was performed at some public meeting. One of the prin­cipal men of the assembly named the youth in public ; af­ter which he was obliged to provide for his own subsistence, and was either now to live by hunting, or by joining in some incursion against the enemy. Great care was taken to prevent the young men from too early connexions with the female sex ; and indeed they could have no hope to gain the affection of the fair, but in proportion to the courage and address they had shown in their military exercises. Accordingly, in an ancient song, we find Bartholin, king of Norway, extremely surprised that his mistress should prove unkind, as he could perform eight different exercises. The children were generally born in camps ; and being inured from their infancy to behold nothing but arms, effu­sion of blood, and slaughter, they imbibed the cruel dis­position of their fathers, and when they broke forth upon other nations, behaved rather like furies than like human creatures.

The laws of this people, in some measure, resembled those of the ancient Lacedaemonians. They knew no vir­tue but bravery, and no vice but cowardice. The greatest penalties were inflicted on such as fled from battle. The laws of the ancient Danes declared such persons infamous, and excluded them from society. Among the Germans, cowards were sometimes suffocated in mud ; after which they were covered over with hurdles, to show, says Taci­tus, that though the punishment of crimes should be pub­lic, there are certain degrees of cowardice and infamy which ought to be buried in oblivion. Frotho king of Denmark enacted by law, that whoever solicited an eminent post ought upon all occasions to attack one enemy, to face two, to retire only one step back from three, and never to make an actual retreat till assaulted by four. The rules of jus­tice were themselves adapted and warped to these preju­dices. War was looked upon as a real act of justice, and force was thought to be an incontestable title over the weak, a visible mark that God had intended them to be subject to the strong. They had no doubt but that the intentions of the Deity had been to establish the same de­pendence among men that takes place among inferior crea­tures ; and, setting out from this principle of the natural inequality among men, they had from thence inferred that the weak had no right to what they could not defend. This maxim was adopted with such rigour, that the name of di­vine judgment was given not only to the judicial combat, but to conflicts and battles of all sorts ; victory being, in their opinion, the only certain mark by which Providence enables us to distinguish those whom it has appointed to command others.

Lastly, their religion, by annexing eternal happiness to the military virtues, gave the utmost possible degree of vi­gour to that propensity which these people had for war, and to their contempt of death, of which we shall now give some instances. We are informed that Harold, surnamed Blaatand, or Blue-tooth, a king of Denmark, who lived in the beginning of the ninth century, had founded on the coast of Pomerania a city named Julin or Jomsburg. To this place he sent a colony of young Danes, bestowing the government on a celebrated warrior called Palnatoko. In this colony it was forbidden to mention the word fear, even in the most imminent dangers. No citizen of Jomsburg was to yield to any number of enemies, however great. The sight of inevitable death was not to be taken as an excuse for showing the smallest apprehension. And this legislator really appears to have eradicated from the minds of most of the youths bred up under him all traces of that sentiment so natural and so universal, which makes men think on their destruction with horror. Nothing can show this better than a single fact in their history, which de­serves to have a place here for its singularity. Some of them having made an irruption into the territories of a powerful

Norwegian lord, named Haquin, were overcome in spite of thé obstinacy of their resistance, and the most distinguish­ed among them being made prisoners, were, according to the custom of those times, condemned to death. The news of this, far from afflicting them, was on the contrary re­ceived with joy. The first who was led to punishment was content to say, without changing countenance, and without expressing the least sign of fear, “ Why should not the same happen to me as did to my father ? He died, and so must I.” A warrior named Thorchill, who was to cut off the head of the second, having asked him what he felt at the sight of death, he answered, “ that he remem­bered too well the laws of Jomsburg, to utter any words that denoted fear.” The third, in reply to the same question, said, “ he rejoiced to die with glory, and that he preferred such a death to an infamous life like that of Thorchill’s.” The fourth made an answer much longer and more extra­ordinary. “ I suffer with a good heart, and the present hour is to me very agreeable. I only beg of you,” added he, addressing himself to Thorchill, “ to be very quick in cutting off my head ; for it is a question often debated by us at Jomsburg, whether one retains any sense after being beheaded. I will therefore grasp this knife in my hand ; if, after my head is cut off, I strike it towards you, it will show I have not lost all sense ; if I let it drop, it will be a proof of the contrary. Make haste, therefore, and decide the dispute.” Thorchill, adds the historian, cut off his head in a most expeditious manner ; but the knife, as might be expected, dropt from his hand. The fifth showed the same tranquillity, and died rallying and jeering his enemies. The sixth begged of Thorchill that he might not be led to punishment like a sheep : “ Strike the blow in my face,” said he ; “I will sit still without shrinking ; and take no­tice whether I once wink my eyes, or betray one sign of fear in my countenance ; for we inhabitants of Jomsburg are used to exercise ourselves in trials of this sort, so as to meet the stroke of death without once moving.” He kept his promise before all the spectators, and received the blow without betraying the least sign of fear, or so much as winking with his eyes. The seventh, says the historian, was a very beautiful young man, in the flower of his age. His long hair, as fine as silk, floated in curls and in ringlets on his shoulders. Thorchill asked him what he thought of death. “ I receive it willingly,” said he, “ since I have fulfilled the greatest duty of life, and have seen all those put to death whom I would not survive. I only beg of you one favour, not to let my hair be touched by a slave, or stained with my blood.”

Neither was this intrepidity peculiar to the inhabitants of Jomsburg. It was the general character of all the Scan­dinavians, of which we shall only give this further instance. A warrior, having been thrown upon his back in wrestling with his enemy, and the latter finding himself without his arms, the vanquished person promised to wait, without changing his posture, till his antagonist fetched a sword to kill him ; and he faithfully kept his word. To die with arms in his hand was the ardent wish of every free man ; and the pleasing idea which they had of this kind of death led them to dread such as proceeded from old age and dis­ease. The history of ancient Scandinavia is full of in­stances of this way of thinking. The warriors who found themselves lingering in disease often availed themselves of their few remaining moments to shake off life, by a way that they supposed to be more glorious. Some of them would be carried into a field of battle, that they might die in the engagement. Others slew themselves. Many got this melancholy service performed by their friends, who con­sidered it as a most sacred duty. “ There is, on a mountain of Iceland,” says the author of an old Iceland romance, “ a rock so high that no animal can fall from the top of it and live. Here men betake themselves when they are afflicted