

called *acinacis*, and a shield made of wicker. Their horses were covered with the same scaly armor; and they employed war-chariots with scythes fixed at the extremity of the axles. They received no other pay than a share of the conquered spoil. In their military expeditions, the wives and children, with a large retinue of male and female slaves, followed the camp; an usage which we are apt to attribute to luxury and effeminacy, when we ought rather, perhaps, to account it a remnant of barbarous manners. In fight, the ancient Persians displayed great personal courage. They esteemed it dishonorable to employ any stratagems in war; and never fought in the night, unless when attacked by the enemy.

We find in the government of the ancient Persians, though extremely despotical, some particular institutions of uncommon excellency. The kingdom was divided into districts or separate provinces, over each of which presided a governor or *satrap*, who received his instructions immediately from the prince, and was obliged, at stated times, to give an account of his administration. To facilitate this intercourse between the provinces and the capital, the establishment of regular couriers or posts, a piece of policy of no ancient date in the kingdoms of Europe, was known in Persia at the time of Cyrus. The sovereign likewise appointed his commissioners to perform periodical circuits through the empire, and report to him every particular relative to the government of the satraps; and he frequently visited in person even the most distant provinces.

The encouragement of agriculture, the spring of population, and therefore one of the most important objects of attention in all governments where there is an extent of territory, was peculiarly the care of the monarchs of Persia. To cultivate the earth was one of the precepts of their sacred books; and the industry of the people, thus recommended by the sanction of a religious duty, was encouraged by the sovereign with suitable rewards, and remissness punished by a proportional increase of taxes. We are informed that, on one particular day in the year, the king partook in person of the feast of the husbandmen.

There were, under the Persian government, some regulations regarding the administration of justice, which are highly deserving of encomium. The rigor of penal laws often defeats its own purpose, for if the punishment exceeds its just measure, and the criminal becomes an object of pity, the influence of punishment as an example is in a great measure defeated; and offences, instead of being strictly coerced, will often be screened from the too severe vengeance of the law. In Persia, a first offence was never capitally punished. That vengeance was reserved only for the hardened and incorrigible criminal. In all cases the accused person was brought face to face with his accuser, who, if he failed to make good his charge, was himself condemned to the punishment which the accused must have undergone had the crime been

proved against him. The sovereign, in certain causes of importance, sat himself in judgment; though in the ordinary administration of justice, there were a certain number of judges chosen, on account of their acknowledged wisdom and probity, who made regular circuits through the provinces, and attended the sovereign in his stated visitations of his dominions. These held their offices for life; but were removable in cases of malversation. The story is well known of the judge, who, being guilty of corruption in his high function, was by Cambyses condemned to be flayed alive, and his skin hung over the seat of judgment.

There are few topics of antiquarian research which have been explored with more anxiety of investigation than the religion of the ancient Persians. The mind is naturally stimulated to inquire into a system of theology, which is not less remarkable for the purity of its moral precepts than for its extreme antiquity; as we have undoubted evidence that the same doctrines and worship which exist among a particular sect of the Persians at this day were the religion of this ancient people some thousand years ago.

The founder of this ancient religion is generally supposed to have been Zoroaster, as he is called by the Greeks, or Zerdusht, as he is denominated by the Persians; but the history of this personage is involved in much uncertainty. By some authors he is said to have lived before the time of Moses (A. C. 1571;) by others to have been contemporary with Ninus and Semiramis (A. C. 1216;) and by others again his era is placed as late as the accession of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, to the throne of Persia (A. C. 522.) These discordances have induced a supposition, that there were two remarkable persons of the name of Zoroaster; and this, which is the opinion of the elder Pliny, has been lately supported with many probable reasons by the Abbé Foucher. According to his notion, the elder Zoroaster was regarded by the Persians as the founder of their religion; while the younger of that name was only a zealous reformer of that ancient worship from the many superstitions with which, in course of time, it had become corrupted. To the first Zoroaster is attributed the composition of the *Zendavesta*, a collection of books which he pretended, like the Roman Numa, to have received from heaven. These books he presented to his sovereign Gustashp, the king of Bactriana; and confirmed their authority, and his own divine mission, by performing, as is said, some very extraordinary miracles. Gustashp became a convert, and abjured, along with the greater part of his subjects, the worship of the stars, represented by several idols, which was then the prevalent religion of those countries, and was termed *Sabaism*. Gustashp became so zealous a proselyte to the new faith, that he refused to pay an annual tribute to a prince of Scythia, unless on the condition that he likewise should renounce his idolatry; a request which the Scythian deemed so insolent, that he invaded Bactriana with an immense army, sacked the city

of Balk, destroyed the *Pyreum*, or Fire-Temple, in which Zoroaster officiated, and put him to death, together with eighty of the magi,* whose blood, as is reported, drowned out the sacred fire. But Gustashp had his revenge; for, collecting all his forces, he attacked and routed the Scythians with immense slaughter, regained his kingdom, and re-establishing the *Pyreum* of Zoroaster, put his religion upon a settled foundation.

