ſelf, cloſes the ſcene, and he denounces againſt the king of Babylon, his poſterity, and even againſt the city which was the ſeat of their cruelty, perpetual deſtruction, and confirms the immutability of his own counſels by the ſolemnity of an oath.

How forcible is this imagery, how diverſified, how ſublime! how elevated the diction, the figures, the ſentiments! — The Jewiſh nation, the cedars of Lebanon, the ghoſts of departed kings, the Babyloniſh monarch, the travellers who find his corpſe, and laſt of all Jeho­vah himſelf, are the characters which ſupport this beau­tiful lyric drama. One continued action is kept up, or rather a ſeries of intereſting actions are connected toge­ther in an incomparable whole. This, indeed, is the principal and diſtinguiſhed excellence of the ſublimer ode, and is diſplayed in its utmoſt perfection in this poem of Iſaiah, which may be conſidered as one of the moſt ancient, and certainly the moſt finiſhed, ſpecimen of that ſpecies of compoſition which has been tranſmitted to us. The perſonifications here are frequent, yet not confuſed; bold, yet not improbable: a free, ele­vated, and truly divine ſpirit, pervades the whole; nor is there any thing wanting in this ode to defeat its claim to the character of perfect beauty and ſublimity. “If (ſays Dr Lowth) I may be indulged in the free de­claration of my own ſentiments on this occaſion, I do not know a ſingle inſtanee in the whole compaſs of Greek and Roman poetry, which, in every excellence of compoſition, can be ſaid to equal, or even approach it.”

Jeremiah was called to the prophetic office in the **1**3th year of the reign of Joſiah the ſon of Amon, A. M. 3376, A. C. 628, and continued to prophecy upwards of 40 years, during the reigns of the degene­rate princes of Judah, to whom he boldly threatened thoſe marks of the divine vengeance which their rebelli­ous conduct drew on themſelves and their country. Af­ter the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Chaldeans, he was ſuffered by Nebuchadnezzar to remain in the deſolate land of Judea to lament the calamities of his infatu­ated countrymen. He was afterwards, as he himſelf informs us, carried with his diſciple Baruch into Egypt, by Johanan the ſon of Kareah.

It appears from ſeveral paſſages that Jeremiah com­mitted his prophecies to writing. In the 36th chap­ter we are informed, that the prophet was commanded to write upon a roll all the prophecies which he had ut­tered; and when the roll was deſtroyed by Jehoiakim the king, Jeremiah dictated the ſame prophecies to Ba­ruch, who wrote them together with many additional circumſtances. The works of Jeremiah extend to the laſt verſe of the 51ſt chapter; in which we have theſe words, “Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.” The 52d chapter was therefore added by ſome other writer. It is, however, a very important ſupplement, as it illuſtrates the accompliſhment of Jeremiah’s prophecies re­jecting the fate of Zedekiah.

The prophecies of Jeremiah are not arranged in the chronological order in which they were delivered.

What has occaſioned this tranſpoſition cannot now be determined. It is generally maintained, that if we conſult their dates, they ought to be thus placed :

In the reign of Joſiah the firſt 12 chapters.

In the reign of Jehoiakim, chapters xiii. xx. xxi. v. **11,** 14.; xxii. xxiii, xxv. xxvi. xxxv. xxxvi. xlv.-xlix. 1 —33.

In the reign of Zedekiah, chap. xxi. 1—10. xxiv, xxvii. xxxiv xxxvii. xxxix. xlix. 34— 39. 1. and li.

Under the government of Gedaliah, chapters xl. xliv. The prophecies which related to the Gentiles were con­tained in the 46th and five following chapters, being placed at the end, as in ſome meaſure unconnected with the reſt. But in ſome copies of the Septuagint theſe ſix chapters follow immediately after the 13th verſe of the 25th chapter.

Jeremiah, though deficient neither in elegance nor ſublirnity, muſt give place in both to Iſaiah. Jerome ſeems to object againſt him a fort of ruſticity of lan­guage, no veſtige of which Dr Lowth was able to diſcover. His ſentiments, it is true, are not always the moſt elevated, nor are his periods always neat and com­pact; but theſe are faults common to thoſe writers whoſe principal aim is to excite the gentler affections, and to call forth the tear of ſympathy or ſorrow. This obſervation is very ſtrongly exemplified in the Lamen­tations, where theſe are the prevailing paſſions; it is, however, frequently inſtanced in the prophecies of this author, and moſt of all in the beginning of the book @@(L), which is chiefly poetical. The middle of it is almoſt entirely hiſtorical. The latter part, again, conſiſting of the ſix laſt chapters, is altogether poetical @@(m); it con­tains ſeveral different predictions, which are diſtinctly marked; and in theſe the prophet approaches very near the ſublimity of Iſaiah. On the whole, however, not above half the book of Jeremiah is poetical.

The book of Lamentations, as we are informed in the title, was compoſed by Jeremiah. We ſhall preſent to our reader an account of this elegiac poem from the elegant pen of Dr Lowth.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah (for the title is pro­perly and ſignificantly plural) conſiſt of a number of plaintive effuſions, compoſed upon the plan of the fu­neral dirges, all upon the ſame ſubject, and uttered with­out connection as they roſe in the mind, in a long courſe of ſeparate ſtanzas. Theſe have afterwards been put together, and formed into a collection or oorreſpondent whole. If any reader, however, ſhould expect to find in them an artificial and methodical arrangement of the general ſubject, a regular diſpoſition of the parts, a per­fect connection and orderly ſucceſſion in the matter, and with all this an uninterrupted ſeries of elegance and correctneſs, he will, really expect what was foreign to the prophet’s deſign. In the character of a mourn­er, he celebrates in plaintive ſtrains the obſequies of his ruined country: whatever preſented itſelf to his mind in the midſt of deſolation and miſery, whatever ſtruck him as particularly wretched and calamitous, whatever the inſtant ſentiment of ſorrow dictated, he pours forth

@@@(l) See the whole of chap. ix. chap. xiv. 17, &c*.* xx. 14—18.

@@@(m) Chap. xlvi.—li, to ver. 59. Chap. lii. properly belongs to the Lamentations, to which it ſerves as an exordium.