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## ARTICLE III.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES.<sup>1</sup>

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It is not an easy lesson for curious minds to learn to leave dark what is dark ; and to state supposed facts with no more assurance than the actual evidence of their existence justifies, according to the most careful measurement of its dimensions. Almost all earnest writers, accordingly, on the early history of nations and of languages, have undertaken to be luminous amid obscure data, and to interpret the past in the same style of self-confident certainty in which the interpreters of prophecy usually unroll the scroll of revelation for the future. The great Niebuhr, and, more recently, the lesser Donaldson, strikingly exemplify this tendency.

The different languages of the world may be arranged, philosophically, in three great classes, viz. :

1. Those consisting of mere separate unvaried monosyllables, like the Chinese. The words composing this language are, all, so many distinct monads, unrelated to each other, and without any organization that adapts them for mutual affiliation. That class of shallow theorists who account for the origin of language, as others do of nature, by what is termed "the development theory," love to represent all lan-

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<sup>1</sup> Among the authors consulted in the preparation of this article are the following, viz. : Grote's Hist. Greece : Smith's do. : Niebuhr's Hist. Rome : Do.'s Lect. on An. Hist. : Brown's Hist. Greek Class. Lit. : Do.'s Rom. Class. Lit. : Donaldson's New Cratylus and Varronianus : Bunsen's Philos. Univ. Hist. : Bopp's Comp. Gram. : Rapp's do. : Grimm's Geschichte der deutschen Sprache : Giese's Æolischer Dialekt : Mommsen's Rom. Geschichte : Schleicher's Geschichte der Sprachen Europa's : Heyse's System der Sprachwissenschaft : Diez's Gram. der Rom. Sprache : Ahrens de Ling. Græc. dialectis : Aufrecht's Umbrischen Sprachdenkmäler : Gesenius Monumenta : Prichard's Nat. Hist. of Man, &c., &c.

guage as having been, originally, in this crude state: conceiving of it, as they do, as a mere human invention, a sort of wild, indigenous product of the social state. Language, as such, on the contrary, is a beautiful piece of Divine mechanism, contrived by Him who made man, and who made him to speak both to Himself and to his fellows; and therefore the nearer to its first beginnings we ascend, in our investigations, the more perfect we find it in its form.

2. Those formed by agglutination. This is an advance on the preceding, in style of construction; as here words do show some appetency and affinity for each other, though in the simplest of all modes of combination, viz. mere cohesion. Such are the Tartar, Finnish, Lappish, and Caucasian languages.

Like the Chinese language, the Tartar family of languages reigns over an immense territory in Asia; and covers, with its folds, the Mantchoos, Mongols, and the whole widespread Turkish race; stretching westward from the shores of the Japan Sea to the neighborhood of Vienna; and southward from the northern Arctic ocean to Affghanistan and the southern coasts of Asia Minor.

3. The inflected languages. These are all of a complete interior organization, complicated with many mutual relations and adaptations, and thoroughly systematized in all their parts. In their history lies embosomed that of the civilized portions of the world. The boundaries of this class of languages, are the boundaries of cultivated humanity.

Two great races, speaking such languages, have existed, and have shared, between them, the peopling of the historic parts of the earth: the Semitic and the Indo-European. The Semitic family of languages consists of three principal divisions: the Hebrew, the Aramæan, and the Arabic.<sup>1</sup> With the Hebrew, the leading ancient language of the Semitic family, the Canaanitish or Phœnician language stands

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<sup>1</sup> To the Arabic belongs also the Ethiopic, as a branch of the Southern Arabic. The Aramæan is called Syriac, in the form in which it appears in the Christian Aramæan literature; but Chaldee, as it exists in the Aramæan writings of the Jews. To the Chaldee is closely allied the Samaritan.

