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**HISTORICAL RESEARCHES.**  
**INTO THE**  
**POLITICS, INTERCOURSE, AND TRADE**  
**OF THE**  
**CARTHAGINIANS, ETHIOPIANS,**  
**AND EGYPTIANS.**

**BY A. H. L. HEEREN.**

**TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.**

**THE SECOND EDITION, .**  
**CORRECTED THROUGHOUT, AND TO WHICH IS NOW FIRST ADDED AN INDEX,**  
**NEW APPENDICES, AND OTHER ADDITIONS.**

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**MDCCCL.**

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

such civilization, religion as its nurse, and the distant regions of the south as its cradle. He compares Herodotus with the Sacred Writings, and describes "Ethiopia, the most distant region of the earth, whose inhabitants are the tallest, most beautiful, and long-lived of the human race,"<sup>1</sup> as "the Sabeans, the men of stature," of one prophet,<sup>2</sup> and as "the mighty men—the Ethiopians, that handle the shield," of another;<sup>3</sup> and in other instances throws a considerable light on the sacred text.

In the researches on the primeval and mysterious Egypt is laid before us a concise but clear sketch of the first attempts at writing, together with the discoveries of Young and Champollion in deciphering hieroglyphics—the land and its inhabitants—their divisions—their occupations—their literature—their religion, their laws and polity:—and, finally, the wonders of that land of marvels—its pyramids, its majestic and solemn temples—the stupendous colossi and monuments of the hundred-gated Thebes, are exhibited before us.

Considering the very interesting nature of these subjects, and the ability and learning displayed by Professor Heeren in their investigation and illustration, it is truly a matter of surprise that such a work has not before been made accessible to the English reader.

No one wishes more sincerely than he who has made this attempt, that it had been done by some one better qualified for the office. The translation was begun merely as a literary exercise, without any view to publication; and was continued solely from the interesting nature of the work, and the pleasure felt in its performance.

Of the high qualifications enumerated by a writer in the *Quarterly Review* as necessary for the proper performance of this task, but few are possessed by him who has undertaken it.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, he still hopes that what he has done will be found to be a correct version of the German: and he is led to state this with more confidence from its having received the sanction and commendation of Professor Heeren himself. That learned gentleman, at the request of the publisher of these volumes, kindly took upon himself the task of reading over the sheets before publication—a task to which his knowledge of the English language rendered him competent, and which the numerous corrections he has made, show him to have executed with much care and attention. Soon after the first thirteen sheets had been transmitted to him, the learned author writes, "I have read them with attention, and attest that they are made with a due knowledge of the two languages, and with all the accuracy which I could desire. I should be well content if the continuation should be executed with the same diligence; and if the whole of my works should be presented in this form to the English public." In a letter received a few days since, containing the Professor's corrections and emendations of the whole of the first volume and the principal part of the second, together with the Appendix IX., which has never before been published, he again expresses his approbation of the English version. A considerable part of the work was also revised by a gentleman distinguished for his accomplishments, and his high attainments in classical and German Literature, whose name (were I at liberty to mention it) would give the reader entire confidence in this part of the work.

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, iii. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah xlv. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah xlv. 9.

<sup>4</sup> "We would gladly see the whole work made accessible to the English reader; but it would require no ordinary accomplishments to do so. Oriental, classical, and modern languages must be alike familiar to the person who should undertake the task." *Quarterly Review*, No. LXXXV. p. 118, note. The translator cannot but congratulate the public upon the able hands which the remaining parts of this work are now in.

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Besides the Appendix just mentioned, there is prefixed to this translation the **GENERAL INTRODUCTION** of the author to his Reflections upon the Nations of Antiquity, which, in the German, is found at the beginning of the volume on the Persians. It has been thought proper to prefix it to this volume, as containing a concise and general development of the first rise of states and governments; of the influence of religion in their formation, and of its beneficial effects upon legislation; of the origin of commerce, and of its offspring, civilization, navigation, and finance. These particulars are so skilfully grouped, so luminously displayed, and the whole finished with so much judgment and taste, that it altogether forms a fine historical picture.

Although the business of translating be perhaps the most humble connected with literature, yet some anxiety is naturally felt for the success of what has cost us much labour. From this feeling the translator of the present work does not profess to be exempt: perhaps it is increased by this being the first literary attempt he has offered to the public. Nevertheless, as he has aimed at nothing beyond clothing the ideas of another in an English dress, he expects no higher praise than that of having executed his task with fidelity, and of having by so doing contributed his feeble efforts for the advancement of knowledge.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

In the Appendix VI. I have given the original Latin as well as an English version of the portions of Avienus, which Prof. Heeren has translated into German. The description given by Heeren of the early Carthaginian voyages in the Atlantic Ocean, receive no small confirmation from the ancient traditions of the Irish. No one but a genuine Irish antiquarian would, of course, contend that the Annals collected by Keating, Flaherty, and O'Connor, are to be received as implicitly as "Holy Writ," and no one but a confirmed sceptic would reject them as wholly unworthy of attention.<sup>1</sup> There is, in all the varying accounts given by the Irish historians, one fact in which all the traditions meet—that letters and some of the arts of civilized life were brought to their country by a people called Phenians; by a change, which, as Faber remarks, is very common in the traditions respecting the origin of nations, the people is sometimes spoken of as an individual, and the personified Phenius becomes the inventor of letters<sup>2</sup> and the parent of civilization. The route prescribed for the Phenians, or the descendants of the imaginary Phenius, brings them from some part of the Levantine coast to the western Mediterranean, and thence round Spain to the British islands. In the oldest legends no date is assigned to the successive steps of this migration, and the chronology given by Keating and

<sup>1</sup> Turner, *History of English Middle Ages*, 1. 276, says, that of all their traditions, one of their most ancient and least irrational is that which deduces some part of their population from Spain.—A Greek writer, Nennius, who wrote in the ninth century, mentions this tradition twice; and his account is valuable, as it shows that in the ninth century the Irish derived themselves from Spain, when they had no motive but their own traditions to do so.

<sup>2</sup> Much has been disputed about the Irish letters. The Bobeloth characters, the Beth-luisnon, Ogham, and Ogham-Crabb writing, have been eagerly dilated on. But also it has been fancied that Fenius Farsadh, the pronepos of Japhet, first invented Irish letters. Turner's *Middle Ages*, vi. 277.

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

O'Connor is manifestly a clumsy forgery by the monks in the middle ages. Still there are some circumstances which would lead to the conclusion that the period when the Phenians came to Ireland, must have been nearly that which is assigned for the voyage of Himilco. Of these the most remarkable is the tradition that a colony of Phenians worked the mines in the county of Wicklow, and that another discovered metallic treasures at Killarney. Now it is sufficiently well known, that the first mines worked by the Poeni, as the Carthaginians should properly be called, were those in Spain, and that the art of mining was brought there to some degree of perfection about the time of Himilco's expedition.

The appearance of the ancient shafts in different parts of Ireland is precisely similar to that which travellers in Spain assure us is presented by the remaining traces of Carthaginian works; the brazen instruments sometimes dug up in the Irish bogs, are found when assayed to have the same proportions of mixture in the metals, as the Carthaginian relics discovered in Sicily and Italy; and the shape of several ornaments found at various times is perfectly congruous to the description given of Carthaginian habits by the Roman historians. Of the coincidences in language it is useless to speak, for the only relic of the Carthaginian tongue is so hopelessly corrupt, that it may be wrested to support any system of which the wildest antiquarian ever dreamed.

The long-disputed question of the Milesian settlement in Ireland may be then settled, if we suppose that the Phenians were a Carthaginian colony; their acquiring the mastery of the country will not appear surprising when we reflect that a handful of Englishmen at the present moment rules over Hindostan; and the pretensions of the Irish to remote antiquity and an eastern origin will appear to have resulted from the adoption of the traditions, which the colonies that introduced letters brought with them from the parent state. In these traditions no note was taken of time, no attempt made to separate what occurred in the earlier steps of the migration from what happened in later periods. Hence room was afforded for the invention of all the fabulous tales that the fancy of flattering genealogists and dreaming monks could invent; but all these leave unchanged the simple fact, that the Irish traditions invariably ascribe the introduction of letters and the arts to a colony called Phenians, and ascribe to that colony a route precisely coincident with the progressive course of the Carthaginians.

Respecting the Cassiterides there are many interesting particulars in TURNER'S *ANGLO-SAXONS*, (vol. i. p. 51, etc.) to which the reader is referred.

*Oxford.*

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

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ALTHOUGH Modern history possesses great importance from our proximity in point of time to the actions it records, as well as their manifold relations to the age in which we live, yet on the other hand Ancient history is not without certain advantages peculiar to itself; which, notwithstanding the many centuries that have intervened, confer upon its records the appearance, as it were, and the graces of a perpetual youth. The crowds of illustrious men conspicuous in its annals, as citizens, as statesmen, or as warriors, will never cease to have their admirers, and, it may be hoped, their imitators also; and even if we admit that these heroes of past ages may have been indebted for part of their grandeur to the venerable mists of antiquity through which we contemplate them, yet does Ancient history possess an incontestable advantage over that of modern times in the rich variety of the forms of government and polity which it unfolds to us. Modern history is confined to Europe, or, beyond those limits, to the colonial settlements of Europeans; and consequently, throughout all its details relative to civilized nations, preserves an uniformity which is the necessary result of the almost equal degree of refinement they have attained. This similarity of manners, arts, and religion has, in some degree, given to mankind at large, as contemplated in these countries, the appearance of one mighty nation, which may be considered, notwithstanding some subordinate differences, as forming an uniform whole. How different an aspect does the Old world present to us! The most civilized nations of the earth were not then, like those of modern Europe, the links of a general system; were not pent up within one quarter of the globe, but dispersed through all the parts of it then known: lastly, they were not associated by the ties of a common religion. Every nation, in consequence, much more readily assumed and maintained a character peculiar to itself; a great diversity of governments grew up and flourished together; and thus it is that Ancient history, although many of our present constitutions were then unknown, enlarges the sphere of our observation, and affords us, in the variety of the forms of government presented to our notice, practical lessons of political wisdom.

On the other hand, questions relative to the commerce of ancient nations appear to be much less intimately connected, than is the case in modern times, with their political institutions; because commerce had not as yet excited in an equal degree the attention of their governments. Nevertheless, even at that time, there were states which in a greater or less degree owed their existence to commerce; and of which the institutions can be very imperfectly understood without a reference to this subject. We cannot, however, form a judgment on any individual question, till we shall have ascended so far in the history of Antiquity as to comprehend the whole extent of ancient commerce, with its principal characteristics, by the light of such records as have been preserved to us. This will justify the extensiveness of the present inquiries, which embrace the trade as well as the political constitutions of the ancient world. Both these questions will be elucidated, according to the plan of the present work, by the inquiries we shall pursue respecting some of the most prominent nations *individually*: but it is necessary to offer first some general observations, which, by developing certain principles, may contribute to illustrate the detail which follows.

