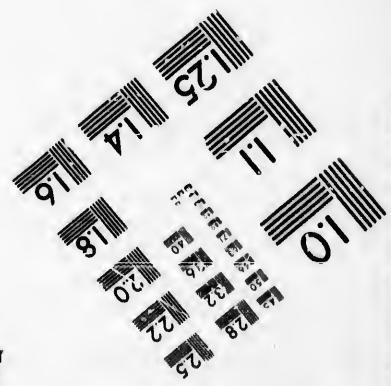
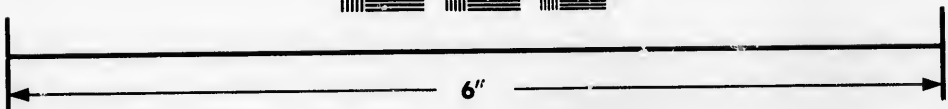
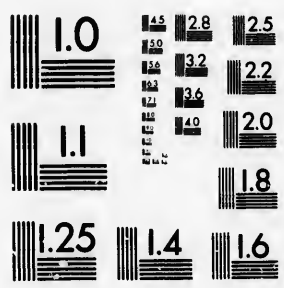


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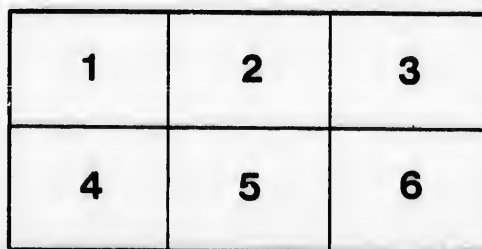
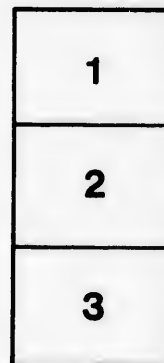
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On Languages as evincing special modes of thought. By E. T. FLETCHER, Esq.

[Read before the Society, 15th March, 1854.]

Few will probably be disposed to question the utility of linguistic study. How little do we know, for instance, of the history of those mysterious phantoms the Pelasgians and Etruscans. And how different had it been, if the language of these people, or even any considerable fragments, had survived to our times, still to be read and understood. More would then have been gained in obtaining a definite notion of the history and affinities of these nations than all the labors of Niebuhr, and Mueller have been able to effect in giving form and substance to their shadowy and uncertain history,

It is with individuals as with nations, the state and character of a writer, the age in which he lived, and the calling which he exercised, are often transparently visible in the language and style of his writings. If we take up, for example, that delightful little treatise, the *Octavius* of Minutius Felix, concerning the age and authorship of which so much was in dispute during the last century, we are first led to remark that the elegance of style and general purity of diction would place it in, or near, the classical period. But we observe then, the occurrence of such post classical words as '*univira*,' '*daemon*,' '*furiescens*,' and '*viror*' for '*viriditas*,' which stamp it as belonging to an age subsequent to that of Virgil and Horace. Yet we have no late-Latin forms. '*Potatus*' for instance is the late-Latin equivalent for the classical '*epotus*'. The author uses the latter. Again we remark

such words as '*comperendino*' and '*ejurato*,' which belong to juridical language. From all which we conclude that the writer was a jurisconsult, and that he lived in post Augustan times, but not later than the third century of our era, which facts have been severally verified from other and extraneous sources.

The unity of the human race, its derivation from one family, and not from several protoplasts, and the place of its original seats, somewhere near the Indian Caucasus, are points which at the present day seem to have a preponderating weight of evidence in their favor. It has been shewn that numerous and striking as are the varieties of the human species, there are none that lie without the range of natural causes, that may not have been produced by a change in the external conditions of climate, latitude, relative sea-level, and the like. The Negro type, for instance, is a strongly-marked variety: yet Latham remarks that as truly as a short stature and light skin coincide with the occupancy of mountain ranges, the negro physiognomy coincides with that of the alluvia of rivers. And another high authority (Dr. Daniell) observes that on leaving the low swamps round the Delta of the Niger for the sandstone country of the interior, the skin becomes fairer, black becomes brown, and brown yellow. Pritchard, in his '*Researches*,' has adduced the case of an Arab family who removed from higher ground to the low and sultry valley of the Hoûran. In a few generations these people had perceptibly approached, in form and features, the physiognomy of the Negro. Even in Africa, the Negro areas are scanty and small, being chiefly limited to hot and moist alluvial grounds. Again, as regards the original unity of language, the various diversities of dialect are clearly traceable through their several steps of derivation, in lines converging, like the radii of a vast

