

they set forth from Mesopotamia, a little horde of Bak tribes, on their long journey eastward, they carried with them both the early elements of Akkadian science and the words and phrases of the Akkadian language. They reached China with letters, astronomy, and arts ready made, and they have done little since but live on the traditions of their far-western ancestors. The truth is, for the eastern hemisphere at least, there is but one civilization, which began in Egypt and the Euphrates Valley, and spread in either direction, eastward to Persia, India, and China, or westward to Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and the Atlantic.

Even the Chinese language turns out, on examination, to be just the opposite of what earlier investigators thought it. Elder philologists took it for granted that primitive tongues *must* have been monosyllabic; and since Chinese is monosyllabic, they regarded it, somewhat illogically, as therefore primitive. But Terrien de Lacouperie and Douglas have shown, on the contrary, that Chinese is really Akkadian by origin, and that it was once polysyllabic, like most other languages. Its words have been shortened by wear and tear, or by that familiar process which turns omnibus into "bus," photograph into "photo," and bicycle into "bike." It consists of words said "for short," like the common abbreviation of William into Bill, Richard into Dick, or Theodore into Theo; or rather, it has suffered by that imperceptible phonetic change which has reduced *elemosyne* to "alms," *semetipsissimus* to *meme*, and Aethelthryth to Aw-dry. In fact, it turns out that Chinese, instead of being one of the most primitive of languages, is really one of the most worn and degraded. In place of "psychology," it would content itself with *psy*, while *tel* or *pho* would do duty for "telephone."

In this case, the diffusion of a language and a culture is by simple migration, as in the well-known instances of Tyre and Carthage, Greece and Sicily, England and America. In other cases, the diffusion is rather by conquest, as in the equally well-known instances of Alexander's successors, the Roman Empire, and the Arabs in North Africa and Syria. Greek, Latin, and Arabic, with their accompanying arts, became naturalized among the subject peoples. Most often, it is the conquerors who thus impose their language on the conquered: we need go no further afield than Wales or Ireland, where the process is incomplete, and Cornwall, where it reached its termination a century ago. But sometimes it is the conquered who absorb and assimilate the conquerors: the Normans seem to have been good hands at thus losing their identity wherever they