The second Zoroaster appears with less splendor. He pretends to no other character than that of a zealous reformer, concerned for the ancient purity of his religion, which, in the course of many ages from the time of its founder, had become considerably corrupted. The whole order of the magi had, in the time of Cambyses, fallen into disrepute. We have seen how, from a very dishonorable imposition in substituting one of their own number for Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, whom that madman had put to death, they had incurred the odium of the whole nation. This event is said to have thrown a stain upon the religion of the *Zendavesta*, which was not wiped off till a reformation was operated by Darius, the son of Hystaspes. This prince was zealously attached to the ancient religion of Zoroaster; but knowing the unpopularity of the race of magi then existing, he abolished them entirely, and created a new order, at the head of which was the second Zerdusht or Zoroaster. He is believed to have been originally a Jew, or at least a person educated in Judea; whence he has grafted on the religion of the Persians a great deal of the doctrines of the Old Testament, both regarding the creation of the world, and the precepts of religion.

The *Zendavesta*, therefore, in the form in which it now appears, must be considered as a work of which the basis claims a most remote antiquity; while even what addition or improvement it received from the younger Zoroaster is of a date so ancient as 500 years before the birth of Christ.

This code of the ancient religion of the Persians, so remarkable for its antiquity, was, till lately, unknown, unless from some abstracts of its doctrines made by a few learned men who were

*The *magi* among the Persians were a class of men, who, like an established order of priesthood, exercised all the public functions of religion, and passed their time exclusively in those sacred duties, and in the cultivation of philosophy. Whether they were originally instituted by Zoroaster, as the priests of his religion, or subsisted before his time, while Sabaism was the religion of the Persians, is uncertain. They were not elected from the body of the people, but formed a distinct class or race of men,—the children of the magi succeeding to the function of their fathers; and being debarred from intermarrying with the people, these children are said to have been frequently the fruit of incestuous intercourse.—*Bruckeri Inst. Hist. Phil.* p. 49. They held a great many mysterious and abstruse doctrines, which they communicated only to the disciples of their own order; but made it likewise their employment to educate the youth of superior rank, and particularly the princes of royal descent, and to instruct them in morality and useful knowledge.

conversant in oriental literature. But it has been lately translated by a Frenchman, M. Anquetil de Perron, whose enthusiasm prompted him to undertake a journey to Persia, in order to explore every trace of that ancient religion. This translation has not contributed to raise the reputation of the *Zendavesta*. We find in it some excellent moral precepts, and a few sublime truths accidentally breaking out amidst a mass of absolute nonsense and incoherent raving. Those, however, who, with a strong prejudice in its favor, have endeavored to make a critical analysis of the work, and to methodize its opinion and doctrines, pretend to find in it not only a philosophical account of the origin of the world, but the purest principles of religion and morality, together with a code of laws for the regulation of civil society.

The cosmogony of the *Zendavesta*, according to the account of these expositors, supposes the first principle of all things to be time without bounds, or *eternity*. From this first principle proceed (but in what manner is not explained) the first *light*, the first *water*, and the original *fire*. From this first principle likewise sprung *Ormud* and *Ahriman*, secondary principles, but active and creative of all things; *Ormud*, a being infinitely good, and *Ahriman*, a being infinitely wicked. The duration of this world is limited to 12,000 years; a space of time which is equally divided between *Ormud* and *Ahriman*, who maintain a constant war for the sovereignty of created nature, and alternately prevail during the period of the duration of the universe; but the contest is to be finally terminated by the triumph of *Ormud* over *Ahriman*; good must subdue evil.

