

sample of a witty saying from Plutarch's mint is that attributed to Themistocles, that his son was the most powerful man in Greece. "For," said he, "the Athenians rule the Hellenes, I rule the Athenians, your mother rules me, and you rule your mother." We must cite one or two others from the many examples from Plutarch. This is attributed by him to Leotychidas, son of Aristo. "A snake having twined itself round a key, which was declared by the seers to be a portent, Leotychidas remarked, "It would have been more of a portent if the key had twined itself round a snake." Others are connected with ornithology, like the apothegm of one who plucked the feathers from a nightingale, and finding it a very small bird, exclaimed, "You little wretch, you're nothing but voice;" and again, the repartee of a Laconian to a man of Sparta, who twitted him with being unable to stand as long as himself on one leg. "No!" replied the other, "but any goose can." This *bon mot*, as it is called by Urban Chevreau in his *Ana* (vol. vii., p. 5), is told with reference to persons who set great store on very frivolous accomplishments; but neither in the Greek nor in the translation have we lit upon a reference to evidence of the fact which the repartee seems to assume. "When Demades, the orator, remarked that the swords of the Spartans were so short that they could be swallowed by conjurors, Agis, the younger king of that name, replied, 'We find them quite long enough to reach the enemy.'" Here the wit exerted is of a truly Spartan tenor, but the anecdote of Cleomenes's oath to give the Argives a truce for seven days, and excusing his perfidious slaughter of them in their sleep on the third night—"It was a truce for seven days"—is surely not wit, but subterfuge. Elsewhere, as for example, in some extracts from Lucian (we except the extracts from his tract on *Demonax*), it is not very easy to see the point so clearly as to justify their admission into the area of Greek wit. The story of Hippocleides, the devil-may-care son of Tisandrus, with the remark of Agaristes's father, "O son of Tisandrus, you have danced away your bride"; and the undignified dancer's reckless reply, "Hippocleides don't care," perhaps belong rather to humour than to wit. Others of Mr. Payley's drafts on Herodotus come more easily into the prescribed area. An anecdote of Strabo gives a vivid picture of the clashing of a harper's performances with the sounding of a bell for opening of the fish market. All the audience vanished at once save a little