

TARSUS.¹

I. INTRODUCTION.

IN the introductory verses of his Letter to the Galatians—that wonderful preface to the most remarkable letter that ever was written—St. Paul gives an historical sketch of his own life, as he looked back on it with the experience of a lifetime and the insight of a thoroughly reasoned religion to direct and intensify his vision. He describes the chief stages in his life from its beginning: what had been misguided and ignorant almost sinks out of view. He remembers only the steps by which his knowledge of truth and his insight into the real nature of the world had grown. The many years in which he had been a leader and chief among the Jews, with his mind shut up within the circle of Jewish ideas and aspirations, are summed up in a brief sentence; and he passes on to the epoch-making event in his career, the real beginning of his life, “when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles.”

It is a widely spread view that in these words the Apostle is merely expressing the infinite power with which God chooses His instruments where He will, selecting persons

¹ I take this opportunity of adding a note about the use of the name *Mirus* (“Wonderful”) among the Christians of Lycaonia. My wife points out the evident reference to Isaiah ix 6: “—His name shall be called Wonderful.” The most remarkable fact in this connexion is the employment of the Latin word rather than the Greek. It cannot be supposed that the Lycaonian Christians used a Latin text of Isaiah; and, in fact, none of the Latin texts use the adjective *mirus*, but *admirabilis*. But in the Colonia Iconium a certain affectation of speaking Latin was fashionable, as inscriptions show; and the people, therefore, preferred to translate the Greek adjective *θαυμαστός* into Latin, and thus they made the name *Mirus* the commonest Christian personal name in the region around, and under the influence of, Iconium (except or along with Paulus).

even the most unlikely and apparently unprepared and unsuited to be His ministers, and putting into them the power to execute His will. But such an interpretation is inadequate and far from complete. It is true that here, as everywhere, Paul lays the strongest emphasis on the limitless power with which God chooses His agents and instruments ; but neither here nor anywhere else does He represent this power as being used in an arbitrary fashion, of which man cannot understand the reasons or the method. The choice of himself was the final execution of a design which had been long maturing in the purpose of God, and which was worked out step by step in the process of events.

Already before his birth Paul had been chosen and set apart as the Apostle of the Gentiles ; and when the proper moment had arrived, the revelation took place, and the design of God was made consciously present in the mind and heart of the man. It was not a sudden and incalculable choice of a human instrument. It was the consummation of a process of choice and preparation which had begun before the man was born, but of which he had previously been wholly unconscious—so unconscious that he had spent his energy in fighting vainly against its compelling power. Only in later time, as he reviewed his life, he could see the preparatory stages in the process, beginning before his birth ; the purpose of God had matured its design by the selection through a long period of means useful to the ultimate end.

If we attempt to interpret this mystic religious statement in the language of history, it means that the family, the surroundings, and the education of Paul had been selected with the perfection of a Divine purpose to make him fit to be what he was designed to be, the Apostle of the Gentiles. There was one nation, one family and one city, out of which the Apostle must arise. The nation was the Jewish ; but

the family was not Palestinian, it was Tarsian. Only "a Hebrew sprung from Hebrews"¹ could be the Apostle of the perfected Judaic faith; but he must be born and brought up in childhood among the Gentiles, a citizen of a Gentile city, and a member of that conquering aristocracy of Romans which ruled all the cities of the Mediterranean world. The Apostle to the Gentiles must be a Jew, a Tarsian citizen, and at the same time a Roman. If that be not the meaning of Paul's words, the historian may abandon the task of interpreting his words altogether, for they cease to have any historical application whatsoever. But his words, here and everywhere, are instinct and alive with historical force. Every sentence is a summary of historical development. But Paul sees and speaks on the plane of eternal truth; and the historian has to render his words, only half seeing, half understanding them, "with stammering lips and insufficient sound," into those which may describe the steps of that development as they are conditioned by time in the process of history.

