

stantly engaged in enterprizes which required conduct to accomplish them, and always succeeded. The experience of a day did not furnish her with more wisdom than all other nations, but she obtained it by a long succession of events. She sustained a small, a moderate, and an immense fortune with the same superiority, derived true welfare from the whole train of her prosperities, and refined every instance of calamity into beneficial instructions.

She lost her liberty, because she completed her work too soon.

CHAPTER X.

*Of the Corruption of the ROMANS.*

I AM of opinion that the sect of Epicurus, which began to be propagated at Rome towards the close of the republic, was very prejudicial to the minds and genius of the people (*a*). The Greeks had been infatuated with its doctrines long before, and consequently, were corrupted much earlier than the Romans. We are assured by Polybius (*b*), that

(*a*) Cyneas having discoursed of the doctrines of this sect, at the table of Pyrrhus, Fabricius said, he wished the enemies of Rome would all embrace such kind of principles. Life of Pyrrhus.

(*b*) If you lend a talent to a Greek, and bind him to the repayment, by ten engagements, with as many securities, and witnesses to the loan, it is impossible to make them regard their word; whereas, among the Romans, whether it be owing to their obligation of accounting for the public and private money, they are always punctual to the oaths they have taken. For which reason, the apprehensions of infernal torments were wisely established, and it is altogether irrational that they now oppose them. Polyb. 1. vi.