circle, to the central point just noted. Thus the great area of the monosyllabic tongues, comprising China, Thibet, and the Transgangetic peninsula, is ethnologically connected with this point by the sub-Himalayan parts of Northern India and by the transitional dialects of North eastern Afganistan. The Indo-European languages are all traceable to the Zend, or to the old Persian, cognate dialects of the Sanscrit. Africa is sub-Semitic, the chief exception appearing to be the anomalous Coptic, differing from the Semitic family by the richness and variety of its inflections, and from the Indo-European by these inflections being generally produced by prefixes. The American dialects, on the other hand, appear to be derived from the polysyllabic tongues of Northern Asia and Hindustan.

In the earliest ages, dialectic differences must have arisen, and these differences assumed a permanent condition as distinct languages, with far greater ease and rapidity than is conceivable at the present day. The speech of man was then unwarped by habit, or precedent, or the all pervading influence of usage and fashion. Clear and vigorous in thought, divinely gifted with the faculty of elaborating for himself a science of vocal signs to serve as land marks and tokens of outer influences and internal conceptions, he stood there fresh from the hands of God, a listener and spectator, surrounded by shapes of power and beauty, and by sounds of almost infinite range, from the 'gnats small minstrelsy' to earth-shaking thunder. It is not difficult then to imagine the force and vividness of his earliest attempts at language. As some vast river, whose course is not now to be altered by the uttermost exertion of human power, but which, at its source felt that modifying influence of a rock, or stone, or any the smallest obstacle, so, in the beginning, the speech of man, we may be certain, was modified by influences that are weak and powerless

now. How else was it that for ages before the first Olympiad, the Greek, the Hebrew, and the Sanscrit already existed complete and finished in structure? Or shall we say that our ordinary chronologies are erroneous and that the world must have been peopled long before the received era? At present, this hypothesis is scarcely tenable. Fact upon fact has been adduced to the contrary. Take for example the curious researches of Brémontier, relative to the progressive advance of the 'dunes' or sand-heaps in the South-west of France. These sand-heaps accumulating first on the sea-shore have been gradually pushed forward by the wind upon the inland country, destroying all vegetation, and converting the rich and fruitful plains into a sterile desert. The action of similar dunes has been familiar to all ages. The author of the Homeric hymn to Apollo seems to allude to them. Modern writers have remarked that the vast sand-plain of Rosapenna, on the coast of Donegal, was, so late as the middle of the last century, a beautiful domain belonging to Lord Boyne. In 1825 the roof of the mansion house was just above the ground, so that the peasantry used to descend into the apartment as into a subterranean-cave; in 1835 not the slightest trace of building was visible. Deluc has mentioned the dune which threatened the church of Padstow in Cornwall: it overhung the roof and all access would have been prevented, but for the door being at the other end. From the same cause, the villages of Brittany have suffered: of one of them nothing is now visible but the summit of the church-steeple. In the department of Landes in France, plains, forests, and the works of man, have been successively buried by their slow but irresistible advance. Many villages and towns mentioned in mediæval records now lie fathom-deep in the sand, to reappear no more. Ten of these were struggling with the sands twenty years ago, and

one of them *Minizan*, after a contest of more than a quarter of a century, has at length succumbed to its doom and almost wholly disappeared. As these dunes advance with the most perfect regularity, and at the rate of from 60 to 72 feet in a year, *Brémontier*, by a very simple process of measurement concludes that their action cannot have commenced much more than 40 centuries ago : a conclusion which *DeLuc* had already arrived at by measuring those of *Holland*, where the dates of the dykes enabled him to attain a high degree of presumptive accuracy.

Assuming then that the human family originated from one pair, and that the era of the first exodus or dispersion lies within the recognised limits of history, the question occurs, were the primary varieties of language invariably connected with special modes of thought? Were they correlative with those of the human species itself?—And how far were these the growth of dynamic influences as climate, soil, mode of life, and the flora of their respective areas.

