591 and even 590 have been suggested by various historians (for the importance of this question see the concluding paragraph of this article). The historical evidence for the Solonian reforms has always been unsatisfactory. There is strong reason to conclude that in the 5th and 4th centuries there was no general tradition as to details. In settling differences there is no appeal to tradition, and this though there occur radical and insoluble contradictions. Thus the *Constitution of Athens* (ch. vi.) says that the Seisachtheia (“ shaking off of burdens ”) consisted in a cancelling of all debts public and private, whereas Androtion, an elder contemporary, denies this specifically, and says that it consisted in the reduction of the rate of interest and the debasement of the coinage. The *Constitution* (ch. x.) denies the existence of any connexion between the coinage reform and the relief of debtors. The absence of tradition is further confirmed by the fact that the *Constitution* always appeals for corroboration to Solon’s *Poems.* Of the *Laws* it is probable that in the 4th century, though some dealing with agrarian distress were in existence, those embodying the Seisachtheia were not, and few if any of the purely constitutional laws re­mained. The main source of the account in the *Constitution* is, therefore, the *Poems* of Solon, from which numerous quota­tions are made (see chs. 5-12).

The reforms of Solon may be divided under three heads —economic, constitutional and miscellaneous. They were necessary owing mainly to the tyrannical attitude of the rich to the poorer classes. Of these many had become slaves in lieu of payment of rent and loans, and thus the land had fallen gradually into the hands of the capitalists. It was necessary to readjust the economic balance and to provide against the evil of aristocratic and capitalist predominance.

A. *Economic Reforms.—*Solon’s economic reforms consisted of the Seisachtheia and certain commercial laws *(e.g.* prevention of export trade except in olive oil, Plut. *Sol.* 24). Among all the problems connected with the Seisachtheia, it is clear (1) that Solon abolished the old Attic law of debt which permitted loans on the security of the debtor’s person; (2) that he restored to freedom those who had been enslaved for debt; (3) that he refused the de­mand for the division of the land (7i7s á^aôaaµóç). As to the can­celling of all debts *(χpeωv άποκοπή)* there is some controversy; Gilbert and Busolt maintain that all debts were cancelled ; strong reasons, may however, be advanced against it. It is possible that the statement in the *Constitution* is a hypothesis to explain the restoration of the slaves to freedom. Further, Solon seems to have regulated the accumulation of land (cf. in Rome the legislation of Tiberius Gracchus) and the rate of interest ; and to have simplified commerce by replacing the Pheidonian standard by the Euboic, which was in use among the Ionian traders, in commerce with whom he foresaw that prosperity lay. It is impossible here to enter into the details of the controversy in connexion with Solon’s land reforms ; it must suffice to give the bare outlines of the dispute. There is no question that (1) the distressed class whom Solon sought to re­lieve were the *Hektemors,* and that (2) the achievement on which he prided himself was the removal of the όροι or stones which were seen everywhere in Attica, and were symbolic of the slavery of the soil. Almost all writers say that these όροι were mortgage-pillars: that they were originally boundary stones and that when land was mortgaged the terms of the agreement were carved on the stones, as evidence. Now firstly, though such mortgage-pillars existed in the time of Demosthenes, none are found earlier than the year 400 B.c., nor is there any reference before that year to this special sense of the word. If then these stones which Solon removed were mortgage-pillars, it is strange that none should have been found till two hundred years later. Secondly, it is. highly improbable that the terms on which land was then cultivated admitted of mortgaging at all. The Hektemors, who, according to the *Constitu­tion,* paid the sixth part of their produce as rent,@@1 were not free­holders but tenants, and therefore, could not mortgage their land at all. From this it follows that when Solon said he had “ re­moved the stones ” he referred to the fatal accumulation of land by landowners. The tenants failed to pay rent, were enslaved, and the “ boundary stone ” of the landowner was moved forward to include their land. Thus the removal of the όροι was a measure against the accumulation of land in the form of enclosures (τeμepη), and fits in with the statement at the end of chapter iv. of the *Constitution,*

"the land was in the hands of a few.” It should be noted (1) that from this releasing of the land it follows that Solon’s law against lending on the security of the person must have been retrospective (i.e. in order to provide a sufficient number of freeholders for the land released); and. (2). that it is one of the most remarkable facts in Athenian economic history that when at the end of the Pelopon­nesian War a proposal was brought forward to limit the franchise to freeholders, it was found that only five thousand failed to satisfy this requirement.

