercourse mentioned is, that Paris brought textile fabrics from Sidon²⁹⁸. Again, Vulcan was especially worshipped in Lemnos, and had his terrestrial abode there. But this goes more naturally to account for the works of metal in Thrace, than for the position of Vulcan in Troas; higher as it was, apparently, than in Greece. Again, it is worth notice, that the Vulcan of the Romans was, like their Mars, one of the old gods of Etruria, a country stamped with many Pelasgian characteristics. It may be, that we ought to look back to Egypt for the origin of all these Vulcans. In the time of Herodotus²⁹⁹, the Egyptian priests claimed him as their own: and Phtah, the principal deity of Memphis, was held by the later Greeks to correspond with their Ἡφαιστος. Even the two names carry tokens of relationship. From that fountain-head might be propagated diverging copies of the deity: and, as far as we can judge, the Vulcan worshipped in Troy was much more like the common ancestor, than the highly idealized artificer of Olympus, upon whom the Poet has worked out all his will³⁰⁰.

²⁹⁷ Il. xxiv. 234-5.

²⁹⁸ Il. vi. 289-92.

²⁹⁹ Herod. ii. 50.

³⁰⁰ Döllinger Heid. u. Jud. VI. iii. p. 411.

Worship of Juno and Gaia in Troas.

There is another of its points of contact with the Olympian system, in which this list of Trojan deities is remarkable. While investigating the Greek mythology, we have found reason to suppose that Juno, Ceres, and Gaia are but three different forms of the same original tradition of a divine *feminine*: of whom Ceres is the Pelasgian copy, Juno the vivid and powerful Hellenic development, and Gaia the original skeleton, retaining nothing of the old character, but having acquired the function of gaol-keeper for perjurers when sent to the other world³⁰¹. In the retention however of all three within the circle of religion, we see both the receptiveness and the universalism of the Greek mythology. Now, in Troy, where there was less of imaginative power, the case stands very differently. Of Ceres, who represents the Pelasgian impression of the old earth-worshipping tradition, we hear nothing in Troas. Probably she was not there, because Gaia, her original, was still a real divinity for the Trojans. But how are we to explain the fact that Gaia and Juno are both there? I venture to suggest, that it is because these are different names, the foreign and the domestic one, for the same thing. When Hector swears to Dolon, it is by Jupiter, ‘the loud-thundering husband of Here:’ which almost appears as if Juno held, in the Trojan oath, a place more or less resembling the place occupied in the Greek oaths (where Juno does not appear at all) by Gaia.

³⁰¹ Rhea (Ἔρα) shows us the fourth and cosmogonic side of the same conception.

Again, it is obvious that, if this relation exists between Gaia and Juno, it explains the fact that we do not find both, so to speak, thriving together. In Troas Gaia is worshipped, but Juno scarcely appears. In Greece Juno is highly exalted, but Gaia has lost all body, and has dwindled to a spectral phantasm. It is the want of imagination in the Trojan mythology, which makes it a more faithful keeper of traditions, stereotyped in the forms in which they were had from their inventors.

Worship of Mercury in Troas.

Next, as to Mercury. I have already adverted to the fact that Priam³⁰², notwithstanding his obligations to Mercury in the Twenty-fourth Iliad, takes no notice of his divinity. I think that a close examination of the narrative tends to show, that the Greek Mercury was not worshipped in Troy; and leaves us to conclude that Homer uses a merely poetical mode of speech in saying that this god gave increase to the flocks of Phorbas³⁰³: even as when he makes Priam call Iris an *Olympian* messenger³⁰⁴.

He appears before Priam and his companion Idæus, when they are on their way to the Greek camp, in the semblance of a young and noble Myrmidon. There were, we know³⁰⁵, certain visible signs, by which deities could in general be recognised or, at least, guessed as such. Both Idæus, however, and Priam himself,

³⁰² Olympus, sect. iii. p. 234.

³⁰³ Il. xiv. 490.

³⁰⁴ Il. xxiv. 194.

³⁰⁵ Olympus, sect. v.

saw nothing of this character in Mercury, and simply took him for a Greek enemy³⁰⁶. Mercury, after some genial conversation, conducts his chariot to the quarters of Achilles, and then, before quitting him, announces himself. Not, however, like Apollo to Hector (Il. xv. 256), and Minerva to Ulysses (Od. xiii. 299), simply by giving his name: but he also declares himself to be an Immortal, θεὸς ἄμβροτος (460). This unusual circumstance raises a presumption, that he was not already known as a divinity to Priam; and the presumption seems to become irrefragable, when we find that Priam, though given to the observances of religion, uses no act or expression of reverence or even recognition to his benefactor, either on his first declaration and departure (460, 7), or upon his second nocturnal appearance (682), followed by a second and final flight to Olympus (694).

