

Useful arts paved the way to the fine arts. Men upon whom the former had bestowed every convenience, turned their thoughts to the latter. Beauty was studied in objects of sight ; and men of taste attached themselves to the fine arts, which multiplied their enjoyments, and improved their benevolence. Sculpture and painting made an early figure in Greece ; which afforded plenty of originals to be copied in these imitative arts. Statuary, a more simple imitation than painting was sooner brought to perfection : the statue of Jupiter by Phidias, and of Juno by Polycletes, though the admiration of all the world, were executed long before the art of light and shade was known. Apollodorus, and Zeuxis his disciple, who flourished in the ninety fifth Olympiad, were the first who figured in that art. Another cause concurred to advance statuary before painting in Greece, and that was a great demand for statues of their gods. Architecture, as a fine art, made a slower progress. Proportions, upon which its elegance chiefly depends, cannot be accurately ascertained, but by an infinity of trials in great buildings ; a model cannot be relied on : for a large and small building, even of the same form, require different proportions. The Romans borrowed the fine arts from the Greeks ; but it cannot be said that they improved upon them.

From the fine arts we proceed to literature. Every known alphabet bears strong marks of derivation from one common source. whence Egypt, Syria, and Assyria, had all profited before its advantages were known to the rest of the world. According to the reports most generally received among the Greeks, letters were first introduced into their Country by a colony of orientals, who founded Thebes in Boeotia ; and the very near resemblance of the first Greek Alphabet to the Phenicians, indeed sufficiently testifies whence it came. The name of Cadmus, by which the leader of the colony became known to posterity, signified, it has been observed, in the Phenician language, an eastern man : and till the overwhelming irruption of the Boetians from Thessaly, about sixty years (according to Thucidides,) after the Trojan war, the country was called Cadmeis, and the people Cadmeians. But there is strong reason to suppose, that in the early ages, the difference of language over Asia, Africa and Europe, as far as the inhabitants of those ages are known to us, was but a difference of dialect ; and that the people of Greece, Phenicia and Egypt, mutually understood each other. Nor does any circumstance in the history of the Grecian people appear more difficult to account for, even in conjecture, than the superiority, form and polish which their speech acquired, in an age beyond tradition, and in circumstances apparently most unfavourable. " For it was amid continual emigration, expulsions, mixtures of various hordes, and revolutions of every kind, that was formed that language, so simple in its analogy, of such complex art in its composition and inflexion, of such clearness, force and elegance in its contexture, and of such singular sweetness, variety, harmony, and majesty in its sound." Already in the time of Homer and Hesiod, who, as we have already hinted, lived long before writing was common, we find