

TARSUS, THE RIVER AND THE SEA.

IV.

THE glory and the ornament of Tarsus was the river Cydnus, which flowed through the middle of the city. Dion Chrysostom, in the first of his two orations delivered at Tarsus somewhere about A.D. 110, makes fun of the pride and affection with which the Tarsians regarded their river; they loved to hear from strangers the praises of its beauty and of the clearness of its water, and they anxiously explained to visitors the reason, when it flowed dark and muddy. He speaks rather depreciatingly of the situation and natural surroundings of Tarsus, and declares that it is inferior to many cities in respect of river and climate and conformation of land and sea and harbour and walls.¹ The river, which flows clear and bright among the hills, soon grows muddy after it enters the rich deep soil of the plain. Dion implies that its water was ordinarily clear as it flowed through the city; and this was certainly the case. In its short course through the thin soil north of the city it did not come much in contact with the mud, but flowed in a wide gravelly bed. Only when in flood did it carry down with it mud and soil, and flow through the city in a dark and turbid current. But below the city, where the soil is deeper, it soon becomes laden with mud, and acquires permanently the yellowish opaque colour of the Tiber at Rome.

The question as to the character of the bed of the Cydnus is complicated by the change that has occurred in the course of the river. It was liable to inundation, as it drained a large extent of hill and mountain country, down which its numerous feeders rushed rapidly after heavy rain

¹ The reading is uncertain in some details, but the general sense is clear.

and poured a sudden flood into the city. Probably the danger was guarded against during the most prosperous period of Tarsian history by operations facilitating the outflow. At least Dion, while he refers to the turbid colour of the river in flood, does not mention the danger of inundation in his very candid and searching enumeration of the natural defects of the city. Afterwards less care was shown in keeping the channel clear and open, and in the time of Justinian, between 527 and 563 A.D., a flood did so much harm to the city, that the Emperor formed a new channel in which the river now flows. Probably this channel was intended merely to divert the superabundant water, for the purpose of making the river within the city uniform and safe. But the result was that, in the neglectful times which followed, the channel within the city gradually became choked, and the whole body of water was diverted into the new course. It was not till about the fourteenth or fifteenth century that the process was completed. Earlier travellers saw the river flowing in part through the city, in which its channel can still be traced (especially in the southern parts) by the depression in the level, and by remains of the embankments and bridges seen by living witnesses during excavations for building purposes. The modern watercourse on the west side of the town, often mistaken by travellers for the original course of the river, is wholly artificial and quite distinct from the old channel (as can be seen by following it up to the point, where it is taken off from the Cydnus).

It was not necessary for Justinian to make a new channel all the way to the sea. A watercourse flowed down parallel to the Cydnus past the eastern side of the city. All that was necessary was to make a cutting from the Cydnus, beginning from a point about a mile north of the modern town, and diverging gradually from it towards the other

bed, which it joins on the east side of the modern city. This watercourse was too small for the large body of water that afterwards came to run through it ; and hence in modern times there are annual floods and great part of the country south of the city is sometimes inundated. In May, 1902, we could hardly make our way down by the west side of the Cydnus towards the sea, and the horses had to wade a long distance through fairly deep water that covered the fields.

The artificial character of the channel in which the Cydnus now flows on the north and north-east sides of the city is plainly shown in the so-called " Falls of the Cydnus," a little below the point where the modern course diverges from the ancient bed. The rocks over which the stream falls contain numerous ancient graves, and many of these are underneath the ordinary level of the water and visible only when the river is at its lowest.

While the river in its modern course never touches the city, and artificial canals carry the water to irrigate the gardens and turn the cotton mills and other machinery in Tarsus, the ancient Cydnus flowed right through the city. Strabo, Dion, Xenophon, and other authorities agree in this statement. About two miles or less below the city there is formed in the wet season a small lake, which generally disappears in summer. This lake forms in a slight depression on the former bed of the river, as the flow of the water is impeded by modern conditions ; but no such lake was permitted to form when Tarsus was a great ancient city.

