# ADVERSARIA LITERARIA.

## NO. XXIV.

*Discovery of a verse of Homer, and Error of Kiessling.*

The following verse is ascribed by Proclus, on the Timæus of Plato (p. 334.), to Homer, but is not to be found in any of the writings of that poet which are now extant. The line is,

Αλλα Ζευς προτερος γεγονει, και πλειονα ηδει.

i. e. "But Jove was born the first, and more he knows."

This verse is also alluded to by Proclus in p. 253. of the same work. If Proclus had not, after quoting this verse, immediately added φησιν Ομηρος, I should have concluded from the manner of it, that it was an Orphic line.

The word δυναμις, which is used by Iamblichus in his treatise Περι Βιου Πυθαγορικου, in the sense in which it is used by mathematicians universally, was not properly understood by Kiessling, the German editor of this work, as will be at once evident to the Geometrical reader, from a perusal of what he says concerning it. The passage in which this word occurs in Iamblichus is the following: βουλομενος δε την εν τοις ανισοις και ασυμμετροις και απειροις πεπερασμενην και ισην και συμμετρον δικαιοσυνην παραδειξαι, και, οπως δει αυτην ασκειν, υφηγησασθαι, την δικαιοσυνην εξη προσεοικεναι τω σχηματι εκεινω, οπερ μονον των εν γεωμετρια διαγραμματων απειρους μεν εχον τας των σχηματων συστασεις, ανομοιως δε αλληλοις διακειμενων, ισας εχει τας της δυναμεως αποδειξεις. (p. 376.): i. e. "Pythagoras, being desirous to exhibit in things unequal, without symmetry and infinite, a definite, equal, and commensurate justice, and to show how it ought to be exercised, said, that justice resembles that figure, which is the only one among geometrical diagrams, that having indeed infinite compositions of figures, but dissimilarly disposed with reference to each other, yet has equal demonstrations of power."

Iamblichus here alludes to a right-angled triangle, and the Pythagoric theorem of 47. 1. of Euclid, and not only to this theorem, but also to the 31st of the 6th book of Euclid. For in the former of these, it is shown that the square described on the longest side of the right-angled triangle is equal to the two squares described on the two other sides. And in the latter it is demonstrated, that any figure described on the longest side is equal to the figures which are like and alike situated to the

former figure, and which are described on the two other sides. Hence, the longest side is said by geometricians to be in power equal to the powers of the other sides. Kiessling, however, not understanding this, says, "that power is the space contained between the concurring lines of figures, and is the area of the triangle." "Δυναμις idem est, quod εμβαδον, spatium, quod intra concurrentes lineas figurarum continetur, area trigoni."

From this passage also it may be inferred, that the theorem of 31. 6. of Euclid was not unknown to Pythagoras.

*THOMAS TAYLOR.*

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The author of the following simple verses, by name Catlyn, was once the Master of the Grammar School at Hull, to which station he raised himself entirely by his own genius and merits. It is said that he was originally a bricklayer, but by mere force of talent and perseverance, greatly distinguished himself in the fields of science. His promotion in life, in more respects than one, resembled that of his contemporary Ben Jonson; for it is said that that celebrated dramatist in his earlier years wielded the trowel. Like Jonson, too, Catlyn was repeatedly assailed by the shafts of envy and malice. His enemies were ever officiously ready tauntingly to remind him of his former profession, and mortify his feelings on every opportunity. But, conscious of his own worth and independence, he could fling back their unmanly taunts, and has shown us that the recollection of his former mean state never called a blush on his cheek; and though he was in no common degree attacked by envy, the malice of his adversaries only drew from him the following retort.

*Hull,* 16*th April,* 1820.

*Ad popularem hydram.*

Res satis nota est neque me molestat
Dum mihi questum renovas priorem,
Nec pudet trulla patrius sub armis
Me meruisse.
Nam mihi quod vult vitio popellus
Invidus verti: sapientiores
Id mihi laudi tribuere, mecum
Non morituræ.
Qui suis legat decus atque nomen,
Is foret famæ melioris illo,
Quo domus patris patriusque splendor
Languidus exit.