

their favor and friendship, crowded in the morning to pay their compliments. Pompey did not think it beneath him to appear at the levee of Cicero. The custom was to wait in the vestibule or ante-chamber, till the great man made his appearance; to pay him some compliment, couched either in wishes for his health or panegyric on his talents, or congratulation on any promotion which might have occurred, and afterwards to accompany him—either walking in his train, or attending by the side of his litter—to the senate-house, or to the forum, and thence to reconduct him home.

The lower ranks and the more servile and parasitical courtiers, who had many such visits to pay, must have necessarily begun very early in the morning. Juvenal humorously describes them as setting out by star-light, and does not even give them time to tie their garters.

These visits Pliny calls *ante-lucana officia*. They were sometimes so troublesome to the great man to whom they were paid, that it was not unusual for him to go out by a back door, and so give his visitors the slip. Horace, in his fifth epistle, playfully advises his friend Torquatus to escape the importunities of his clients by this sinister expedient:—

“rebus omissis,
Atria servantem postico falle clientem”

This liberty, however, we may rest assured, was not very often taken; for if, as we have above seen, the expedients of those ancient courtiers, who in these remote times solicited the patronage of the great in Rome, were in few respects different from that watchful and attentive assiduity which still distinguishes the same classes amongst ourselves, we may rely also that the great in Rome were no less ambitious of receiving these marks of distinction, than the powerful in this country. Popularity was there, indeed, always the first object of ambition; and when the great man made the tour of his circle at the levee, he was not, we may be assured, the least complaisant of his company. And, indeed, in the latter ages of the republic it was not enough for the great to show their affability by an empty salute or a simple squeeze of the hand; the courtiers were then accustomed to expect more substantial marks of their favor, and thought themselves ill used if they were not regaled with a breakfast of the most delicate viands, or repaid for their attendance by a present or a piece of money.

From the levee they next proceeded to the tribunal or to the forum—some, as concerned there either in private or public business, others for amusement to hear what was going on. There the time was spent till noon, which among the Romans was the hour of dinner, chiefly a very light repast, and of which it was not customary to invite any guests to partake. After dinner the youth repaired to the Campus Martius, and spent the hours till sunset in a variety of sports and athletic exercises. The elder

class retired for an hour to repose, and then passed the afternoon in their porticoes or galleries which, in the house of every man of rank, formed a conspicuous part of the building. Many of these were opened to the air, supported on pillars of stone or marble, under which they enjoyed the exercise of walking, and sometimes of being carried in their litters. Other galleries were sheltered from the air, and lighted by windows of a transparent talc or lapis specularis which supplied the place of glass.* These covered galleries were ornamented in the richest manner, and with the most expensive decorations—gilded roofs, paintings on the walls, and statues in the niches;—and adjoining to them were their libraries, which, in the latter days of the republic, became an article of great expense, and on the furnishing of which the higher classes used particularly to pique themselves. The sumptuous Lucullus exceeded all his contemporaries in this, as indeed in every other species of luxury. His library was more extensive than that of any other private citizen, and the use he made of it more noble. His porticoes, the halls where his books were arranged, and his gardens with which they communicated, were all open to the public. Strangers were more particularly welcomed, and his house, Plutarch informs us, became the asylum and the prytaneum of all the Greeks at Rome. In these galleries the master of the house amused himself in the evening in conversations with his guests, or in sports with his friends. There likewise the poets came to recite their works, although this practice was probably confined to the most ostentatious or the most needy, who in this way attempted to recommend themselves to a patron. “Non recito cuiquam (says Horace) nisi amicis, idque coactus.”

The houses of private citizens, and even of those of the higher classes, were of a very moderate size during the times of the republic. The Romans appear to have lived much in the open air, as a great part of their buildings consisted of vestibules and porticoes. The houses were detached from each other, and usually of one floor. The different apartments had each a single door, entering from the gallery or portico. These apartments, except the *triclinium* or hall, where they sat at meals, were generally small, and lighted only by one square window near the ceilings. The furniture of the house and its decorations were simple, the walls ornamented with fresco painting in a light and cheerful style. The larger houses had each a garden behind for the cultivation of vegetables, and a few trees to yield a refreshing shade in summer.

This luxury of walking and amusing themselves under cover was not long confined to the rich and the powerful. These, to increase their popularity, built porticoes for the use of the public,

* “Hibernis objecta notis specularia puros
Admittunt soles, et sine fæce diem.”—*Martial*.

and contended with each other in bestowing on them the most expensive adornments. In these porticoes all classes were to be found amusing themselves. Indeed idleness and luxury, towards the end of the republic, characterized equally the richer and the poorer citizens. They had approached that period so necessarily incident to every wealthy and overgrown state, when industry becomes a reproach, and amusement forms the engrossing object of life.