About five or six miles below the modern town the Cydnus flowed into a lake. This lake is fed by natural springs in its bed (as I was informed by good authorities), and must always have existed. Its ancient name was Rhegmoi or Rhegma ; and the name must be taken as a proof that it was at one time a lagoon, into which the sea broke over a

bar of sand. Thus at some remote period, the memory of which was preserved by the name, the river had no proper mouth to discharge itself into the sea (resembling in this respect the Sarus, as described in Section III.) But in the time of Strabo, and doubtless for centuries previously, the lake was separate from the sea, and communicated with it only through the lower course of the river. Strabo describes the lake as a widening of the river. There was doubtless then, as now, a belt of sand and dunes between the lake and the sea, though it remains uncertain whether the belt was as broad then as it now is.

This lake was the harbour of Tarsus. Here were the docks and arsenal. Here most ships discharged, though light galleys, like that which carried Cleopatra, could be navigated up into the heart of the city. Round three sides of the lake, probably, extended the harbour town, which was called Aulai.¹ The city did not extend to the southern side of the lake; not a trace could be seen of a city on that side; but the buildings extended in an almost unbroken succession from the lake to the city.

The conformation of the country shows that the Cydnus must have flowed in a comparatively straight course southwards through the plain into the lake. The exact line of its old channel cannot always be traced, but its general course is evident. In the centre of the city, however, it made a sharp bend eastwards for a short distance, and then turned south again. Its old channel in this bend is quite clearly visible within the modern town; and a more careful survey

¹ It is an error of Ritter's to call the harbour town Anchialos. The sole foundation for the great geographer's opinion seems to lie in the derivation ἀγχι ἕδος, "near the sea." The references of the ancients show clearly that Anchialos was about 12 miles south-west of Tarsus on the road to Soloi-Pompeiopolis, and a little way inland from Zephyrion, which was situated at Kara-Duwar, on the coast about two miles east from Mersina, the modern harbour which has taken the place of Zephyrion.

might suffice to place its whole course on a map with exact certainty.

The Cydnus flows with a much swifter current down a far less level course than the Sarus. The railway which passes a short mile north of Tarsus is a few feet higher above the sea at Tarsus than at Adana (63 feet), and therefore, while the Sarus has a meandering course of 50 or 60 miles from Adana to the sea, the Cydnus falls a little more in its course of about 11 miles. But the fall is greatest above the city, less within it and far less below it. Even the upper lake or marsh cannot be much above sea level, and the lower permanent lake is probably little, if at all, higher than sea level except when it is swollen by rains and by overflow from the modern river on the east.

At an early period of history a great deal of labour and skill must have been expended on the channel of the Cydnus and on the lake in order to regulate and limit them, and to improve the navigation. The once useless lagoon was converted into a convenient harbour, open to ships through the lower course of the river, yet completely shut in and safe against sudden attack from the sea. Nature had aided the work by forming a broader belt of sandy sea shore and transforming the lagoon into a lake. But engineering skill was required to improve the lower course of the river, to facilitate its flow and prevent inundation, to deepen and embank the channel and to drain the marshes, as well as to border the lake with the quays and dockyards which Strabo describes. The lake was certainly smaller in ancient times than it now is, and proportionately deeper. The river probably issued from it at the south-eastern end and found its way into the sea through the same mouth as at the present day, though the present communication from the lake and the modern river is by a cutting a hundred yards or more north of the probable former channel of the river.

This brief survey shows what was the foundation on which rested the love and pride with which the Tarsians regarded their river. The Cydnus is very far from being a beautiful or a grand stream. Nature has not originally seemed kind to Tarsus. Nothing can be drearier or more repellent than the stretch of land and river between the city and the sea, as the modern traveller beholds it. No amount of skill could ever make it beautiful. Dion certainly was thoroughly justified when he said to the Tarsians that as regards natural surroundings and advantages, they were inferior to numberless cities. But their river was their own in the sense that their own skill and energy had made it. They had transformed that dreary stretch of half-inundated lands, fringed by sand heaps along the sea, into a rich, well drained and well watered plain, holding in its bosom a vast city through which ran for miles a river capacious of the merchandise of many lands—a city with its feet resting on a great inland harbour and its head reaching up to the hills.