Nothing can, in itself, be more obscure than the question respecting the formation of states or civil societies, (expressions which we may consider as synonymous,) and the causes of the diversity of form they have assumed; but this



question, which the very remoteness of their origin and the want of credible information renders so difficult, has been still more embarrassed by the practice of transferring to ancient times ideas drawn from the constitutions of existing nations, which are utterly inapplicable to those of Antiquity. The further we advance in such investigations, the more we shall have reason to be convinced, that the origin of political constitutions was, at the first, exceedingly simple, and as far as possible from being the effect of deliberate intention or established principles; being much more the result of circumstances and necessity. It is seldom, however, that the history of nations ascends so far: but our observations on such tribes as are still in their political infancy supply us with data respecting the progress of ancient nations, which we shall in vain expect from the history of the latter;<sup>1</sup> nor was there ever a period when the opportunities of making such observations were more copious than at present. What then are the general conclusions to which such observations lead us, and how do they agree with the records which have been preserved to us in Ancient history?

The first bond of community existing among men was, beyond all question, the natural one of *domestic* ties. It is greatly to be doubted whether any people ever existed, among whom the law of marriage, or the domestic alliance of the two sexes, did not prevail; and even if an instance or two could be cited, it may safely be pronounced that such a state of society would resolve itself into barbarism. The very bond, however, of domestic society implied an inequality which was necessarily productive of authority on the one hand and submission on the other. Among barbarous nations the husband is always the lord of his wife and of his children, so long as the latter are supported by him; and as the moral motives which should mitigate this authority are few and feeble, it is apt to degenerate into absolute despotism. His wife and his children are treated by the lordly savage as parts of his property; and all the laborious occupations of the household or the field, and every task which does not demand courage as well as strength, are laid upon the females of the family.

It cannot escape an attentive observer, that this sort of domestic tyranny, so early established and the fruitful source of so many evils, must also have been a serious obstacle to the establishment of a better order of things. By whatever means anything like a *constitution* may be effected, it presupposes the association and combination of a considerable number of separate families. Can it then be matter of surprise that we find so many abuses in civil constitutions, when their roots had already penetrated so deep into the domestic relations from which the latter were formed?

This bond, however, of consanguinity, is much more extensive and powerful among savage tribes than among civilized nations. The different members of the family do not, as with us, devote themselves, as soon as they have attained a certain age, to various occupations in the world without, and thus separate from the parent-stock. All pursue the same occupation, whether it be hunting or the tending of cattle. Consequently the families remain united: they gradually form Tribes, and the Tribes—Nations. The distinction of tribes is universally prevalent, and no less influential among the savages of North America or Australasia, than among the half-savage inhabitants of Central Asia, or of the deserts of Arabia and Africa. The members of the same tribe settle or migrate together: and although the first formation of such societies was undoubtedly the effect of a law of Nature, yet their common interest must have confirmed and strengthened the bond of union, as providing for their mutual defence and security during their continual petty wars. It is always the case that tribes of this sort are subjected to a despotic authority possessed by the head of their race; who owes his power to the patriarchal privileges of his birth, and consequently is sometimes tempted to indulge it, till it becomes an oppressive

<sup>1</sup> Among the works illustrative of the history and geography of nations which have appeared since the last edition of these Inquiries, deserves to be mentioned first, Mountstuart Elphinston's *Account of the Kingdom of Cabul and its Dependencies*, London, 1815; the author of which had visited Afghanistan, as ambassador at the court of Cabul. The Afghans are at present precisely in a *transition-state*, half pastoral and half agricultural. Tribes of both classes live intermingled; and in no part of the world are there greater opportunities for studying with advantage the outlines of civil society in its infancy; respecting which the accomplished author has afforded us details as authentic as they are interesting.

tyranny: at the same time that the dependents of other chiefs are nowise sufferers in their personal freedom.

We must distinguish, however, between such patriarchal authorities, prevalent among wandering tribes, and the civil and political constitutions which presuppose settled habitations and territorial possessions. It is true that even the pastoral state of such tribes can hardly exist without the acknowledgment of certain laws of property: the herds, for instance, are considered to belong to certain individuals, and occasionally the pastures to certain tribes; but the occupations of such races of men, confined principally to the tending of cattle, are so exceedingly easy and simple, that they fail to supply motives for the development of their faculties. The questions which arise among them respecting their possessions are so little intricate, that the decision of the head of the tribe is sufficient to compose all their differences respecting the grand controversy of *Meum* and *Tuum*. Another state of things prevails when such wandering tribes obtain settled possessions, and the law of absolute proprietorship over certain lands and territories is introduced in favour of individuals. It is not easy to define in each instance, on historical grounds, how and when this came to pass: partly because our records rarely ascend so high, and partly because these changes rarely took place simultaneously, but for the most part gradually and insensibly. We may however allege a multitude of causes, connected with the climate, the nature of the soil, and the external relations of each nation, which contributed to effect this change, and will afford us abundant matter for observation.

The consequence of this adoption of settled habitations was the establishment of towns and cities, which severally possessed their respective territory, of greater or less extent. The effect of the formation of communities of this sort was the commencement of certain relations between the inhabitants of the same place; and the outline, however rude, of something like a civil constitution. The unity of their interests and their common security, required that they should be governed by councils common to all, and guided by the same leader. The authority of the heads of tribes and families declined in the same proportion: because as these cities increased in population they gave occasion for a great diversity of arts and occupations, which facilitated the resort of strangers, and contributed to break through the distinctions of clan and tribe.

Whatever may have been the original causes of the formation of such cities or communities, for the present inquiry one fact is amply sufficient,—that in several countries of the Old World, such as Egypt, Syria, Italy, etc., we find that cities existed at the earliest period to which our acquaintance with those countries ascends.

Such an origin of civil government was the frequent and perhaps universal source of the constitutions which we denominate Republican. To this inference we are led by all the evidence which Ancient history has preserved to us; without pretending to establish an hypothesis which might be made the basis of still broader conclusions. The free states of Antiquity, as far as we are acquainted with them, were nothing more than cities surrounded by their peculiar districts; and this character they continued to preserve, whatever degree of political consequence they may have subsequently attained. At the same time, the greatest differences prevailed with regard to the equality or inequality of rights enjoyed by the inhabitants of the country as compared with the citizens of the town. The Phœnician, Grecian, and Italian free states were of this description. It is easy to conceive, from what has been advanced, how such a state of things may have commenced and been established in a single city, or even throughout a territory of small extent (though in this case there always previously existed, or was soon formed, some chief town); while it is very difficult to imagine how an entire nation, dispersed over an extensive tract of country, could fall at once upon the expedient of adopting a free civil constitution.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to such constitutions, it is easy to see not only how they came to be greatly diversified, but also how some of them attained great importance. It

<sup>1</sup> The example of the Jewish confederacy is not a proof to the contrary. The various tribes which composed it would have been effectually dissolved in a complete anarchy, if the establishment of kingly power among them had not contributed to hold them together.

is true that their leading characteristics must always have continued essentially the same. When the state consisted of a number of citizens possessing equal rights, it was a necessary consequence that assemblies should be convened from time to time to debate on their common interests. In such assemblies all the inhabitants of the same town or its territory, being members of the same community, were entitled to appear in person: and this circumstance may furnish us with an answer to the question,—How it came to pass that the Representative System, as it obtains among the moderns, continued so long unknown to the ancients?—Because the very forms and constitution of their republics, implying as they did a right of voting in person, excluded the idea of *representation*. For several reasons, however, it was found necessary to remedy the defects inherent in a form of government purely democratical, by establishing another council, consisting of men of some experience, who might be constantly at hand to supply the place of assemblies which could not be always held, and to decide questions of a nature remote from the apprehension of a popular meeting. Such a council was formed under the name of a Senate, and consisted of the most considerable and most experienced citizens, constituting a distinct and independent body. Finally, as the various departments of the administration demanded a number of special functionaries, it became necessary to create Magistrates, who were intrusted with a greater or less degree of authority according to circumstances.

Such was necessarily the outline of the civil constitutions of all the ancient republics; Comitia—a Senate—and Magistrates, composing their principal parts. Yet, notwithstanding this general similarity, what a diversity of modifications may we expect to discover in them! It is impossible that in any state an absolute equality should exist between its members. The unavoidable differences of opulence and poverty will for the most part bring with them a political inequality also. The hereditary disposition of the more distinguished families to appropriate to themselves the exclusive possession of honours and offices necessarily tends to establish a patrician caste, which would engross the control of all public business. In this manner the constitution would become more or less aristocratic or democratic (to borrow the language of the Greeks); and the same principles will serve to show how individuals also came to acquire an authority more or less arbitrary. Differences no less important would obtain with respect to the senate, the number of its members, as well as the number, the offices, the authority, and the denominations of the magistrates. An example of such diversities we may remark in the free towns of Germany during the days of their liberty; and which is preserved in the few which still subsist. No other country has borrowed so largely from the political institutions of Antiquity, (as may be best seen by tracing back the history of such free towns for two or three hundred years,) notwithstanding some diversities which it does not belong to this place to point out.

Such republics were necessarily of small extent at their commencement: without, however, renouncing their original character, they were often enabled in various ways to extend the limits of their power and their territory, and even to become the mistresses of empires, as, for instance, Rome and Carthage. When several communities belonging to the same nation were situated near each other, they naturally formed a mutual alliance; especially when the pressure of enemies from without drove them to combine their means of resistance. In such cases it was natural that the most considerable state or city should place itself at the head of the confederation, and assume a precedence, which almost necessarily degenerated into a species of domination; of which we see examples in the conduct of Rome towards the Latin states, of Tyre with respect to the Phœnician, of Thebes with respect to those of Bœotia, etc. Nevertheless, the inferior cities would still continue to lay claim to a certain independence. In questions affecting the whole confederacy, such as those of peace and war, the superior state might sometimes carry its claims of precedence to the extent of an absolute supremacy; but so long as her general authority remained unquestioned, she did not much concern herself with the internal polity of the inferior states, or with matters which only affected them individually. Such a prece-

dence enjoyed by the principal state will readily explain how cities, insignificant in themselves, were able to attempt and achieve conquests, aided in many cases by a combination of favourable circumstances, with men of talent and spirit at the head of affairs, and enjoying the resources which their navigation, commerce, and mines supplied.