There is good reason to believe, with *Klaproth*, that before the deluge there existed no considerable varieties of language. The forms of human speech were most probably nearly the same everywhere. Apart from the reasons which he has adduced, the universal ‘violence and corruption’ which the Hebrew records speak of, hint rather at a population compressed within a small area than at the pastoral habits of one widely diffused. Of the mosaic deluge itself, the form of the Hebrew expression “under the whole heavens,” the old *Apamean* medals with figures in an ark or chest floating on the waters, the *Phrygian* tradition in connexion therewith mentioned in the *Sybilline oracles*, which however apocryphal, are yet confessedly ancient, the old *Hellenic Myth* of *Deucalion*, itself of Indian origin, and the similar mythoi of many

lands collected by Harcourt in his *Doctrine of the Deluge*, all incline us to the belief that this great cataclysm swept off the whole human race, one family alone excepted. The first land to appear from amid the slowly receding waters must have been the lofty Hindoo-Kooshi and its continuation eastward in the Himalayan chain. These it is probable were the first to receive the sacred footprints of the aged patriarch and his sons, themselves the sires and patriarchs of our race. Here on the swelling slopes of these monarchs of earth's mountains, no unfitting stage for the occasion, stood the sole survivors of the mighty ruin : here was the altar built, the fire kindled, and from hence the smoke of their offering ascended, we are told, as a sweet savor to God. From this chain, then, originated the first dispersion of the human family.

On looking at the physical configuration of Asia, we are struck by the fact that great part of its surface is taken up by extensive plateaux or elevated tracts of table-land, raised from four thousand to ten thousand feet above the sea-level. Of these the two most remarkable are the great Eastern plateau, which comprises the whole of Thibet, with the desert of Cobi, extending Eastward and Northward past the great wall of China, and the Western or Iranian plateau, nearly coincident with the limits of modern Persia. The Hindoo Coosh, which we have considered as the cradle of our race, lies as an isthmus between these two plateaux, which would of course become habitable before the plains or level country. The former, or larger of these table-lands appears to have been the original home of the monosyllabic or uninflected tongues, whose type is the Chinese, and the latter, or Iranian plateau, that of the polysyllabic or inflected tongues. The inflected languages are again divisible into two great and widely different families. 1st. The partially inflected, with a tendency

to fall into analytic forms, such as the Syro-Arabian tongues ; and secondly, the highly inflected, with a tendency to synthetic forms of which the Sanscrit is the most notable type and example. Thus there are three great divisions of which, psychologically considered, the first or uninflected, will be found connected with mere rationalism in its lowest form ; the second or Syro Arabian, with strong objectivity of mind, or rationalism kindled by imagination ; and the third, the old Indian or highly-inflected, with a subjective cast of thought, or rationalism enlivened by a creative fancy. Let us consider each of these divisions in order.

The swarm of emigrants thrown eastwards from the Hindoo-Koosh, while the low lands were as yet uninhabitable, found themselves in the highlands of Thibet and the desert of Cobi. Thibet has been described by Turner as "one of the least favored countries under heaven, and appearing in a great measure incapable of culture. It exhibits only low rocky hills (that is, rising but little above the plateau), without any visible vegetation, or extensive arid plains, both of the most stern and stubborn aspect, promising full as little as they produce. Its climate is cold and bleak in the extreme, from the severe effects of which the inhabitants are obliged to seek refuge in sheltered valleys and hollows, or amidst the warmest aspects of the rocks." Here then, where the means of sustenance were so scanty, a social existence was scarcely possible to these earliest comers. They would have starved, had they attempted to live in clusters or large communities : the instinct of self-preservation compelled them to isolate themselves. We may imagine then, the state of gradual degradation into which their language must have fallen, living as they did thus miserably, and thus isolated from each other. Without a written literature, exposed to

cold and famine, in a land untraversed by rivers, and presenting an interminable monotony of rock and sand with a background of eternal snow, the nobler faculties of the mind must in them have remained dormant, fancy and imagination must have drooped and died. The very keenness and susceptibility of impression which characterised those early ages, undwarfed by the weight of usage or precedent, all these must have rapidly hastened the downward progress of their language. So by degrees there grew up a stern utilitarianism of thought and speech. Linguistic declensions became disused, the graceful and expressive changes of words fell away : and thus was evolved a language without syllables, a speech without inflections. The physical structure of the people themselves became degraded, and thus was originated the mong ootype, a cast of form and features since recognised as belonging to all dwellers in cold and desolate lands, as those of Arctic Asia, and the American Esquimaux. Spreading thus in course of time towards the Eastward, they struck the headwaters of the Irawaddy and its trans-Gangetic brethren, and of the great Chinese rivers, the Hoang-ho and Yantse-kiang, streams of vast extent, the natural outlets of this widely extended plateau, and leading to warm and sunny lands, the luxuriant plains of South-eastern Asia. Thus arose the great empire of China. These wanderers from the central table-land, dwarfed alike in body and intellect, found a country abounding in natural advantages, rich in all manner of products. Then first grew up among them laws, government and forms of civil polity. From the peculiar cast of thought possessed by these first comers, the face of the country as well as its usages and institutions assumed everywhere a practical and unimaginative aspect. Bridges were constructed, canals cut, and grain cultivated