This is only one of the numberless cases in the ancient world in which a great engineering operation lies far away back at the beginning of the history of a city or a district. The effort and the struggle for victory over nature in such cases seem to have started the population on a career of success, teaching them to combine and to organize the work of many for a common benefit, and showing in the result how union and toil could make their city great and its inhabitants respected.

When once the Cydnus had been regulated and navigation made possible, Tarsus was placed in a very favourable situation. It was (as Thucydides says) a necessity for the early trading cities that they should lie at some distance from the sea in order to be safe from pirates. Tarsus was situated at the head of the navigation of a river, which it

had by its own work and skill made navigable ; and it took full advantage of its position. Though not most favourably situated by nature to be the distributing centre for Cilicia, and the road centre for communication with other lands, it entered into competition with its rivals that were more favoured by nature, and by another great piece of engineering placed itself in command of the best route from Cilicia to the north and north-west across the Taurus mountains. Tarsus cut the great pass, called the Cilician Gates, one of the most famous and the most important passes in history.

V. TARSUS AND THE CILICIAN GATES.

The broad and lofty ridge of the Taurus mountains divides Cilicia on the south from Cappadocia and Lycaonia on the north. The Taurus is cut obliquely from north-west to south-east by a glen, down which flows a river called Tchakut Su, rising in Cappadocia and joining the Sarus in Cilicia near Adana. The glen of the Tchakut water offers a natural road, easy and gently sloping through the heart of Taurus. It is generally a very narrow gorge, deep down amid the lofty mountains ; but it opens out into two small valleys, one near the northern end, the Vale of Loulon or Halala, 3,600 feet above the sea, the other about the middle of its course, the Vale of Podandus, 2,800 feet. At the east end of the Vale the glen is narrowed to a mere slit barely wide enough to receive the Tchakut water, and the road has to cross a hill ridge for about four or five miles. Apart from this there is no difficulty, until, a few miles south-east from the Vale of Podandus, the glen ends before the southern ridge of Taurus, which rises high above it like a broad, lofty, unbroken wall. The river Tchakut finds an underground passage through this wall ; and the railway will in some future age traverse it by a tunnel, and

emerge on the foot hills in front of Taurus, and so come down on Adana. But the road has to climb over this great wall, and nature has provided no easy way to do this. The earliest road, which is still not altogether disused, went on south-eastwards to Adana direct, ascending the steep ridge and descending again on the southern side: it has never been anything but a hill path, fit for horses but not for vehicles.

This was the path by which Mallos and Adana originally maintained their communication and trade with the Central Plateau of Anatolia.

The enterprise of the Tarsians opened up a waggon road direct to their own city. A path, which was in use doubtless from the earliest time, leaves the Tchakut glen at Podandus (2,800 feet) and ascends by the course of a small stream, keeping a little west of south till it reaches and crosses the bare broad summit (4,300 feet) where Ibrahim Pasha's Lines were constructed in the war of 1839, then it descends sharply 500 feet beside another small stream till it reaches a sheer wall of rock through which the stream finds its way in a narrow gorge, the Cilician Gates. Nature had made this gorge just wide enough to carry the water, and the rocks rise steep on both sides to the height of 500 or 600 feet. Except in flood, men and animals could easily traverse the rough bed of this small stream. But the pass began to be important only when the Tarsians built a waggon road over the difficult hills to the southern end of the Gates, and then cut with the chisel a level path out of the solid rock on the west bank of the stream. Thus the "Cilician Gates" became the one waggon road from Cilicia across the Taurus, and remained the only waggon road until the Romans (probably under Septimius Severus, about 200-210 A.D.) made another from Corycus by Olba to Laranda.

We naturally ask at what period these great engineering works were achieved ; but no direct evidence is attainable except that a waggon road leading south across Taurus from Tyana was in existence before the march of the Ten Thousand (401 B.C.), and this waggon road must necessarily be the road through the Cilician Gates. For my own part, though strict evidence has not been discovered and certainly is unattainable, I feel confident that the waggon way through the Cilician Gates had been cut, and a permanent frontier guard stationed there, centuries before that time. The probability that this was so will appear in the following sections.

