

and in many libraries, Bynkershoek, Heineccius, and Valin, have taken their place by the side of Blackstone and Coke. Our printed reports show the fruits of this liberal study. They are not filled with technical subtilties, nor are they merely *libelli de stillicidiorum ac de parietum jure*. That they are not read in England, and quoted in her courts of justice, is another proof of the prejudice we have just mentioned; and it is a prejudice, which we should be the last to imitate in our own conduct. We should rejoice to find English lawbooks in our courts of justice, as we do to see English machinery in our manufactories. We have little doubt that we shall improve upon both.

ART. VI.—*Orpheus Poetarum Græcorum Antiquissimus*.
 AUCTORE GEORGIO HENRICO BODE. Commentatio
 Præmio regio Ornata. Gottingæ, 1824. 4to. pp. 185.

THREE poems of considerable extent, with many fragments, have descended to us from antiquity, under the name of Orpheus. It has been found impossible, at the present day, and with all the certainty resulting from the art of printing, to ascertain the authorship even of many works in popular circulation. To say nothing of such instances as Junius; the cases of Rowley and Ossian prove how easy it is to fabricate a work, which shall pass for genuine even with sagacious professional critics. The case of Eikon Basilike is still more memorable. That work was more rapidly circulated, probably, than any book ever written. Fifty editions of it were published in the course of a year. All the industry, stimulated by all the virulence of party, was exercised to detect the true author. The controversy was keenly agitated, during the lifetime of the eye witnesses to its composition and publication; and yet, says Hume, 'the proofs, brought to evince that this work is or is not the king's, are so convincing, that if an impartial reader peruses any one side apart, he will think it impossible, that arguments could be produced to counterbalance so strong an evidence.' Some of the plays of Shakspeare are further cases in point; and in

the instance of *Gil Blas*, we see a most popular work disputed, not between two authors but between two languages;—the Spanish version of that work purports to be a retranslation of it into its original idiom.

It is therefore not strange, that the classical writings of antiquity, works which had their origin at the grey dawn of intellectual day, which were circulated only in single written copies, which perhaps were transmitted for some generations only in the chant of the minstrels, and which again, after the decline of the arts of the classical age, were exposed to all the casualties of the dark and ignorant ages, and have come down to us at last in many cases, in a single manuscript,—it is not strange, we say, that writings like these should be the subject of perpetual controversy as to their authorship. These controversies are indeed, as to main points, rapidly clearing up. That a large class of compositions, ascribed to certain renowned primeval poets, are not genuine, has for some time been not so much matter of demonstration, as of critical intuition; and nothing has been left, but to settle in what age and by what grammarian, the fabrication was made.

With respect to the Poems, under the name of Orpheus, the *Argonautica*, the Hymns, the *Lithica*, and several of the fragments, critics, second to none of the last generation, are inclined to ascribe them to a very early period. We need name only such scholars as Gessner and Ruhnken. On the other hand, Mr Tyrwhit, one of the most learned and sagacious of the English Hellenists, Schneider, and Hermann, the latest and acutest editor of these Orphic Poems, bring them down even to the third or fourth century of the christian era. In conducting the inquiry into the age of these remains, the preceding critics had generally confined themselves to external probabilities, to geographical and historical tests, to the style and language as matters of taste, from which an indication of the period when they were produced might be drawn. Thus Gessner, in the prolegomena to his edition, which at the time it was published (1764) was the best, argues from the geographical details in the *Argonautica*, that the author of that poem must have lived at a very early period; while (so precarious are these speculations) Schneider, by a far more accurate and masterly examination of the same geographical hints, draws the opposite inference. Ruhnken says, that, on

a careful perusal of these poems, he is struck with nothing, which betrays the taste of a modern age.

It was plain, in this almost ridiculous diversity of judgment, on the part of the first critics, that some new test, of more searching efficacy, or less liable to error in the application, must be resorted to, or the question given up as insoluble. Such a test was found out and applied by Hermann, whose unrivalled skill in the Greek Grammar and Greek Metres abundantly qualified him for the task ;—a test, which must be allowed to be far more sure and safe than any general *feeling*, by which we may suppose that we recognise, in a certain style and manner, the taste, or in a few vague, geographical, and historical data, the knowledge, of a particular age. In his *Dissertatio de Ætate Scriptoris Argonauticorum*, subjoined to his edition of the Orphica, after giving a brief account of the state of the controversy, he examines the structure of the Orphic verse. He first indicates the progressive modification of the hexameter verse, through the series of the epic and didactic hexameter writers, pointing out the gradual changes which it underwent from the time of Homer, till it was wholly remodelled by Nonnus, who lived in the fifth century, and who wrote a poem in fortyeight books on the exploits of Bacchus, and a paraphrase on the Gospel of Saint John ; a choice of subjects, taking them together, which has been matter of scandal. It would take us widely out of our limits to follow Hermann into the *minutiæ* of this inquiry ; nor is it in any degree necessary for our present purpose, which is to prepare our readers for a few remarks on Mr Bode's Dissertation. It will be sufficient to observe here, that Hermann detects, in the hexameters of the Orphic poems, those peculiarities, which show that their author must have lived in the fourth century of the christian era, just before the hexameter verse received its last considerable modification, under the hands of Nonnus. To show, that in conducting this investigation, Hermann has not fallen into the error of his predecessors, in building too much on points of mere taste, which are disputable, we will only further remark, that, with singular acuteness and learning, he pursues the inquiry, under the heads of the trochaic cæsura in the fourth foot ; the lengthening of the doubtful vowels on account of the cæsura ; of the hiatus ; of the shortening of long vowels by the Attic poets ; of