But besides this class of states, whose origin and formation we have endeavoured to illustrate, Ancient history presents us with another totally different in all the circumstances of their creation and constitution,—in the *Great Monarchies* of antiquity; of which the origin was often no less rapid than their extent was enormous. Some of them were of moderate size and consisted of a single people; the power of their kings being derived from the ancient hereditary law of patriarchal authority. In this manner in Epirus, Macedonia, and elsewhere, the family of their native princes maintained itself on the throne. Others, however, (and those in every respect the most considerable,) comprehended under one dominion a multitude of all nations and languages. It is not to be supposed that a number of independent nations should have voluntarily submitted themselves to one, and it is, *a priori*, much more probable that such a state of things was the result, for the most part, of the rapid growth and victorious progress of a conquering people. The sequel of these inquiries will convince us, in the case of Asia, that such conquering nations were, for the most part, wanderers and shepherds, who forsook their own barren abodes, allured by the prospect of booty and the hope of possessing richer and better cultivated regions, which they overran, pillaged, and subdued. Even if these conquerors had been less barbarous than they were, it is obvious that the whole political condition of such monarchies was necessarily formed on a model totally different from that which prevailed in republics, which owed their existence to the erection of cities and establishment of communities. In a kingdom founded upon the right of conquest, the authority of the ruler could only be maintained by force of arms; and even if a military despotism in its fullest extent were not the consequence, it is obvious that the constitution must partake of that character. An absolute monarchy is the inevitable result; sufficiently rigid to preclude such states from ever assuming the character of *free*; and this may already serve to explain in part the remarkable contrast which the great Monarchies present, in their internal constitution and development, to the Republics of antiquity.

If we are not at liberty to affirm that all the ancient forms of government originated in the manner we have described, it is at least certain that the greater number and the most powerful of the states then existing may be classed under one or other of these two descriptions. When we reflect, however, that all civil societies, which deserve the name, are associations of free men;—that it was not possible that anything like political wisdom or sound philosophy should have regulated their first formation;—that the very desire of security and mutual defence which contributed to their creation was not likely to be at all times equally urgent, and might sometimes be forgotten;—when all these considerations present themselves to the mind of the inquisitive historian, he feels that, in the infancy of the human race, such communities could not have been held together except by a more durable and powerful bond than all of these,—that of *Religion*. There is no conclusion which political history supplies more remarkable than this; that the farther we advance in the history of any nation, the greater becomes the influence of religion in state affairs: and it is the more necessary to advert to this early combination of Religion with Polity, because many circumstances in the following inquiries can only be illustrated by referring to such an union. On the present occasion I use the term Religion to express the barbarous reverence which uncivilized nations have always paid, by certain rites and customs, to imaginary deities, under whatever form they may have been represented or conceived to exist. Whether there may or may not exist some tribes among whom no traces of religion (in the above sense of the word) can be discovered, is a question which has not been perfectly ascertained, and which, in the present case, is immaterial; since, even if such exist, they form at all events exceptions of the rarest occurrence. Now, to convert such a religion into a bond of political union, it is only necessary that it should possess in each nation or

tribe a *national* character, as is generally the case; since, as is proved by a multitude of examples, every nation is easily led to adopt certain gods as its tutelary and peculiar deities. Such an idea,—of a tutelary deity the common protector of the whole nation,—is obviously an invisible bond of interest and alliance. From being an invisible bond of union it is calculated to become a visible one also, and in this respect is especially influential. As soon as the worship of their deities became connected with some particular spot, and took place in some national temple or sanctuary, with public festivals at which all the nation and only that nation assisted,—so soon was there established among them a principle of *unity*, independent of external circumstances, and allied to the innermost feelings of man. Of this we find abundant confirmation in every page of Ancient history.

A state consisting of a single city with its petty territory, in which the very circumstance of its inhabitants living together establishes a strong bond of union, can better subsist without this tie of a common religion, though even in this case it can hardly be altogether dispensed with. But the absolute necessity for such an alliance is best seen in the cases of confederations formed after the manner we have been describing. The very idea of combination implies a previous state of separation, and on this account extraordinary means are necessary to prevent the dissolution of the confederacy and a return to the original condition. It may be added, that as every such association imposes on its members certain common burdens, there is a natural tendency on the part of the combined states to release themselves from such obligations, so soon as circumstances may permit. What then shall insure the durability of such alliances? It is true that the pressure of foreign enemies and the necessity for a combined resistance may effect this for a time, but such occasions are transitory:—even the influence of a paramount authority can insure it only to a certain extent, and only while completely predominant:—Religion alone can maintain such an union, through the influence of common rites and temples, which confer an individuality, as it were, upon the nation,—which appeal to the senses, and the heart; which distinguish that from all other nations, and by that very circumstance infuse into it a spirit of *nationality*. In this manner the temple of the Tyrian Hercules became the centre of the Phœnician League,—that of Jupiter Latiaris of the Latin Confederacy; and thus it was that the Grecian states, discordant in their forms of government and disunited by frequent wars, yet felt themselves to be members of one community, when assembled to celebrate the festival of the Olympian Jupiter.

It is true that Religion can afford no such bond of union to a variety of nations of different origin and various creeds, who formed one mighty mass only in consequence of the superior power of their common conquerors. In as far indeed as the religion of the conquering nation superseded those of the conquered, it exercised of course a considerable but not an universal influence; but its principal efficacy in such cases consisted in its introducing *legislation*, which opposed, as it were, some bounds to the overwhelming violence of military despots, and limited what it could not control. Legislation, to be effectual and to insure respect, demands the sanction of a higher authority. Among nations which have already attained a certain degree of intellectual cultivation and political constitution, the laws, it is true, will of themselves command respect, because men have had time to be convinced that obedience is a duty; but such sentiments were not to be looked for among rude and uneducated tribes, who were not disposed to venerate the laws, except as far as they were sanctioned by Religion. For this reason, in the earliest ages of antiquity, civil institutions, no less than those which were of a character strictly religious, bore the impress of Religion; and even in the present day we see an example of it in the case of all those nations which own the authority of the Koran. Among the Greeks and Romans also, the enactments of Lycurgus and Numa were sanctioned by the authority of the popular religion. Such a state of things naturally caused the establishment of a *sacerdotal* race, as a distinct order, or even *caste*, (the customs of the East differing in this respect from those of Greece and Rome,) which necessarily attained the highest influence in political questions; an influence which, although occasionally abused, was not without its good effects in limiting

the omnipotence of the monarch. Religion also prescribed certain ceremonies which all were equally bound to observe; and the duty of observing them, and the forms they imposed, placed some salutary limits to the power of the sovereign.

The above must be received as merely some general observations on the political constitutions of the Ancients, which in the sequel we shall have abundant occasion to apply to particular examples. A system of Polity, in the full sense of the term, is not the proper subject of researches which necessarily follow the course of history. Nevertheless, if I do not deceive myself, the remarks already offered suggest an explanation of some obscurities which, in the opinion of many of our theorists, involve the first origin of civil society. We do not consider the formation of such societies to be the result of a formal, social compact—the very idea of which is at variance with the condition of a people still in their infancy:—nor do we think that anything like the *discovery* of a constitution took place at a definite period: but we believe it to have grown insensibly out of the exigencies and the passions of mankind. All this was so far from being the result of theory, that it is probable the notion of a theory never entered the heads of the first founders of states, whatever may have been thought of subsequently; and in consequence of this want of system at their commencement, the different forms of government assumed a variety of character, which the theorist finds it hard to reduce to the classifications of modern systems.

The origin of *Commerce* is involved in no less obscurity than that of *Government*. Though we may be convinced that in general it must have originated in the wants of mankind, and the consequent interchange of various commodities, yet many important questions still remain, which history cannot solve satisfactorily. For instance, we are either altogether ignorant, or little less than ignorant, when and how men first came to convert simple *barter* to *commerce*, properly so called, by affixing an adventitious value to the precious metals as measures of the price of a commodity;—how this arrangement became universal, and what were its earliest effects on commerce and civilization;—when gold and silver were first stamped and became current as coinage, and how this discovery also was universally disseminated? Such inquiries are beside our present purpose, and would probably be of little utility, since all that can with any certainty be ascertained on these subjects, has been already said. It will be a much more necessary, and, it is to be hoped, a more profitable task, to take a general survey of ancient commerce at the period of its greatest prosperity, and to point out the peculiarities by which, as regards its objects and institutions, it was distinguished from the commerce of modern times.

It is obvious, that so long as the fourth and largest quarter of our globe remained undiscovered, not only the direction, but the very character of commerce in general must have been essentially different from that of our own times. The three great continents of the Ancient world were not separated by the ocean, and either actually touched or nearly approached each other; and the only sea which was interposed between them all, (the Mediterranean,) was of limited extent. This occasioned the distinctive character belonging to the commerce of antiquity as compared with that of our own days, namely, that the former was principally carried on by land; the trade by sea being merely an appendage to the land commerce. We are accustomed to consider improvements in commerce as inseparable from improvements in navigation; a way of judging totally inapplicable to ancient times, in which the navigation of the Mediterranean, or along certain coasts, however active it may have been, was principally serviceable as assisting and co-operating with land traffic, and as the means of transporting certain weighty commodities.

Commerce by sea, on the grand scale, owed its origin to the *discovery of America*. Up to that period the commerce of Antiquity and of the Middle Ages pursued, on the whole, the same course:—this great event alone formed an era in its history: The great high-way (as it may be termed) which led from the East to Europe and Africa, continued unchanged on the whole, however it may have been altered by some slight deviations; and the traffic which it was the means of carrying on, continued always the principal one. We may therefore

be permitted to doubt whether the circumnavigation of Africa could ever have produced those great and general results which followed upon the discovery of America. It is probable that the communication with India would have long continued to be a mere coasting trade, such as it originally was.

But the discovery of America alone, independently of the circumnavigation of Africa, was sufficient to give a new character to the commerce of the world. That vast continent was accessible only across the ocean; not to be approached by a timid navigation from promontory to promontory, or island to island. Either this great discovery, with all its immeasurable consequences, was to be renounced, or it was necessary to brave the perils of the Atlantic. The ports of the Mediterranean became deserted as soon as those on the western coasts of Europe were opened to fleets from both the Indies; and the ocean at last assumed its proper character and natural pre-eminence, as the high-way for the commerce of the world.

As the commerce of Antiquity was principally carried on by land, we shall be better able to appreciate its nature and extent by taking a survey of the general characteristics of land traffic.