It may be added that Herodotus v. 52 describes the guardhouses at the frontier between Cappadocia and Cilicia on the Royal Road from Sardis to Susa. Now, the Royal Road in reality must have taken the more direct northerly route across Anti-Taurus to the Euphrates, traversing the district of Cilicia north of Taurus. But Herodotus erroneously supposed that the Cilicia which the Royal Road traversed was Cilicia by the sea (as appears from his words in v. 49) ; and the detailed description which he gives of the guardhouses at the Cilician frontier was applicable to the Cilician Gates, through which he must have supposed that the Royal Road went. I see here a proof that the importance of this pass had called for a permanent guard when Herodotus was gathering information in preparation for his history. This takes back the cutting of the Gates at least as early as the first half of the fifth century ; and the indirect considerations to be stated below carry us further back still.

This survey of the natural conditions by which Tarsian development was controlled has brought out clearly that the great history of the city was not due to the excellent qualities of river, climate, sea or harbour placed at its dis-

posal with lavish kindness by nature. In those respects it was inferior, as Dion says, to very many cities. It had subdued nature to its purposes, it had made for itself river and harbour and access to the sea, and a great engineered road across the mountains; and it could compensate through the kindness of nature the stifling moist heat of the plain by the lighter and cooler atmosphere of the hills or the sharper air of the upper Taurus regions. It had learned to conquer nature by observing the laws and methods of nature. It was the men that had made the city.

Such was the great inheritance which they bequeathed to their descendants. An inheritance of the fruit of courage and energy like this is a great thing for a people, and a just cause for pride: the Tarsians of the later Greek and Roman times were stimulated and strengthened by the consciousness of their inheritance from the men of earlier times. That is clearly implied by the language of Strabo and Dion; and it is expressed in the words of St. Paul.

Clear evidence of Paul's deep feeling about his Tarsian home may be seen in the account which Luke gives of one of the most terrible scenes in his life, when, bruised and at the point of death, he was rescued from the clutches of a fanatical and exasperated Jewish crowd by the Roman soldiers. If we imagine what his condition must have been, sore from his blows and the pulling asunder of his rescuers and of the mob, probably bleeding, certainly excited and breathless, the shouts of the crowd still dinning in his ears, "Away with him," as they strove to get hold of him again, his life hanging on the steadfast discipline of the soldiers and the goodwill of their commander—we must feel that at this supreme moment, when the Roman tribune hurriedly questioned him as to his race and language, he would not waste his words in stating mere picturesque details: anything that rose to his lips in this crisis of strong excite-

ment and emotion must have been something that lay near his heart, or something that was calculated to determine his rescuer's conduct. He said: "I am Jew, Tarsian of Cilicia, citizen of no mean city." This was not his strict legal designation in the Roman Empire, for he was a Roman citizen, and that proud description superseded all humbler characteristics. Nor was the Tarsian designation the one best calculated to move the Roman tribune to grant the request which Paul was about to make; that officer was far more likely to grant the request of a Roman than of a Tarsian Jew. Nor had Paul any objection to claiming his Roman rights, for he shortly afterwards claimed them at the Tribune's hand.

It seems impossible to explain Paul's reply on this occasion except that "Tarsian" was the description of himself which lay closest to his heart, and was uttered in his excitement. And, especially, the praise of Tarsus as a famous city is hardly capable of any other interpretation than that, in his deeply stirred emotional condition, he gave expression to the patriotism and love which he really felt for his fatherland and the home of his early years.

It is not impossible now, and there is no reason to think it was impossible then, for a Jew of the Diaspora to entertain a distinct and strong feeling of loyalty towards the city where he was born and in which he possessed the rights of citizenship. It must be remembered that the feeling of an ancient citizen to his own city was much stronger than that which is in modern times entertained usually toward one's native town. All the feeling of patriotism which now binds us to our country, irrespective of the town to which we belong, was in ancient times directed towards one's city. "Fatherland" denoted one's city, and not one's country. Both *Patria* in Latin, and *Patris* in Greek, were

applied to the city of one's home.¹ It was only to a small degree, and among the most educated Greeks, that Hellas, as a country, was an idea of power. The educated native of a Cilician city like Tarsus regarded the country Cilicia as implying rudeness and barbarism, and prided himself on being a Hellene rather than a Cilician; but Hellas to him meant a certain standard and ideal of culture and municipal freedom. He was a "Tarsian," but Tarsus was, and had long been, a Hellenic city; and the Greek-speaking Tarsians were either Hellenes or Jews, but not Cilicians.

