eloquence and melody, and perſuaded them to exchange their fierceneſs for a ſociable life and peaceful manners ; nay, great part of Greece was anciently peopled by Thracians. Tereus, a Thracian, governed at Daulis in Phocis, where the tragical ſtory of Philomela and Progne was acted. From thence a body of Thracians passed over to Eubœa, and posſeſſed themſelves of that iſland. Of the ſame nation were the Aones, Tembices, and Hyanthians, who made themſelves maſters of Boeotia ; and great part of Attica itſelf was inhabited by Thracians, under the command of the celebrated Eumolpus. It is not therefore without the utmost ingratitude and injuſtice that the Greeks ſtyle them Bar*barians,* ſince to them chiefly they were indebted both for the peopling and poliſhing of their country.

Thrace was anciently divided into a number of petty ſtates, which were firſt ſubdued by Philip of Macedon. On the decline of the Macedonian empire, the country fell un­der the power of the Romans. It continued under ſubjection to them till the irruption of the Turks, in whoſe hands it still remains.

THRASHING, in agriculture, the operation by which corn is ſeparated from the ſtraw. This operation is per­formed in a variety of ways, ſometimes by the feet of ani­mals, ſometimes by a flail, and ſometimes by a machine.

The moſt ancient method of ſeparating the corn from the ſtraw was by the hoofs of cattle or horſes. This was practiſed by the Iſraelites, as we find from the books of Moses ; it was also common among the Greeks and Romans @@\*. Flails and thraſhing machines were alſo not uncommon among theſe nations @@\*. The flail which was uſed by the Romans, called *baculus, fustis,* or *pertica,* was probably no­thing more than a cudgel or pole. The thraſhing machine, which was called *tribula* or *tribulum,* and ſometimes *traha,* was a kind of fledge made of boards joined together, and loaded with ſtone or iron. Horſes were yoked to this ma­chine, and a man was ſeated upon it to drive them over the ſheaves of corn.

Different methods are employed in different countries for ſeparating the corn from the italic. In the greateſt part of France the flail is uſed ; but in the ſouthern diſtricts it is generally performed by the feet of animals : animals are alſo uſed for the ſame purpoſe in Spain, in Italy, in the Morea, in the Canaries, in China, and in the vicinity of Canton, where the flail is alſo ſometimes uſed. It appears that in hot cli­mates the grains do not adhere ſo firmly to the ſtalk as in cold countries, and therefore may be more eaſily ſeparated. This will explain the reaſon why animals are ſo frequently employed in hot countries for treading out the corn ; where­as in cold climates we know they are ſeldom tried, and have no reaſon to ſuppoſe that they would anſwer the purpoſe. In the Iſle of France in Africa, rice and wheat are thraſhed with poles, and maize with ſticks ; for it has not been poſ­ſible to teach the negroes the uſe of the flail.

The animals uſed for treading out corn are, oxen, cows, horſes, mules, and even asses when the quantity is not great. The operation is performed in this manner : The ſheaves, af­ter being opened, are ſpread in ſuch a manner that the ears of the corn are laid as much uppermoſt as poſſible, and a man, ſtanding in the centre, holds the halters of the cattle, which are made to trot round as in a manege ; whilſt other men with forks ſhake the ſtraw up from time to time, and the cattle are trotted over it again and again till they have beat­en out all the grain. This method is expeditious enough ; but beſides bruiſing a conſiderable quantity of corn, it requires a great many cattle, and injures the legs of the horſes and mules, which are preferred before cows and oxen for this work.

The flail is undoubtedly a much better inſtrument ſor thraſhing corn than the feet of animals, for it ſeparates the grain from the ſtraw and hulks both more effectually and more expeditiouſly ; yet it is liable to many objections. It is a very laborious employment, too ſevere indeed even for a ſtrong man ; and as it is uſually the intereſt of the thraſher rather to thraſh much than to thraſh clean, a good deal of corn will generally be left upon the ſtraw. It is therefore an object of great importance in huſbandry to procure a pro­per machine for ſeparating the corn from the ſtraw.

The firſt thraſhing machine attempted in modern times, of which we have received any account, was invented in Edinburgh by Mr Michael Menzies about the year 1732. It conſiſted of a number of inſtruments like flails, fixed in a moveable beam, and inclined to it at an angle of ten de­grees. On each side of the beam in which the flails were fixed, floors or benches were placed for ſpreading the ſheaves on. The flails were moved backwards and forwards upon the benches by means of a crank fixed on the end of an axle, which made about 30 revolutions in a minute.

The ſecond thraſhing machine was invented by Mr Mi­chael Stirling, a farmer in the pariſh of Dunblane, Perthſhire. Of this diſcovery we have received a very accurate and authentic account from his ſon, the Reverend Mr Robert Stirling miniſter of Crieff.

It is an old proverb, that neceſſity is the mother of inven­tion. This was verified on the preſent occaſion. Belides his ordinary domeſtic ſervants, Mr Μ. Stirling had occasion ſometimes to hire an additional number to thraſh out his grain, and frequently found it difficult to procure ſo many as he needed. This naturally led him to reflect whether the operation of thraſhing could not eaſily be performed by machinery. Accordingly, ſo early as the year 1753, under the pretence of joining in the amuſements of his children, he formed in miniature a water mill, in which two iron ſprings, made to riſe and fall alternately, represented the motion of two flails, by which a few ſtalks of corn put under them might be ſpeedily thraſhed. This plan he executed on a ſcale ſufficiently large within two years after, making the ſprings about ten feet long, each of which had one end firmly ſcrewed into a ſolid plank, and the other terminated in a round batoon of ſolid iron, two feet long and above an inch in diameter. Under theſe the ſheaves were conveyed gradual­ly forward in a narrow channel or trough, by palling between two indented horizontal cylinders, ſimilar to thoſe now uſed in moſt of the thraſhing mills in that part of the country, and called *feeders.* In this manner the thraſhing was exe­cuted completely, and with conſiderable rapidity ; but as the operation was performed on a low floor, and no method con­trived for carrying off the ſtraw, the accumulation of it pro­duced ſuch confuſion, and the removal of it was attended with ſuch danger, that this ſcheme was very ſoon entirely aban­doned. The mortification ariſing from diſappoimment, and eſpecially the scoffs of his neighbours, for what was univerſally accounted an abſurd and ridiculous attempt, ſerved on­ly to ſtimulate the exertions of the inventor to accompliſh his deſigns on another plan.

Laying aſide therefore the iron ſprings with the feeders, and all the apparatus adapted to them, he retained only an outer or water wheel, with an inner or cog wheel moving on the ſame axle ; to this inner wheel, which had 48 teeth or cogs, he applied a vertical trundle or pinion, with ſeven notches, the axle of which passed through a floor above the wheel, and having its upper pivot ſecured in a beam six feet above that floor. At the diſtance of three feet three inches above the floor two ſtraight pieces of ſquared wood, each four feet long, paſſed through the axle of the trundle at right angles, forming four arms, to be moved round ho­rizontally. To the extremities of theſe arms were fixed

@@@[m]\* Pliny, xviii. 30. Virgil, George. iii. 132. Col ii. 21. Tibull. i. 5. 21.

@@@[m]\* Isaiah xviii. 27. Homer, II. xx. 495.