B. *Constitutional Reforms.—*It is on this part of his work that Solon’s claim to be considered a great statesman is founded. By his new constitution he laid the foundations of the Athenian democracy and paved the way for its later developments. It should be noted in the first place that the following account is written on the assumption that the Draconian constitution de­scribed in chapter iv. of the *Constitution of Athens* had never existed (see Draco). In some respects that alleged constitution is more democratic than Solon’s. This, coupled with the fact that Solon is always spoken of as the founder of democracy, is one of the strongest reasons for rejecting the Draconian constitution. It will be seen that Solon’s state was by no means a perfected democracy, but was in some respects rather a moderate oligarchy in which political privilege was graduated by possession of land. To Solon are gener­ally ascribed the four classes—Pentacosiomedimni, Hippeis, Zeugitae and Thetes. Of these the first consisted of those whose land pro­duced as many measures *(medimni)* of corn and as many measures *(metretae)* of oil and wine as together amounted to 500 measures. The Hippeis (the horsemen, *i.e.* those who could provide a war­horse for the service of the state) were rated at over 300 and under 500 medimni; the third class (those who tilled their land with a yoke of oxen) at 200 medimni and the Thetes below 200 medimni. The Zeugites probably served as heavy-armed soldiers, and the Thetes were the sailors of the state. It is likely that the Zeugites were mainly Hektemors (see above) whom Solon converted into freeholders. Whether Solon invented these classes is uncertain, but it seems clear that he first put them into definite relation with the political organism. The Thetes (who included probably the servants of the Eupatridae, now secured as freemen), the fisher­men of the Paralia (or sea-coast), and the artisans *(cerameis)* of Athens) for the first time received political existence by their admis­sion to the sovereign assembly of the Ecclesia *(q.v.).* Of these classes the first alone retained the right of holding the offices of archon and treasurer; other offices were, however, opened to the second and third classes *(sc.* the Poletae, the Eleven and the Colacretae; see Cleisthenes [I.] footnote). It is of the utmost importance to observe that the office of Strategus *(q.v.)* is not mentioned in connexion with Solon’s reform. It is often said that Solon used his classification as the basis of a sliding scale of taxation. Against this, it is known that Peisistratus, whose faction was essentially the poorer classes, established a uniform 5% tax, and it is highly unlikely that he would have reversed an existing arrangement which was particularly favourable to his friends. The admission of the Thetes to the Ecclesia was an important step in the direction of democracy (for the powers which Solon gave to the Ecclesia, see Ecclesia). But the greatest reform of Solon was undoubtedly the institution of the Heliaea (or courts of justice). The jury were appointed by lot from all the citizens (including the Thetes), and thus the same people elected the magistrates in the Ecclesia and subsequently tried them in the Heliaea. Hence Solon trans­ferred the sovereign power from the areopagus and the magistrates to the citizens as a whole. Further, as the archons, at the expiry of their year of office, passed into the areopagus, the people exer­cised control over the personnel of that body also (see Areopagus). In spite of the alleged Draconian constitution, alluded to above, it is still very generally held that Solon invented the Boulē or Council of Four Hundred, one hundred from each of the old tribes. The importance of this body as an advisory committee of the Ecclesia, and the functions of the Prytaneis are explained under BoulĒ. It is sufficient here to point out that, according to Plutarch’s *Solon* (ch. 19) the state henceforth rested on two councils “ as on anchors,” and that the large powers exercised by the Cleisthenean Boulē were not exercised by the Solonian. From this, and the articles Areopagus, Boule, Ecclesia and Greek Law, it will be seen that Solon contrived an absolutely organic constitution of a “ mixed ” type, which had in it the seeds of the great democratic growth which reached its maturity under Pericles. It should be added here, in reference to the election of magistrates under Solon’s con­stitution, that there is discrepancy between the *Politics* and the *Constitution;* the latter says that Solon gave to the Thetes nothing but a share in the Ecclesia and the courts of justice, and that the magistrates were elected by a combination of selection and lot *(κXηpωτot bi προκρίτων),* whereas the *Politics* says that Solon gave them only the power to elect the magistrates and try them at the end of their year. It seems likely for other reasons that the former scheme should be assigned to the years after Marathon, and, there­fore, that the account in the *Politics* is correct (but see Archon).

C. *Miscellaneous.—*The miscellaneous laws of Solon arc inter­esting primarily as throwing light upon the social condition of Athens at the time (see Evelyn Abbot, *History of Greece,* I. xiii. § 18).

@@@1 Others say they were: (1) labourers who received one-sixth of the produce as wages; (2) tenants who paid five-sixths as rent and kept one sixth, or (3) tenants who paid one-sixth as rent and kept five-sixths. As to (3) it is said such tenants could not have been in real distress, and as to (1) and (2) it is said that such a p9siti0n would have meant starvation from the first.