From that time, however, a change, introduced by the lite­rary taste of Pisistratus, had gradually prepared the way for establishing a school of philosophy at Athens.@@1 Pericles, too, had given a great stimulus to the literary spirit by his own fondness for intellectual pursuits, and the society of intellectual men. In the midst of his active political life, he could find time and thought for the elaborate disqui­sitions of the ingenious persons whom he invited to him. He could spend a whole day in disputing with Protagoras on so subtile a question as the theory of causation;@@3 such was the intense interest which he displayed in every thing tending to the development of mental energy, and such the encouragement he gave to the change of taste then in pro­gress by his own example. In the person of Socrates was found the genius formed to preside over the growing taste for literary and philosophical refinement, and to give it the form of an established institution. What, therefore, were merely indefinite fears at the time of the exhibition of “ The Clouds,” assumed a more distinct character of alarm to an­cient prejudices within a quarter of a century afterwards. The rapidity and violence of several successive revolutions of the government during the latter part of that interval, further prepared the minds of the people for any sudden outbreaks of party spirit, and made every man an object of suspicion to his neighbour. A democracy of an hundred years’ existence@@’ had been overthrown, and first an oli­garchy of four hundred, then a tyranny of thirty, establish­ed by foreign arms, in its place. Nor, as it had not been without fraud and bloodshed that the people had been spoil­ed of their “ ancient liberty,”@@\* were they disposed to sur­render it in quiet; or were those who seized on the govern­ment able to retain it long on the same footing. A struggle ensued ; in which the individuals of contending parties only sought to provide, each for his own aggrandizement and in­terest, or at least his own safety, under the constant expec­tation of some counter-revolution.@@5 The people had found that some of those very pcrsons who would never have been suspected of oligarchical views, had in the late changes taken part against the popular government, so that they knew not, at last, whom to trust even of themselves.@@® We are not to wonder that an accusation of Socrates should have succeeded before an Athenian jury at this period of morbid sensitiveness of the public mind.

An accusation of impiety was, we must remember, too, an accusation of a political offence. A change of the popular re­ligion was a change of the fundamental constitution of a Greek state. And as in the absolute rule of a single despot, so in the tyranny of a multitude, the reputation of zeal for religion is studiously maintained from policy, if from no higher mo­tive, to throw around its arbitrary acts the reverence and fear due to the religious character. The teaching of So­crates was indeed eminently religious, but it differed from what the state regarded as such. He proved the existence of an invisible divine power, wisely designing and govern­ing all things, and inculcated the duties of piety and mo­rality as flowing from the belief of such an agency. Such clearly was not the state-religion.@@7 This was no system of truth or morality. It was tradition and legend, and imme­morial usage, and ritual observance.@@8 And it was enough for a charge of impiety that Socrates rested religion on other

grounds. A pious Athenian, and yet not pious after the man­ner of the Athenians, was, in their view, an introducer of new gods. He might well be believed to be a worshipper of the clouds and the air, when he pointed out to them, that the gods would not receive the sacrifice offered by wicked men,@@3 that even their silent counsels were not concealed from the divine cognizance, and that justice was an indispensable duty of the worshipper of the gods.@@10

That the accusation further should be credible, as brought in this form, is not strange, when it is known that, during the Peloponnesian war, the worship of new gods had been intro­duced into the city; as at Rome during the depression of its fortunes in the first years of the second Punic war. So great­ly had the vicissitudes of fortune influenced the minds of men, observes Livy, describing this effect,—so great was the influx of religion, and that chiefly foreign, into the state,—that ei­ther the men or the gods appeared to have suddenly become different.@@11 So at Athens, it appears, the forms of super­stition had been multiplied, under the pressure of civil and domestic calamity acting on the fears and credulity of the people. The strong reproof which Euripides puts into the mouth of Theseus, of the austere life of Hippolytus, would seem to point at some ascetic devotees among the Athe­nians themselves, practising a more refined and scrupulous religion, distinct from that of the vulgar ;

"Ηδη rt⅛ *aυ%eι, xa∣ iι* ά·ψό;/οο *βog3,i* 2iτB∕ς xαtr⅞λευ, *t)ξf>ιa* r âraxr’ sχu>r,

Baxjrrvs, τολλϊν *γgaμψMm> npΛt* ζασνούί·@@12

In Aristophanes@@13 we find still more evident allusion to the introduction of new objects of worship, new fanatical rites, in which the women chiefly officiated, and in which a gross licentiousness mingled with the gloom and solemnities of barbaric superstition.

Again, education was intimately connected with politics in a Grecian state. The state took in hand its youthful citizens, and trained them according to its peculiar institu­tions, and in its own spirit. At least, in all the early con­stitutions, great attention was paid to education. Lycurgus made Sparta a constant school of war to his citizens. So too Solon, though he had, with greater knowledge of human nature than Lycurgus, adapted his institutions to the people for whom he legislated, provided that the people should be trained to the system of laws prescribed to them. But this care of the early legislators had begun to be lost sight of in practice.@@H In Aristotle’s day it had disappeared everywhere.@@15 In Sparta it was still nominally reverenced. In Athens, an entire relaxation of the educational discipline had taken place already in the time of Socrates. Pericles, flattering the democratic spirit of the Athenians of his day, could boast of their ease from labours and the obligation of exer­cises, and congratulate them on the courage which they could display at the time of action, without being inured beforehand by a course of hardy discipline.@@10 But now, whilst the state was remiss in not enforcing education ac­cording to its ancient system, a new system had grown up, the offspring of the luxury and refinement of its days of im­perial greatness. This new and unauthorized education was diffused throughout the mass of the inhabitants beyond the pale of the citizens. Solon’s law imposed the duties of

@@@I Aul. Gell. vi. 17. Libros Athenis disciplinarum liberalium publice ad legendum præbendos primus posuisse dicitur Pisistratus tyran­nus, &c.

@@@• Plutarch iu Pericl. Op. i. p. 665.

@@@» Thucyd. viii. 68. @@@\* Thucyd. viii. 71, 72.

@@@’ Thucyd. iii. 82. *ιrarrωr i'aùrùn* a'rar, x.r.λ.

@@@β Thucyd. viii. 66.

@@@’ Aristotle, Pol. v. 9.

@@@’ Cic. de Legib. ii. 16.

@@@9 Xenoph. Mem. i. 3.

@@@10 Xenoph. i. 6.

@@@II Liv. XXV. I. Quo diutius trahebatur bellum et variabant secundæ adversæq. res non fortunam magis quam animos hominum; tanta religio, et ea magna ex parte externa, civitatem incessit, ut aut homines aut Dii repente alii viderentur facti, &c.

@@@>· Euripid. Hippolyt. 952.

@@@15 See Pax. 410, 428. Lysist. 389.

@@@14 Lysimachus, in the Laches, complains of their fathers having neglected their education, <iπ *i>fuit ∕∙<∙<> t"ut rζvφS.,* p. 182. See this dialogue of Plato throughout, on the subject of Athenian education.

@@@15 Aristot. Pol. v. 7. Jλ<yaP∙5v∕ τaim(.

@@@16 Thucyd. ii. 39.