The case of Scamander will require particular notice: because it is immediately connected with the question, whether the Trojans partook of that tendency to a large imaginative development of religion, which so eminently distinguishes the Grecian supernaturalism.

We will therefore consider carefully the facts relating to this deity, and such other kindred facts as Homer suggests.

He speaks of Dolopion as follows³⁰⁷;

ὑπερθύμου Δολοπίονος, ὅς ῥα Σκαμάνδρου

³⁰⁶ Il. xxiv. 347, 355, 358-60.

³⁰⁷ Il. v. 77.

This is entirely in keeping, as to particulars, with the Pelasgian and Trojan institutions. The ἄρητήρ of Homer is apparently always the priest. Dolopion was a man in very high station and honour, like the priests of Rome, and of early Ætolia³⁰⁸; but not like those of later Greece. And he had been 'made' or 'appointed' priest; as Theano was chosen to be priestess by the people. The priesthood of the Homeric age never appears as a caste in these latitudes. The only approximation to caste is in the gift of the μάντις, which, as we find from the *Odyssey*, was hereditary in the family of Melampus³⁰⁹. Thus far, then, the evidence respecting Scamander certainly would appear to belong to the category of Homer's historical statements.

Beyond this, everything assumes a figurative stamp. Scamander fights as a deity with Achilles, and his waters are so powerful that they can only be subdued by the immediate action of the god of fire. The hero, too, is aided by the powerful blasts of Zephyr and of Notus, whom Juno rouses up to scorch the Trojans³¹⁰. As we can hardly doubt, that the plague in the First Book represents some form of marsh-fever, so here it appears likely that the Poet takes very skilful advantage of a flood, caused by summer rains, which had annoyed the Greeks, and which had

³⁰⁸ Il. ix. 575.

³⁰⁹ Od. xv. 223 and seqq.

³¹⁰ Il. xxi. 331 and seqq.

been followed by the subsidence of the waters upon the return of hot weather.

Scamander is very great in the Iliad, but with a purely local greatness. As a person, he speaks both to men and to gods. He addresses Simois as his beloved brother; but it is entirely on the affair of the deluge and the heat. Though he takes part in the war, the distinction is not awarded to him of being a member of the smaller and select Olympian community: he merely stands included by presumption in the general category of Rivers³¹¹.

Worship of Scamander.

We have a description from the mouth of Achilles of certain sacrifices, as belonging to the worship of Scamander³¹²:

οὐδ' ὑμῖν ποταμός περ ἐϋρῶρος ἀργυροδίνης
ἀρκέσει, ᾧ δὴ δηθὰ πολέας ἱερεύετε τάυρους,
ζωοὺς δ' ἐν δίνησι καθίετε μώνυχας ἵππους.

This offering of live horses is peculiar, and unlike anything else represented to us in the Homeric poems. Not only the youths, but even the dogs, whom Achilles offers to the Shade of Patroclus, are slain before they are cast into the fire. The same thing is not mentioned with respect to the four horses, who are also among the victims; but it is probably, even from the physical necessities of the case, to be presumed.

³¹¹ Il. xx. 7.

³¹² Il. xxi. 130-2.

It may, perhaps, be argued, that this speech of Achilles partakes of the nature of a sarcasm. The fine Trojan horses were reared and pastured on the river banks; taunts often pass between the warriors of the two sides: the δὴ δηθὰ may have had the force of *forsooth*. Some doubt may attach to the evidence, which the passage gives, on this ground; and also from the singularity of the practice that is imputed. It is, on the whole, however, safest to assume that it is trustworthy.

The case will then stand thus; that we have apparently one single case in Troy of a pure local impersonation of a power belonging to external nature. Now this might happen under peculiar circumstances, and yet a very broad distinction might subsist between the religion of the two nations as to imaginative development.

Scamander was indeed a great power for the Trojans; it was the great river of the country, the μέγας ποταμὸς βαθυδίνης. The child of the great Hector was named by him Scamandrius, while Simoeisius³¹³ was the son of a very insignificant person. Another Scamandrius was a distinguished huntsman, taught by Diana, in a country where the accomplishment was rare³¹⁴. His floods, however useful in time of war, would in time of peace do fearful damage. It is possibly the true explanation of the last among the lines quoted from the speech of Achilles, that he carried away, in sudden *spates*, many of the horses that were

³¹³ Il. iv. 474, 488.