It is evident that the countries which are the most fruitful in the most valuable commodities, (especially if these be peculiar to their soil,) must also be able to supply the greatest quantity of exports; which will be sought by other nations, however remote, who may have learnt the value of such productions. Now the interior of Europe, till the times of the Roman empire, continued in a state which made it incapable of assuming any importance in commerce. Some of the southernmost states of Greece and of Italy had, to a certain degree, emerged from barbarism:—the rest were so uncivilized—had so few wants, and so few commodities of their own to offer in exchange, that even if anything like trade was carried on with them, it was not sufficiently important to rank as a branch of general commerce. Even that of Greece and Rome could be little more than what was necessary to supply their own demands. What productions—raw or manufactured—had they to offer to the East in return for hers? An exception must be made in favour of the south of Spain, the precious metals of which found a ready market in every country.

It is obvious, then, that Asia and Africa, both of them inhabited in a great measure by civilized nations, and both—(more particularly the eastern regions of Asia)—renowned for their splendid natural productions,—must have become the grand emporia of Ancient commerce. Obstacles, however, unknown to modern Europeans, were presented by the vast extent of the Asiatic continent, the peculiarities of its geography and soil, the many deserts which intersect it, and the lawless hordes which infest them. The safety of the merchant accordingly demanded precautions unnecessary in our own countries. As it was impossible for single travellers to effect those long and hazardous journeys, it became necessary to collect companies either sufficiently numerous to defend themselves, or able to pay for the protection of a body of guards. Such bodies of men, which we are accustomed to designate by the word Caravans,<sup>1</sup> could not, however, be collected at a moment's notice, or in every place; and it was necessary that a rendezvous should be appointed, that the merchants and travellers might know where to join a sufficient force for their common defence. In like manner the places of resort for the sale as well as the purchase of their merchandise were necessarily fixed, being recommended by their favourable position, or by some other circumstance, such as long usage; because in such situations alone the sellers were sure to meet a sufficient number of purchasers, and *vice versa*. For like reasons the very course of the caravan was not a matter of free choice but of established custom. In the vast *steppes* and sandy deserts which they had to traverse, Nature had sparingly allotted to the traveller a few scattered places of rest, where, under the shade of palm trees and beside the cool fountains at their feet, the merchant and his beast of burden might enjoy the refreshment rendered necessary by so much suffering. Such places of repose become also *entrepôts* of commerce, and not unfrequently the sites of

<sup>1</sup> I follow the common pronunciation of the word, which is properly *Kierran*.

temples and sanctuaries, under the protection of which the merchant prosecuted his trade, and to which the pilgrim resorted; and these frequently increased to great and opulent cities, and contributed, by motives of interest or necessity, to attract to the same route the various bands of travellers.

From all this it is apparent why such commerce by caravans became subject to certain rules, and restricted to a definite course. It is not wonderful therefore that the routes of caravans should have continued, on the whole, invariable, for hundreds and even for thousands of years; notwithstanding they may have been partially diverted by the decay or destruction of particular cities, or the growth of others in their stead. The same considerations will show us how it came to pass that certain situations peculiarly favourable for the transactions of land commerce, such as Egypt and Babylon, so soon assumed a conspicuous place in history; which they continued to preserve through the Middle Ages no less than in those of Antiquity, notwithstanding some occasional diminutions of their splendour. We shall also find that similar reasons led to the effect we have already pointed out, namely, that the commerce of the Middle Ages continued, on the whole, to be the same in its operations with that of Antiquity, and could not in fact have been otherwise, except it had changed its nature to a sea commerce from a traffic by land. Till this took place, in other words, till the discovery of America, the species of commerce by land which was carried on, derived its characteristics not so much from the method it pursued and the countries it traversed, as from the nations by which it was maintained; and whether the grand channel of communication through Asia terminated at Tyre or at Alexandria, made no essential difference in the nature of the commerce itself.

The trade by caravans requires a multitude of beasts of burden, particularly of camels, an animal fitted above all others not only for supporting great burdens, but for enduring long and painful journeys through desert tracts sparingly supplied with water. In like manner a number of camel-drivers are necessary, accustomed to the care of these animals, and, like them, habituated to support fatigue and privation. The horse and the mule, though useful for such purposes, are far inferior in these qualities to the camel; and accordingly we do not find any large communication by means of caravans to have existed except in regions where the camel (the ship of the desert, as it is termed by the Arabs) is found. But this useful animal, though reduced to a state of perfect bondage, is not, like the horse or the mule, easily reared in the stable; it loves the free air and open country, and consequently the rearing of camels has, on the whole, continued at all times the occupation of nomadic tribes.

This will already explain how such tribes,—(even if their habitual mode of life had been less analogous than it was to that of the followers of a caravan,)—came to devote themselves so much to this mode of traffic. When they did not themselves become merchants they were accustomed (as we shall see by examples cited in the course of this work) to supply beasts of burden to the inhabitants of mercantile cities, and not unfrequently to undertake the transport of commodities for others;<sup>1</sup> and when we consider that one half of Asia and of Africa is occupied by such roving tribes and their herds,<sup>2</sup> can we be surprised that this description of traffic should have been so widely extended?

Whatever may be the strength of the camel, it was still too limited not to have the effect of restricting the commerce carried on by its means. Many hundred camels would scarcely suffice to convey the freight of one of our East Indiamen; and consequently the transport of wares by such means of conveyance must have been exceedingly confined. Articles of great weight or bulk are necessarily transported in much smaller quantities by land; and this will explain the fact how so many of the most valuable products of distant countries, though known

<sup>1</sup> See Elphinston's account of Cabul, p. 290, fol.

<sup>2</sup> The camel is found throughout the whole of Southern and Central Asia as far as 53° N. Lat.; as well as throughout the whole of Northern Africa. We have no means of knowing to what extent it is found in Southern Africa, but it would appear to be entirely unknown there; possibly never passing the great chain of mountains which divides that continent. I have pointed out in another work the effect which the importation of this useful animal might have on the commerce of those countries, *List. Works*, ii. 8, 420.



to exist, so seldom became articles of commerce among the Ancients. How, for instance, could rice, the most valuable of all the productions of the East, be conveyed in any large quantities to Europe? How could the sugar and saltpetre of Bengal be transported by land to the markets of the West? On the other hand, articles of less weight but great value, such as spices, perfumes, light apparel, the precious stones and metals, etc., were readily transported, and on that account also became objects of primary importance in Ancient commerce.

These remarks will have the effect of illustrating the great importance of the communication by means of caravans to the nations of Antiquity. Civilization being generally the result of commerce, it is obvious that the progress in this respect of the nations of Africa and Asia mainly depended on such a mode of intercourse; and a moment's consideration will teach us how it was calculated, in itself, to promote by twofold relations such a consequence. In the first place, a communication by caravans always creates a considerable *intermediate* commerce. The caravans necessarily traverse various countries and nations, and the demands of these, as well as the interest of the merchants, have the effect of promoting an interchange of articles of commerce. It is true that in many cases this continued for centuries extremely simple, and it would be an extremely hasty conclusion to assert that in every case a progressive improvement in civilization was the necessary result of such traffic; which is apt to be limited according to the luxuries or necessities in demand. In proportion, however, as such interchange is confined to profitable and excludes injurious articles of commerce, it produces an immediate improvement in the economy of domestic life. Among more civilized nations it is proportionably extensive; and although the fixed track to which the caravans are confined prevents their disseminating very widely an equal degree of improvement, yet such a mode of communication has the effect, as we have already seen, of creating certain emporia of commerce along the line of its route, which being frequented by numbers attracted by the love of gain, gradually grow up into flourishing cities, and, following the usual progress of refinement, increase in wealth and civilization,—in luxury and corruption. The progress of commerce at large being intimately connected with this species of *intermediate* traffic, the importance of the latter is sufficiently obvious.

Notwithstanding the prevalence in Ancient times of land commerce, we must not lose sight of the trade then carried on by sea, particularly as it has been variously misrepresented by authors. Some have not scrupled to send the fleets of the Tyrians and Carthaginians to America; while others have denied their means of effecting the distant voyages of which we possess indisputable evidence.

The chief characteristic of the navigation of the Ancients was this, that it continued to be at all times a coasting navigation. The sailors of Antiquity never quitted the land except when constrained to do so by some unavoidable necessity, such as the violence of currents, or when the passage from one coast to the other was of the shortest duration. It is the general opinion, that they were compelled to adhere to the land for want of the mariner's compass; but the true reason must be sought in the scantiness of their geographical knowledge, which embraced only three parts of the world. To induce seamen to make distant voyages across an open sea some *object* is necessary, which, before the discovery of America, did not exist to any. Such long navigations were not attempted nor desired; and it may be doubted whether the bare circumstance of the invention of the compass could have ever given rise to them, had not a daring adventurer been conducted by it to the discovery of regions on the other side of the Atlantic. The mariner's compass had already been discovered more than a hundred years when Columbus first used it as his guide across the Ocean.

But while we admit the navigation of the Ancients to have been always carried on along the coast, we must be cautious how we attribute to it the degree of imperfection so liberally assigned it by many. It is certain that a coasting navigation is not only subject to greater difficulties and dangers than any other, but has the property, in consequence, of forming at all times the most expert seamen. Is it not true that at the present day the Newfoundland fisheries and the coal-trade form the best mariners of England? The greater frequency of danger in

such navigations habituates the sailor to overcome and despise it. It would be a most unwarrantable inference, therefore, to conclude that, because the nations of Antiquity confined themselves to coasting voyages of small extent, they were therefore deficient in maritime experience and skill. It was by the prosecution of such voyages that the Portuguese found their way to the East Indies. The very position of the three continents of the Ancient world precluded the possibility of fixing any absolute limit to navigation; and nothing was more likely to advance discovery than the long continuance of such coasting voyages. No insurmountable barrier prohibited further progress:—the love of lucre and the love of discovery perpetually allure the mariner onwards from the known to the unknown;—and when we reflect that the Carthaginians and Phœnicians were enabled to pursue at their leisure, and in profound peace, their long and adventurous voyages, we shall easily admit that they may have been gradually induced to extend them farther and farther till they had penetrated into very remote regions. Without attempting at present to draw any general inference from these observations, we may at least be convinced that it is a very unfounded proceeding to assert that the accounts we possess of the distant voyages of these nations along the coasts of Europe and Africa, and even of the circumnavigation of the latter, are fabulous, merely because they do not coincide with our own preconceived notions of the unskilfulness of Ancient mariners. If we would have some *external* evidence,—what corroboration can be more strong than the instance of the Normans during the Middle Ages? Can it be doubted that *they* circumnavigated Europe? Or can we deny the fact of their voyages, which, nevertheless, from the relative position of their native country, were prosecuted under circumstances of much greater difficulty and danger than were the expeditions of Tyre and Carthage, seated as these were on the coasts of the Mediterranean?