Tarsus was the city which should produce the Apostle to the Gentiles. Why was that city chosen? Again we must recognize that the choice was no arbitrary selection of an unlikely and unsuitable place. Tarsus was, by its nature and circumstances, the one suitable place. That it was the one suitable place has been borne in on the present writer in the course of long study of the conditions of society and geographical environment of the Cilician land and cities. It was only after the observation of this remarkable adaptation had gradually fixed itself in his mind, taken root there, and grown into definite expression in a sentence, that he found the same thought fully expressed in the words of

¹ The true meaning of the phrase in Phil. iii. 5 is quite certain (*St. Paul the Trav.* p. 32), though I do not know that any of the commentators have accepted it.

Paul himself. When writing the *Historical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, those words were passed by unnoticed and unexplained, because they were (like many others still) uncomprehended and obscure. Now they appear full of light and historical meaning.

Now wherein lay the peculiar suitability of Tarsus to educate and mould the mind of him who should in due time make the religion of the Jewish race intelligible to the Graeco-Roman world, and should be able to raise that world up to the moral level of the Hebrew people and the spiritual level of ability to sympathize with the Hebrew religion in its perfected stage? It lay in the fact that Tarsus was the city whose institutions best and most completely united the oriental and the western character. When Greece went forth under Alexander the Great to conquer the East, the union of oriental and occidental was attempted in every city of western Asia. That is the most remarkable and interesting feature of Hellenistic history in the Graeco-Asiatic kingdoms and cities.¹ But none of those cities, though all were deeply affected in varying degrees by their Asiatic surroundings and the Asiatic element in their populations, seem to have been so successful as Tarsus in establishing a fairly harmonious balance between the two elements. Not that the union was perfect: that was impossible so long as the religions of the two elements were inharmonious and mutually hostile. But the Tarsian state was more successful than any other of the great cities of that time in producing an amalgamated society, in which the oriental and the occidental spirit in unison attained in some degree to a higher plane of thought and action. In others the Greek spirit at first was too strong, too "anti-Semitic," and too determined to be

¹ Preface to *The Letters to the Seven Churches*, with chapters xi., xii.

supreme and to crush out all opposition. In Tarsus the Greek qualities and powers were used and guided by a society which was, on the whole, more Asiatic in character.

With this idea in our mind, we proceed to study the character and the social conditions of the city of Tarsus. It would be vain and profitless to study the city simply as it was in the childhood of Paul. We can understand its character and influence at that period only by studying its development and the law of its growth. How had it been formed into its condition at the Christian era? What elements were there in its population? What fortunes had befallen the people and moulded them already before their birth? What influences of sea and air, of plain and mountain, of intercourse and warfare with others, had affected through many generations their nature and determined their character?

It is plain that we are far from regarding the character of Paul as being that of the pure Jew unaffected by Hellenism or Roman experience (i.e. as Roman administration of a province and a city showed Roman system and nature). We can only regret to find in Professor Harnack's recent *Mission und Ausbreitung des Christenthums*, p. 354, what seems intended for a strong assertion of the absolutely contradictory point of view. It may be quoted in Dr. Moffat's translation, ii. p. 137, "If there are any lingering doubts in the mind as to whether the Apostle should be credited, in the last instance, to Jewish instead of to Hellenistic Christianity, these doubts may be laid to rest by a study of Porphyry. For this critic, a Hellenist of the first water, feels keener antipathy to Paul than to any other Christian. Paul's dialectic is totally unintelligible to him, and he therefore deems it both sophistical and deceitful. Paul's proofs resolve themselves for him into flat contradictions, whilst in the Apostle's personal testimonies he sees merely an un-

stable, barbarian and insincere rhetorician, who is a foe to all noble and liberal culture.”

Setting aside the ultimate and apparently irreconcilable difference between Professor Harnack's point of view in reading Paul himself and that which is taken in this study, which is too large a topic and too far from the proper subject of these pages, we must remark that the peculiarly intense antipathy of the Hellenist Porphyry to Paul does not in the slightest degree prove Professor Harnack's view that Paul was untouched by Hellenism. Tacitus's principle, *odia fratrum inimicissima*, the bitterest hatred is that which intervenes between brothers, is as true in regard to philosophic or religious thought as in respect of human life and passions. Porphyry hated Paul, not because he was the purest and most unalloyed Jew, but because he was the Jew who ought to have been more truly Hellenist than he actually was, who had quaffed from the fountain of Hellenism and then rejected all the essential features of Hellenic thought, who had learned from Hellenism in order to destroy it, who used Hellenistic ideas and abused them in unreasonable and unnatural ways, who had got hold of such Hellenic terms as “grace” (the most characteristic word and thought in the whole range of Hellenism), and used it in a hatefully sophistical and deceitful way like the treacherous barbarian that he was. Nowhere could there be found, in Porphyry's estimation, a more detestable and dangerous foe to all noble and liberal culture than the de-Hellenized Hellenist Paul.