In the meantime, for maintaining their warfare, *Ormud* creates an immense number of *good genii*, and his opponent an equal number of *evil* ones. *Ormud* then proceeds to the creation of a perfect world; but is continually thwarted in his purpose, and has his works contaminated, by the malignant interference of his adversary. *Ormud* creates a *bull*, out of the body of which spring first all the different kinds of plants, and then all the various species of animals; man among the rest. But in this formation of the bull, *Ahriman* has likewise a joint operation; so that man, intended to be formed pure, uncorrupted, and immortal, has within him the seeds of impurity, corruption, and death. He deviates, of course, from the path of rectitude, and falls from his pristine innocence. His first offence is the neglect to pay a proper veneration to *Ormud* under the symbol of water; a crime which entails sin and mortality against all the descendants of the aggressor, and gives a great triumph to *Ahriman* and his *evil genii*.

These contentions between the good and the evil principle are supposed to endure till the accomplishment of Time. Man becomes subject to death in consequence of his sins; but when the period arrives, that the whole inhabitants of the earth shall be converted to the religion of Zoroaster, then shall be the resurrec-

tion of the dead with their earthly bodies and souls. The just shall be separated from the unjust; the former to be translated to Paradise, where they shall enjoy the highest pleasures, both of soul and body; the latter to be purified for an appointed space in burning metals, and cleansed from all their offences; after which, all created beings shall enjoy the most perfect happiness for ever. Ahriman and his evil genii shall undergo the same purification; and after his limited punishment, even he shall partake of the joys of eternity, repeat the Zendavesta, and join with all beings in the praises of Ormusd.

This doctrine of the two separate and eternal principles, a good and an evil, has had its advocates among many other religious sects besides the ancient Persians. It seems to be a natural effort of unenlightened reason to afford a solution of that great problem, the origin of evil. It was revived in the third century of the Christian era by a sect of heretics termed Manichees,* whose doctrine the skeptical Bayle has defended with much dangerous sophistry. But his arguments, and all others that are applicable to this controversy, tend to nothing else than to convince us of the imperfection of human reason, and the vain folly of man's pretences to subject to his limited understanding the schemes of Providence, or reconcile in every instance those anomalies which appear in the structure both of the physical and moral world.

Such is the system of cosmogony contained in these books of the Zendavesta, upon which the whole religion of the ancient *Parsi* was founded. The practical part of this religion, consisted, first, in acknowledging and adoring Ormusd, the principle of all good, by a strict observance of purity in thought, words, and actions: secondly, in showing a proportional detestation of Ahriman, his productions, and his works. The most acceptable service to Ormusd was observing the precepts of the Zendavesta, reading that work, and repeating its liturgies. The chief among its forms of prayer are addressed not directly to Ormusd, but through the medium of his greatest works, the sun, the moon, and stars.

* This sect arose about A. D. 277, and took its origin from one of the Persian Magi, named *Manes*. He professed to believe in Christianity, and in the principal doctrines of the New Testament; rejecting altogether the Old Testament, which he maintained was one of the delusions which had sprung from Ahriman, or the evil principle, for the purpose of keeping mankind in darkness, ignorance, and vice. For that reason, it was, as he maintained, that in the course of the contest which always subsists between the good and the evil principles—the good principle, under the person of Mithras or Christ, had abrogated the Old Testament, and revealed his perfect religion and worship in the New. Yet though the Manichees professed to receive the New Testament, they adopted in reality only what suited their own opinions. They formed a peculiar scheme of Christianity, which was mingled with many of the doctrines of the Magi; and whatever parts of the New Testament they found to be inconsistent with their scheme, they boldly affirmed to be corruptions and interpolations. This sect of the Manichees subsisted for many centuries, and even some of the earlier fathers of the Christian church were contaminated with its errors.

Mithras the sun, of all the productions of Ormusd, is supposed to be the most powerful antagonist of Ahriman. After these celestial objects, the terrestrial elements have the next claim to worship and veneration. Of these, the noblest is the fire, the symbol of the sun, and of the original heat which pervades all nature. The fire was therefore reckoned the purest material symbol of the divinity. The other elements of air, earth, and water, had each a subordinate respect paid to them; and it was an object of the most zealous care of the ancient *Parsi*, to keep them pure and uncorrupted. But this worship of the fire and the other elements was always inferior and subordinate to the adoration of Ormusd, with whose praises all their religious ceremonies began and ended.

But the object of these books of the Zendavesta was not only to reveal the divinity, and the knowledge of his works, and that peculiar worship which was most acceptable to him: they contained likewise a system of moral duties, and of civil regulations. These moral precepts and regulations are better known from the *Sadder*, a compilation made about three centuries ago by the modern *Parsi*, or *Guebres*, in which a great many of the absurdities contained in the Zendavesta are rejected or omitted.