At the same time the navigation of the Ancients was not so exclusively a coasting one as not occasionally to venture across the open sea; but within very moderate limits, and only in the case of narrow seas. A glance at a map of the Eastern hemisphere of the globe will show us two seas of this description, both of great importance. The *Mediterranean*, with its subordinate portions, comprehending the Black Sea; and the *Indian Ocean*, lying between the coasts of Eastern Africa, Arabia, and Hindostan, and comprising the Arabian and Persian Gulfs.

The Mediterranean was obviously formed to be the principal scene of the commerce and navigation of the Ancients, by its position, in the centre of the three continents, and surrounded by the most fruitful and most civilized regions of the known world. The facility of its navigation was greatly increased by the abundance of islands strewed over its surface, the promontories which on every side stretch far into its bosom, and by the smallness of its total extent. It served as the medium of communication between the inhabitants of the three continents, who, beyond all question, would have continued as uncivilized as those of Central Africa, if the basin of the Mediterranean had been a *steppe*, like those of Mongolia.

In the Indian Ocean, within the limits we have mentioned, navigation is facilitated not only by the vicinity of the opposite shores, and by the frequent occurrence of islands, but also by periodical winds, which change their direction twice in the year. During all the summer half-year, from May to October, the prevailing south-west winds wafted from the coast of Africa to those of Malabar and Ceylon the fleets which the north wind, prevailing at the same time, had carried down the Arabian Gulf, and led through the straits of Babelmandeb: and in like manner, during our winter months, a constant north-easterly breeze served to conduct them home again, and taking a southerly direction as it entered the Arabian Gulf, conveyed them securely to its innermost recess.<sup>1</sup> The sequel of these observations will convince us that at a very early period the nations of the South availed themselves of the advantages thus afforded them by nature; and will at the same time show us how easy it was for the Ancients to

<sup>1</sup> The Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf have both of them their monsoons, which differ in their directions. In the latter northerly winds prevail during the summer, and in the former south-westerly; which assist the navigation towards the coast of Malabar. On the other hand, during the winter months north-easterly winds prevail in the Ocean, and, in the Arabian Gulf, gales from the south; the effect of which is such as has been described.

prosecute the voyages referred to, without supposing the nature of their navigation to have undergone a change.

The extreme difference between the commerce of the Ancients and that of the Moderns must be apparent from what has been advanced, but it will be rendered yet more evident by a brief comparison of the system and objects of each.

The system of Ancient commerce was, on the whole, much more simple than that of modern nations; wanting many of the artificial improvements without which trade, as it now exists, could not be carried on. Its object was simply to supply certain demands of necessity or luxury; and these the merchant sought to sell at an advanced price, especially when he had bestowed upon them labour of his own. In this simple manner he acquired competence or wealth; but without carrying his speculations or his views any further. Consequently the commerce of the Ancients was characterized by this leading circumstance,—that it was a traffic or barter of *commodities*. In many cases, especially in very ancient times, these commodities were simply exchanged by way of barter; and even when the precious metals became the standard of value, they were at first employed with a reference to their weight, and only at a later period as coins properly so called. We know indeed that the Phœnicians, the Persians, and other nations possessed a coinage of their own, and we are certain that some species of coin (the Daric for instance) were current among the Greeks also; but it is not known to what extent this practice prevailed. One thing however is certain, that there was nothing like a *money trade* established among the Ancients, which at present forms a very principal branch of European commerce, and which, if it existed at all, was then merely in its infancy. In some of the great cities, such as Athens, Rome, Alexandria, etc., the constant influx of foreigners must have given rise to the trade of money-changers; but as long as there was no *exchange*, properly so called, such partial and incomplete interchanges of coinage could never become a branch of trade. The instances to the contrary which have been produced from certain Ancient authors are of an extremely doubtful nature, and appear to be nothing more than cases of orders of payment. It was natural that these should be drawn on a third person, but the art was not yet known of making them circulate, and converting them into articles of commerce. In modern days the money market at large is intimately connected with public credit, particularly with that of the great commercial states; and may be considered as a consequence of the habit so universally adopted and understood, of contracting and liquidating at a minimum price public debts. Such a practice was unknown, because unnecessary in Ancient times. The moderate expenditure of Ancient governments was supplied either by means of tribute, or, in the free states, extraordinary occasions were met by voluntary loans on the part of the citizens, which were subsequently repaid; without ever affording grounds for mercantile speculation. A regular system of exchange must be dependent on certain general laws affecting that branch of trade, and can scarcely be maintained without a well-organized system of *Posts*; since everything depends upon a certain, rapid, and constant correspondence between the different money markets. Yet we are not at liberty to suppose the commerce of the Ancients to have been as inefficient as ours would be if all communication by postage were suddenly removed; since it is a very different thing to be deprived of an advantage, and never to have possessed it: in the latter case the difficulty suggests of itself some partial remedy. It is not, however, the less certain, that many branches of modern commerce owe their present activity,—nay, their very existence,—to the communication established by the system of posts.

The greater simplicity of Ancient commerce is also shown by this circumstance, that a much less variety of employments was created by it, restricted as it was to the mere purchase and sale of commodities. Yet even in this respect we must not be too positive in our assertions. Who can pronounce with certainty all that passed in the great mercantile houses of Tyre or Carthage? We have many examples to prove that in commercial countries a great variety of employments has been always created by trade, besides those immediately devoted to it: for instance, in Egypt, the various mercantile agents, interpreters, brokers, etc.; and we are warranted by the unchangeable character of Oriental manners

to infer that such was probably the case in Ancient times. The principal difference, therefore, lies between the commerce of Europe as it is, and as it was. Even in the East, however, it is probable that the circumstances of those times made it impossible for the merchant to transact, as he does at present, a great proportion of his affairs by means of others: he was obliged himself to travel into foreign countries to purchase his commodities, particularly into regions which, (like Spain,) from their situation on the other side of the Mediterranean, and from the barbarism of their inhabitants, did not admit of any other mode of access. On this account also he was compelled, for the most part, to be at the same time the owner and captain of his vessel. All these observations are of course liable to many exceptions, but it may be safely asserted in general, that the very circumstance of the want of a regular communication by *posts* rendered it impossible for the Ancients to carry on their negotiations in the manner now established, by *commission*.

The *objects* of commerce must have been obviously much more limited than in the present day, not only because many articles of trade now of great importance were then either unknown or little used, but also because the means of conveyance employed were insufficient, as we have seen, to transport the weightier merchandises.

Among these must be comprehended the most necessary article of all—*Corn*. Allowing that such a trade may to a certain extent have been carried on by land, it is clear that this necessary of life could not have been so transported in large quantities, or to any great distance. A trade in corn is especially dependent on navigation, and, in ancient times, was limited, in general, to the shores of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, and possibly also of the Arabian and Persian Gulfs. The coasts of Barbary and Egypt, which at the present day are so productive, were then still more so, because more highly cultivated. Who does not know that Rome derived her very subsistence from their granaries, and those of Sicily?

The transport of Wine was attended with even greater difficulties; it being impossible to transport liquids in sufficient quantities on beasts of burden; and difficult and sometimes impossible for wagons to follow a caravan, from the want of roads, or the badness of them. There were also other circumstances which contributed to give a totally different character to the wine-trade of the Ancients. The western countries of Europe, which now almost exclusively supply the rest of the world with this article, then produced little or none, even for their own consumption; at the same time that they had little demand for this luxury, and (contrary to the present state of commerce in this respect) contributed little to increase its value as an article of trade. Every country was then content with a wine of its own; and the cultivation of the vine was the more considerable and the more widely disseminated, because there existed no religion which interdicted the use of the grape.

On the other hand, Oil was then a much more important article of commerce. It bears transportation better than some kinds of wine, and was at that time in universal request, in consequence of the little use of butter in the southern countries. It may be added, that the cultivation of the Olive has undergone little change: the districts which then produced that useful tree continue to produce it exclusively; and Sicily, and the southern coast of Italy, were then indebted to it for no small share of their prosperity.

The difficulties opposed to the conveyance of different articles of clothing were much less considerable, although the raw material could not be imported in such large quantities as at present. The most precious of these, silk, cotton, and fine wool, were peculiar to the East, and the sequel of these observations will show the high degree of importance attached to these commodities as articles of land commerce.

The precious productions of the East, spices and perfumes, particularly frankincense, poured in a rich stream through various channels from the coasts of India and Arabia, to supply the costly sacrifices of the Ancients. The subject will be treated more fully in the course of the present work, but it has been already remarked, that no article of commerce was so well adapted to land carriage.

The epochs of the Roman and Macedonian empires are far from being the most important or the most instructive, either as respects the polity or the trade of the Ancients. The variety which distinguished the ancient forms of government was necessarily overwhelmed by an universal dominion, and Commerce herself was apt to be fettered with the same bondage in which every other civil relation was confined. We must ascend to a more distant age, if we would contemplate the constitutions of the Ancients in all their diversity, and their commerce in its most tranquil and flourishing condition. The period immediately preceding the establishment, and during the continuance of the Persian monarchy, appears to offer to the historian the most satisfactory survey and the richest field of inquiry. By examining this epoch we shall be enabled to estimate correctly the commerce of Alexandria of a later date, and the questions arising out of the political systems of the Romans and Macedonians. In like manner, by ascending to the age referred to, we behold, as it were, everything in its proper place, before the success of one nation had deprived the rest of their independence;—every commercial state then occupied the rank and position in the general system for which it appeared to be designed by its peculiar advantages. The shores of the Mediterranean were inhabited in every direction by industrious and sea-faring nations: *Carthage* had occupied the greater part of the coast of Africa, and by opening her ports for the importation of foreign produce, had already begun to monopolize the commerce of the Interior. *Cyrene* was the immediate neighbour of Carthage, and had become her rival, by her possessions along the eastern portion of the same coast. Over against these cities the Grecian colonies of Sicily and Italy had grown, by the cultivation of their fruitful territories, to a degree of opulence and prosperity which in the end proved fatal to them. Their narrow limits could with difficulty produce as much oil and wine as was absorbed by the neighbouring country of Gaul, and the boundless continent of Africa; which were either altogether barren of these productions, or afforded them sparingly and with difficulty. Italy was then principally in the hands of the Etrusci; a nation who, in spite of the jealous rivalry of Carthage, maintained themselves in the Mediterranean: while the *Ilomans*, pent up as yet within the limits of Latium, were content to carry on a peaceful traffic, and conclude a treaty of commerce with their future enemies the Carthaginians. The internal commerce of Gaul was in the hands of *Masilia*, the most peaceful and prosperous of all the Grecian states; while, on the coast of Spain, *Gades* and other independent Phœnician colonies, were mistresses of fleets which even braved the waves of the Atlantic.