in the most intimate relation. Canaan was the home of the Hebrew tongue. It was, essentially, the language of the Phœnician race, by whom Palestine was inhabited before the immigration of Abraham's posterity. It became the adopted language of his descendants, and was transferred, with them, to Egypt, and brought back to Canaan. Whatever variations there may have been in the speech of those dwelling in Tyre and Sidon, compared with that of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, they were very slight. Even the language of Numidia is supposed, by Gesenius, to have been pure, or nearly pure, Hebrew.<sup>1</sup> The remaining fragments, accordingly, of the Phœnician and Punic languages, agree with the Hebrew. The Semitic languages were native in the countries lying between the Mediterranean, the Armenian mountains, the Tigris, and the southern coast of Arabia; or, in other words, in South-western Asia. The Arabic is the only present living language, of any great importance, belonging to this family of languages. This now covers, with its mantle, a large part of Western Asia and Northern Africa. It has also a solitary representative of itself in Europe, in the Maltese language, which is but a dialect of the Arabic.

The Semitic languages differ widely from the Indo-European, in respect to their grammar, vocabulary, and idioms. And yet, although they do not stand in any close relationship to each other, a remote connection between them cannot be denied. So far as yet traced, the Semitic is the older family of the two; but its limits and its functions have ever been of a far narrower range. Indo-European literature,

<sup>1</sup> Augustine, himself a native Carthaginian, said in his day that "the Hebrew and Carthaginian languages differ but little. The Hebrew, Carthaginian and Phœnician languages are of one origin and character." So Hieronymus: "the Carthaginian language is, to a great extent, allied with the Hebrew; and is said, indeed, to flow forth from the fountains of the Hebrew." Gesenius himself adds that "this is to be thoroughly maintained, that the Phœnician language in the main, and indeed *as to almost everything*, agrees with the Hebrew, whether you consider their roots or the mode of forming and inflecting their words—a point which it is superfluous to illustrate with examples." Vid Gesenii Monumenta, etc., Sect. 3. Chap. entitled "Linguae Phœniciae indoles et cum Hebræa necessitudo."

though not of so high antiquity as the Semitic, far surpasses it in variety, flexibility, beauty, strength, and luxuriance. The ultimate roots of the Semitic tongues are few in number ; and the formation of words by prefixes and affixes, is simple and, in most cases, similar ; while in the Indo-European, we have a range and style of words and inflections adapted for the truest and finest possible expression of thought, of whatever height or depth, or of whatever scope or bearing. The Semitic nations have lived, with remarkable uniformity, on vast open plains ; or wandered over wide and dreary deserts, by which the negative side of their character has been more developed than the positive. The lot, on the contrary, of the Indo-European or Japhetic nations, has been ever, with as remarkable uniformity, cast, by a favoring Providence, amid rivers, mountains, vales, and gorges ; where they might gaze upon an ever-changing sky, and breathe a vigorous, ever-changing air ; and where they would be required to accoutre themselves for an ever-changing series of enterprises and endeavors.

The Indo-European nations and languages have spread themselves, in the Eastern hemisphere, over the vast area, from the mouth of the Ganges to the British Islands and the northern extremities of Scandinavia. They comprise the Sanscrit, Zend, Old-Persian, Greek, Latin, Lettish, Slavonic, German, and Celtic families of tongues. As we go eastward geographically, and backward historically, we find a greater and greater approximation, constantly, to the pure Indo-European types of words, as found in the Sanscrit ; and, as we go westward, less and less ; until, in the Celtic, the most western European language, we find the fewest traces left of the common original mother tongue. It is, indeed, but a recent discovery, made by the late distinguished Prichard, that the Celtic properly belongs to the same great parent-stock of languages. Still more recently, by the discovery of the Old Egyptian language, and the comparison of the Celtic languages with it, the conviction is reached, as Bunsen claims, that the original Celtic is more ancient, not only, than the Teutonic branch of languages but even

than the Sanscrit itself ; forming a sort of connecting link between the Old Egyptian and the Sanscrit, in the stages of lingual development. If this be so, although the fact asserted is far from being determined, then to the Celtic must be conceded the honor, now given to the Sanscrit, and otherwise to be given to it still, of preserving in itself more fully than any other branch of languages now spoken, that ancient Mother-tongue, now lost, in its pure, primal form, from the eyes of men ; from which, yet, all earth's subsequent languages have been derived. If this view of the Celtic shall be fully substantiated, its real connection with the Sanscrit will still remain the same, while the order of sequence, between the two, will be directly alternated.