through almost interminable plains. They became, what they are now, a nation of agriculturists and engineers. With admirable perseverance, with unwearying toil and industry, they seconded the fertility of the soil, or overcame its irregularities.

A religion existed, but of an eminently rationalistic character ; not a polytheism, which could scarcely have been generated without the imaginative faculty, but a cold, repellant theism, —a blank expression of their belief that some unknown power existed but of doubtful attributes and nature. Temples were built and a priesthood established. A wonderful exactness of form and ceremony prevailed. But the power of creating mythi, and investing severest truth with the graceful figments of fancy, a power common to all other nations, existed not in them. To Science and Literature no temple was erected. The poverty of their language was in part remedied by the introduction of tonic accents, but it remained still inadequate to the demands of philosophy. None scanned the secrets of the universe, or sounded the depths of the human soul. No rhapsodist or singer appeared. The seasons in their glorious change rolled away : life and death, change and reproduction, all the iris-hued facts and shews of existence, lay around them, but no poet arose. No analogue, or even reflex, existed of that spirit which produced, in other lands, the Ramayana of the old Hindoos, or the Iliad and Odyssy of Homer.

Far other was the destiny of the dwellers on the Western or Iranian plateau. It has been noted that these became early divided into two widely different branches. Of these, the next in order of place to that which we have just considered, is the old-Indian family, of whose language the Sanscrit affords the most perfect type, and from which, or some cognate tongue, all the various Indo-European dialects are descended. Here, as before, the dynamics of ethnology must

be taken largely into account, and the character of this class seems to have been mainly influenced by their original fixity of habitation, by the greater density and centralisation of their living, a condition permitted by the productiveness of the soil, and by the early subtlety of intellect and play of fancy acquired from being thus clustered in masses, blest with a mild and delicious, but not sultry or enervating climate, and with the means of existence scattered everywhere abundantly around them.

At the northern extremity of Hindustan, walled in on every side by the lofty mountains of the Himalaya system, lies the elevated valley of Cashmere, a land hallowed by immemorial tradition, revered as sacred throughout India, the resort of innumerable pilgrims, and celebrated in the strains of both eastern and western bards. Like the happy valley of Rasselas, Nature seems to have intended it as an asylum and refuge from the outer world. It lies at the source of the Jylum, or Hydaspes, a tributary of the Indus, and one of the five rivers from which the territory of the Punjaub takes its name. One narrow opening alone, towards the northwest, affords a passage way to the inhabitants, and a means of exit to the river. The height above the sea-level preserves it from the intense tropical heats of Lower India, and has adorned it with the choicest products of mere temperate climes. The rose, the iris, and the lotus flower are there in profusion; the apple, the pear, and apricot, proffer their fruits; massive plane trees stand everywhere in broad-leaved magnificence of foliage, while the river itself, with numerous bends, sweeps on majestically through all. Solemn and characteristic too is the ruined temple of black marble that stands near Islamabad, a Cyclopean structure, built up of huge uncemented blocks of hard compact limestone; in style a combination of Egyptian,

