

political supremacy. Rome, however, never supplants the tongue and culture of Greece, but largely accepts them herself until much of her own power is transferred to a Greek city, Constantinople. Hence, at the revival of learning, the products of the old Greek mind come forth to transform the Western world.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY SKETCH.

1. On this subject some observations have been already made in the introduction to this book (page 3). The interest of the great story of ancient Greece is really inexhaustible. It has been well said that "of all histories of which we know so much, this is the most abounding in consequences to us who now live. The true ancestors of the European nations are not those from whose blood they are sprung, but those from whom they derive the richest portion of their inheritance. The battle of Marathon, even as an event in English history, is more important than the battle of Hastings. If the issue of that day had been different, the Britons and the Saxons might still have been wandering in the woods. The Greeks are also the most remarkable people who have yet existed." This high claim is justly made on the grounds of the power and efforts that were required for them to achieve what they did for themselves and for mankind. With the exception of Christianity, they were the beginners of nearly everything of which the modern world can boast.

2. It was by their own unaided exertions that they raised themselves so far above surrounding peoples. It was they who originated political freedom and first produced an historical literature, and that a perfect one of its kind. The same wonderful race rose to the height of excellence in oratory, poetry, sculpture, architecture. They were the founders of mathematics, of physical science, of true political science, of the philosophy of human nature and life. In each of these departments of skilled and systematic acquirement they made for themselves those first steps on which all the rest depend. Freedom of thought was their grand invention, and they bestowed it on the world, a heritage for all ages to come. Unfettered by pedantries or superstitions, they looked