The modern Slavonic languages agree, wonderfully, with both the Latin and the Greek. The resemblance of the Russian, especially, to the Latin, is very striking. Donaldson quotes, with approval, a modern traveller as saying that the founders of Rome spoke the Russian language. In the implication made, however, by such a quotation, that so unclassical a surmise is to be received as a literal historical truth, he shows the same credulity, and the same tendency to philological marvellousness, that elsewhere often characterize his speculations. Such tendencies, indeed, are among the customary weaknesses of that class of sceptical minds, whether in natural, theological, historical, linguistic, or other science which he represents.

Of all the languages immediately derived from the Sanscrit, the Lithuanian, a branch of the Lettish family, now spoken on the southern shore of the Baltic, is found to be, among all living languages, the most akin, in its spirit and forms, to the original Sanscrit. It is also, at the same time, so much akin to the Latin and the Greek, as to occupy, to the ear of the etymologist, in a multitude of words not otherwise understood, the place of an interpreter : with its face fixed on the Latin, and its hand pointing backwards to the Sanscrit. It is now, however, under the pressure of Russian institutions, influences, and ideas, fast being mongrelized with that language.

The most ancient languages of the Indo-European stock, may be grouped in two family-pairs, viz.: I. the Arian family-pair; II. the Greco-Italic or Pelasgian family-pair.

I. The Arian family-pair. This comprises, as the title indicates, two leading families:—1. The Indian family; 2. The Iranian family. The word *Arian* (Sanskrit *Arya*, and Zend *Airya*) signifies “noble,” “well-born,” a name applied, by the ancient Hindoos, to themselves, in contradistinction to the rest of the world, whom they considered base-born and contemptible. So the Greeks called the rest of the world “barbarians;” and the Jews termed the Gentiles “dogs.” *Arii* was the ancient name of the Medes: a name afterwards preserved in the *Aria* and *Ariana* of the Greek geographers. Aryavarta, the country lying between the Himalaya and the Vindhya mountains, the primeval abode of their fathers, is now regarded as their “holy land” by the Brahmins. There, in that high table-land of Central Asia, two thousand years and more before Christ, our Hindoo ancestors had their early national home. So also to Bactria, near the Indus on the west, the earliest traditions of the Persians point, as the ancient and romantic seat of their race. Irân, then, a country bounded on the north by the Caspian, on the south by the Indian ocean, on the east by the Indus, and on the west by the Euphrates, is the spot to which all the languages of the civilized world, ancient and modern, now unite in pointing as the place of their origin.

1. The Indian family. Of this, the Sanscrit is the most remarkable: standing farthest east and at the farthest distance of time, full-orbed in its brightness, casting splendor on every language around it, and on every language to be found, in the long procession of its descendants, from that day to this. In the Vedas it has come down to us, from the borders of the primitive world; on the margin of which the genius of history never planted its foot. “The Sanscrit is,” in the language of Eichhoff, “the richest of all languages in the world, *in its combinations*. Its words melt and run continually together, in harmony of sound and sense; and their full splendor is but faintly imaged to the view, even by the

beautiful and pictorial language of Greece; while the coarser and sterner Latin represents, in its features, still less of this high characteristic, of its mother Sanscrit." It must, however, be remembered, in connection with this statement, that in respect to the artistic development of language, in variety, fulness, and exactness of form, as well as in outward phonetic beauty and effect, the Greek far surpassed, not only the Sanscrit, but also every other language, ancient or modern. It must also ever be remembered of the Sanscrit, that, in many particulars, it has experienced, in the form in which it has reached our eyes, alterations of its original elements and characteristics; so much so that, not unfrequently, some of the derived languages present to us the primal theme of a word, in a much purer form than even the Sanscrit itself, as is often especially true of the Lithuanian.