Tuscan and Saxon ; it stands there in grim and sullen silence, perhaps the oldest temple in the world. But everything here points to the most remote antiquity. Mount Meru, the Hindoo Paradise, stands close by, on the confines of Cashmir and Thibet. The traces of this name in far distant lands evince how deep was the reverence of early migratory colonists for this most venerable mountain. Witness the sacerdotal Meroe in Abyssinia, the Meropes in Greece, and with its intensive prefix *soo*, Somaros of Dodona, and Samaria in Palestine. As to the last, how significant, in this connection, is the speech of the Samaritan woman, 'our fathers worshipped in this mountain.' Again, the primeval name of Cashmir was Kaira, and the province itself was called Kaira-naya, the word *naya* signifying polity or government ; hence the European Chæronea. It was also called the habitation of Casyapa, a mythological personage by whose agency the valley is said to have been drained : hence probably the Cassiopæi of Hellas. These old familiar names were adopted by the earliest colonists in the nomenclature of their new abodes, from a feeling which is common to all, and of which 'the land we live in' is a notable example. It is remarkable, by the way, that the old Greek names of tribes and places are significant if reference be had to the Sanscrit, but utterly unmeaning without such reference. Such then was the birth-place of the old-Indian family of nations. But in course of time the Cashmirian valley could no longer restrain the expansive energies of its tenants. At an era when the language had that amount of inflection which we find in the Turanian dialects of Siberia and the Tamul of Southern India, a mighty exodus took place, India, Northern Asia, and the Iranian plateau, received their earliest inhabitants. Then arose among these wanderers the religion of Buddha, a species of dissenting protest against

the caste-system organized hierarchy of Brahmanism which still remained the religion of Cashmir. For it will be found that in all ages a widely expanded population is most favorable to the growth of civil license and religious dissent, while the congregation of large masses begets an ease and refinement averse to innovation and more in keeping with established forms.*

Thus, then, the Cashmirians who remained in their original home-seats passed rapidly through all the phases of a highly civilized community. They became intellectually subtle, esthetically fastidious, exact, and critical. Their language, like themselves, became polished and refined to the last degree until it reached its culmination of excellence in the classical Sanscrit, the Deva-nagari, or language of the Gods. They next appear on the stage as armed and conquering enthusiasts, strong in the might of fanaticism, the same power which gave the strength of insanity to the gloomy religionist of our own civil wars, and bore down in ruin the else unconquerable chivalry of England. So sped forth on their destroying mis-

* In the history of our own land we have evidence enough of this. Elizabeth and James and the first Charles, discouraged the increase of London, and drove the leading politicians to their country residences, from an idle fear of their meddling too much in state matters. A fatal and suicidal policy! For hence arose the country-party, a race of wealthy country gentlemen, strong in a feeling of personal independence, living on their own estates, powerful by comparison with those around them, and thence self-confident, tenacious in opinion, and abhorrent of restraint. Such were the beginnings of evil. The storm that swept away church and monarchy together may perhaps be traced to this cloud no larger than a man's hand.

sion the Brahmans and their followers. A long and fearful warfare issued, and the Kshatriyas, or warrior-caste, were violently expelled from their strongholds. This holy war has furnished the theme of the oldest Indian epopee. Thus, in the very ancient Mahabharata, we find at the end of the fifth book "There was in Malwa a king named Herghes, whose army consisted altogether of Kshatriyas, and between him and the king of the Brahmans a war broke out. The Kshatriyas, though the most numerous party were nevertheless worsted in every engagement." And again, in the first book of the Ramayana,—“The power of the Kshatriyas is not greater than that of the Brahmans: O Brahma, thy power is of Divine origin and far superior to that of Kshatriya.” And the warrior tribe in India have ever since remained in strict subordination to the priesthood.

By this invasion, the Sanscrit became the language of all Hindustan, with the exception of the Deccan or southern extremity, a plateau where the old Tamul is still spoken: and in conformity with this view, the Sanscrit is known on the peninsula by a term signifying “from the North”, clearly pointing out from what quarter it was introduced.

The Sanscrit literature, like its language, is everywhere indicative of strong subjectivity of thought. By subjectivity is meant that condition of the thinker when his thoughts radiate outwards from himself, when in every process of the mind, he himself is the starting point of his conception and the outer world only presents itself to him through the alembic of his being and colored by the medium of his own individuality. Subjectivity is most favorable to the exercise of that faculty which, for want of a better name, we may here call fancy, wherein the thinker is the demiurgus of his own thoughts, shaping them as he will and uncontrolled by influences from

without. Objectivity on the other hand implies the being swayed by influences and agencies external to the thinker, and is less favorable to the development of imagination. In subjectivity the *ego* is pre-eminently active: in objectivity, on the contrary, passive.