As the purpose of these papers is to study the growth of Tarsus from the point of view above indicated, facts and events will be treated and grouped according to their importance as affecting the growth of the city. It will be convenient here, once for all, to mention various articles in which the writer has studied Tarsus from other points of

view. In an article, "Cilicia, Tarsus, and the great Taurus Pass,"¹ there is given a study in considerable detail of the geographical and commercial conditions which helped to determine the history of the three cities of the lower Cilician plain. Two papers in the *Athenaeum*, December 6, 1902, and August 1, 1903, contain a description of the situation and surroundings of Tarsus, and of the topography of the district. A paper in which the attempt was made to estimate the importance of the relations between sea valley and central plateau, and to classify "the geographical conditions determining history and religion in Asia Minor," bears on the history of Tarsus² among other places. The article "Tarsus" in Dr. Hastings' great *Dictionary of the Bible*, gives a summary of the history of Tarsus. I have also written a detailed study of Mallos, the great rival of Tarsus, but refrained from printing it until the opportunity of visiting Mallos may present itself, so that the topographical view expressed in it (which is quite opposed to the opinions, differing from one another, recently advocated by M. Imhoof Blumer and by Messrs. Heberdey and Wilhelm), may be tested by actual experiment; but in the present series of studies the truth of the view advocated in this unpublished paper must be assumed. Mallos is however mentioned here only incidentally—in so far as it affected the history of its great rival Tarsus.

II. THE SITUATION OF TARSUS.

Tarsus (which still bears its ancient name slightly modified, Tersous) is situated in the Cilician plain, about 70 to 80 feet above sea level, and about ten miles from the

¹ *Geographical Journal*, October, 1903, pp. 357-413. We visited Tarsus in 1891 and in 1902. In 1890 also I passed through it, without stopping, when hurrying to catch a steamer at Mersina, the modern port of Tarsus.

² *Geographical Journal*, September, 1902, pp. 257-282.

southern coast. Behind it, about two miles distant, the hills begin to rise gently from the level plain; and they extend back in undulating and gently swelling ridges, intersected by deep water channels, until they lean against the vast and lofty ridge of Taurus, about thirty miles distant to the north.

Cilicia lies between Taurus and the sea, and it consists of the level sea plain, the alluvial hills, and the front of the ridge of Taurus. The bounds on the north varied in different periods of history. In the Roman time (with which we are here chiefly concerned) they were fixed high up on the face of Taurus, though not quite so high as the summit of the front ridge; and, as this is the natural geographical boundary between the Cilician land, steamy with the moist heat of its well watered soil, and the broad, lofty and inclement mountain region of Taurus, backed by the high central plateau of Anatolia, we shall regard it as the true frontier of the country. The exact point is indicated by inscriptions on the rock walls of the narrow pass called the "Cilician Gates."

The combination of these three kinds of country was highly advantageous to the Cilician cities and people. The cities, Tarsus and the rest, were situated in the low plains, only a few feet above sea level. The moist heat of the fertile soil and oppressive atmosphere would have been unfavourable to vigorous municipal or commercial life. But the considerable extent of undulating ground, often very fertile and at the present time generally well wooded, which intervened as foot hills between the sea plain and the Taurus mountains, offered a far more pleasant and healthy abode during the summer heat; while the high glens and plateaus of Taurus were admirable sanatoria.

Those foot hills, therefore, were a valuable part of Tarsian territory, and really essential to its prosperity;

and the remains of ancient life show that the opportunity was thoroughly used by the people. There is, in truth, a second Tarsus on the hills, about nine to twelve miles north of the city proper, probably a town chiefly for summer residence, but still a large and strong town with regular fortifications on a great scale, permanently occupied by a considerable population—indeed a much stronger city than Tarsus on the level plain, devoid of any proper acropolis (as Dion Chrysostom mentions), could ever have been.