The passion for public games and magnificent spectacles constituted, at this period, a very striking feature in the Roman character. The shows of the amphitheatre rose naturally out of that taste for martial exercises, which we find in the first ages of every warlike people. About the 490th year of Rome, Marcus and Decimus Brutus presented a combat of gladiators for the first time at Rome. About a century after that period the *athletæ* were introduced for a public show; and there were combats of slaves with bears and lions. Sylla, during his prætorship, exhibited a combat where a hundred men fought with a hundred lions; and Julius Cæsar, during his ædileship, presented a show where there fought three hundred couples of gladiators.* It is astonishing to what a height the passion for these bloody entertainments was carried; and what is very remarkable was, that the spirit of luxury, which is in general found rather favorable to humanity, or at the least productive of a refinement of manners, amongst the Roman people, on the contrary, was marked by an increasing and unnatural ferocity in the public amusements—a circumstance not unworthy of attention from those who, in the present day, are advocates for those public fighting matches which, in point of brutality, are, perhaps, little inferior to the more mortal combats at Rome.

The Lanistæ, whose business it was to instruct these gladiators in their profession, taught them not only the use of their arms, but likewise the most graceful postures of falling when they were wounded, and the finest attitudes of dying in. The food of these unfortunate victims was likewise prescribed to them, and was of such a nature as to enrich and thicken the blood, so that it might flow more leisurely through their wounds, and thus the spectators might be the longer gratified with the sight of their agonies. These miserable beings were also accustomed, on entering their profession, to take an oath, of which the form has been preserved to us in a fragment of Petronius. “*In verba Eumolpi juravimus, uri, vinciri, verberari, ferroque necari, et quicquid aliud Eumolpus*

* Dion Cassius, in speaking of Pompey's shows, in which above five hundred lions were killed, besides elephants and other wild beasts, tells us it was a miserable spectacle, even to the populace, who were affected by the mournful cries of these poor animals; (Dion, b. xxxix.) and Cicero broadly condemns those inhuman spectacles, as in his time affording no delight to the mob who gazed upon them.—Cicero, Epist. ad Familiares, b. vii. Epist. 1.

jussisset tanquam legitimi gladiatores domino, corpora animosque religiosissime addicimus”—i. e. “We swear that we will suffer ourselves to be bound, scourged, burned, or killed by the sword, or whatever else Eumolpus ordains, and thus, like freeborn gladiators, we religiously devote both soul and body to our master.” Is it not dreadful that human nature should ever have been reduced to such a state of degrading and incomprehensible barbarity?

In a former chapter, on the progress of literature amongst the Romans, the entertainments of the theatre were discussed at some length, but amongst these entertainments none during the later periods of the commonwealth became so popular as the taste for pantomime. Schools were instituted where this art was publicly taught, and these, we read, were often more frequented by the younger patricians than the lectures of the orators. A decree of the senate was found necessary to prohibit its members from attending these indecent assemblies, and discharging all of the equestrian order from publicly courting and encouraging the performers of pantomime. We may conceive to what a pitch of degeneracy the public manners had arrived when we read that the affairs of the state were interrupted, and the minds of its ministers embroiled, by the contentions of the different parties who supported each their favorite actors, and that, on this account, it was more than once found necessary to expel them from the city.

Following the Romans through the ordinary occupations of the day, it was customary for them to go from the porticoes or the theatre to take the bath. Water, which in the more frugal days of the republic, was used only for the necessary purposes of life, was not brought to Rome by aqueducts till the 441st year of the city. It was till that time drawn from the Tiber, or from wells in the town. But it soon became one of the chief articles of luxury, to supply as well the public as the private baths, and many aqueducts were accordingly built, and public reservoirs and fountains reared in every quarter of the city. This luxury increased to such a degree that, under Augustus, there were seven hundred basins, a hundred and five fountains, and a hundred and thirty public reservoirs, all adorned in the most sumptuous manner, with columns, statues, and basso-relieues. To superintend these became an office of considerable dignity and emolument, and under the emperors was filled mostly by men of the first rank.