³¹⁴ Il. v. 49.

pastured on his banks. The Trojans, then, may have had strong motives for deifying Scamander, and particularly for providing him with a priest, who might beseech him to keep down his waters. And it will be remembered, from the case of Gaia, that the Trojan religion was, without doubt, favourable to the idea of purely elemental deities: what lacked was the vivid force of fancy, that revelled in profuse multiplication.

Different view of Rivers in Troas.

For we cannot fail to perceive, that the idea of a river-god did not enter into the Trojan as it did into the Greek life. Ulysses, when in difficulty, at once invokes the aid of the Scherian river³¹⁵, at whose mouth he lands. Now the Trojans are driven in masses into the Scamander by the terrible pursuit of Achilles, and they hide and skulk, or come forth and fight, about its banks and waters. Yet no one of them invokes the River, although that River was a deity contending on their side. So entirely was he without place in their consciousness as a power able to help, even though he may have been publicly worshipped in deprecation of a calamity, which he was known to be able to inflict.

With this remarkable silence we may compare, besides the prayer and thanksgiving of Ulysses, the invocation of Achilles to Spercheius³¹⁶. On his leaving home, his father Peleus had dedicated his hair as an offering to be made to the River on

³¹⁵ Od. v. 445.

³¹⁶ Il. xxiii. 144.

his return, and to be accompanied by a hecatomb. This would have been a thank-offering; and as such, in accordance with the prayer of Ulysses, it implies the power of the River deity to confer benefits. Nor is that power rendered doubtful by the fact, that in the particular case the prayer is not fulfilled, and that the hair is therefore devoted to the remains of Patroclus. We may remark, again, the sacrifice offered, apparently almost as matter of course, by the Pylian army to Alpheus, on their merely reaching his banks³¹⁷. And, as a whole, the multitudinous impersonations of natural objects in the Greek mythology are, both with Homer and in the later writers, of a benign and genial character. This bright and sunny aspect is in contrast with the formidable character of Scamander, and of the worship offered to him.

There is, perhaps, enough of resemblance between the Scamander of the Trojan mythology, and the Spercheus or Alpheus of the Greek, to suggest the question, whether the deification of this river may possibly have been due to the Hellic influences, which resided in the royal houses of the country. There are not wanting signs, that the family of Priam was closely connected with the river and its banks. The name given to Hector's child is one such token; and we know that the mares of Erichthonius were fed upon the marshes near Scamander³¹⁸. It is also worth observation that the Priest of Scamander was

³¹⁷ Il. xi. 728.

³¹⁸ Il. xx. 221.

called Dolopion, while Dolops was the name of a son of Lampus, a Trojan of the highest rank, brother to Priam, and one of the δημογέροντες of Troy³¹⁹.

But though there may be a special relation between the worship of Scamander, and the influence of the royal family, I think the explanation is chiefly to be sought in the specific differences which separate it from River-worship, as generally conceived in the Olympian system.

There is another aspect of River-worship in Greece, with which it seems to have more affinity. There is the terrible adjuration of Styx, which implies its vindictive agency³²⁰. This river is represented on earth by a branch from itself, called Titaesius, near the Perrhæbian Dodona³²¹. The Rivers are expressly invoked, in this character, by Agamemnon in the adjuration of the Pact: and are associated with the deities that punish perjury after death. Moreover, it is curious that, when Agamemnon makes an adjuration before Greeks alone, he omits the appeal to the Rivers, whom he had named when he was acting for the two peoples jointly³²². This seems to show that the invocation of Rivers, or of some class of Rivers, in a retributive capacity, was familiar, and may have been peculiar, to the Trojans.

³¹⁹ Il. iii. 147-9. xv. 525-7.

³²⁰ Il. xiv. 271. xv. 37.

³²¹ Il. 2. 751-5.

³²² Compare Il. iii. 276. xix. 258.

True aspect of Trojan River-worship.

In effect, then, the grand distinction seems to be this. The worship of Scamander in Troas belonged to the elemental system and earth-worship, which the Greeks, for the purposes of their Olympus, had refined away into a poetical vivifying Power, replete with more bland influences: retaining it, more or less, for the purpose of adjuration, in the darker and sterner sense. Accordingly, while Scamander, who is also called Xanthus, has, as a god, a mark of antiquity in the double name³²³, he shows none of the Greek anthropophuistic ingredients. Even for speech and action, he does not take the human form; but he is, simply and strictly, the element alive.

