cles died at an early age, before his father,@@1—who were yet children, one of them a boy, another a child in the arms, at the time of their father’s death.@@2 We learn from other authorities,@@5 that two of his children were named Sophronis­cus and Menexenus; but they are said to have been the chil­dren, not of Xanthippe, but of another wife, Myrto, the grand-daughter of Aristides the just.@@1 To account for this, it has been stated, that after their disasters in Sicily, the Athe­nians made a decree authorizing double marriages, with the view of recruiting their exhausted population. But this statement does not appear to be borne out by the earlier authorities on the subject of Athenian legislation. Nor is it probable that a law should have been enacted, directly sanctioning a form of polygamy. It appears, that during the pressure and confusion of the Peloponnesian war, per­sons obtained the freedom of the city of Athens, whose title was objectionable on the constitutional ground of their not being bom of citizen-parents on both sides. Thus had Pericles, after the death of his two legitimate sons, obtained the admission of his son, Pericles, by Aspasia, to the privi­lege of citizenship ;@@4 though he had himself carried, some time before, a law of strict limitation, under which, nearly four thousand were deprived of the franchise.@@6 Such ex­tension of the privilege to the offspring of illegal unions, possibly gave a pretext to the supposition, that a decree passed at Athens sanctioning bigamy.

Some difficulty, however, arises on the subject of the mar­riage of Socrates, from the conflict of authorities. Whilst it is asserted on the one hand, that he was married to Myrto and Xanthippe at the same time; on the other hand, others assign them both as his wives, but in succession, and also differ as to the order of succession. But the silence of Plato and Xenophon respecting any other wife of Socrates butXan- thippe, and their coincidence in speaking of her only as the mother of his children, may be regarded as sufficiently de­cisive of the point against every subsequent authority. In­deed, the reference to Aristotle, given by Laertius, which is the chief ground for believing that Socrates was married also to Myrto, is very questionable. Plutarch doubts whether the treatise to which Laertius appeals for the fact, is the genuine work of Aristotle. From the manner, too, in which the name of Myrto appears to have been introduced in the account, nothing more may have been intended, than that Socrates found her in a state of widowhood and distress from poverty, and took care of her at his own home.@@7 Aristides belonged to the same tribe and the same demus or borough, as Socrates; and a reverence for the virtues of the grand­father, may have combined with these almost domestic ties, to call forth such an act of friendliness to the disconsolate Myrto. And, if this be the case, as is probable, it would only add an interesting instance of that liberal benevo­lence which characterized the whole conduct of Socrates.@@8

It is a confirmation of this conclusion, that all the anec­dotes of the private life of Socrates, with one exception, and that evidently a fabricated instance,@@9 bring Xanthippe on the scene. On his inviting some wealthy persons to sup­per, it is Xanthippe who is distressed by their deficient means of hospitality, and to whom he replies, “Takecourage; if they are worthy people, they will be satisfied; if they are worth­less, we shall care nothing about them.”@@10 It is Xanthippe whom he reproves for her particularity about her dress on the occasion of some public spectacle, as more desirous of “ being seen than to see.”@@11 It is of her again that Alcibiades expressed his wonder how he could bear with her, when he simply, but pointedly referred him to her just claims on his affection as the mother of his children.@@1\* On another occa­sion, his disciple, Antisthenes, is said to have asked him, with reference to Xanthippe, why he did not study to im­prove the disposition of his wife, whose violence of temper (he observed) was unexampled in the history of domestic life. Instead of confirming the censorious remark, he turned it, according to his usual method, to a practical illustration of his philosophy. “ If Xanthippe was hard to be controlled,” was the tenour of his answer, “ it was only a proper discip­line to him for the management of men ; as those who would be masters in horsemanship, began with managing the most spirited horse, after which, every other would be tractable.”@@1’ These stories, and the like, handed down or invented by the humour of the times, may be merely exaggerations of the fact of the inconvenience and dissatisfaction occasionally felt at the philosopher’s home, by his habitual neglect of his do­mestic concerns, and the duty of exertion consequently im­posed on Xanthippe beyond Athenian women in general. She appears indeed to have tenderly loved her husband, if Plato has faithfully traced the picture of her visit to his prison, and her extreme anguish at that trying hour. And he also knew her value, if his affection may be judged of, as surely it may, by the kind and gentle considerateness of his man­ner in committing her to the care of his friends at parting, and his absolute reserve of his feelings on that occasion.@@14 The picture indeed is drawn by the hand of a consummate master ; and Plato, it is true, was not present on the occa­sion. But we must believe, that in painting a scene that must have been impressed on the mind of the disciples of the philosopher, above every other incident of his life, and of which persons then living must have retained a lively recollection, he took his outlines at least of these interest­ing particulars from the real state of the case.

But the allusion to these circumstances brings us prema­turely to the solemn tragedy which closed his intrepid and energetic career. We have yet to contemplate him pursu­ing tor many a year his unwearied labour of awakening his countrymen from their dreams of knowledge and happiness to the realities of their condition in the world. Great in­deed must have been the address, which could recommend the severe and wholesome truths inculcated by him, to the hearing of the vain and volatile Athenians. To none is the practical application of a principle, so condemnatory of human folly and impertinence, as the maxim, “ know thy­self,” truly welcome. And yet this was the burthen of the teaching of Socrates for a series of years, among a people, whom it was far easier to please by praising to excess, than not to displease by censuring ever so slightly. They would listen, indeed, patiently to general invectives on their public­conduct, conveyed in the impassioned eloquence of their orators ; as persons will even now sympathize with general descriptions of the depravity of human nature, or of whole classes of men. But all refuse the pain of direct self-appli-

@@@, Plutarch, De Gen. Socr. p. 331.

@@@\* Plato, Phœdo, pp. 135, 262.

@@@3 Aristotle, cited by Laertius in vit. Socr.

@@@« Diog Laert. in vit.

@@@• The same who was among the generals at the battle of Arginusæ, and who were cruelly and iniquitously sacrificed to party spirit after their great victory.

@@@• Plutarch in Pericl. Op. i. p 667.

@@@’ The poverty of the family of Aristides appears from Ælian, Var. Hist. x. 15.

@@@• Plutarch in Aristides, Op∙ ii. p. 542. Plutarch adds, that Panætius bad sufficiently refuted the story of the double marriage in his observations on Socrates. The story is also questioned by Athenæus. Deipnosoph. xiii. *2.*

@@@’ Porphyry in Theodolit. Therapeut, xii. tells of altercations, even to blows, between Xanthippe and Myrto, whilst Socrates stands by and laughs, amidst their joint attacks on himself.

@@@10 Diog. Laert. in vit

@@@,1 Ælian, Var. Hist. vii. 10.

@@@\* Diog. Laert. in Vit.

@@@” Xenoph Conviv. ii.

@@@“Plato, Phædo p. 135.