And hence it is that in the vast circle of Sanscrit literature that has come down to us, what chiefly strikes us is its richness and luxuriance, its inexhaustible invention, its life and vividness, its splendor of conception, and unwearying power of delineation. It is the apotheosis of human creative fancy. In the Mahabharata, for instance, the Deity Krishna calls up from the depths of ocean the wonderful city Dwarka, glittering with gold and precious stones, temples lift their heads in sunshine, the smoke of incense rises from the altars, the gardens are shaded with trees of paradise and refreshed with the waters of immortality. And in its rapid change of events, its love of the marvellous and the powerful interest excited, it suggests a comparison with that idol of our boyhood the "Arabian Nights Entertainments" a production in fact not of Arabian origin as De Sacy maintained, but essentially Indian, as Von Hammer has shewn, both in spirit and conception. Everywhere in these creations of the mind, we seem to have before us a true reflex of the life led by the old Indians themselves, moving in a land favored beyond all other lands, invigorated by their Northern descent, and beholding the wonders of earth and heaven mirrored on the surface of broad and magnificent streams. And how wonderfully subtle and powerful was the instrument of their intellectual expression, the language with which they thought! What delicate shades, what refined differences of meaning, what metrical harmonies lay within the compass of a dialect possessing such varieties of grammatical inflection!—Three numbers and eight cases exist for the nouns

of which there are seventeen classes or declensions: then for the verbs there are ten conjugations, each verb besides the ordinary *parasmaipada* and *atmane-pada*, or active and reflective forms, being susceptible of a passive voice and also of a causal, desiderative, and frequentative form. Thus arose the grand heroic poems, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, the venerable *Vedas*, older than all, and the philosophic compilation of *Menu*; works that yet remain, vast, stately and imperishable as the mighty oaks and banyans of the land from which they sprang.

Nor was the influence of the old Indian mode of thought confined to the East alone. Swarms of colonists were thrown out in all directions. Westward they were checked by the warlike *Syro-Arabians*, so that in this direction their course was circuitous, chiefly south from the mouth of the *Indus*, or northwards along the skirt of the *Iranian plateau*. This latter swarm seems to have traversed the *Caspian* and entered *Greece* from the North, the former to have sailed from that estuary of the *Indus*, known as the *Cori*:—the *Cori-Indus*, whence *Corinthus* and the *Corinthians*. Again *Pelàsa* is the antient name for the Province of *Bahar*; and *Pelaska* is a known derivative form:—what if the old *Pelagins* drew their origin thence? That the people inhabiting the country of the *Indus* were recognized as navigators in the very earliest ages, is clear from the *Institutes of Menu* (reaching back to 1400 B. C.) where they are spoken of as “merchants who traffic beyond the sea.” And it is on the banks of the *Indus* that we find *Attock*, the *Helœ mountains*, and *Tatta*, the representatives or rather originals of *Attica*, the *Hellenes*, and the symbolical *Tettix*, respectively. Farther, what can the mere classical scholar make of so common a term of polity as *δεσποτης*? Our ordinary lexicons are silent here. Schnei-

der and Passow give small help to its derivation. But the merest tyro in Sanscrit, the novice who is struggling through the Hitopadesa, grammar and glossary in hand, can tell us that it is derived from two very simple Sanscrit words, *desa* a land, and *pati* a lord or prince: the compound *des-pati* being precisely similar to our word land-lord in structure, though not quite in signification. Let us hope that a change is at hand; that the poets and the sages of the Indus will be allowed a place among our familiar household gods; that the breadth and permanence and universality of their influence will meet a more perfect recognition, and that some space will be allotted in all our colleges for the study of that magnificent language, whose golden threads are everywhere apparent in the warp of European literature.

The Syro-Arabian family alone remain. Their original home-seats appear to have been the highlands of Armenia, whence in the course of ages they descended the vallies of the Euphrates and Tigris, from their nomade encampments on the banks of these rivers gave rise to the cities Nineveh and Babylon, and overspread Syria and Arabia.—Wandering in their habits, familiar with the sublimest phenomena of nature, exposed to the whirlwind of the tropics and the blasting breath of the simoon, the speech of these children of the sun evinces everywhere an intense susceptibility to outward impressions. Comparatively bare of inflections, harsh and guttural in sound, scorning as it were the refined euphonic system of its Eastern neighbours, it borrows its conceptional terms from the outer world, it personifies all nature. It abounds in onomatopoeic words or those wherein the sound echoes in some sort the sense; it is sublime by investing the unknown and spiritual with the grandest attributes of that which is visible and corporeal. The intense feeling of reverence which

