

to be roused out of a torpid state by some fortunate change of circumstances. Prosperity, contrasted with former abasement, gives to the mind a spring, which is vigorously exerted in every new pursuit. The Athenians made but a mean figure under the tyranny of their petty sovereigns ; but upon gaining freedom and independence, they were converted into heroes. Miletus, a Greek city of Ionia, being destroyed by the King of Persia, and the inhabitants made slaves, the Athenians, deeply affected with the misery of their brethren, boldly attacked the King in his own dominions, and burnt the city of Sardis. In less than ten years after, they gained a signal victory at Marathon ; and, under Themistocles, made head against the prodigious army with which Xerxes threatened utter ruin to Greece. Such prosperity produced its usual effects : arts flourished with arms, and Athens became the chief theatre for sciences as well as for fine arts. The reign of Augustus Cæsar, which put an end to the rancour of civil war, and restored peace to Rome, with the comforts of society, proved an auspicious era for literature ; and produced a cloud of Latin historians, poets, and philosophers, to whom the moderns are indebted for their taste and talents. One who makes a figure rouses emulation in all : one catches fire from another, and the national spirit is every where triumphant : classical works are composed, and useful discoveries made in every art and science. The restoration of the royal family in England, which put an end to cruel and envenomed civil war, promoted improvements of every kind ; arts and industry made a rapid progress among the people, though left to themselves by a weak and fluctuating administration.— Another cause of activity and animation, is the being engaged in some important action of doubtful event ; a struggle for liberty, the resisting an invasion, or the like. Greece divided into small States frequently at war with each other, advanced literature and the fine arts to unrivalled perfection. After a long stupor during the dark ages of Christianity, arts and literature revived among the turbulent states of Italy. The Royal Society in London, and the academy of sciences in Paris, were both of them instituted after civil wars that had animated the people and roused their activity. And now let us consider the rise and progress of the arts.

Art is natural to man ; and the skill he acquires after many ages of practice, is only the improvement of a talent he possessed at the first. Vitruvius* finds the rudiments of Architecture in the form of a Scythian Cottage. The Armourer may find the first productions of his calling in the sling and the bow ; and the Shipwright of his in the Canoe of the Savage. Even the Historian and the Poet may find the original essays of their arts, as we shall afterwards have occasion to remark, in the tale, and the song which celebrate the wars, the loves, and the adventures of men in their rudest condition. Ages are generally supposed to have borrowed from those who had gone

* MARCUS VITRUVIUS POLLIO was a very celebrated Roman architect, and according to the common opinion, was born at Verona, and lived in the reign of Augustus, to whom he dedicated his excellent treatise on architecture, divided into ten books. There are several English translations of Vitruvius.