

There remain also certain passages—chiefly healing-stories—where the presence of heroic rhythm suggests the possibility of hexameter origin.¹

Even these tentative results must be tested by considerations of syntax, vocabulary, and so on²: but the study of latent rhythms may prove a useful trace-horse to help us along the path of accurate criticism; and through careful analysis and observation of indications of this kind we may perhaps get nearer than before to the Evangelists at work.

E. ILIFF ROBSON.

THE SITUATION OF TARSHISH.

It has been well said (by the late Sir P. Renouf) that ‘the identification of Tarshish with Tartessus in Spain is so universally taken for granted, both by secular writers, and by Biblical scholars, that it would argue a great want of modesty to call it in question, were not the arguments in its behalf well known to be devoid of demonstrative force’. The words ‘Tarshish, tin, and Spain’ have been so unhesitatingly linked together, without any real attempt at investigation, that it is difficult to say which is the more culpable: the carelessness or the credulity involved in so universal an assumption.

Tarshish—as an ethnico-geographical term (for the name is also used in other senses in Scripture)—occurs altogether thirteen times in the Old Testament; and those references contain all the direct evidence on the subject, as (with one possible exception) the name Tarshish has never been found elsewhere. Our primary duty lies therefore in the investigation of these texts; such subsidiary questions as the identification of ‘Tartessus’ and the meaning of the phrase ‘ships of Tarshish’, being merely historical accessories to the exegetical question—what do we know about *Tarshish* as an ethnical and a geographical term?

I. Biblical Evidence.

In Gen. x 4, 5 we read—‘the sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim.’ ‘Of these were the *isles of the nations* divided in their lands.’ This 10th chapter of Genesis must not be

contexts on actual incidents. It is the junction of the liturgical phrase or formula with an appropriate context which the evangelist supplies.

¹ See p. 275 note 2.

² Such results of criticism are here purposely left aside, the present aim being to find in what direction rhythm alone will take us.

regarded as a strict and scientific ethnological list. Such races of men as fell within the horizon of the writer are enumerated from the point of view of the geographer rather than that of the ethnologist. Also (as Schrader pointed out) the Japhetic family is arranged in two series: the first—Gomer and his sons—containing more distant races, whilst the second—Javan and his sons (among whom Tarshish is included)—comprises those nations living in nearer proximity to the Hebrews. Moreover, these lists are each arranged in the order of a survey from West to East, though of course geographical knowledge was then only in its infancy. This systematic arrangement of the ‘sons’, being an admitted fact, furnishes valuable and reliable data for determining the locality of Tarshish if we can (within reasonable limits) fix the cognate races.

The first of these is Javan, which has been decisively identified with the Ionians; a term that includes all that mixed body of early Aryan inhabitants of ‘the isles of Greece’ and the Eastern Mediterranean which gradually became known to the Hebrews through the medium of Phoenician commerce. The evidence for this identity will be found carefully summarized by Dr Sayce in his article on ‘Javan’ in Hastings *Bible Dictionary*.

The three names associated with Tarshish as ‘sons of Javan’ are Elishah, Kittim, and Dodanim, which are Hebraized eponymics known to Hebrew writers through the reports of Tyrian traders. From ‘the isles of Elishah’ they obtained one of their precious purple dyes, the *murex brandaris* for which the isle of Cythera and the eastern coast of the Peloponnesus became famous at a very early period. In fact the stormy Cape Malea (the southern promontory of Greece) for a long time constituted the extreme limit beyond which even those hardy traders dared not venture into unknown western seas. It was the district over which, in the Homeric age, the wise counsellor Nestor ruled, who himself was the son of a Tyrian colonist Neleus. The Pelasgic Εἰλώτης (whence is derived the Hebrew ‘Elishah’) at that time inhabited this district, though soon afterwards they were reduced to slavery by Doric invaders,¹ and passed almost into oblivion.

Again, Josephus was undoubtedly correct in identifying the ‘isles of Kittim’ with Cyprus, though probably the term also included Crete,² both of which islands still possess ample remains of primitive Phoenician occupation: Dodanim should doubtless be read רֹדַנִים as in 1 Chron. i 7 (the parallel passage), and denoted the famous island of Rhodes in the Aegean, where was another ancient Phoenician colony at Camirus.