animates the oldest Syro-Arabian prophets, heightens the loftiness of their style. They are great because confessing their weakness. We have but just been considering the highest expression of human intellect and fancy: we have here the abnegation of intellect, and a recognition of other and higher influences. The march of the old Hebrew bards, the noblest exponents of this family of Nations, has a natural and sustained dignity hitherto unknown. The air wove and graceful fancies of the Hindoo epopee sink into nothing beside the war-horse of Job, "his neck clothed in thunder," or the leviathan whose "eyes are like the eyelids of the morning." How poor and tame appear the old Indian deities, with their multiform incarnations, before the Syro-Arabian conception of that awful presence, "who stood and measured the earth, who beheld and drove asunder the nations." The Hebrew vocables themselves, enuniated as they are "ab imo pectore," seem instinct with life, burning with resistless and concentrated energy. In their language, the verb, the energizer of all human speech, is everywhere predominant. Herder has forcibly called it "an abyss of verbs." On the other hand these verbs have no present tense: as if life itself to these earnest thinkers were only a past and future. Their utterance is one flow of metaphor. The dews of heaven, the sun in his strength, the cloud, the whirlwind, the latter rain, all are introduced in turn, as natural and unstrained forms of expression. Adversity and its uses have met with no sublimer exposition, than the book of Job, itself an Arab poem, and perhaps the oldest in the world. Towards the last, where the voice from above breaks in, it speaks in thunder-peals, such thunder as the poet himself may have heard shaking some inland Sinai and seeming to his listening ear, the very voice of Deity.

The Syro-Arabian family appear to have thrown out but few early colonies into Europe. Strabo, however, in the tenth Book of his Geography, speaking of the peopling of Eubœa, off the coast of Bœotia, considers the first inhabitants to have been "a colony of Arabs who had accompanied Cadmus into Greece." *Αραβες δὲ Κάδμω συνδιαβαρτες* Confirmative of which, Agatharcides in his account of the Red Sea, and Diodorus Siculus, in his third Book, both allude to a tie of consanguinity existing between the Ishmaelite tribe of Zebeyde on the one hand, and the people of Bœotia and the Peloponnesus on the other. In Africa, their influence, through the sea-faring Phœnicians, has been great from the earliest times, and the African fathers of the Church seem to have inherited much of their fire and energy. For a while, it would appear, the pure theism of the first days lapsed into idolatry, until the creed of Islam arose, eminently theistic in character, a protest against polytheism, a restoration, so far, of the old patriarchal faith. As such the Koran is worthy of attention, independent of the historic associations connected with a book which has been carried on the sword-point from the Philippine islands to the Western confines of Spain and Africa, over one hundred and thirty degrees of longitude, and over seventy degrees of latitude, from Tartary to the Tropic of Capricorn. Notably warlike were these Arabs in all ages. Firdûsi speaks of them as "making the earth red as wine with blood of their foes, and the air like a forest of canes with their tall spears."

Thus, then, have we briefly reviewed the main characteristics of the three great families among which the earth has been divided. Each has a distinct form of utterance, and a mode of thought closely corresponding. In each we find either rationalism, or subjectivity, or objectivity, not of course exclusively prevailing, but characteristic and predominant. The first has

attached itself to the lower, but still indispensable, requirements of our nature. Subjectivity has given a strength and impulse to human knowledge, has led the way to fields of purest enjoyment, has scaled the heights of the material universe and sounded its depths, has analysed all things, even the mind itself. To objectivity on the other hand seems to have been intrusted the preservation of that reverential feeling which should crown with humility the highest efforts of man. Let us not forget that we have received our sacred books, nay, Christianity itself through a Syro-Arabian medium. We pride ourselves on the freedom of our institutions ; be this as it may, are we not in social life, the trembling slaves of that most debasing of all principles, the dread of public opinion. It is not so with the Arab. Let us be charitable in our estimate of the faith of Islam. Assuredly it has in it much that is noble and beautiful. It is only of late years that we have become awake to the conviction that there may be wiser modes of treating the insane than using whips and chains and tortures. But to the Moslem, the unhappy beings suffering under this most afflictive dispensation, have always been objects of the tenderest and most compassionate care. Let us hope that the old ferocious prejudices engendered by the crusades are fast dying away, that a kindlier and more candid spirit has arisen, and that after we have run the whole circle of science and art, the confession will be made, that we may yet learn something from the patriarchal Syrian, or the wandering Arab of the desert.