From the *Sadder*, according to the analysis of it by M. Foucher, it appears that the principle of the morality of the *Parsi* was a sort of Epicurism. The indulgence of the passions was recommended, in so far as it is consistent with the welfare of society; and reprobated only when destructive or subversive of it. There is no merit annexed to abstinence or mortification; these extremes are equally reprobated with intemperance and debauchery. Adultery was held criminal, and so was celibacy or virginity. Murder, theft, violence, and injustice were crimes highly offensive to God, because destructive to the happiness of man. To cultivate an untilled field, to plant fruit-trees, to destroy noxious animals, to bring water to a dry and barren land, were all actions beneficial to mankind, and therefore most agreeable to the divinity, who wills perpetually the highest happiness of his creatures.

In a word, this religion of Zoroaster, delivered in the books of the Zendavesta, and abridged in the *Sadder*, which is still the code of belief and of worship among the *Guebres*, a sect of the modern Persians, appears to contain, along with a very erroneous system of theology, and amidst a mass of unfathomable incongruities and absurdities, some very striking truths, and many precepts of morality and practical rules of conduct which would do honor to the most enlightened Christians.

I have thus endeavored to give some idea of the genius and character of the ancient Persians, who were a people remarkable for a temperance and simplicity of manners, very different from the character they assumed after they had become a great and conquering nation. No people was ever more prone to adopt

foreign customs or foreign manners. They no sooner subdued the Medes than they assumed their dress; after conquering Egypt, they used the Egyptian armor; and after becoming acquainted with the Greeks, they imitated them, as Herodotus informs us, in the worst of their vices. But that they were originally a very different people, all ancient authors bear concurring testimony.

At the time when they engaged in the war with Greece, their national character had undergone an entire change. They were a people corrupted by luxury: their armies, immense in their numbers, were a disorderly assemblage of all the tributary nations they had subdued; Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, mingled with the native Persians; a discordant mass, of which the component parts had no tie of affection which bound them to a common interest.

Athens at this time had asserted her liberty by the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ, and was disposed to put a high value on her newly purchased freedom. The power and strength of the republic were at this time very considerable. Luxury had not yet spread her contagion on the public manners; and the patriotic flame was fervent in all ranks of the people. Even the slaves, who, as we before remarked, formed the chief mass of the population of the state, were an active and serviceable body of men; for being ever treated with humanity by the free citizens, they felt an equal regard for the common interest, and on every occasion of war armed with the spirit of citizens for the defence of their country. The Lacedæmonians had the same love of liberty, the same ardor of patriotism, and were yet more accustomed to warfare than the Athenians. In the contest with Persia, the spirit of the Greeks was raised to its utmost pitch; and it is in fact from this era that the Greeks, as an united people, begin to occupy the chief place in the history of the nations of antiquity.

BOOK THE SECOND

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF GREECE, continued.—Origin and cause of the WAR WITH PERSIA—Commencement of hostilities—Battle of Marathon—Miltiades—Aristides—Themistocles—Invasion of Greece by Xerxes—Banishment of Aristides—Thermopylæ—Salamis—Platæa and Mycæ—Disunion of the Greeks—Cimon—Pericles—Decline of the patriotic spirit.

HAVING in the last chapter given a short retrospective view of the origin of the Persian monarchy, and the outlines of its history down to the period of the war with Greece—together with a brief account of the government, manners, laws, and religion of the ancient Persians;—we now proceed to carry on the detail of the Grecian history, by shortly tracing the progress and issue of that important war, which may be said to have owed its origin to the ambition of Darius the son of Hystaspes, heightened by the passion of revenge. The Ionians, a people of the lesser Asia, originally a Greek colony, had, with the other colonies of Æolia and Caria, been subdued by Cræsus, and annexed to his dominions of Lydia. On the conquest of Lydia by Cyrus, these provinces of course became a part of the great empire of Persia. They were impatient, however, of this state of subjection, and eagerly sought to regain their former freedom. For this purpose, they sought the aid of their ancient countrymen of Greece, applying first to Lacedæmon, then considered as the predominant power; but, being unsuccessful in that quarter, they made the same demand, with better success, on Athens and the islands of the Ægean Sea. Athens and the islands equipped and furnished the Ionians with twenty-five ships of war, which immediately began hostilities on every city on the Asian coast that acknowledged the government of Persia. We remarked in a former chapter,* that after the expulsion of the Pisistratidæ from Athens, Hippias, the last of

* Book i. chap. x. *in fine*.