In remote times other languages, as dialects, sprang from the Sanscrit, which ere long supplanted it on its own soil; leaving it to maintain its existence, at last, only as the language of the sacred books of India and of its learned men. These dialects are denominated the Pali and the Prâcrit; and are now found, as dead languages, by the side of their Sanscrit mother, in Northern Hindostan. The Pali grew up, as the offspring of the Sanscrit, in the province of Bahar; and is, to this day, the sacred language of all the nations that cherish Buddhism; since, among those that speak this dialect, that singular religion originated. The Prâcrit languages (for they are many — the idea is plural) include numerous low, depraved dialects, which grew up, as parasites, on the decaying trunk of the original Sanscrit tree. The word "Sanskrit" means "complete" "polished," "classical;" while that of "Prâcrit" is "vulgar," "provincial." The Pali and Prâcrit dialects represent the middle age of the Sanscrit, in its native home; while the present languages of Hindostan (some twenty or thirty in number) represent it in its most degenerate state, having swerved very greatly from their original model.

But there is also a vagrant language, belonging to the Indian family, whose geographical home, like that of those who



speak it, is everywhere. But two people, while preserving their national distinctness in all times and places, have spread themselves, as such, over all the earth: the Jews and the Gypsies. Their law of extension, from age to age, has not been orbital, but cometary. They claim the wide world as their domain. The Jew preserves his language as a sacred relic, and prizes it for the fathers' sake. It contains in it a Divine deposit: the law and the testimony; and is beautiful for its antiquity and the honor that it has received from above; but it is a living language no more, and has lost all function in the present. But how different is it with the Gypsy. His language is everywhere the same intact, cherished, old mother-tongue: as distinct and separate from the other languages among which it is found, as are the people from those over whose territories they wander.

Their names are quite various: as, Gypsy, from their supposed home in Egypt; Zigeuner, a word of doubtful meaning; Sinte, the name by which they call themselves, perhaps from Saindhwa, "inhabitants of Sindhu," or the Indus; and also Roem, meaning "man;" and Kalo, "of dark skin," from Sanscrit, Kala, "dark." They first appeared in Europe in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Their language, in its great and manifold resemblances to the Sanscrit, nullifies absolutely, before the court of classical and historical criticism, the so common conception of their Egyptian origin; and shows that they came from Northern India. This, however, is not the first or greatest ethnological fallacy, that has originated in a popular empirical style of etymological guessing. The Ancients, especially, were very fond of weaving legendary history, out of such dubious materials.

2. The Iranian family. The name Iran is derived from Arya; and includes those people whose languages were originally allied closely with those of the Indian family; but yet, by certain definite laws of sound, separated from them. Some of these definite laws are such as these, viz.:—  
 (1) The change of a dental into s before t; as in Zend *Basta*, from Sanscrit *Baddha*, bound. (2) The Sanscrit *sv* is

changed into a guttural, as in Sansc. "svasr — sister;" New Persian, "châher." (3) A radical s is changed into h, as in Sansc. "Saptan;" Zend, "hapta;" and Sansc. "sam," with Old Persian "ham." (4) The frequent substitution of the dentalsibilant z for the guttural aspirate h, as in Sansc. "aham — I;" and "mih"—to urinate, Zend, "azem," and "miz."

The two chief antique languages, of this class, are the Zend and the Old Persian. The Zend is the language of the holy books of the Parsees, the Zend Avesta. It was the original vernacular of the Medes and Bactrians. So closely does it resemble the Sanscrit, that, in very many words, by merely changing the Zend letters into their Sanscrit equivalents, you obtain at once precisely the same identical word. Very striking also, in particular, is the correspondence between Persia and India, in the elements of their religion and mythology. It is a fact, also, worthy of remembrance in this connection, that the Zend is proved to be, throughout, wonderfully congruous and correlated with the German languages.