In the face of such evidence as this it seems superfluous to enlarge

¹ ‘Return of the Heraclidae’ circa 900 B.C.

² Josephus *Ant. Iud.* ix 14. 2.

on its opposition to any inference that the allied ethnical term 'Tarshish' should be identified with a hypothetical Phoenician colony (or group of colonies¹) out in the Atlantic Ocean, two thousand miles away from the others.

There is, however, the view maintained by Josephus and other Jewish writers,² that Tarsus (St Paul's birthplace) is Tarshish: a view which might, so far, seem probable. But the objections raised against it are so many and so cogent that, when combined, they are fatal to its tenability.

There is first a philological objection. The identity of the Septuagint Θαρσῆς and the classical Ταρσός is philologically unsound. The distinction between the Θ and T is consistently maintained throughout all our evidence, as is also the force of the Hebrew *long I* (chiriq) in the second syllable, represented in Greek by the diphthong ει but never by the short ο. Then again, neither of the two sibilants in Ταρσός is a radical; the first s being the Hebrew ת (zain) softened from the Phoenician name TARZ [תָּרֶץ = Ṭar̥ṣ], and the second s being the usual Greek termination for a nominative case in such foreign names. But the most insuperable objection to the identity of Tarshish and Tarsus is the fact (conclusively proved by monumental inscriptions) that the early inhabitants of Cilicia were connected far more closely with the Asiatic Hittites than with the European Ionians. In fact, Tarsus (which, by the way, was never a seaport) was a primitive Hittite city dedicated to the deity Tark or Sandan; and we may be absolutely certain that no Old Testament writer would so confuse a tribe of Mongolian Hittites with the white-skinned, blue-eyed Aryans of Greece and the Mediterranean isles as to call Tarshish (meaning Tarsus) a son of Javan.³

Rejecting, therefore, the theory that Tarsus is meant, let us proceed to another incidental consideration which has an important bearing upon the identification of Tarshish, namely, its intimate connexion with the 'isles of the nations'.

In Ps. lxxii 10 we read 'the kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring presents'. In Isa. ix 9 God Himself is represented as saying—'the Isles shall wait for Me, and ships of Tarshish to bring thy sons from far', whilst in Isa. lxvi 19 Javan, Tarshish, and the Isles are again grouped together. We meet with an analogous expression—'the Isles of the Sea' on the Egyptian monuments, where it always means the larger islands of the Eastern Mediterranean. I am aware that too much

¹ Rawlinson *Phoenicia* 69.

² Josephus *Ant.* i 6, 1 and ix 10, 2. Cf. also *Judith* ii 23.

³ The value of Josephus's geographical knowledge is discounted by his statement that Jonah, on his way to *Tarsus*, was vomited by the fish on the shore of the Euxine Sea.

stress must not be laid upon this point, and that the Revisers have accordingly favoured the ambiguous term 'coastland' as a marginal alternative for 'isle'. But in Ezek. xxvi 18 we find the unequivocal expression 'the isles that are in the sea', and there are other references which leave us in no doubt that Hebrew writers did know what an island is—and used the proper term **נָס** for it. Also, as we bear in mind the parallelism which characterizes Hebrew poetry, we may naturally infer that Tarshish was one of the islands thus referred to.

In concluding this part of our enquiry, I think there can be no reasonable doubt that the various Biblical references all refer to one and the same place, and that place the one inhabited by the Ionian nation named Tarshish in Genesis x 4.