As one wanders over these ruins, which extend westwards from the north road for several miles up to the deep gorge of the river Cydnus, the question even suggests itself whether this was not a separate city; and the name of Augusta, a Cilician city whose site and even neighbourhood are entirely uncertain, rises to one's mind. But it is beyond doubt that the territory of Tarsus extended up to the Cilician frontier at the Gates, for the "Bounds of the Cilicians" are mentioned on the coins of the city; and therefore this hill town must have been in Tarsian territory. The ruins are evidently mainly Roman; and the very name which was given to them in the second or third century can probably be determined. On the west edge of the ruins the Roman road from the Cilician Gates to Tarsus is spanned by a triumphal arch, on which doubtless once stood a triumphal car drawn by four horses, in bronze or marble (*quadrigae*). This monument gave its name to the whole district around; and the name appears in Greek as Kodrigai on coins of Tarsus, struck about A.D. 200. From these coins we learn that games of the Olympian fashion were celebrated in honour of the victory of the Emperor Severus (over Pesceunius Niger in A.D. 194) at Kodrigai, which is called the "Boundary of the Cilicians," and was therefore on the north side of Tarsus towards the Cilician Gates. Severus had marched south

into Cilicia along the road from the Gates, and we may presume that the triumphal arch was erected at the place where the road approached the town.¹ On the plateau near the arch games might well have been held, especially during the heat of summer.

This upper town formed a really important factor in Tarsian history. It was mainly instrumental in maintaining unimpaired through many centuries the vigour and energy of the citizens. Tarsus, lying low in the plain, sheltered by Taurus from the invigorating northerly breezes, which are so important in maintaining the salubrity of Anatolia, would inevitably be a relaxing and enervating place; but the close neighbourhood of the hills brought an invigorating residence within easy reach of the mass of the population.

The healthy condition of ancient Greek cities generally was due partly to the water supply, partly to the cleanliness which was a matter of religious duty, enforced by the gods of the streets, whose images stood there to enforce respect, and partly to the love of the people for country residence and for outdoor life. That, in choosing the sites of the great Greek cities of Asia, much attention was paid to the character of the atmosphere and the neighbourhood of invigorating high ground, is evident to all who have seen and noted their situation.

The population of the entire country is, and has always probably been, appreciative of this character. The natives even now, unobservant and resigned and careless as they are, will often distinguish between the invigorating atmo-

¹ A friend who is studying the triumphal arches of the Romans tells me that he believes the arch to be older than the time of Severus. Trajan, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius had all probably visited Tarsus; and the arch might have been built to honour any of them (especially Hadrian or Marcus).

sphere of one town and the oppressive, heavy air of another at no great distance in a worse situation.

The case of Tarsus was similar to that of Perga, and even worse : Perga stood on a slightly elevated plateau by the river : Tarsus lay on the dead level plain, only a few feet above the lowest level of the river Cydnus, and exposed to inundation as soon as the water rose in flood. Both are sheltered in the same way by the northern mountains ; both face the sea and the sun. In my *Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 62 f., this character of Perga is described. A distinguished French scholar has denied the truth of this account of Perga, on the ground that the thorough cultivation of the soil in ancient times must have made it healthy. It is all a question of degree. Cultivation will do much to diminish the malarious character of a district ; but the soil was so fertile because it is naturally abundantly moist. Irrigation, where needed, is easy. Wherever this abundant moisture and fertility characterize the sea plain in this extremely hot country, fever is prevalent and the climate is depressing, while insect pests make human life trying and miserable for a considerable part of the year. The bad effect is immensely increased by neglect and the increase of marshes ; but it is unavoidable and incurable.

Now since the country south of Tarsus has been allowed to relapse into its primitive state of marsh, the climate of the city is doubtless more oppressive and enervating than it was in the Roman time, when the marshes had all been drained and the country was entirely under cultivation. But, at the best, the situation of Tarsus must always have made the climate relaxing ; and the city could not have retained the vigour that made its citizens widely famous in the ancient world, without the hill town or hill residence so close at hand, which prevented the degeneration of the Tarsian spirit through many centuries.

