

the Mediterranean, they carried on a lucrative trade with Tartessus, exchanging the products of the East for its gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron. This region, one of the most fertile of the ancient world, is called *Tarshish* in the Old Testament, and according to the Book of Genesis, chap. x., ver. 4, was peopled by the descendants of Japhet. As the knowledge of the existence of this country could only have been derived from the reports of the Phœnicians, they must have visited Tarshish, according to the chronology generally accepted, 1450 years before the Christian era, or about the same time that their country was conquered by the Israelites.

In their progress to the westward, the Phœnicians at length reached the Straits of Gibraltar and passed through into the Atlantic. Sailing along the coast in a north-westerly direction they discovered an excellent harbour where they established a colony to which they gave the name of *Gades* (Cadiz). According to Strabo, the colony of Gades was established 290 years before the foundation of Carthage, or in the twelfth century B.C.; consequently, if they had visited Tarshish in the year 1450 B.C., they must have been more than 200 years in the immediate vicinity of the Straits before they ventured to pass through into the open ocean. Once embarked on the waters of the Atlantic, they showed