The Old Persian is the language of many now perfectly deciphered arrow-headed inscriptions of the Achæmenidian kings. The New Persian has been greatly altered, in flowing down from its original sources, by the influence of the Arabic, through the long reign of Mohammedism over that region of the world.

But there are other languages, of this stock, of much smaller philological value than those already mentioned, viz. the Ossetian and Armenian. In the midst of the Caucasus, alone by itself, though surrounded by men of other tongues, like the solitary nest of a wild bird in the mountains, is the home of the Ossetian tongue. The people still call themselves by the old family name, Iron. They are but rude highlanders, without a literature or a history. The Armenian language, on the contrary, has a rich historical literature. The alphabet is peculiar, being immediately modelled after the Greek. Though the language is of an original Iranian constitution, its form and features have been much altered by contact with surrounding languages. The Ancient Ar-

menian was a living language down to the twelfth century ; since which time the present dialect has grown up, into full individual stature. The skirts of the Armenian language, and of the busy, trafficking people that speak it, are found now resting, in Europe, in Southern Russia, around the Sea of Azof, and in Turkey, Galicia, and Hungary.

II. The Greco-Italic or Pelasgic family-pair. But a little while ago, Latin etymology was universally constructed (as it still is by many, who are entirely ignorant of its true foundations, though fancying themselves to be on the pathway of high classical scholarship) on altogether a Greek basis. The Latin, such writers have derived, immediately, from the Greek ; accounting for the differences of form and structure, by all sorts of empirical explanations, whose chief merit has consisted in their being an ingenious dodge of difficulties, that could not be solved. Such works as Valpy's *Lat. Etymol. Dictionary*, Mair's *Tyro*, Döderlein's various works, and Schwenk's *etymologisches Wörterbuch*, illustrate this era and style of Latin etymology. These works still have a value, and that often considerable, in exhibiting correspondences in the two languages, and suggesting hints for further research. But they are no guide-books, as they profess to be, in either philological or historical research. The fundamental conception, which they undertake to develop, is false and ridiculous.

In very remote ages, there existed a Greco-Italic race, to which the progenitors of both the Latin and Greek nations (as they afterwards came to be, and to be called) belonged, in common ; and from which they, afterwards, branched off into a distinct and separate development. The Greek race, remaining nearer geographically, and in closer contact commercially and socially, with that Oriental world, amid whose abounding and inspiring luxuriance God himself prepared the first home of the human family, came, in every respect, to a higher and nobler style of growth and greatness than the Latin. The people and their language spread out themselves, in different periods and localities, into a vigorous fourfold manifestation, as expressed in the *Æolic*, *Doric*, *Io-*

nic, and Attic dialects ; which mark, indeed, but so many stages or epochs of the same language. The Doric is but a variety of the Æolic ; and these two dialects may, without impropriety, be said to mark the earlier and later aspects of the Pelasgic period. The Ionic, as a subsequent development of the same language, took on its separate form, under the influence of national progress, as a distinct home-product ; and "so far," as Müller well observes, "as it differs, in any word, in respect to either its vowels or its consonants, from the Æolic, it differs also from the original type of the word."

The Italic race parted from the common Græco-Italic stock, by a more western migration ; where, in another climate, and under other influences, they matured into a well-defined development of their own. They, ere long, parted into an eastern and western branch ; and the eastern, subsequently, divided itself into the Umbrian and Oscan. The causes, times, and modes of these different migrations and separations, lie out of the field of exact historic vision.

As agriculture is the necessary basis of all stable social organization, we are compelled to believe that the original Græco-Italic race were given to the culture of grain, oil, and wine ; instead of leading that wandering shepherd-life, to which Orientals have ever been so much addicted, and which was undoubtedly, therefore, a leading feature, at the first, of Indo-European life in the East. The very names given to the first inhabitants of Italy, declare this historic fact ; as Æno-tria (from *olivos*, wine), from which the title Æno-trians ; and so Opsci and Osci, laborers (*ops*), and Siculi and Sicani, reapers (*seco*, to cut).

