

point, however, it would take me too long to dwell at any profitable length. Suffice it to say that (if we except the Phœnician and Punic in the days of Tyrian and Carthaginian colonizing enterprise, the Arabic, during the domination of the Caliphs, and the Hebrew, in the wake of the Jewish wanderings) the Semitic languages have been seldom found far away from the limits of their ancient cradle-land. Yet of no group of tongues have the conquests been more splendid or more enduring, if we have regard to the influence of their literatures on the nations of the world. As an Aryan was destined to be the religious teacher of countless myriads of the races of farther Asia, so from the tents of Shem was to spread the light that was to lighten the gentiles of the west. Palestine is the Holy Land to the proud civilizations that arose on the ruins of Rome. Rome itself put a Jewish fisherman in the high place of its haughty Cæsars. Hebrew, which Greek and Roman scholars did not think worth the trouble of learning, became the Holy Tongue, a "sacred and original language," occupying a serene height by itself, apart from any vulgar speech (though Greek, too, was allowed to share in its sanctification), and endowed with graces and privileges of which no other language could boast. Though the Jews are strangers in all lands, and their only home is among strangers, their sacred books are the most valued literature, the most prized heritage of Christendom. Nor does their influence end there. The Old Testament was the foster-mother of Mohammedanism as well. To the followers of the Prophet, as to us, Abraham is the father of the faithful; and there is not a community of either creed from Yokohama to San Francisco, or from Siberia to the Cape of Good Hope, whose belief and worship, and even whose common thoughts and speech do not bear some impress of Judaism. The Hebrew language has not penetrated and interfused other languages, like the Latin and Greek, but much of the peculiar phraseology which was familiar to Moses, to David, to Isaiah and to Paul may be heard to-day in every domestic gathering, in almost every thoroughfare in the civilized world. Every recurring Seventh Day recalls the law of Moses and on the most momentous occasions in our lives: at the font, at the marriage altar, at the death-bed, at the grave-side, we hear words of comfort, of warning, of sympathy which were common to the Jewish people when as yet the glory had not departed from Israel. What conquest could be more marked, more permanent than that? And yet that is not all? Did not Jewish modes of thought modify those of Phœnicia, of Egypt, of Greece, of Persia, of Rome,—being, perhaps, modified themselves in turn? For the communication of nation with nation was undoubtedly less exceptional in ancient times than it was once the fashion to believe. Josephus says that the *Aurea Chersonesus* of India was the destination of Solomon's fleet and, whether or no, it is reasonable to believe that the Jews, especially after the exile, were no strangers to the life and movement of the civilized world from the Indus to the Pillars of Hercules.

That the Phœnicians, near neighbors to the Jews, and speaking almost the same tongue, made important contributions to civilization, it is needless to say; but, like those who give their own blood to invigorate others, their labours and victories only went to build up the greater power of Rome. The mistress of the world never forgave her rival, though she relented so far as to build a second Carthage; but Greece never ceased to remember the "letters Cadmus gave." Dr. Arnold has emphasized the providential close of the triple conflict. Still, even if we give our sympathies to the victor who was to hand down the gains of his triumph to ourselves, we cannot but regret that those who conferred on Europe the glorious boon of letters should have left so few traces of the language to which