But this hill town was not a mere place of summer residence. It seems to have grown from a mere *mansio in monte* (as it is perhaps called in the Peutinger Table), into a real fortified city, a second Tarsus. The fortifications were probably constructed during the decay of the Roman Empire, when invasions were a constant danger, and a stronger defence than the city of the plain was required. It seems possible that this hill town is the Tarsus which the Bordeaux Pilgrim mentions, xxiv. Roman miles south of the Cilician Gates. This is far too short for the distance between the Gates and the city of the plain. It is quite probable that the Pilgrim stopped at the hill town, and gave his measurement of distance correctly.¹

Tarsus was certainly a very large city in the Roman times. The information of intelligent and observant residents is that, wherever you dig, from the hills two miles north of the present city to the lake and marsh five or six miles south, you come upon remains of the ancient city. With the residents on the hills, the population of the Tarsian State is likely to have been not much less than a million. Thus it was, as Basil describes it, a metropolis for three provinces, a centre of communication for Cilicia, Cappadocia, and Assyria.

The fortunes and history of Tarsus were determined by three geographical conditions : (1) its relation to the rest of the Cilician plain, (2) its connexion through the river Cydnus with the sea, and (3) its position commanding the end of the principal pass across the Taurus mountains to the central plateau and the western and northern parts of Anatolia, one of the greatest routes which have made the history of the Mediterranean world, the pass of the Cilician Gates.

¹ The only alternative to this hypothesis is to alter the text and say that xii. is an error for xxii. or xxiv.

III. TARSUS AND THE PLAIN OF CILICIA.

The country of Cilicia is, roughly speaking, triangular in shape, the apex on the north-east being formed by its mighty boundary mountains, Amanus, running due south and separating Cilicia from Syria and Commagene, and Taurus diverging to the south-west and dividing the country from Cappadocia and Lycaonia. Those two great mountain walls approach close to the sea, which forms the third side of the Cilician triangle.

We may neglect as unimportant two narrow strips of coast land, at the eastern and western ends of Cilicia, the one where Amanus and its spur Djebel-Nur surround the Gulf of Issus, the other where Taurus and its foot hills run down close to the coast. Apart from these strips of territory and the foot hills that lie against the mountains and make a full half of the whole land, Cilicia consists of two very rich plains, the upper or eastern, which is divided from the sea by a ridge of hills (Djebel-Nur), and the lower or western, which is in the strictest sense a maritime plain. The eastern plain is the valley of the river Pyramus. The western is the valley of three rivers, the lowest course of the Pyramus, the Sarus, and the Cydnus; and on the three rivers were situated the three great cities, Mallos on the Pyramus, Adana on the Sarus, and Tarsus on the Cydnus. The mutual relations and rivalries of these three cities have determined the history of the maritime plain of Cilicia.

Another side of Cilician life, the opposition between the western plain with its capital Tarsus and the eastern plain with its capital Anazarba, will not concern us much in the present study. It was an important feature of the later Roman period, the second and following centuries after Christ; but it exercised no appreciable influence in determining the character of the Pauline Tarsus, with which we are now engaged.

The west Cilician plain has been gradually won from the sea in the course of ages. It has been formed mainly by the great river Sarus, which bears through the centre of the plain to the sea the united waters of two great rivers of the plateau, the Karmalas and the Sarus proper. The formation of the plain has probably been assisted by several successive slight elevations of the level of the land (shown by a succession of old sea beaches, which mark out the shape of the former gulf, now become the western plain); but, mainly, the plain has been deposited by the Sarus. This plain, like the country as a whole, is triangular in shape, with the sea as its base, and its apex in a recess of the hills. It contains about 800 square miles of arable land, with a strip of sand hills and lagoons about two to three miles wide along the coast.