Other references might also be examined, but perhaps enough has been said to furnish fair presumptive evidence that Tarshish should be looked for among the *islands* of the Mediterranean, especially as these remaining Biblical references to Tarshish, although interesting in themselves, throw but little additional light on its position. From Jer. x 9 we learn that 'silver, beaten into plates' for overlaying images was a well-known export; other minerals for which Tarshish was then a famous emporium being iron, lead, and a certain metal called **בריל**, which has been tentatively translated 'tin'.¹ Of course it does not necessarily follow that all these metals were mined at Tarshish (though doubtless some were), but merely that the mineral products of neighbouring lands were from thence shipped to Tyre. A point on which great stress has been laid (though injudiciously) is this connexion of Tarshish with the metallic substance known to the Hebrews as **בריל**, and translated 'tin' in our Bibles. It is an acknowledged fact that the Phoenicians, as early as the third century B. C., did visit the Scilly Isles and the coast of Cornwall, and thence obtained tin. It is also true that a small quantity of this *cassiterite* has been found in Southern Spain. But to assume that a systematic commerce in tin existed between Tyre and either Spain or Britain, at least 700 years previously, is flagrantly to defy evidence and probability, and to assume what is practically impossible. And, *a fortiori*, I may, in passing, add that Tarshish was evidently not a mere place of barter, but was an important Phoenician colony, in intimate connexion with the mother-country, Tyre.

Even supposing we accept the hypothesis that the Hebrew **בריל** is 'tin', the fact proves nothing for our present purpose. Tin was known to the Hebrews only as the (reputed) alloy² in the bronze used for weapons and other tools or instruments. But bronze (containing about 10 per cent. of tin) was unquestionably known in Egypt, Crete, Akkad,

¹ Ezek. xxvii 12.

² Cf. Isa. i 25.

and Mycenae many centuries before the first Phoenician vessel ploughed the waters of the Mediterranean; and neither then, nor in any subsequent period,¹ was there that universal reliance on Tarshish for tin which has been so hastily assumed by those who think that the whereabouts of Tarshish is to be thus crudely decided by the whereabouts of tin.

A few words are perhaps desirable in regard to the difficulty raised by the references in 2 Chronicles (ix 21 and xx 36) to ships which (in the former case) 'went to Tarshish' from Ezion-gaber, a port on the Red Sea; and brought back to Solomon 'gold and silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks'. Obviously these exports are very different from those we have hitherto considered, and cannot be explained as European products. Bochart got over this difficulty by assuming that there were *two* different Tarshishes—one in the Mediterranean, the other in the Indian Ocean.

The frequent occurrence, however, of the phrase אֲנִיּוֹת תְּרַשִׁישׁ as a synonym for large vessels furnished with both sails and oars—the 'East Indiamen', in fact, of ancient commerce—suggests a different and far simpler interpretation. It is clear, from 1 Kings xxii 48, that the destination of Jehoshaphat's vessels was *Ophir*, even though they are termed 'ships of Tarshish', and the natural inference is that the part. הַלְכָה in 2 Chron. ix 21 is an interpolation of the Chronicler, in a mistaken effort to elucidate the ambiguity in אֲנִיּוֹת תְּרַשִׁישׁ at a time when its original signification had become obsolete. This is the view taken by De Wette, Winer, Gesenius, Ewald, Movers, Hävernick, and most other modern authorities, and one which entirely meets the case.

II. *The Evidence as to 'Tartessus'.*

We have now briefly examined all the Biblical evidence on the subject. Summarized, it amounts to this. Tarshish was an island, or part of an island, in the Mediterranean, inhabited by a numerous and civilized Pelasgic people; renowned for its supply of several, valuable minerals, and for the technical skill of its metal-workers. It was an island, moreover, on which a very early Tyrian settlement was made, which, in the seventh century B.C., had grown into a very important and flourishing Tyrian colony.

¹ Oxydracan ambassadors gave presents of 100 talents of tin to Alexander in India. See Q. Curtius *De Rebus Alex. Mag.* ix 8. 1. בְּרִיל is more likely to be the 'bdellium' (בְּדֵלֶם) of Gen. ii 12, and was of oriental origin. Κασσίτερος is derived from Sansk. KASTIRA, which induces the inference that prehistoric tin came from Drangiana or some other stanniferous area in the Far East. But the point is an immaterial one.

We now turn to the modern theory that Tartessus (a name which, it is needless to add, does not occur in the Bible) is the place really signified. We, therefore, naturally enquire, What do we know about such a place? Are we sure that Tartessus ever existed? Did the Phoenicians ever have any colony there? These are important questions, concerning which all the available evidence was collected many years ago by the late Sir G. Cornewall Lewis, and printed as an article in *Notes and Queries* (1859).

