

**THE PRIVATE TUTOR: OR,
THOUGHTS UPON THE
LOVE OF EXCELLING AND
THE LOVE OF EXCELLENCE**

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The Private Tutor: Or, Thoughts Upon the Love of Excelling and the Love of Excellence by Basil Montagu

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BASIL MONTAGU

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1777
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1820.
G. O. H.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

WITH THE AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF
THIRTY YEARS UNINTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP,
THIS TRACT IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO
THE REVEREND FRANCIS WRANHAM,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



Preface.

AFTER having passed a few days at Salamis, upon the shores where Xerxes was defeated and Solon was born, I sailed with a fair wind, and in less than an hour anchored in the Piræus, now called Porto Leone.

In my way to Athens we passed along the ruins of Themistocles's wall, by a road in the midst of a beautiful plain covered with vineyards and olive-trees, bounded on one side by mountains and on the other by the sea. Upon approaching the city I saw the temple of Theseus, built by the Athenians soon after the battle of Marathon; and at a small distance the temple of Jupiter Olympius, which contained the most celebrated works of art, the gifts of all the cities of Greece. A few beautiful marble pillars, with their friezes, architraves, and

cornices, are now the only remains of this once magnificent structure.

Near to it are the ruins of the temple of the winds. The Triton which stood at the top, so contrived as to point with his wand to each wind, is no more to be seen; but the figures with their proper attributes may be traced. I easily discovered the God Zephyrus represented as a beautiful young man gliding with a scarcely perceptible motion and surrounded by flowers.

Above all stands the Parthenon, the most renowned temple in Greece. Here the people of Attica, regardless of their several religious dissensions, joined in an unanimous worship. As I was passing between two of the columns I perceived some men watching me with a sort of suspicion and jealousy, which being little disposed to encounter, I avoided and quitted the city. I quitted it with the sad consciousness that the whole of this country, the plains of Marathon and the pass of Thermopylæ, are under the dominion of the Turks.

Athens is governed by a Vaivode, who buys the office of the chief of the black eunuchs, to whom the whole revenue belongs.

I am always disposed rather to discover the cause of misery than to distress or indulge myself in lamentations over its existence. The decline and fall of empires proceed from causes as certain in their operation as any other cause in nature. I saw in the horizon the island of Calauria, where Demosthenes is buried: I was on the very spot where he opposed the misguided multitude; where he in vain exhorted a heedless people to remember that, as vice hurries individuals to destruction, it converts a living nation into a sepulchre. The city is a ruin; the country is governed by unlettered barbarians: but it is some consolation to reflect that the mighty heart is not still. "Of all those massive temples," says a favourite author, "which for pomp or pleasure were builded in goodly Athens, scarcely one stone doth stand upon another: and yet those strains which were chaunted by sweet Menander, learned

“ Euripides, lofty Sophocles, scarce noted by the
“ vulgar, and counted by the most but as thin air;
“ these are familiar to our ears, our instructors at
“ school, our solace in old age: and the walls that
“ did echo them are laid low: so will it ever be when
“ the hand of man doth strive with the imperish-
“ able spirit, the mortal with the immortal.” With
this consolation I proceeded.—On my left was the
river Ilyssus: on my right, close under the walls of
the Acropolis, the theatre of Bacchus, where the
Athenians performed their dramas and where the
statues of their dramatic poets were placed. I passed
over the hill where the poet Musæus is buried, to the
very spot where the Academy, where the schools of
Pythagoras, of Plato, of Isocrates, and of Aristotle
flourished.

The thoughts of an Englishman, in joy or in
sorrow, turn untravelled to his own country. And
did these schools produce more celebrated philoso-
phers, orators, historians, poets, and princes, than
the universities of England? Were the youth of