The Greek and Latin languages have, then, a common origin, and possess a common substantive being. The mould and model of the Latin are the most antique of the two. In the Æolic dialect, in which we have the remains, in general, of the Greek, as it was in its primeval state, it resembles the Latin much more than in its later dialects. In this dialect, the Græco-Italic or Pelasgic element, that forms the common stock of the Greek and Latin languages, is found most abundantly, and with the fewest adulterations and ad-

ditions. The words most distinctly common to the two languages, the Greek and the Latin, are those that thereby show themselves to characterize that period, in which they had a blended life, in one common stock. These words relate to the domestic animals, the soil, articles of subsistence, and implements of husbandry; or, in other words, to the elements and experiences of every-day life. In the Attic dialect, or classic Greek, it departs farthest from the original elements of its common parentage and character. It is in the Greek<sup>1</sup> that we find the altered and secondary sounds and forms, while in the Latin they maintain their primitive aspect. At the remotest period of which we have any historical records concerning the Greek, it had already undergone great changes from its primitive state. In that dark, unwritten, Archaic era, as in "the womb of the morning," the Greek and Latin dwelt together, in their embryo state, yet to be developed into a separate life and activity. This is its Græco-Latin or Pelasgic period. So much of that great common primitive Græco-Italic race as, in overflowing the plains of Greece, rested permanently upon them, as its abode, soon came, under local influences, to assume a corresponding definite character, determined by their climate, sky, landscape, and soil, and the habits of life, that they necessitated and suggested.

The next period of Grecian development was the Hellenic or Classic; covering all the more enlarged and cultivated conditions of Grecian character and society. As the terms Pelasgic and Hellenic are commonly used, to denote different elementary races, it must be ever borne in mind, that contrarily they are used here, to denote only different eras of historic development, in the same identical race. The term Pelasgic, accordingly, determines the epoch of the first Græco-Italic emigrations into Greece, and so that of its first perma-

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<sup>1</sup> The name Greece was given by the Romans, to that country. The vernacular name for it was Hellas, and for themselves Hellenes. So we call the Germans by that name, while the French call them *Les Allemands*, and they call themselves *Deutsch*. The old Etrusci or *Tusci* also, as the Romans called them, denominated themselves *Rasena*, and the Gypsies name themselves *Sinte*.

ment settlement, and of the establishment of its primitive institutions. The term Hellenic separates from this first epoch, that subsequent era, marked, on the one hand, by the later emigration of the same Græco-Italic race, in a more cultivated condition, and also by a fuller and higher home-development; by which agencies combined, the original institutions, habits, ideas, and language of primitive Greece were so greatly modified and improved. In this second and advanced period of the Greeks, they were more strongly Persian, in their cast of character and style of speech, than ever before. In this period, the four dialects, the Æolic and Doric, the Ionic and Attic, like the four moons revolving in the sky of Jupiter, appeared together, in full view, above the horizon of Greek literature. The Æolic<sup>1</sup> and Doric dialects, which are essentially identical, had their distinct specific sphere of manifestation in the Pelasgic period; while the Ionic and Attic, which are also identical in nature, and but different stages and phases of the same improved state of the original Greek language, found their proper native element in the Hellenic period. In the Æolic and Doric dialects, accordingly, the Greek appears in a more plain and homely garb, while in the Ionic and Attic it comes forth in full costume, wearing a robe wrought by many hands into its most artistic and perfect shape. By its own finished excellence the Attic came, in the end, to be admired throughout all Greece, as "the perfection of beauty," and to become dominant in the whole domain of speech, whether uttered or written. By this dialect, as a standard, the deviations of the other dialects, as such, were measured. While the Ionians did not dislike a concurrence of words, they rejected the harsh consonantal combinations, abounding in the early types of the language; and the Athenians carried the improvement of original forms still farther, by contracting all proximate vowels which would produce an hiatus, into one.