At the apex of the plain, on the north, the river Sarus enters this lower plain, and winds its circuitous way in a great sweep towards the sea, which it now reaches very near the mouth of the Cydnus at the western edge of the plain. At an early period it probably joined the Pyramus, which, entering the western plain by a narrow pass between the Taurus foot hills and the Djebel-Nur, keeps close at the present day to the base of the latter, and winds back towards the sea, on the extreme eastern limit of the plain.¹ But the Sarus deserted that old junction some centuries before the time of Christ, and formed its own way to the sea through the centre of the plain. It probably found entrance to the sea at different points as the centuries passed by, and its mouth is now, certainly, much further west than it was in the Pauline period. At that time it apparently flowed not directly into the sea, but into a large lagoon, still well

¹ The Pyramus formerly joined the sea further to the west, as will be described below.

marked, about nine miles east of the mouth of the Cydnus and fifteen miles west of the old Pyramus-mouth. This lagoon was half divided from the sea by a bar of sand. Thus the Sarus had no navigable entrance from the sea ; and a city situated on the river Sarus could have no direct maritime connexion. Adana, therefore, the city on the Sarus, was situated far up the river, near the apex of the plain. The river was and is there quite navigable, but navigation must have been only for purposes of local communication, not of sea-going traffic.

Taking into consideration the foot hills as well as the sea plain, we see that Adana lies near the centre of Cilicia, in a very favourable situation for ruling the country, when sea navigation is unimportant. Hence it is the natural capital of the country under Turkish rule. A lofty rocky hill forms an excellent and strong acropolis, crowned now by the buildings of the American Mission. From those buildings there is offered a wonderful view ; on the south, across the apparently limitless level plain, the sea cannot be distinguished ; on the north and west one looks over the lower foot hills to the long snow-clad wall of Taurus. Eastwards the view is almost more varied and impressive.

From Tarsus no such view can be got ; the city is so near the foot hills that the Taurus wall is concealed from view behind them ; and there is no hill marked enough to serve as an acropolis or to afford a good outlook. But from the hills a few miles northward, and especially from the acropolis of the hill city, a marvellous view is presented, extending along the mountain walls of Taurus and of Amanus, and across the Gulf of Issus to the Syrian mountains and the promontory behind which lie Seleucia and Antioch.

Adana and Tarsus are cities of inevitable importance ; and both retain their ancient names to the present day. Mallos, on the Pyramus, has lost its people and its name.

Its very site is still unsettled and a subject of controversy. It owed its greatness in early history to circumstances that have long ceased to exist. At the beginning of history it stands forth as the principal harbour of the Cilician land, and the chief seat of Greek influence and trade. The Pyramus, then, offered the only well defined river entrance on the Cilician coast with a natural harbour, whereas Tarsus had to make its harbour, and Adana never could have enjoyed maritime communication.

As was necessary in primitive times, when piracy was a never-ceasing danger, Mallos was built, not on the sea, but some way up the river. Strabo mentions that it stood on a hill, and thus points out its position, for there is only one hill near the mouth of the Pyramus. West of the ancient mouth a little ridge of hills (now called Kara-Tash)¹ rises on the seashore. This ridge was probably once an island in the Cilician Gulf, and afterwards it formed the eastern promontory at the entrance to the gulf. As the land rose and the sea receded, the Pyramus passed out along its northern and western base into the sea. The city of Mallos was situated on the northern slope of the hill, away from the sea and looking towards the river. In this situation, one understands why Scylax regards it as an inland city, up the river, while both Strabo and the Stadiasmus describe it as belonging to the coast, and Strabo pointedly contrasts it with the inner country.

The river Pyramus, like the Sarus, has silted up its former mouth, and now flows in a different channel. About twelve or fifteen miles above the ancient mouth, where the old course turned off towards south-west, keeping close along the northern edge of the Mallos hills, it now bends

¹ Kara-Tash, Black-Stone, is the name both of the hills and of a village situated on them.

sharply back to the east and flows into the bay of Ayash (the ancient Aigeai), which it is rapidly filling up with the soil deposited from its waters. Accordingly the site of Mallos must now be looked for on the western side of the modern river, and at some considerable distance from the bank.

Between the rivers Cydnus and Pyramus lies the famous Aléian plain, deposited in large degree by the river Sarus, which flows through it and has gradually formed it. A plain formed in this way must in an earlier stage of history have been a succession of swamps and waste land, only half won from the sea, with the Sarus struggling to find a painful and devious way through it. Long after the Pyramus had found a well defined channel down past the site of Mallos to the coast, the Sarus was wending its difficult course through those marshy lowlands towards the sea. Homer has preserved for us in the fifth book of the *Iliad* the memory of that early time, when he relates the tale of Bellerophon, how

When at last, forsaken in his mind,
Forsook of Heaven, forsaking humankind,
Wide o'er the Aléian plain he chose to stray,
A long forlorn uncomfortable way.

