

THE
REPUBLIC OF CICERO,

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN;

AND ACCOMPANIED WITH A

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

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or votes. The first class consisting of men of rank and property, with the centuries of horse, had ninety-six votes ; leaving ninety-seven votes to the other five classes. In order, however, to give the ascendancy to the first class in the least offensive way, the century of blacksmiths and carpenters was added to the first class, under pretence of their great utility to the city ; but really because they were dependent upon the first class and the cavalry for employment, and could be relied upon. In this manner the first class secured a majority of ninety-seven votes. The second book closes with a declaration from Scipio, that unless the most perfect justice is observed, no government can prosper.

The third book opens with a philosophical analysis of the faculties of man, introductory to the great principle of the immutable nature of justice, which it appears was fully discussed in this book, of which so small a portion is preserved. A splendid picture is drawn in the second section of an accomplished statesman, such as Cicero himself had aimed to be, and which from a passage in one of his letters to Atticus, appears to have been farther elaborated in the sixth book. It relates to a triumph about which he felt some anxiety after his government of Cilicia. " If this idea of a triumph which even you approve, had not been infused into me, you would not have had to look far for

the perfect citizen described in the sixth book.”* Philus is called upon to defend the cause of injustice after the manner of Carneades the Greek sophist. The powerful passage contained in the seventeenth section is delivered by him. It was reserved for Lælius to close the discussion as the advocate of justice. Scarce any part of his discourse is preserved. Some fragments have, however, been collected by Professor Mai, preserved by Nonius the Philologist, and by Lactantius. In the one, Lælius is made to declare, that the Roman youth ought not to be permitted to listen to Carneades, who if he thought as he spoke, was a bad man; and if he was not, as he preferred to believe, his discourse was nevertheless detestable. One of the passages from Lactantius is that well known exposition of eternal right, or natural law of justice of which conscience is the voice.

“There is indeed a law, right reason, which is in accordance with nature; existing in all, unchangeable, eternal. Commanding us to do what is right, forbidding us to do what is wrong. It has dominion over good men, but possesses no influence over bad ones. No other law can be substituted for it, no part of it can be taken away, nor can it be abrogated altogether. Neither the people or the senate can absolve us from

* Let. to Att. vii. §.

it. It wants no commentator or interpreter. It is not one thing at Rome, and another thing at Athens: one thing to-day, and another thing to-morrow; but it is a law eternal and immutable for all nations and for all time. God, the sole Ruler, and universal Lord, has framed and proclaimed this law. He who does not obey it, renounces himself, and is false to his own nature: he brings upon himself the direst tortures, even when he escapes human punishments.”*

The fourth book of which a mere fragment is preserved, appears to have treated of domestic manners, the education of youth, and of Roman life, public and private. We have lost here many fine pictures of the simplicity of Roman manners, at that flourishing period of the republic, as well as of the progress of luxury, which was not inconsiderable. A fragment of this book is preserved in Nonius, where Scipio opposes the collection of a revenue, necessary perhaps to make good those deficiencies which extravagance had produced. “*Nolo enim eundem populum imperatorem et portitorem esse terrarum. Optimum autem et in privatis familiis et in republica vectigal duco esse parsimoniam.*” “I am not willing that the same people should be the sovereigns and the toll-gatherers of the world.

* Lact. Inst. vi. S.