

far less happily endowed than the Greeks. To attempt any survey of the character and work of Egyptian civilization would require a paper (rather a library, indeed) to itself.

Among the moral conquests of the Semitic languages, mention has already been made of Arabic. In this case, as in that of Hebrew, those who were brought beneath its sway were, in the main, affected by the enforcement of new ideas, not by the adoption of a new language. There were exceptions, indeed, as with the Turks, North Africans and others, who made the language, as well as the faith, of the victors their own. But in few, if any, cases did the new language entirely, as in the conquests of Rome, displace the old. Generally contented with stagnancy, the Arabs have proved that, when some grand common impulse urges them to unwonted action, they can display an energy which carries all before it. In the spread of their civilization, the sword went first, ruthlessly hewing a way for the enthusiasts, and, when there was no more to subdue, the pen followed on a mission at once soothing and elevating. DuBois Reymond thus describes the course of Arab civilization in the day of its greatest energy: "While beneath the sign of the cross the night of barbarism had settled down on the western world, in the East, under the green standard of the Prophet, an original form of civilization had been developed, which not only preserved what had been won by the classical peoples in mathematics, astronomy and medicine, but even itself made no mean acquisitions in those sciences." The stages through which they passed in attaining that result were remarkable. First, they appear as rude warriors, ignorant and despising learning, only full of a fanatic and sanguinary zeal. Not till the close of the 7th century, did the leaders begin to show some regard for culture. Then the Omniades and Abbassides gathered to their courts the most distinguished scholars of their time, and, under the glorious sceptre Haroun al Raschid, the contemporary of Charlemagne, literary merit, met with an encouragement worthy of the most fruitful days of ancient Greece. At that time, in both east and west, there seemed to be a sure promise of the revival of all that was best in the old learning, and of a new life for physical science. The Arabs excelled in poetry and in prose that is akin to it—tales marked by gorgeousness of imagination, and narrated with rare dramatic skill. They also cultivated history with success and, indeed, as Sismondi says, had a passion for every species of composition (except epic poetry, comedy and tragedy) and such a desire to leave no subject untouched that Benzaid of Cordova and Abd-ul-Monder, of Valencia, wrote a serious history of celebrated horses, as did Alasneco of camels that had risen to distinction. But the study by which they most influenced the West was that of philosophy. They read with eagerness the works of Aristotle, which they translated and expounded, and there is little doubt that, as their lyric and didactic poetry affected the style of the Romance writers (see Fauriel's "History of Provençal Poetry," translated by Dr. G. J. Adler, chapter xiii.) so their allegorical interpretation of the great philosopher had a marked influence on the schools of the West. To them, also, we owe, indirectly, at least, our numerical notation, our initiation into algebraic methods, the first impulse to the study of chemistry, and the foundation of nearly all the knowledge that Europe long possessed of botany, of scientific agriculture, of astronomy, and of other sciences in which the pupils were afterwards destined to so far surpass their masters. But, if we except the small Arabic element in the Spanish language, and a few words added to the vocabularies of the other western nations, with the names of some rivers, hills and towns in the Iberian peninsula, there is nothing left to remind the student of the great influence once exerted