the use of the pronouns *ᾧ* and *σφίῳ*; and lastly, of the general diction and choice of words in these Orphic remains. It appears to us, we confess, impossible, that any one should rise from the perusal of this masterly dissertation, with any doubt on his mind, that these poems are the production of a comparatively recent age of Grecian metrical art.

With respect to the *Argonautica*, the oldest period, which has been assigned to this poem, is that of Onomacritus, under the princes of the house of Pisistratus. This priest had been appointed conservator of the oracles of Orpheus and Musæus, relics of the ancient national religion, which were preserved with superstitious veneration at Athens. Having been detected by Lasus, a lyric poet, (Herodot. VII, 6,) in interpolating these oracles, he was displaced and banished by Hipparchus, and took refuge at the Persian court. To this person, Tatian (adv. Græcos. p. 138,) ascribes the composition of the *Argonautica* and other poems bearing the name of Orpheus; and in this he has been followed by a multitude of ancient and modern writers. It is the opinion of Gessner, borrowed from some of the ancient grammarians, that Onomacritus did not *write* these poems, but that he transfused them, out of the ancient form and dialect, in which they previously existed, into a more modern dress, with additions and refinements of his own. This opinion is treated with great but not undeserved severity by Mr Bode, (Dissertat. p. 92,) and the probable origin of it suggested. Ruhnken is willing to ascribe the *Argonautica* and other Orphic poems to a person as old at least as Onomacritus; and Wolf (Prolegomena, p. 247) uses the expression, *de vetusto auctore Argonauticorum Orphicorum*. But the result of the examination made by Hermann of the structure of the verse, brings down the poem too decisively to the late period already mentioned, to admit a longer doubt. We will only add, that it is quoted or referred to by no ancient author, not even those in *pari materia*, as Apollonius Rhodius.

The *Lithica* is placed by Mr Tyrwhit about the year 357, under the emperor Constantius. He infers this from a couple of lines, 74, 75, in which the fate of the bard is intimated to have been the consequence of an accusation of magic. The first law, making magic capital, dates from the time just mentioned; but as under Domitian edicts were issued for the ex-

pulsion of philosophers and magicians from Italy, and it is in itself more likely, that the poet should have written in exile than under sentence of death, it may rather be inferred that he lived some time before Constantius. Whenever this poem was written, it appears to have lain long concealed in the libraries; for it is first cited by John Tzetzes, in the twelfth century. It is the opinion of Tyrwhit, that it came anonymously into the hands of Tzetzes, and was by him ascribed to Orpheus. Some have supposed that this is the same poem, which is mentioned by Suidas in the tenth century, under the name of Orpheus *περὶ λίθων*. That poem, however, treated of eighty kinds of stones; this treats of twentytwo. The poem, mentioned by Suidas, dwelt on the mode of engraving stones, while the Orphic Lithica now extant touches their magical and medicinal qualities, as antidotes, and their efficacy in conciliating the gods.

The *Hymns* extant under the name of Orpheus, have been supposed, by most critics, to be more ancient productions, either than the *Argonautica* or *Lithica*. Tiedeman, in his account of the earliest philosophers of Greece, has given a minute analysis of them. Although from their nature as contrasted with the *Lithica* and *Argonautica*, we should be prepared to find in them more of the genuine ancient Orphic poetry, than in any other of the productions that bear the name of this primeval bard; yet a large portion also of the hymns appears to be the fabrication of a recent age, and of the platonising Christians. They contain some splendid addresses to the divine principle; but so corrupted with pagan attributes, that Heinsius was led to pronounce them 'a true liturgy of Satan.' These hymns, to the number of eightysix, were translated by Joseph Scaliger into Latin hexameters, in the space of five days; a translation, of which it is well observed by Fabricius, that it requires no common reader, and often stands in need of an interpretation from the original. Some of these hymns are forms of invocation; some designed to be used at the ceremonial of initiation into the mysteries; some, strictly speaking, hymns, in honor of the divinities to whom they are inscribed.