The practice of taking the cold bath was in early use in Rome, where the heat of the climate and the fatigue attending the athletic exercises made it requisite alike for the purposes of cleanliness and comfort. It was not till pretty late in the republic that the hot baths began to be introduced; but at last it became customary for all to take the warm bath before sitting down to supper. The rich had their baths in their own houses, in which, as in every other thing, they vied with each other in expense and magnificence. Seneca, when he speaks of this piece of luxury, tells us his countrymen dis-

dained to set their feet upon any thing but precious stones; and Pliny wishes old *Fabricius* alive, to witness the degeneracy of his posterity, whose seats in their private baths were made of solid silver. Under the later emperors, indeed, this luxury appears to have been carried to an almost incredible excess. The public baths built by Augustus, by Dioclesian, and by Caracalla, were sumptuous beyond description. These were open to all the citizens, who, for a trifling gratuity, had slaves to attend on them, to assist them in undressing, and to rub their bodies with flesh-brushes. The baths of Dioclesian were so large that they could accommodate 3,000 persons bathing at the same time. They were adorned with columns of the finest marble, and decorated with a profusion of statues and of paintings. They consisted of a variety of apartments destined not only for the purposes of bathing, but for various amusements, and even for literary and philosophic exercises. There were public libraries adjoining to the baths, halls of resort for the studious or for the idle, who met to talk over the news of the day; and to these also the poets resorted, as we have observed they did to the porticoes, to recite their compositions.

In the houses of the great, the bath was used immediately before they went to supper; and they came from the bath to the table in a loose sort of robe, called, from its use, *convivalis* or *triclinaria*. It was customary for them to sup between the ninth and tenth hours, which, when the sun rose at six, would correspond with our three or four in the afternoon, and at a proportional distance from sunset, as the days were longer or shorter. They must, therefore, have always sat down to supper with day-light, and indeed Vitruvius directs the supper-room to be constructed in such a manner that it shall have its aspect to the setting-sun: "*Hyberna triclinia recedentem solem spectare debent,*" lib. vi. c. 5; but they often, however early their hour of commencement, prolonged the entertainment through most of the night.

It is singular that, as with us moderns luxury has thrown the meals much later than they were in the more frugal days of our ancestors, the same cause was attended with very contrary effects at Rome. In the early ages of the commonwealth, when day-light was valuable for the purposes of labor and industry, the citizens did not sup till sunset, but in the more advanced periods of the Roman state, when the luxury of the table became one of the most serious concerns in life, it was found necessary to begin early, that time might not be found wanting for such important concerns. The custom of reclining on couches came not into use till the end of the sixth century, and for some time after it was adopted by the men, the Roman ladies, from motives of decency, continued to sit upright at table; but these scruples were soon removed, and all promiscuously adopted the recumbent posture, except the youth who had not yet attained the age of putting on the manly robe. They sat in a respectful posture at the bottom of the couch.

These couches were ranged along three sides of a square table, which was then called *triclinium*, as was likewise the chamber itself in which they supped. The fourth side of the table remained open for the servants to place and remove the dishes. Above was a large canopy of cloth suspended by the corners, to prevent the company being incommoded with dust. It was this custom that enables Horace to introduce a ludicrous accident, which he describes as occurring at a supper given by the niggardly, but ostentatious Nasidienus to Macænas, and some other courtiers. Whilst the landlord is enlarging on the praises of a favorite dish, and discussing the merits of the component ingredients of the sauce, the canopy falls down and involves every thing, host, guest, supper and dishes, in a cloud of dust and darkness.

"Interea suspensa graves aulæa ruinas
In patinam fecere trahentia pulveris atri
Quantum non Aquilo Campanis excitat agris." *
B. ii. Sat. 8.

Every feast was attended with a certain mixture of religious ceremony. It began and concluded with a libation to the gods. In barbarous nations we know there was ever a strong affinity between a repast and a sacrifice. The offerings to the gods consisted of what men esteemed always their choicest food, and the priests, as the ministers of the gods, ate the sacrifice. The practice of libation, also, was of the highest antiquity. It was universal both among the Greeks and Romans; and the idea of the meal being a religious ceremony, both with regard to the libations of wine, and the offerings of the meat to the priests, showed itself in several other particulars. It was esteemed a most solemn obligation, if a person laying his hand upon the table, should pronounce an oath. The *triclinium* was looked upon as an altar. The salt was also held sacred, and it was regarded as an unfavorable omen should it be spilled or overturned. It was customary, also, to place upon the table small *images* or *penates*—*Genii mensæ præsides*, or *epitrapetii*, as they were called, to whose honor it was chiefly that the libation was performed. These religious notions had this good effect, that amidst all their intemperance the Romans accounted it a species of sacrilege to allow a quarrel or an animosity at table, and the height of impiety to commit any violence or outrage. But these religious ideas could be only felt by a moderate and a virtuous people. When luxury had once spread its contagion, as was too certainly the case before the end of the republic, a few traces may remain in customs and ceremonies, but these can only be consid-