In the Græco-Italic period of European history, the char-

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<sup>1</sup> The Æolic and Doric were far purer in their forms in the Pelasgic period, when no Grecian literature existed, than found now to be in the remains left of them in the Greek writers, all of whom lived in the Hellenic period.

acter and condition of those who, as the primitive inhabitants of Europe, planted the germs of all its subsequent development, are revealed to us. In them, and in the armies of Teutonic emigrants that followed them, of the same blood and of the same primeval language, we behold our own early ancestors, when first entering on the great world-stage of life. The Indo-European nations generally are, indeed, but a series of colonies of the Arian race, which, in an age long preceding any known dates, spread out itself, from its common centre, north and west. The colonies which formed the northern nations of Europe, probably traversed the regions lying northward of the Caspian; while the nations of southern Europe went through Asia Minor and across the Hellespont or the Bosphorus. Emigration and colonization have ever been marked peculiarities in the history of this family of nations; emigration in masses, from a period beyond the reach of documentary history, down to the present hour. Westward, ever westward, for thousands of years, has flowed the living tide. In the Hellenic period, or that of the second great historical emigration, the tide of colonization set immediately from Ionia in Asia Minor, but came originally, without doubt, from Persia; while, in the earlier period, it seems to have come rather from Media than Persia. A striking argument in favor of the influence of Persian elements, in determining the form and features of the Hellenic period, is found in the fact of the special resemblance of the Classic Greek to the Persian, both ancient and modern; a resemblance which its Latin sister, of a more homogeneous Pelasgic constitution, does not at all possess. Says Niebuhr: "the Hellenes and Pelasgians were kindred nations; identity of religion and similarity of language connected them with each other. Here we find a fundamental difference and a fundamental relationship bound together by an inexplicable law." On his theory of a difference of races, the combination is an enigma; but not at all on our theory, that the difference between them was merely a difference in the stages of development of the same race.

The domain of the Greek language was coextensive with

the colonies and conquests of that ever-busy moving people. The term *Græcia* was applied, in fact, to two countries, viz. *Græcia Antiqua*, or Greece Proper, and *Græcia Magna*, or the south-eastern portion of Italy. But while the colonists of *Magna Græcia* contributed largely to the development of Greek literature, the mother-country always wore the crown of intellectual supremacy. Her colonies filled the islands of the *Ægean Sea*, and belted its shores on both the European and Asiatic coasts, and spread even northwards, around the upper and under sides of the Baltic. By the victorious arms, also, of Alexander, Greek ideas, influences, institutions, and minds were planted over all the East, from Macedonia to the Indus, and around about the coast of the Mediterranean, to Alexandria in Egypt. To the Greeks the world is indebted for literature, grammar, philosophy, and art, beyond any other nation.

The Modern living representative of the Greek, is the *Romaic* or *Modern Greek*, into which the *Ancient Greek* has, at last, dropped from its *Byzantine* corruptions; but which much more resembles its progenitor than the *Romance languages*, viz. the *French*, *Italian*, and *Spanish*, do the *Latin*.

In the *Albanian*,<sup>1</sup> the probable representative of a more primitive *Illyrian*, spoken along the eastern coast of the *Adriatic*, we have a language which seems to resemble both it and the *Latin* in combination, and to have grown up, as a seedling, in that primitive *Græco-Italic* period, in which neither the *Greek* nor *Latin* had any distinct, separate existence; a living specimen of the primeval language of *Southern Europe*, retaining still its first identity unimpaired. The primitive ancestors of the *Indo-European* nations were but little advanced in the arts of life. "They were probably," as says *Prichard*, "ignorant of the use of iron and other

<sup>1</sup> It will be interesting to compare some of its forms with the Greek.