The species of deification, implied in earth-worship, scarcely lifted the objects of it in any degree out of the sphere of purely material conceptions. Thus, while Scamander, from his superior power, is no more than Nature put in action, all the other Rivers of Troas exhibit to us Nature purely passive, a blind instrument in the hand of deity. The total silence and inaction of Simois³²⁴, after the appeal of Scamander, makes his impersonality more conspicuous, than if he had not been addressed. Again, when the Greeks have quitted the country, Apollo takes up the streams of the eight rivers that descend from Ida, including great Scamander, like so many firemen's hose, and

³²³ Il. xx. 74.

³²⁴ Il. xxi. 308.

turns them upon the rampart to destroy it. We have no example in Homer of this mechanical mode of handling Greek rivers.

The distinction of treatment seems to be due to a difference in the mythology of the two countries as its probable source. And I find an analogous method of proceeding with reference to the Winds. In the *Iliad* they are deities, addressed in prayer, and capable of receiving offerings. In the *Odyssey* they are mere senseless instruments of nature, under the control of Æolus. But then in the *Iliad* Homer deals with them for a Greek purpose (for I do not except the impersonation of Boreas, *Il.* xx. 203, where the Dardanid family is concerned): it is Achilles who prays to them: it is the Greek war-horse that they beget. In the *Odyssey* he introduces them amidst a system of foreign, that is to say, of Phœnician traditions.

Turning now to other objects, let us next see whether further inquiry will confirm the suggestions, which I have founded on the cases of Gaia and of Scamander.

At the head of Scamander are two fountains, and hard by them are the cisterns, which the women of the city frequent for washing clothes. Thus the spot is one of great notoriety; yet there is not a word of any deity connected with these fountains. This is in remarkable contrast with what we meet in Homer's Greek topography. Ulysses³²⁵, immediately on being aware that he has been disembarked in Ithaca, prays to the Nymphs of the grotto, which was dedicated to them. There they had their bowls and

³²⁵ *Od.* xiii. 356.

vases, and their distaffs of stone, with which they spun yarn of sea-purple³²⁶. And the harbour, in which he was landed, was the harbour of Phorcys, the old man of the sea³²⁷. So again at the fountain, where the people of the town drew water, there was an altar of the Nymphs that presided over it, upon which all the passers-by habitually made offerings³²⁸. Nor could this be wonderful, as all groves, all fountains, all meadows, and probably all mountains, had their proper indwelling Nymphs according to the Greek mythology; while the Rivers were impersonated as deities, and the sea too teemed at every point with preternatural life.

Trojan impersonations from Nature rare.

Homer has named many, besides Scamander, of the rivers of Mount Ida; but to none, not even to Simois, nor again to Ida or Gargarus themselves, does he assign any of these local inhabitants.

There are, however, three curious cases of Nymphs assigned by him to Troas. The *νύμφη νηΐς*, called Abarbaree, bears two sons to Bucolion³²⁹, a spurious child of Laomedon; and another nymph of the same class bears Satnius to Enops³³⁰. A

³²⁶ Od. xiii. 103.

³²⁷ Ibid. 96.

³²⁸ Od. xvii. 208-11.

³²⁹ Il. vi. 21.

³³⁰ Il. xiv. 444.

third similar case is recorded in the Twentieth Book³³¹. These would appear to be simple cases of spurious births, and to have no proper connection with mythology. For the mother of Satnius is called ἄμύμων; a name never applied by Homer to the Immortals. If, however, the Nymphs be deities, they mark another difference between Greece and Troy: for Homer never attributes lusts to the Nymphs of the Greek Olympus.

Amidst the whole detail of the Iliad, in one instance only have we Trojan Nymphs conceived after the Greek fashion: it is when those of the mountains, according to the speech of Andromache, planted elms round about the fresh-made tomb of her father Eetion.

As a general rule, no Trojan refers in speech either to any legend, or to any intermediate order, of supernatural beings. Destiny, named by Hecuba, is, as we have seen, a metaphysical idea, rather than a person³³².

The very name of Olympus itself is a symbol of nationality; and around it are grouped the forms, which either the popular belief, or the imagination of the Poet, incorporated into the company of objects for worship. They form a body wonderfully brilliant and diversified. They pervade the Greek mind in such a way, as to appear alike in its didactic, and its most deeply pathetic moods. The speech of Phoenix gives us the Parable of Ἄτη and the Λιταί: then the episode of Meleager, which is founded on

³³¹ Il. xx. 384.