* In the time of Seneca, their halls of banquet were constructed with movable roofs, adorned with paintings, so that the ceiling was made to change along with the different courses. "*Versatilia cœnationum laquearia ita coaugmentat ut subinde alia facies atque alia succedat, et toties tecta quoties ferocula mutantur.*"—*Seneca*, Epist. 90.

ered as the shadows of ancient virtue, after the substance had long perished. Such was the case with regard to the ceremonies we have mentioned. They still continued in observance after luxury and debauchery had reached their utmost height; but all those ideas of religion which had been interwoven with them were gone for ever.

It would be a task at once disagreeable and unprofitable to describe minutely those excesses which are painted in the strongest and often the most disgusting colors by the ancient writers, both satirists and historians, or to dwell on the intemperance of those degraded times when, as Livy tells us, "a cook, who by their frugal ancestors was looked upon as the vilest and meanest of slaves, was considered as an officer of high importance, and that trade dignified by the name of an art, which before was regarded as the most servile drudgery."

It was a general custom, in preparing for a luxurious meal, to take a vomit a short time before sitting down to table. This was not regarded as a mark either of gluttony or epicurism, but was held to be done in compliment to the entertainer, that his guests might be enabled to carry off a greater quantity of his good fare. When Julius Cæsar paid a visit of reconciliation to Cicero by inviting himself to sup with him, he took care to let Cicero know that he had taken a vomit before hand, and was resolved to make a most enormous meal — and Cicero tells us he kept his word, which, for his own part, he took very kindly, and as a mark of Cæsar's high politeness. (Cic. Epist. ad Attic. 13, 52.)

Compared with that of the Romans, the luxury of the moderns would scarcely deserve the name of intemperance. Before the principal meal was placed on the table, it was customary to present an *antecæniûm* or collation, which consisted of pickles and spices, to provoke and sharpen the appetite. The thirst excited by this prelude to more serious occupation was allayed by a mixture of wine and honey, which they termed *promulsio*, and the stomach being thus prepared, the supper itself was presented, after a short interval. The expense ridiculously bestowed on these entertainments, and the labor employed in collecting the rarest and most costly articles of food, exceed all belief. In this, as indeed in every other species of luxury, there was the most capricious refinement of extravagance. Suetonius mentions a supper given to Vitellius by his brother, in which, among other articles, there were 2000 of the choicest fishes (*lectissimorum piscium*.) 7000 of the most delicate birds—one dish, from its size and capacity, was named the *agis*, or *shield of Minerva*. It was filled chiefly with the livers of *scari* (a delicate species of fish,) the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of parrots (imagined, probably, to be tender from their much chattering,) and the bellies of lampreys, brought from most distant provinces. This may serve as some specimen of the luxury of the Roman suppers.

Their entertainments were accompanied with every thing fitted to flatter the senses and to gratify the appetite. Musicians, male and female dancers, players of farce and pantomime, jesters and buffoons, and even gladiators exhibited whilst the guests sat at table. In order, if possible, to restrain such extreme luxury, a variety of sumptuary laws were promulgated from time to time, some of them limiting the number of dishes, others the number of guests, and others the expense to be bestowed on an entertainment, but all these attempts were completely unsuccessful. How, in effect, could it have been possible to bring back ancient simplicity, unless they could have also recalled ancient poverty? When a state has once become generally opulent, the expenses of the rich must keep pace with their fortunes, otherwise the poor would want employment and subsistence. It is luxury that is silently levelling that inequality, or at least keeping fortunes in a constant fluctuation, giving vigor in this manner to all those various parts of the political machine, which would be otherwise apt to lose their strength and pliability for want of motion. We may wish that Rome had remained poor and virtuous, but, being once great and opulent, it was to have required an impossibility that she should not have been luxurious.

CHAPTER V.

On the Art of War among the Romans.

WE have seen the Romans engaged for many ages in continual wars, first with the petty states of Italy, and afterwards with foreign nations. From the prodigious success which attended the arms of this remarkable people, and from the dominion which they accomplished, at length, over almost the whole of the known world, it is a necessary inference that they must have carried the knowledge of the art military to a higher degree of perfection than any other of the ancient nations: to whatever collateral or partial causes we may attribute the success of some of their warlike enterprises, the great and leading cause of those rapid and extensive conquests could have been nothing else than the excellence of their military discipline, compared to that of the nations whom they subdued. "It was not," says Vegetius, "to the superiority of numbers,