The first author to mention Tartessus is Stesichorus,¹ a Sicilian poet in the sixth century B.C., who names it as a *river* in Spain, which Strabo subsequently identified with the Baetis, to-day called the Guadaluquivir. Two other Greek poets—Anacreon and Simonides of Ceos (both *circa* 490 B.C.)—confirm this statement of Stesichorus. But from Herodotus, a few years later, we learn that dwelling near its banks in the sixth century B.C. there was an obscure Iberian tribe called the Tartessii, governed by a chief Arganthonius, who was remarkable for having been 120 years old when he died.² Hesiod's περίφροντος Ἐρυθέην,³ where Hercules went to capture the oxen of Geryones, was identified by Pherecydes of Athens⁴ as the island of Gades; though Pindar states merely that Hercules went to τὰς πύλας Γαδειρών, evidently meaning thereby the rocks of Gibraltar and Abyla, and elsewhere he (i.e. Pindar) says ‘what is beyond the Pillars is inaccessible’.⁵ Apollodorus, however, does certainly speak of a place Tartessus, in connexion with Hercules's voyage.⁶ But Apollodorus was 350 years later than Pindar, and he betrays the geographical ignorance prevailing even in his time by saying that παρελθὼν Ταρτησούν Hercules arrived at the Pillars, thus obviously assuming that the supposed Tartessus was *within* the Mediterranean.

As regards Gades, no one doubts that from the tenth century B.C.—or possibly even earlier still—the Phoenicians had a trading station, which soon grew into a successful colony, at Γάδειρα (so-called from its Phoenician name Agadir, meaning ‘an enclosure’) which by the Latins became changed to ‘Gades’, and by the Spaniards to ‘Cadiz’. But there is absolutely no ground for supposing that Gades was preceded by a still earlier Phoenician colony called Tarshish, especially a colony of such wealth and importance as is demanded by the Biblical references to Tarshish. Certainly whatever commerce then came to Tyre from Western Spain must have come from Gades, and after the domination of Carthage it passed to that emporium rather than to Tyre.⁷ Now it

¹ Quoted by Strabo iii 2. 11. ² Herodotus i 163. ³ Hesiod *Theog.* 290.

⁴ Pherecydes in Müller *Frag. Hist. Gr.* i 132.

⁵ Pindar *Nem.* iv 112; *Olymp.* iii 79.

⁷ Renouf *Proc. of Soc. Bibl. Arch.* 1894, p. 106.

⁶ Apollodorus *Biblioth.* ii 5. 10.

is incredible that Gadeira (which possessed a name familiar in Hebrew) could have been known to the Hebrews only as Tarshish (which has not a Hebrew etymology). It is equally incredible that Tarshish and Gadeira could have co-existed together as neighbouring colonies, or they would certainly have been mentioned *together*, either in the Bible, or in the various Greek references to the adventures of Perseus and Hercules. So far, however, from that being the case, Herodotus,¹ in narrating a story about the Samian navigator Colaeus who, driven by contrary winds, had paid an involuntary visit to this Tartessian tribe about 640 B.C., says that Colaeus found them a peaceful people apparently quite unacquainted with Phoenician commerce, even though Gades, a settlement just off the coast, had existed for some 200 years. Clearly Herodotus knew nothing about a Tartessus holding commercial dealings with Tyre or Sidon.

In fact the main authority for the theory that Tartessus was a *place* (not merely the name of a *river*) is a passage ascribed to Scymnos of Chios (an obscure Greek geographer, living about the third century B.C.). In that passage² Tartessus is definitely described as a city, two days' sail beyond Gades, and as renowned for its wealth of gold, tin, and copper—products which, by the way, are very different from the murenas of which a Tartessian fame had reached Aristophanes, or even the peculiar kind of weasel found there which Herodotus recorded.³

But that specious description of Tartessus may safely be dismissed as mythical, for Meineke proved conclusively, in 1846, that the entire poem from which it is taken is a forgery of the first century B.C., at which time Diodorus and Strabo assure us that no authentic evidence for such a town as Tartessus was in existence.