1. <i>νιε</i>	1. <i>εις</i> (for <i>εως</i> )	1. <i>πᾶρε</i> - <i>πῶτος</i>
2. <i>δι</i>	2. <i>δύο</i>	2. <i>διτε</i> - <i>δευτερος</i>
3. <i>τρι</i>	3. <i>τρεῖς</i>	3. <i>τρετε</i> - <i>τριτος</i>
4. <i>κατερ</i>	4. <i>τέτταρες</i> (quatuor)	4. <i>κατερετε</i> - <i>τέτταρος</i>
5. <i>πεντε</i>	5. <i>πέντε</i>	5. <i>πέσσετε</i> - <i>πέμπτος</i>



metals, since the terms used to denote them are fundamentally different in their different languages, and must, therefore, it would seem, have been adopted subsequently to the era of the individual languages, derived from the parent-stock. What could be more unlike than χρυσός, aurum, and gold; or σίδηρος, ferrum, and iron? The use of letters was also entirely unknown to the Arian nations, to those at least which passed into Europe; and it was introduced among them, in long-after ages, by the Phœnicians."

In the Pelasgic period, the Greeks, as was natural in their weakness and amid the rude beginnings of pioneer life, when everything lay new and unclaimed by others before them, were peaceful and laborious; but in the Hellenic, or more developed period, the arts of war sprang up, and commerce and conquest extended the power of Greece in all directions.

In the Homeric poems, the oldest monument of the Greek tongue, we see the three leading dialects, the Æolic, Ionic, and Attic, all variously appearing together, on the stage. The language was then still, to a great degree, in a transition state, casting off its old skin and taking on a new one. Homer is as dear to the philologist as to the poet, presenting a rich array of curiosities and treasures to his delighted gaze.

Giese, in his *Æolischer Dialekt*, draws a picture of the pre-Hellenic period, in somewhat the same spirit in which geologists describe the pre-Adamite earth, too graphic and interesting to be lost. In that archaic, unhistoric period, he says, for substance: "no opposition had grown up, as afterwards against the consonant F, (or the digamma) imported from Phœnicia, and the sibilant S. The half-vowel y (Latin I), wanting afterwards, was then in vogue. The vowel-hues of words were not multiplied as afterwards. The vowel A was the common vowel-sound, as in Sanscrit, used in the utterance of all consonantal sounds; which afterwards came to be changed, in so many cases, into its weaker or stronger cognates ε, η, ο; and the diphthongs, αι ει and οι, were but of infrequent occurrence. Consonant changes were

few. The Aspirate was not in existence; or, if so, only as a consonant. Euphonic mutations were few, being guided only by simple natural principles of convenience or pleasure, and not, as afterwards, brought to a state of scientific and artistic development. The rejection of consonants, when final, had not yet grown into extensive use, nor had the principle of assimilation yet become strong. The aspirating influence of a  $\sigma$  or a  $\pi$ , or a smooth mute preceding or following it, had hardly yet shown itself. So also vowel-contractions, the result of active business-habits of life and speech, and so an after-growth, had not yet occurred to any great extent. The whole subject of case-development was still in a simple, uncomplicated state. Prepositions had not yet become much developed as helps and additions to case-endings; and when used, were used, to a great extent, adverbially. The demonstrative pronoun had not yet taken on the aspect also of the definite article. The signification of words, in this primitive state of the language, was, in reference to some classes of them, more specific, and in reference to others more general, than afterwards when, by the increase of ideas and the multiplication of wants, the same words came to have many more shades of meaning." Secondary meanings, and multiform senses of the same words, keep ever growing up, in any living language, however stable, as the people who use them as the medium of exchange in the world of thought, expand perpetually over a wide area of activity and development. In the general description here furnished, of the contrasts that existed in the Pelasgic and Hellenic periods, though general and brief, the student will find an accurate outline of the style of changes wrought in the Greek language, as it became more and more moulded into its final classic form.

[To be continued.]