Moreover, citizenship implied much more in ancient times than it means now. We can now migrate to a new city, and almost immediately acquire citizenship there, losing in it our former home. But in ancient days the Tarsian who migrated to another city continued to rank as a Tarsian, and Tarsus was still his fatherland, while in his new home he was merely a resident alien. His descendants, too, continued to be mere resident aliens. Occasionally, and as a special compliment, a resident alien was granted the citizenship with his descendants; but a special enactment was needed in each individual case and family.

The city that was his fatherland and his home mattered much to Paul. It had a place in his heart. He was proud of its greatness. He thought of the men who had made it and bequeathed it to his time as men connected by certain ties with himself (Rom. i. 14).

Who were those men? Of what stock was the people who thus made their own river and harbour?

VI. THE IONIANS IN EARLY TARSUS.

According to the view stated in the preceding pages, the

¹ To a certain degree the Roman Imperial régime succeeded in widening the scope of the term *patria*. That is one of the many advances which it enabled the world to make. It gave to men the power to feel that their Fatherland was their country and not their narrow township.

formation of that important pass over Taurus, one of the great triumphs of early civilization over the conditions of nature, was simply a stage in the long struggle between Tarsus and its pair of allied rivals, Mallos with Adana,¹ for control of the markets of the country. From this point of view it becomes clear also that Tarsus first became a harbour and a sea power, and afterwards proceeded to open up the land road as a means of developing its commerce.

The conformity of the facts, as thus stated, with the character of Greek trading enterprise at numberless points round the Mediterranean and Black Seas, is striking. Surely the development of Tarsus must imply a mixture of Greek blood and race in the city. This idea is confirmed and definitely proved by the fact that the first station north of Tarsus, on the way to the Gates, bore the name of Mopsoukrene, the Fountain of Mopsus. Mopsus was the religious impersonation and expression of the expansive energy of the Greek colonies on the Cilician and the neighbouring Pamphylian and Syrian coasts. Such colonies always went forth under divine guidance, and this guidance regularly proceeded from a single centre, viz., one of the centres of prophetic inspiration which the Greeks called Oracles. In the best known period of Greek history the Delphic Oracle was the chief agent in directing the streams of Greek overflow and colonization in the various lines along which it spread. But the Cilician colonies were founded at an earlier time, when the Delphic Oracle had not yet established such a widespread influence, and the divine guidance proceeded from an Ionian centre, viz., the Oracle of Clarian Apollo. Mopsus is the expression (according to the anthropomorphic method of Greek popular thought) of the Clarian Apolline orders, in obedience to which trade and settlement on the Levant coasts set forth from the shores of Lydia and Caria.

¹ See Section III.

Mopsus was the leader and guide of the expansive energy of Mallos, as well as of Tarsus ; and the town which was founded on the road from Mallos to inner and Eastern Cilicia was called Mopsou-estia, the Hearth of Mopsus. Mopsus was a far more important figure in the religion of Mallos than in that of Tarsus. He slipped out of the latter to such an extent that no other trace of his former existence is known to us there besides the village of Mopsoukrene. The reason can only be that the Greek element and the Greek religion were weaker in Tarsus than in Mallos ; and that is quite certainly proved by other evidence. But the presence of Mopsus in Tarsian local nomenclature is a complete proof that the Greek element was influential at a very early time in that city.

This Greek expansion was designated in old Oriental and Semitic tradition as " the sons of Javan," i.e., the " Ionian " traders. The " sons of Javan " are the Greek race in its progress along the Levant coasts, which brought the Ionian Greeks within the sphere of knowledge and intercourse of the Semites.