The States of Greece, more particularly Athens and Corinth, with their Ionian dependencies, had secured to themselves the commerce of the *Ægean* and the Black Sea; and even Egypt, exclusive as it was (under the dominion of the Pharaohs) in all its institutions, had opened at Naucratis a free port for Grecian commerce. The later kings of this ancient dynasty went still further, and with the hope of making themselves masters of Phœnicia and Syria, removed their residence from Memphis to Saïs, and equipped fleets at the same time on the Arabian Gulf and the Mediterranean. The nations of Central Asia were brought into closer contact by the levies of the Assyrians and Babylonians; and even the compulsory migration of some conquered nations—(the first expedient which despotism in its infancy devised to maintain its conquests)—was not without some beneficial result, by making different nations better acquainted with each other,—with their productions and their demands. The haughty *Babylon*, formed by her very position for the seat of empire and of commerce to the rest of Asia, had already become the resort of the arts and civilization; while Tyre and the other Phœnician states maintained their rights as the principal channels of communication for the trade of Asia and Europe: a trade which, though momentarily disturbed by the Persian conquest, presently resumed its former current. Under the dominion of the last, the whole of Central Asia assumed the internal arrangement of a settled empire: the traveller pursued without difficulty his way along the high roads from Sardes to Persepolis and Bactria; and the very remains of their palaces, decorated with the representations of public feasts, on occasion of which the different nations are

portrayed as presenting their offerings before the throne of the monarch, are even now a striking proof of the industry and arts of the people, and the wise government of their kings.

If to this outline we add the commerce of Southern Africa and Ethiopia, carried on, as we shall have occasion to see, by means of caravans communicating with Carthage and Tyre across the deserts of that continent, we are presented (in the period we are contemplating) with a picture of life and activity—of the commerce and combinations of mankind,—extending over the fairest portions of the globe, and affording the historian a surprise and pleasure, proportioned to the multiplicity of the objects it embraces. Without pushing our inquiries to the utmost limits of recorded time, we take up our position at a period when the clear light of authentic History began to lose itself in the twilight of Tradition:—an obscurity which, in proportion as it is capable of being penetrated, allures the curiosity of the observer. Without attempting to explore it beyond the limits to which the torch of criticism may safely conduct us, we may hope that occasionally some scattered rays may shoot far into its recesses.

Of this splendid picture we shall attempt to delineate at least the principal features. To this end we must cause the warlike races which usually occupy the most prominent place on the stage of History, to withdraw awhile, and make room for more pacific and unassuming nations. Let the march of devastating armies give place to that of peaceful caravans: and instead of ruined cities, let us contemplate the more pleasing spectacle of newly-founded and flourishing colonies.

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## PREFACE.

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DURING the forty years which have now nearly elapsed since the first appearance of these Reflections upon Ancient Africa, a progress has been made in the exploration of this quarter of the globe, which far surpasses the highest expectations that could have been formed with any semblance of probability. Bruce's Travels, and the Narrative of Lucas, in the first part of the Proceedings of the African Society, were at that time the most important authorities to which I could have recourse for a comparison between the present Africa and the Ancient, which forms throughout the groundwork of these Researches. But the spirit of the age, which, with a power before unknown, achieved all it attempted, did wonders with regard to Africa. Hardy and enterprising adventurers, among whom were some of my personal friends, penetrated into its interior. The chief country, indeed, of this part of the world, once the cradle of civilization and science, unexpectedly obtained a political consequence which it had lost for centuries: it was the object of an expedition led on by the hero of the age, with a literary as well as an armed retinue; of an expedition which, from the new stores of information it opened, will never be forgotten.

The fruits of these enterprises, by the honourable liberality of our government, were placed at my disposal; and, encouraged by the indulgent reception which I saw vouchsafed to my first essay, I felt the obligation pressed upon me, to lay every new edition before the reader in as improved a state as possible. This I did in the second edition, which appeared in 1804, and which not only contained many additions and improvements, but was almost entirely rewritten. If this was rendered necessary formerly by the Travels of HORNEMANN, DENON, and others, it was not less so after the appearance of the great French work, *Description d'Egypte*, with its magnificent atlas of copper-plates, of which I made use in the third edition, published in 1815. It only remains for me now to state what has been done for the fourth.

Already, in the third edition, it was found necessary to divide the

*Reflections upon the African Nations* into two volumes; the first containing the Carthaginians and Ethiopians, the second the Egyptians. The same division has been observed in this fourth edition. But the vast increase made to our stock of information respecting this quarter of the globe within the last ten years, has made numerous additions and occasional alterations necessary. For the section on the Carthaginians, much new information has been derived from the Travels of *DELLA CELLA*, which shows us, for the first time, what a rich harvest for the lovers of antiquity may be collected in the ancient Cyrenaica; from those of *CAPTAIN LYON*, who, following the footsteps of *HORNEMANN*, conducts us into the very heart of Africa; and, above all, the important work of General Count *MINUTOLI*, by which the ichnography and picture of the ancient Ammonium are laid before us.

Others, of which premature accounts have reached the public, such as those of Major Denham and his companion, could only be quoted from periodical publications, such as the *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*, the *Quarterly Review*, etc.

Still more important is the information which has lately been afforded us respecting Ethiopia. The names of Burkhardt, Belzoni, Gau, and Caillaud, of whom the two first, alas! have fallen sacrifices to their enterprising spirit, here become illustrious. To Burkhardt we are indebted for an accurate description of the tribes inhabiting those regions. Of Niebuhr it may truly be said, that there scarcely ever existed a traveller whose merit has been so soon and so generally acknowledged as that of my immortal friend: his name is already an authority both in the East and the West. Belzoni has erected himself a lasting monument by rescuing from the desert the gigantic grotto of Ipsambul. The great work of Gau now lies before our eyes, displaying with the most scientific accuracy the monuments of Nubia as far as the cataract of Wadi Halfa. The bold enterprising spirit of Caillaud penetrated even still farther: the monuments of ancient Meroë could no longer remain concealed; and even the ancient temple of Jupiter Ammon again presents itself to our admiring eyes. The fruits also of these enterprises, so far as they have yet been made public, are placed within my reach; and what interesting matter I found therein for enriching this new edition, the discernment of the reader will discover. The chapter upon Meroë has been almost entirely re-written. I was taught to regret the delayed publication of the *Travels of Gau and Caillaud*, by the use of the engravings; and even hesitated whether I ought not to defer the parts published till the appearance of the letter-press. The plates, however, lay almost complete before me; and it seemed



to me, as these at all events must form the groundwork of the inquiry, most advantageous to form it upon my own judgment and view of these, and to leave a future comparison to the reader, or to supply the omission in an Appendix to some following part. When, however, I applied through a common friend to MONSIEUR CAILLAUD, in order to obtain information respecting the appearance of his Travels, he gave me for answer that they would be ready for the public in a few months; and tendered me, in the most obliging manner, more early communications; a favour I felt bound in justice to decline. But, not unacquainted with my former researches, he added an assurance, which I here give in his own words: "Le jugement de M. Caillaud sur la position de Meroë," as he writes, "se rapporte parfaitement avec celui de M. Heeren; et il approuve beaucoup ce qu'il dit sur la marche de la civilisation entre l'Ethiopie et l'Egypte. Il pense, et atteste même, qu'un antique état de Meroë a joué un très grand rôle dans cette marche, et que les premiers progrès du développement des arts et de la civilisation sont descendus d'Ethiopie en Egypte, où ils se sont développés, et perfectionnés; qu'un grand nombre d'usages dans les cérémonies religieuses tout à fait perdus en Egypte, et que l'on retrouve dans les cérémonies anciennes, y sont encore conservés. Il a remarqué aussi, que le costume des habitans de certaines contrées a la plus grande ressemblance avec le costume connu des peuples anciens. Il ajoute, qu'un grand nombre des monumens de ces contrées doivent dater d'une antiquité très reculée; que quant à beaucoup d'autres qui subsistent encore, et dont les restes sont encore bien conservés, il ne croit pas qu'ils soient très anciens: les pluies qui tombent si abondamment dans ces pays devant contribuer et contribuant à leur destruction." All this will undoubtedly be further explained and more accurately determined by the journal of Caillaud. The reader needs scarcely be told, that it gave me great pleasure to find this conformity of opinion between myself and a person who had been at the very place in question: whether it will give as much satisfaction to certain critics, who had already decreed that what has now come to pass could not be, and who would rather shut their eyes than see, I shall leave them to settle.

Quite of another kind are the discoveries which the successful exertions of Champollion in deciphering hieroglyphics, especially the names of the Pharaohs, promise us. It is certainly to Egypt that they have the closest relation, and it is therefore in that part of my work that I shall more fully consider them; still, however, they touch upon Ethiopia. When it is remembered how many particulars in regard to this subject remain still undetermined, although

the discovery of a phonetic alphabet is proved in general ; if it be moreover considered, that without a knowledge of the Coptic no progress can here be made ; it will not be expected that I in this path, following the footsteps of Champollion, should attempt blindly to grope my way. Still however I cannot pass over in total silence, as the reader will readily see, the relations which these discoveries bear to my researches. They will therefore be found quoted in a few places, not as proofs of my assertions, but merely to show the agreement of their results with my statements.

The advantages, then, of this new edition will appear from what I have now said. Everything available in the new discoveries for the improvement of my work has been carefully made use of ; and with that discriminating caution which would render it most likely to shed a clearer light upon the subject. How far I have attained my end the reader must judge ; yet I flatter myself that fair critics will not underrate my endeavours to impart to these researches that degree of clearness and precision which my means and ability would allow.

The new maps which are appended will, I hope, give a proof of this. They represent ancient Africa, so far as is necessary for the present work, *previous* to the Ptolemies and Romans. The modern names are always enclosed within brackets : of the ancient, no more places are specified than could be conveniently given upon a general map without overcharging it ; namely, the countries, nations, and cities which have some historical importance.

With much greater confidence than I did the foregoing do I now deliver this edition into the hands of the reader ; as my former statements are here confirmed by additional evidence in numerous and important particulars. *The monuments are still standing ;* and stand too firm to be disputed away by the efforts of daring criticism.

