

times were competitors for the *Olympic* crown. We see the kings of Macedon, the tyrants of Sicily, the princes of *Minor Asia*, and at last the lords of imperial Rome, and emperors of the world, incited by a love of glory, *the last infirmity of noble minds*, enter *their* names among the candidates, and contend for the envied palm—judging their felicity completed, and the career of all human glory and greatness happily terminated, if they could but interweave the *Olympic* garland with the *laurels* they had purchased in fields of blood.

The *Olympic* exercises principally consisted in *running*, *wrestling*, and the *chariot race*—for *leaping*, throwing the *dart* and *discus*, were parts of what they call the *Pentathlon*. The candidates were to be *freemen*, and persons of unexceptionable morals. A defect in *legitimacy* or in personal character totally disqualified them. It was indispensibly necessary for them previously to submit to a severe regimen. At their own homes they prescribed themselves a particular course of diet: and the laws required them, when they had given in their names to be enrolled in the list of competitors, to resort to *Elis*, and reside there *thirty* days before the games commenced; where their *regimen* and *preparatory exercises* were regulated and directed by a number of illustrious persons, who were appointed every day to superintend them. This form of diet they authoritatively prescribed, and religiously inspected, that the combatants might acquit themselves in the conflict in a manner worthy the Grecian name, worthy the sacred solemnity of the occasion, and worthy those crowds of illustrious spectators by whom they would be surrounded. There are many passages in the Greek and Roman classics which make mention of that extreme strictness, temperance, and continence which the candidates were obliged to observe.

A youth, who hopes th' OLYMPIC prize to gain,
All arts must try, and ev'ry toil sustain;
Th' extremes of heat and cold must often prove,
And shun the weak'ning joys of wine and love.

FRANCIS.

After this preparatory discipline, on the day appointed for the celebration, a *herald*, called over their names, recited to them the laws of the *games*, encouraged them to exert all their powers, and expatiated upon the blessings and advantages of victory. He then introduced the competitors into the *stadium*—led them around it, and with a loud voice demanded, if any one in that assembly could charge any of the candidates with being infamous in his life and morals, could prove him a slave, a robber, or illegitimate. They were then conducted to the altar, and a solemn oath exacted from them, that they would observe the strictest honor in the contention.

Afterward, they who were to engage in the *foot race* were brought to the barrier, along which they were arranged, and waited, in all the excesses of ardor and impatience, for the signal. The cord being dropped, they all at once sprung forth, fired with the love of