The very ancient Ionian connexion of Tarsus is set forth in that important old geographical document, preserved to us in Genesis x. 4 f. : " The sons of Javan : Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim (or Rodanim, as in the Pentateuch here and the Hebrew also of 1 Chron. i. 7). Of these were the coasts of the nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue ; after their families, in their nations." The most probable interpretation of this list is still that of Josephus : Kittim is Cyprus (Kition, the leading city of early time)¹ and Tarshish is Tarsus. That Rodanim means the settlers of Rhodes seems to follow naturally (Dodanim being rejected as a false text). Elishah

¹ Another proposed identification of Kittim with the people of Ketis in Cilicia Tracheia keeps the name in the same region.

has been very plausibly explained as the land of Alasia or Alsa (mentioned in the Tel-el-Amarna tablets), which, as is generally agreed, lay somewhere in the Syrian-Cilician-Cyprian coast region; and the explanation must, in the present state of our knowledge, supersede all others (though, of course, certainty is not yet attainable on such matters).

Bearing in mind the close connexion between the Alêian plain and Mallos, and the way in which Herodotus (vi. 95) seems to assume as self-evident that Mallos was the harbour of the Alêian plain,¹ we must admit the probability of Professor Sayce's suggestion that Alasia is the Alêian plain, with its harbour and capital Mallos.² This identification would discover in the list of Gen. x. 4 the two great harbours of ancient Cilicia and the two great islands off the south coast of Asia Minor. These four were "the sons of Javan," the four Greek foundations which first brought the Ionian within the ken of the nations of Syria and Palestine.

The objections made by modern scholars to the identification of Tarsus and Tarshish, and the rival theories which they propose, seem utterly devoid of strength or probability. To suppose that Tartessos, or any other place in Spain, formed part of the list in Genesis x. 4, is geographically meaningless and historically impossible; and the theory that the Etruscan people (Tyrsenoi) was meant is nearly as bad. To say that Tarsus was not founded when this document was written is to pretend to a knowledge about the beginnings of Tarsus which we do not possess, and to set undeserved value on the foundation legends stated by Strabo and others. It is also objected that the Aramaic spelling

¹ See EXPOSITOR (Feb.), p. 275. I have to apologise for a misquotation from Pope's translation of the *Iliad* on p. 274: in the first line read "distracted" instead of "forsaken" (which crept in from the second line).

² The omission of the letter *s* between vowels is a common phenomenon in Greek.

of the name (as shown on coins of the city) was -r z- and not -r s h-; but great changes and varieties in the spelling of foreign geographical names are frequently found in other cases; this Cilician or Anatolian name was spelt Tarsos by the Greeks, Tarzi- in Aramaic, and Tarshish in the document of Genesis x.

It may also be urged in objection that the Greek colonies of Cilicia seem to have been Dorian, whereas Genesis x. 4 speaks of "Ionian." But who would venture, in the face of the recent discoveries which have upset all our old ideas about early Greece, to dogmatize about the meaning of "Ionian" in the second millennium B.C., or to say that "Ionians" could not have founded colonies in Cilicia so early as that? We cannot say anything more definite than that "the sons of Javan" were the Greek settlers and traders as known to the people of Phœnicia or Syria.

It would be out of place here to discuss the questions that rise out of the various uses of the name Tarshish in the Old Testament; nor am I competent to do so. But it is important for our present purpose to note that the exports from Tarshish to Tyre included silver, iron, tin, and lead.¹ Silver and lead are found in abundance in the Taurus mountains, close to the route of the Cilician Gates, and the mines have been worked from time immemorial. Iron has been found and worked from an extremely early time in the northern or Pontic region of Cappadocia, and it is commonly held by scholars that the use of iron for the benefit of man originated there. The Pontic production was carried south by the Cilician Gates and Tarsus. The precious stone Tarshish has not been identified.

Assuming the identification of Tarshish and Tarsus, we find the same name in various slight modifications, lasting from the second millennium before Christ, through the

¹ Ezek. xxvii. 12; Jer. x. 9.

Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab, Egyptian, and Turkish domination, down to the Tarsous of the present day. Tarsus, always half oriental, adapted itself readily to every Oriental ruler, and preserved its continuous individuality under all. While it would not be justifiable, in the conflict of opinion, to draw weighty historical inferences at present from the identification, we can at least infer that "the sons of Javan" are allowed by general opinion to have had a footing somewhere on the east Levant coasts in the second millennium at Alasia and Kittim. If so, they must have had landing places or ports in Cilicia, and these can hardly have been elsewhere than on the rivers at Mallos and Tarsus.

With this early origin of Tarsus we shall find that all the evidence is in perfect agreement.

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