

The Piræan tombs are easily opened ; and, although they are so much concealed by weeds and bushes as to be invisible, their quantity facilitates their discovery. The development is performed by first breaking the *trapeza*, or cover, with a large hammer, and then overturning it with a strong pole, as a lever. The tombs are cut in

<sup>1</sup> De Legibus, b. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Hence called *Κηροραφία*.

<sup>3</sup> Epist. ad Famil. b. 4. Epist. 12. and De Legibus, b. 2. where he says, "Hominem mortuum inquit lex in xii tabulis, in urbe ne sepelito, neve urito."

<sup>4</sup> Pausan. b. 5. c. 4.

<sup>5</sup> B. 3. Eleg. 16. v. 25.

the rock, and their common depth is four or five feet. They are filled with a fine loose earth, which has been a subsequent introduction, rather than an original deposit. Some of these sepulchres in a state of superior preservation were opened in my presence ; and they contained earth not more than a foot in depth. The first day I employed ten men, who, in the course of nine hours, opened thirty tombs. The common calculation is, that two men can open four in a day. The first which we discovered contained the bones of a sheep ; which, except the horns, and the *maxilla*, were crumbling in decay. A black sheep was commonly sacrificed at graves to the infernal deities ; and probably formed part of the funereal entertainment. This was the *περιδειπνον*,<sup>1</sup> or *Νεκροδειπνον*,<sup>2</sup> the *cæna feralis* of the Romans ;<sup>3</sup> for it is not to be imagined, that the promiscuous slaughter of men and animals, which was so ceremoniously performed at the tomb of Patroclus, was ever permitted in Greece after the heroic ages ; and every thing which, on similar occasions, was offered to the infernal deities, was no doubt eaten by the guests, excepting some particular parts which were left for the gods alone, who, as Tertullian observes, had the worst pieces, while the *Manes* had only the fragments which fell from the festive board, and were thrown into the tomb.