Without describing the fragments of Orpheus, which Tiedeman discusses in the same minute manner, enough has now been said to give the reader a general notion of the poems,

that remain under the name of Orpheus, at least as respects authenticity and authorship. The result of the whole is, that there is no reason for believing any of them to be genuine, or to be the production of an age much nearer than a thousand years, to that when Orpheus lived. These general views we have regarded, as a necessary introduction to the brief account we would now give of Mr Bode's Dissertation.

This performance received the prize given by the Royal Academy of Sciences, at Göttingen, and forming, as it probably does, the *coup d'essai* of its young author, is certainly a most honorable monument, not merely to his erudition, but to the far rarer merit, his sagacity and judgment. Mr Bode does not enter at all into the particular description of any of the works, that have descended to us under the name of Orpheus. Assuming their spuriousness, he aims only to establish the country, age, and character of the poet; and of him not as one historical personage, but only as the representative of a primeval school of bards; in like manner, as, since the publication of Wolf's prolegomena, Homer himself is no longer considered in the light of one historical personage, but as the head and representative of an entire school. If it be thought, on the one hand, that a disputation relative to a poet, whose personality is not contended for, and whose name only is used for convenience, to designate a succession of bards, that probably flourished during several ages; a disputation proceeding (not like that on the Homeric Poems) upon the actual inspection and criticism of the preserved works of the school, but on casual notices gleaned from subsequent authors;—if it be thought that this must be of somewhat shadowy and over subtle character; it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the object mainly on this occasion was to give proof of learning and ingenuity; that nothing is more unreasonable than to judge of an occasional performance, by any other test, than its adaptation to the occasion; and that Mr Bode is in no degree responsible for the choice of the subject.

Although it appears in the modest guise of a prize dissertation, this performance is a quarto volume of near two hundred pages, of which at least two third parts are in the fine type of the notes. It is therefore a work of compass and

labor. It consists of a prolegomena and three chapters. In the prolegomena, the author treats what the Germans call technically the *literature* of the subject. He gives an account of the sources, from which, in a period of subsequent antiquity, information was to be gathered of the nature of the Orphic poetry, and from which it may yet be gathered, as far as those sources are still accessible; and then mentions the modern treatises either wholly or partly devoted to this subject.

As regards the ancient sources, Mr Bode, in contradiction on the one hand, to those who have erroneously averred that Orpheus is commemorated by Homer and Hesiod, and, on the other hand, that the first mention is made of him by Pindar or Herodotus, has justly named Pherecydes Lerijs and Terpander, as the oldest authorities. After Terpander, our author makes it probable that the name of Orpheus was known to the Logographi, who preceded the classical historians; and who, from the lyric and still more the cyclic poets of their own and an earlier age, must have derived a traditional acquaintance with Orpheus. There are manifest traces that Pherecydes of Athens and Hellanicus had paid particular attention to the traditions relative to Orpheus; and Herodotus, whom Mr Bode refers to the same class of writers, wrote a work, as we learn from a passage of Olympiodorus preserved in Photius, expressly on the subject. After this period, our author does not think it necessary to enter into an enumeration of all the names; and specifies only Androtion and Philochorus, as writers *de rebus Atticis*, who appear to have treated expressly of Orpheus.

In a like cursory manner are passed over the ancient authors on literary history and biographical writers, some of whom, by strong presumption, and most, as we certainly know, made mention of Orpheus. Mr Bode, in passing, commends and asserts the opinion quoted by Cicero from Aristotle, '*Orpheum poetam nunquam fuisse*;' an alarming judgment, it must be owned, for a tractate entitled *Orpheus Poetarum Græcorum antiquissimus*; but sufficiently explained, in the intimation we have already given of Mr Bode's views, as to the personality of Orpheus. Our author next briefly alludes to the labors of the Alexandrian grammarians,

of the platonising Christians, and of the Jew, Aristobulus, who appears, in the time of Ptolemy Physcon—*ab inflato ventre sic appellatum*—to have given the first impulse to that unwise criticism, by which the fathers of the Greek church were so long fascinated, namely, that of deducing all the sublime notions of the Greek poets on the subject of the gods, or the divine principle, from the Jewish Scriptures. We have not time to analyse the few sections, in which the labors of modern scholars on the subject are commemorated by our author. He refers to a work of the renowned antiquary Zoega, *Reliquiæ Hafnienses*, in which everything contained in the ancients relative to Orpheus is collected; it having been the design of this learned Dane, as we read in Mr Welcker's notice of him, to publish an edition of the Orphic remains.