*Göttingen, May 4th, 1825.*

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

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AFRICA, from the earliest times to the present, has always excited, in a more lively degree than any other quarter of the world, the curiosity of mankind; and yet it has never been drawn forth from the mysterious obscurity in which it is involved. The great difficulties which the nature of its interior opposes to every attempt made to explore it, have prevented any one of them, up to the present time, from being successful beyond a certain point; still this very mystery and obscurity, combined with the peculiar productions of its soil, have always offered a continual allurements to inquisitive spirits; and no sooner has one enterprise in part or altogether miscarried, than new ones have been formed. Nature seems to have destined Africa for her mysterious workshop: there peculiar races of men are formed; there the larger species of savage beasts, inhabitants of the desert, wander in safety; there a vegetable creation arises, the first glance at which tells us that it belongs to a distant and unknown region of the world.

Notwithstanding this, a considerable part of Africa broke through, at an early period, the thick darkness in which it seemed enveloped; and indeed, as a comparison of the latest discoveries with the earliest will show, a much greater portion than has hitherto been generally supposed. According to evidence, which has gained credit in an unusual manner, Africa was circumnavigated at a period of very remote antiquity;<sup>1</sup> and although this circumstance had no influence upon the further exploration of the southern part, it concurred with many favourable circumstances to promote that of the northern. Even in the earliest ages, the north-east coast of Africa was inhabited by civilized and commercial nations, who were natives of the soil like the Egyptians, or had migrated from other countries like the Carthaginians and Cyreneans. The extensive intercourse and multifarious connexions which these nations had, as the further prosecution of these inquiries will show, with the interior of this quarter of the globe, brought

<sup>1</sup> Herod. iv. 42.

many accounts from thence to the countries on the sea-coast ; and it is possible that Herodotus might collect during his residence in Egypt, a place where merchants from every quarter met together, his admirable accounts of these countries : accounts which not only confirm the latest discoveries, but which often go beyond them and require further discoveries to establish their credibility. But the vicissitudes to which Africa was afterwards exposed must have assisted still more to extend the information respecting it. The dominion of the Ptolemies in Egypt was in more than one way conducive to this end. As the commerce of this country increased, the circle of geographical knowledge became of course extended. The necessity of obtaining elephants for their wars, which could only be procured from the interior of Africa, occasioned more minute inquiries to be made respecting it. The more accurate information thus obtained, and the connexions so formed, paved the way to those conquests, which under the third Ptolemy and Evergetes I. extended into the interior of Æthiopia. We need not, therefore, wonder at finding in the fragments which are left us of the works of the Alexandrine geographers, and especially of Agatharchides, so minute a description of those distant regions, which did not again become known till in the present age they were discovered by Bruce. The fall of Carthage also, much as that state had done in exploring Africa, tended rather to extend than to limit the information already obtained of its interior. As a Roman province, North Africa acquired a Roman character ; and besides the wars carried on in the country of the Garamantes, which extended to the frontiers of Æthiopia, another circumstance aided the exploration of Africa. Its immense deserts were obliged to furnish the savage animals for the great combats of wild beasts that took place, principally under the emperors : and to which the Roman people became the more attached, in proportion as the state declined. The Roman historians sufficiently show the almost incredible pitch to which these amusements were carried at that time, and if we reflect upon the distance that it would be necessary to penetrate into the interior of the country to obtain the great number of lions, elephants, and other beasts requisite for them,<sup>1</sup> we shall scarcely be able to doubt but this

<sup>1</sup> Compare for example the catalogue of wild beasts of the emperor Philip, which must have been brought for the great procession and fight of wild beasts at the secular games (*ludi seculares*) 1000 years from the building of Rome. Among others there were no less than ten giraffes (*camelopardi*). *Script. Hist. Aug.* ii. p. 68, *Hyem. edition*. There is no

custom was of great importance in extending the information respecting those countries, although we cannot say exactly how much was actually gained thereby.

In this way antiquity obtained its knowledge of Africa, which was still further increased, in the middle ages, by the victories of the Arabs, and their settlement on its northern coasts; when all those places, Fez, Morocco, and others, now overrun by barbarians, were, under their dominion, the seats of science and literature. From this source, and from the discoveries of the Europeans in the latter part of the fifteenth and commencement of the sixteenth centuries, have been drawn up, to the latest times, our accounts respecting Africa, as well as the names on our more early maps. The entire change which then took place in the colonial system of Europe, and which caused it to turn its whole attention to the two Indies, was without doubt the principal reason why curiosity respecting this quarter of the globe, which no longer seemed interesting, except to furnish slaves for planting distant possessions, lay dormant; till in our own days, by a conflux of fortunate circumstances, the spirit of discovery has again been roused, and in twenty years done more towards dispelling the mysterious darkness which hangs over Africa, than had been done in the two preceding centuries.

The physical features, however, of this quarter of the globe, notwithstanding all that has been done by ancient and modern research, have not been yet so well ascertained as to enable us to reduce them to any general division, as is done with regard to Asia. How little, indeed, do we know, even after the repeated journeys undertaken from the Cape of Good Hope, of the southern part, into which nobody up to the present time has penetrated beyond the Tropic of Capricorn, whilst all our information respecting the country northward of this is limited to a very unsatisfactory knowledge of the coasts.<sup>1</sup> Our present view therefore must be confined, as it would have been in ancient times, merely to the northern part, particularly as the object of these inquiries, limited to the period when that alone was known, requires no more.

foundation for the belief that these species of wild beasts were found at that time farther north; and we see, therefore, that the Roman hunters must have penetrated into the heart of Africa.

<sup>1</sup> Light, however, on these parts now begins to dawn; if the accounts drawn from the papers of the deceased Bowdich, formed upon the reports given him by the Portuguese, respecting the inland countries between Congo and Mozambique, be authentic, then these countries form a table land without high mountains; with streams flowing in various directions, and a great lake, Maravi, said to extend northwards as far as Mombasa, and probably forming a chain of lakes similar to those of North America. *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*, 1824.

The northern part of Africa is divided into three regions, which Herodotus has already very properly distinguished. He separates his Libya into the *inhabited*, situated on the Mediterranean, the *wild beast* territory, and the *desert* Libya.<sup>1</sup> This division, founded upon the natural features of the country, answers to the modern names of Barbary, Biledulgerid, and Sahara; but the fertile and inhabited lands beyond the desert, which we comprise under the names of Nigritia or Soudan, are not included therein. They were not, however, as the prosecution of this inquiry will show, altogether unknown to Herodotus. But the part which he knew of it he gave to Æthiopia, the general name for the interior of Africa as far as it was inhabited by black or dark-coloured people.

The first region therefore comprises Mauritania, Numidia, the proper territory of Carthage, (which the Romans afterwards called, in a stricter sense, Africa,) Cyrenaica, and Marmarica; or the northern parts of the present kingdoms of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and Barca, which are together comprised under the name of Barbary. Justly, indeed, does it merit the name of *habitable* Africa, which is pre-eminently given it by Herodotus, on account of the fertility which almost every where characterizes it. The coasts of Tripoli and the eastern part of Barca have, however, even to the sea, large sandy districts, but even these were inhabited in ancient times by nomad hordes.

Beyond this region, under latitude 30°, a chain of mountains runs across Africa, which in the western regions are comprised under the name of Atlas. Separate portions only of this chain are known up to the present time, although recent discoveries satisfactorily show that it extends in the same latitude across the whole continent of Africa, from the sea-shore to the boundaries of Egypt. Its loftiest and broadest part seems to be in the west, where it usually bears the name of Atlas, and where it occupies the whole of the southern provinces of Morocco and Algiers; as it approaches Tripoli, where it takes the name of Harudsta, it becomes narrower, parched, and sterile; after which it continues along the north boundary of the desert, a chain of barren rocks, until it reaches Egypt.<sup>2</sup> In the western

<sup>1</sup> Herod. ii. cap. 32, and iv. 181.

<sup>2</sup> See Hornemann's *Journal of his Travels in Africa*. He is the first traveller, within my knowledge, who has opened to us the eastern half of this chain, and shown us that it extends athwart Africa. His accounts are confirmed and enlarged by the journey of Della Cella to Cyrenaica, as well as by that of General Minutoli. Although this chain, according to Della Cella, *Viaggio da Tripoli alle frontiere occidentali dell' Egitto fatto nel 1817*, p

parts, where there is no lack of water, it is, more than in any other, the peculiar haunt of savage beasts; from which circumstance Herodotus, with great justice, calls it the *wild beast country*. By the Arabs it is called the Land of Dates,<sup>1</sup> from the great quantity of that fruit, so important to Africa, which grows there. The whole region, therefore, comprises the southern side of Atlas, together with the territory lying near it, extending as far as the great desert, between the 30th and 26th degrees of north latitude. The later Greek and Roman geographers call it Gætulia; and it is known even by their poets, as the native haunt of savage beasts. This whole district forms at present the southern parts of the before-mentioned kingdoms; but in consequence of the weakness of those wretched governments, several independent states have been formed there, as Fezzan (*Phazania Regio, Ptol.*) which formerly belonged to Tripoli, Sigilmessa, and others: but the inhabitants of these regions are, and have been from the earliest times, the greatest merchants and travellers in the world. Of these people the great caravans are principally composed, which at one time penetrate athwart the deserts into the golden regions of the interior of Africa, and at others pass to Egypt, Arabia, and Persia.

Their country, which is only fertile in some of those places where water is found, loses itself by degrees in a barren desert; which Herodotus calls the *sandy regions*,<sup>2</sup> and which is comprised by the Arabs under the general name of the Desert, *Sahara*. It extends, as Herodotus very accurately remarks, across Africa, from Egypt to the western coast, and stretches itself, under the same degrees of latitude, through the regions of Asia, Arabia, the southern provinces of Persia, and penetrates considerably into northern India.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, an inaccurate, though a common notion, to suppose it forms one continuous sterile ocean of sand. It contains, on the contrary, not only several fruitful patches, but whole districts, which form steppes, over which nomad hordes wander with their cattle.<sup>4</sup> The breadth of this sandy region is not every where the

162, is sometimes broken eastward of the Great Syrtis, yet it is not interrupted to any extent; and the same species of mountain, a sort of chalk stone, succeeds again soon after.

<sup>1</sup> *Beladal Jerid*, commonly pronounced *Biledulgerid*.

<sup>2</sup> Herod. iv. 181, ὄφρον ψάμμης, a *sandy tract*. He expressly adds, that the same extends from Thebes in Egypt to the Pillars of Hercules.