³³² Il. xxii. 435. xxiv. 209.

the wrath of Diana: but into this legend itself, inserted into the speech, is again interpolated the separate legend of Apollo and Alcyone³³³. The speech of Agamemnon, in the Nineteenth Book, affords us another example³³⁴. The case is the same in the most pathetic strains. Achilles, in the interview with Priam, exhorts him to take food by the example of Niobe, and appends her tale³³⁵: Penelope, praying to Diana in the extremity of her grief, recites the tale of the daughters of Pandareus³³⁶. Even the Suitor Antinous points his address to Ulysses with the semi-divine legend of the Centaurs and Lapithæ³³⁷. Everywhere, and from all the receptacles of thought, mythology overflows. But in Troy the case is quite different. There the human mind never seems to resort to it, either for food or in sport. We find deities, priests, prophets, ceremonial, all apparently in abundance: in all of these, except the first, the Greeks are much poorer; but each of them, in and for himself, is in contact with an entire supernatural world, the creation of luxuriant and energetic fancy, which ranges alike over the spheres of sense and of metaphysics. Andromache, virtuous and sincere as Penelope, has no such mental wealth; her thoughts, and those of Hecuba and Priam, both ordinarily and also on the death of Hector, are limited to topics the most

³³³ Il. ix. 559.

³³⁴ Il. xix. 90-133.

³³⁵ Il. xxiv. 602-17.

³³⁶ Od. xx. 66.

³³⁷ Od. xxi. 295-304.

obvious and primitive, with which society, however undeveloped, is familiar. From this limitation, and from the nature of those legends respecting deities, of which the scene is laid in Troas, it seems reasonable to believe that the mythological dress is of purely Hellenic origin.

The dedication to Jupiter of the lofty and beautiful chestnut-tree³³⁸ near Troy, is in correspondence with the oak of Dodona, and indicates quite a different train of thought from those which conceived the Greek Olympus. It is probably both a fragment of nature-worship in its Oriental form, and likewise a portion of the external and ritual development, in which the religion of Troy was evidently prolific enough. And in this case the negative evidence of Homer is especially strong; because the great number of the particular spots on the plain of Troy, which he has had occasion to commemorate, constitute a much more minute topography there, than he has given us on any other scene, not even excepting Ithaca: so that he could hardly have avoided showing us, had it been the fact, that the religion of Troy entered largely into what Mr. Grote has so well called 'the religious and personal interpretation of nature.'

Next as to those divine persons of the second order, who are so abundantly presented to us by Homer in relations with the Greeks. Iris visits the Trojans thrice. First, she repairs to their Assembly in the form of Polites. Secondly, she appears to Helen, as her sister-in-law Laodice. She delivers her message to Priam

³³⁸ Il. v. 697, and vii. 60.

in the Twenty-fourth Book without disguise; perhaps because it was necessary³³⁹ that he should have the assistance of a deity seen and heard, in order to embolden him for a seemingly desperate enterprise. But there is nothing in his account of the interview, which requires us to suppose that the person Iris was known to Priam. The expression he uses is³⁴⁰

αὐτὸς γὰρ ἄκουσα θεοῦ καὶ ἐσέδρακον ἄντην.

And again, he calls her an Olympian messenger³⁴¹ from Jupiter. Another passage carries the argument a point further, by showing us that the appearance of this benignant deity was alarming, doubtless because it was strange, to him. When she arrives, she addresses him very softly τυτθὸν φθηγξαμένη (170): but he is seized with dread;

τὸν δὲ τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα·

an emotion, which I do not remember to have found recorded on any apparition of a divinity to a Greek hero.

Poverty of Trojan Mythology.

Thus far then it would appear probable, that in the Trojan mythology the list of major deities was more contracted than in Greece, and that the minor deities were almost unknown. But perhaps the most marked difference between the two systems is

³³⁹ Il. xxiv. 220.

³⁴⁰ Il. xxiv. 223, 194.

³⁴¹ Sup. p. [155](#).

in the copious development on the Greek side of the doctrine of a future state, compared with the jejune and shadowy character of that belief among the Trojans.

Jejune doctrine of a Future State.

In the narrative of the sack of Hypoplacian Thebes, and again in her first lament over Hector, Andromache does indeed speak of her husband, father, and brothers, respectively, as having entered the dwellings of Aides³⁴²

³⁴² Il. vi. 422. xxii. 482.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.