Having thus prepared the way, by this learned indication of the sources of information from which a knowledge of the subject may be gained, Mr Bode proceeds, in chapter first, to ascertain the *period* of the Orphic Poetry. This period is fixed by him at the age preceding Homer. This proposition involves a learned inquiry into the age of Homer, and the date of the Trojan war. In the result of this inquiry, Mr Bode assumes the middle of the tenth century before our Savior, as the period of the Homeric poems; and throws back the commencement of the Orphic school to the thirteenth century.

Connected with this part of the discussion is one equally original and learned, of the question, whether epic poetry had its origin in Ionia. The affirmative of this question, we need not say, is almost universally held; but we advise all, who can bear to have their fixed opinions shaken, to read what Mr Bode has advanced on this topic, pages 63—69. That the age of Orpheus preceded that of Homer is established by the nature of the case, which requires that a lyric should precede an epic school; and by the historical fact, that all the most ancient names recorded of Greek poets, belong to the style of Orpheus, and not to the epic. In a strain rising into true eloquence, our author sets forth the condensation into one personage, under one name, in those ages of the world, which precede historical monuments, of whole genera-

tions of poets, heroes, and men. No abstract or translation would do full justice to his reflections on this theme, and we must accordingly refer our readers to the eighteenth section of his work, p. 72. The other topics treated in this section, such as the great Doric revolution; the labors of the princes of the family of Pisistratus, on the poems as well of the Orphic as the Homeric school; the fate of the Orphic poetry among the disciples of Pythagoras and at Alexandria, are all treated in a masterly manner, but one, from the cumulative nature of the argument, and the great compression of matter, not capable of much abridgment.

The second chapter is devoted to the *country* of Orpheus, or rather of the Orphic poetry. Mr Bode has here also ventured to dissent from the general opinion, which makes the Thrace of the classical age, that is, the country north of the Hellespont and the Ægean, the primitive abode of refinement; and maintains, on the contrary, that *the* Thrace thus signalised, was the lower regions of Macedonia and Thessaly. He assumes the Thracians to have been more ancient than the Hellenes, and, with the Pelasgi, one of the primitive tribes of Greece. In this connexion, we find very profound and ingenious remarks on the Pelasgi, and the primitive dialect of Greece; and in opposition to the mass of writers, who regard the epic or Homeric as the oldest form of the language, Mr Bode confers that character on the Doric. The most operative causes of the decline of the Orphic, and the rise of the Homeric school, are found by our author, in the circumstances attending the Doric revolution and the colonisation of Ionia.

The last chapter treats the *nature* of the Orphic Poetry. Denying that any dependence can be placed on the productions, which now bear the name of Orpheus, and which are of epic, didactic, and lyric nature, Mr Bode resorts exclusively to the hints found in ancient authors, and to sagacious reasonings on the progress of the human mind and taste, to solve the last remaining problem. We presume that few will be inclined to refuse assent to his conclusion, that the Orphic poetry was lyrical in its style and religious in its matter; and that its principal compositions were hymns. It is impossible for us within our limits, to follow him through

this last branch of the subject, and we will only observe, that his remarks on the Grecian poetic cosmogonies, on the mysteries, on the twofold Dionysius of the ancient Greeks, on the union of the mythology of Apollo and Bacchus, on the Orphic lyre, are characterised by a display of choice learning.

On the whole, this essay marks a scholar of rare promise; and it encourages us to expect much from a work, which Mr Bode has announced in his preface, a history of the Greek poets, written in German, on the plan of Bouterwek's history of poetry and fine writing in the modern languages. Experience and time will correct the only imperfections we have noted in this interesting writer; an occasional discursive profusion of learning, and sometimes a tartness of manner, in speaking of living writers, especially the French, which philologists, we know, are apt to assume, but which is better spared.

We own we have been at the greater pains to fix the public attention, through the medium of this journal, on Mr Bode's work, because its ingenious author has lately taken up his abode among us, and deserves a hearty welcome from the friends of learning and of education. He has been tempted from flattering prospects in Germany, to cross the Atlantic, not unattended with the warm recommendation of the fathers of science at Georgia Augusta. We rejoice that he will find, in the admirable institution of Messrs Cogswell and Bancroft, a worthy field of exertion; the cooperation of liberal associates in the formation of ingenuous minds. We trust he will yet have the happiness of hearing not a few of the scholars of the next generation, boast of the favored spot to which he has been called, in his own expressive words, '*ex illius terræ saltugosis montibus et consecratis lucis alma Musarum numina, mitem Gratiarum cupidinisque cultum, et mansuetam Apollinis et Dionysii religionem ad se descendisse.*'