This writer evidently understood the Aléian plain to be a melancholy waste, untraversed by any path, uninhabited by man, a scar upon the smiling face of the land, where a melancholic madman might "wander alone, eating his own soul, avoiding the paths of man."¹ But in the classical

¹ So also Alcmaeon, when struck with madness after he had slain his mother, could find no rest or peace or home, until he went to a place which was neither sea nor land. Such a place he found in the swampy delta of the Achelôos. Bellerophon, afflicted also with madness by the Divine wrath, found his lonely refuge in the marsh land of the lower Sarus. I am indebted to Miss J. E. Harrison, LL.D., for the illustration.

period of history it was a great stretch of especially fertile and rich land. Strabo distinguishes the Aléian plain from the coast-land, because the former was cultivated and rich, while the latter was mere sand and lagoon and cane-brake. The troops of Alexander the Great were able to march right across the plain, which was well suited for the movement of cavalry in the fourth century before Christ and doubtless during many centuries earlier. The Homeric account preserves a true tale of ancient days, brought to the harbours of the west by the early Greek sailors who traded to the port of Mallos, and the tale probably carries us back to a time not later than the ninth century B.C., and opens before us a page in the history of the gradual formation of the central Cilician river and the Cilician plain. How far human agency co-operated with nature in defining and embanking the river channel is a question on which proper exploration would doubtless throw some light. Those great engineering operations by which rivers were regulated and marshes were drained, as e.g. the Yang-tse-kiang, the Po, the Nile, the Boeotian marsh Copais, and many mountain glens in Greece and Anatolia, lie far back at the beginning of civilization in the southern countries.

The Aléian plain was divided between the three great cities ; but undoubtedly the largest part belonged to Mallos. Hence Mallos is probably the harbour which is meant by Herodotus, vi. 95, when he tells that the great army sent by Darius against Greece in 490 B.C. marched to the Aléian plain in Cilicia and encamped there, until the ships arrived and took them on board.

The early history of Tarsus was determined by competition with its two rivals. It outstripped them in the race at last ; but Mallos was at first the great harbour and the principal Greek colony of Cilicia. An alliance between Mallos and Adana was natural, because the path from

Mallos to the north and the inner plateau lay through Adana, and its trade was dependent on the friendship of the inland city: each had much to gain from friendship with the other. On the other hand the interests of Tarsus were opposed to both Adana and Mallos. Tarsus, as a harbour, competed with the latter, and as commanding its own path to the inner plateau it competed with the former. This struggle for superiority continued through the Greek period, and traces of it remain in the orations which Dion Chrysostom delivered at Tarsus in the beginning of the second century after Christ. But Tarsus grew steadily greater and more powerful, while its two rivals seem to have finally been forced to accept a lower rank, leaving the supremacy of the western plain to their more vigorous competitor.

To judge from the holes which are made in the ground here and there, the plain near Tarsus consists of a stratum of rich fertile soil resting on a bottom of gravel and pebbles. The stratum of soil is thin at the edge of the hills on the north and gets deeper as one goes south towards the sea. The rivers flow on the gravel and pebbles. Perhaps the same kind of formation may extend over the whole Aléian plain.

It is sometimes stated that the ruins of the ancient Tarsus are covered by the silt of the river to the depth of 15 or 20 feet. I could find no proof that any recent river deposit overlies the old level of the city, nor that the remains of ancient life are covered so deep, except on a sort of hill or mound on the south-west of the modern buildings, which seems to be entirely modern, caused by the earth accumulating over ancient remains. Such a mound always tends to gather over an uninhabited site; but in the inhabited part of Tarsus the modern level seems not to be more than a very few feet above the ancient.

This may be inferred from the depth at which the pebble and gravelly bottom is struck in digging, for the level of this bottom has probably not changed, since the overlying stratum of loam was deposited in the geological process of formation. So far as mere command of a large extent of fertile territory is concerned, Tarsus, though well equipped in that respect, was not equal to either of its rivals. Its ultimate superiority was due to other causes.

W. M. RAMSAY.