<sup>3</sup> Through Kerman (*Carmania*) Mecran (*Gedrosia*) as far as Moulton in North India.

<sup>4</sup> See especially Golberry, *Fragments d'un Voyage en Afrique*, vol. i. cap. 6. Upon the physical nature of the soil of the desert see in particular Minutoli, *Journey to the Temple of Ammon*.

same ; its widest extent is in the western half of North Africa between the present kingdom of Morocco and the Negro country ; and its narrowest between the present states of Tripoli and Kassina, where also it is most frequently interrupted by watery districts. It becomes again much broader as it approaches Egypt. Every where, however, it presents sufficient terrors to prevent single travellers from venturing to cross it ; and where it is broadest, the largest caravans cannot traverse it without the greatest danger. The western desert of Zuenziga is the most terrible of all ; the deserts of Berdoa, Bilmah, and Barca, with some others, form parts of it, and finally lose themselves in the sandy deserts of Upper Egypt and Nubia.

Beyond these sandy solitudes happier regions are again found. A chain, or rather a ridge of mountains, which probably runs across Africa under 12° north latitude, becomes the common parent of many large and small rivers, and entirely changes the features of the country. The dark obscurity in which this ridge, called on our latest maps the Kong mountains, has always hitherto remained, has only recently been partially broken through. The streams which it pours forth swollen by the violence of the tropic rains, which here, near the equator, have their longest duration, overflow like the Nile the neighbouring lands, and fertilize their soil. Instead of a sandy desert, the eye now ranges over extensive plains covered with wood, and now over gently sloping hills, containing, often at the depth of but a few feet, the richest veins of gold. Of the succeeding immeasurable tracts we scarcely know a single spot, yet, from what little information we have, southern Africa seems generally more fertile, and therefore more thickly inhabited, than the northern.<sup>1</sup>

These preliminary observations on the physical state of Africa, upon which rests the foundation of the whole inland trade of this quarter of the world, are of the greatest importance to our subject, and many of the following remarks would be unintelligible without them. I purposely abstain from more minute detail, as I would not burthen the memory of my readers with names which might obscure the general outline.

One of the most extraordinary facts respecting all this part of Africa is, without doubt, the rarity of large rivers, which,

<sup>1</sup> We as yet know nothing of great sandy deserts which may be contained in southern Africa ; and the many and very considerable streams therein, render it improbable that any such are there to be found.



however, may be accounted for from the course of the principal mountain chain. The northern chain runs so closely along the Mediterranean, that the rivers which flow from it are properly mountain streams, which, after a short course, lose themselves in the sea. The extensive tracts which lie between this and the southern chain, have no slope either towards the north or south, sufficient to make the streams take either of these directions, but only towards the west and east, and even this, as it seems, only near the mountains. Under such circumstances those regions must necessarily remain without water, as no stream could form itself a channel through them. These impediments do not cease till we come to Egypt, where the mountain chain ends, or alters its course; and the Nile is the only large stream which continues to flow from south to north in the northern part of Africa. Whether, however, this river has yet been traced to its source, and whether it flows in the same direction, from south to north, at its rise, still remains, notwithstanding the recent discoveries and the boast of a celebrated traveller that he had penetrated to its head, undetermined. We know that this stream is formed in the interior of Africa by the conflux of several rivers, but it seems not to be settled which of these is properly the Nile. The river which Bruce takes to be it rises between the 10° and 11° north latitude, and bears the name of *Abavi*; but the more westerly branch, which is called by him the White River, (*Bahr el Abiad*, the *Astapus* of the ancients,) has its source much deeper in the interior of Africa; and seems, from the mass of waters which it rolls along, to have more right to be considered as the principal stream. The direction of its course remains still uncertain and unexplored; even the latest adventurer, M. Caillaud, who saw its conjunction with the Nile, could not trace the stream upwards; the problem, therefore, still remains unsolved, whether the Nile comes from the south or west. A tradition which, from the earliest times to the present, has obtained in Africa, speaks of a branch of the Nile flowing in the latter direction. It is clearly and precisely given by the father of history: "The Nile," says Herodotus, "flows out of Libya, dividing it into two parts; and, as I conjecture, (assuming unknown things from what is known,) runs in a direction parallel to the Danube."<sup>1</sup> The Arabian geographers name this river the Nile of the Negroes, but make it to run in a contrary

<sup>1</sup> Herod. ii. 33.

direction, from east to west: only giving it a common source out of the same lake with the Egyptian Nile;<sup>1</sup> while, according to the statements of the latest travellers in Africa, the assertion of Herodotus is still the generally prevailing belief in the interior of this quarter of the world.<sup>2</sup> This question, however, is not likely to remain long unsettled in an age like the present, in which so much zeal is testified to clear up every doubt that remains respecting the distant regions of the globe; and since a British traveller has already penetrated along the western bank of the Nile as far as Darfur,<sup>3</sup> without finding any river, we may with safety conclude, that it is only above this point that such a westerly principal arm can now be sought for, if after all it really should exist.

Intimately connected with this question is another, of which, in modern times, we have a more accurate solution; namely, upon the course of the stream, which generally goes under the name of the Niger. Modern geographers have often confounded this stream with the Senegal, which, flowing from east to west, falls into the ocean under 16° north latitude; and is reckoned among the principal streams of Africa. In the ancient geographers, on the contrary, the Senegal, which by Ptolemy and others is called the Daradus, never bears the name of the Niger. Pliny, as well as Ptolemy, seems rather to have understood by this latter, a river in the interior of Africa, not flowing from east to west, but from west to east.<sup>4</sup> This being added to the information given above respecting a branch of the Nile, which was said to flow from the west of Africa, caused the Niger to be confounded with the Nile, and is by Pliny expressly declared to be the same river with the Astapus, or White River.<sup>5</sup> Modern geography, in consequence of the exploration of the Joliba, discovered by Mungo Park, tends to confirm the tradition respecting the existence of a river in the interior of Africa, flowing from west to east; a tradition known to Herodotus,<sup>6</sup> and upon which he founded the conjecture that this river might be the Nile.<sup>7</sup> Its discoveries, however, offer no confirmation of the conjecture that the Joliba has any connexion with the Nile; but there are, on the contrary, im-

<sup>1</sup> As Edrisi and Abulfeda. See Hartmann, *Geogr. Africa Edrisiana*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Hornemann, p. 138, 141.

<sup>3</sup> H. Browne, whose particular object it was to trace the course of the White River to its source; but who was detained prisoner in Darfur.

<sup>4</sup> See Ptolemy, *Africa*, tab. iv. The principal authority is Pliny, V. cap. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Pliny, l. c.

<sup>6</sup> Herod. ii. 32. See the section upon the Land Trade of the Carthaginians.

<sup>7</sup> Herod. ii. 33.

portant reasons which render it improbable; for not only the length of the course which we must in that case assign the Joliba, and which would make it divide nearly all Africa in its widest part, but also the course of the mountain chain, as far as we are acquainted with it, and the direction of the slope depending upon it, seem to contradict it.<sup>1</sup> The latest discoveries of the British, of which however we have only preliminary notices,<sup>2</sup> seem to place it beyond a doubt that the Joliba falls into the great lake of Tzaad in the empire of Bornou. Whether, however, it flows again out of it on the eastern side of this lake, or whether the floods, during the rainy season, cause a junction with the White River, is still unknown.

This want of navigable rivers, together with the large sandy deserts, must have impeded the intercourse of the African nations, and on that account must have thrown great, almost insurmountable, difficulties in the way of their civilization. The inhabitants of the interior of this quarter of the globe have lived, from the earliest times, almost always cut off from the rest of the world. Protected by their sandy deserts, they were scarcely accessible to the persevering toil of friendly caravans, never to the army of a foreign conqueror. Great and sudden moral or political revolutions seem to have happened as rarely here as violent physical changes. Nature, nevertheless, has provided in a remarkable manner, that they should not remain total strangers to each other; she has not only given them fruitful inland countries, but stored even the immense sandy deserts themselves with treasures, which have either excited the avarice, or been required by the necessities of mankind. The central countries of Africa were celebrated among the northern nations, even in the earliest ages, for the abundance of gold which they contained; but probably another present, bestowed by nature on the desert, did more towards keeping up an intercourse between them. In its interior were found, sometimes in hills, sometimes in lakes, the great magazines of salt, which supply the most distant tribes with this indispensable mineral, of which the negro countries are totally destitute, and which obliges them to undertake in large companies such dangerous journeys through the sandy regions.

<sup>1</sup> The arguments for the opposite opinion have already been explained by Rennel, in his additions to Hornemann's Travels, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> The accounts of Denham, Clapperton, and Oudeny, in the *Quarterly Review*, Dec. 1823, before the publication of their travels. The improbable hypothesis, that the Joliba turns to the west, and runs into the Congo river, and which even occasioned an unsuccessful journey of discovery to that river, falls therefore of itself to the ground.

Besides this, unfortunately for humanity, even in that early period the slave trade existed, (which, as far back as history can trace, seems always to have been a native of that soil,) and many other, though less important, branches of commerce. Thus we see that several thousand years ago, as well as at present, there existed an intercourse with the nations of Central Africa, which became the principal cause of its civilization, and furnished the remainder of the world with the means of information respecting this quarter of the globe. The accounts which are come down to us from antiquity concerning it are scanty and defective, but on that very account are the more attractive to the historical inquirer; and the research which will be made as we proceed<sup>1</sup> will perhaps, therefore, be more secure of the attention, and have more claim to the indulgence of the reader.

But if the interior of Africa was subject to fewer changes, her coasts, especially the northern, were more exposed to foreign migrations. Here arose the republic of Carthage, one of the first and most remarkable of the ancient world; here the state of Cyrenaica, had it enjoyed more domestic tranquillity, might have become the rival of Carthage. Here also the only native people, who on the shores of the Nile attained so high and remarkable a degree of civilization, attract our attention; while the Æthiopians in the obscure distance, and enveloped in the thickest mist of antiquity, glimmer, almost invisible, on the confines of the earth.

In the hands of these nations rested the commerce of Inner Africa, and besides them not a single large state, that we know of, has been formed within it, as the later Numidian empire is not here to be considered. But although my inquiries may be limited to these, I shall nevertheless find occasion to introduce what I may have to say respecting the other inhabitants of this quarter of the globe. Cyrene did not become sufficiently large, and too little information is left concerning it to give materials for a separate division. The accounts preserved respecting it, will find a more appropriate place in the third part of this work, which relates to the Greeks and their colonies in general.

<sup>1</sup> See the section on the Land Trade of the Carthaginians, in which will be found further explanation and proofs of what we have here said.