The silence of Pseudo-Scylax, who wrote an account of Spain in his work called 'Periplus' about 350 B.C., as to such a city is very significant; as likewise is the silence of Artemidorus of Ephesus and Poseidonius in the second century B.C., because both of those writers knew Iberia intimately, and mention its various towns. Coming down later than the Christian era we find Pliny,⁴ Pausanias,⁵ and Avienus⁶ suggesting that Tartessus was an old name for Gades (a suggestion which we have already seen to be impossible), and Arrian⁷ calling it a *κτίσμα Φονίκων*, also apparently thereby meaning Gades. On the other hand Pliny, Ptolemy, and other classical geographers identified

¹ Herodotus iv 152.

² Scymnos v 162.

³ Aristophanes *Frogs* 475; Herod. iv 192.

⁴ Pliny is unreliable, because in *Nat. Hist.* iii 3 he identified Tartessus with Kartea, whereas in iv 36 he identified it with Gades.

⁵ Pausanias vi 19.

⁶ Avienus *Ora Marit.* 85. 269.

⁷ Arrian *De Exped. Alexandri* ii 16. § 3.

it with Karteia,¹ an obscure (but much later) *Carthaginian* settlement immediately east of Gibraltar, which, having always had a Phoenician name, could never have been called either Tarshish or Tartessus. As there certainly was an Iberian tribe called the *Tartessii*, inhabiting the mainland somewhere near the island of Gades, the probability is that, owing to the meagre and inexact knowledge available to ancient geographers concerning so distant a locality, the Tartessian district and the ancient Phoenician colony of Gadeira became confused, and so the misconception arose that the colony was named Tartessus.

In conclusion we ask who first proposed to identify this purely hypothetical town with the Biblical Tarshish? So far as I have been able to trace, it seems to have originated with a learned Spanish Jesuit named Pineda, who wrote several Biblical commentaries about the year 1600 (died 1637). In his work *De Rebus Salomonis* (iv 14) he discusses the subject at considerable length, and quotes a vague statement of Anastasius Sinaita, a seventh-century monk, that Tarshish was 'Hesperia in the West'. Pineda, therefore, merely on the ground of similarity of name, asserted that Tartessus must be identical with it. His theory remained unnoticed, however, until adopted by the famous Oriental scholar Bochart, a generation later, in his great work on 'Biblical Geography'.² Bochart quoted Eusebius as the authority for his opinion, but gave no reference to support it, and, unfortunately for him, the opinion of Eusebius is still ascertainable from his *Onomasticon*,³ and proves beyond question that he thought Tarshish was Carthage. Michaelis,⁴ and Gesenius⁵ (to whom the matter was only of incidental concern), were content to accept the opinion of Bochart; and thus the theory that Tarshish was a Phoenician colony on the west coast of Spain received the added support of their names, though they do not appear to have ever made any attempt to sift the evidence before giving their personal *imprimatur* to the theory. After them came the pens of ready writers who, under the misleading term 'popular knowledge', have made themselves wholesale disseminators of errors on this as on many other similar matters. With the exception of the article in Smith's *Bible Dictionary* no really critical examination of the evidence was made until the late Sir Peter Renouf in 1894 drew the attention of the 'Society of Biblical Archeology' to the baselessness of the common hypothesis; and requested me to

¹ Probably Steph. Byzant. meant *Kapreia* when he said *Tapoñiov*, and was merely copying Apollodorus. *Kapreia* or *Kapthaia* = Phoen. Καρπή 'city'. It is with Karteia that Smith identified Tartessus, whilst Winckler prefers the unknown *Tapoñiov*, which he erroneously identified with Mastia (*Forschungen* i 445).

² Bochart *Phaleg* iii 7.

³ Eusebius *Onom.* sub nom.

⁴ J. D. Michaelis *Spicilegium* i 82.

⁵ Gesenius *Heb. Lex.* sub nom. צָרְשִׁישׁ.

follow up the enquiry, which I thereupon did. I had finished my examination of the evidence and written out the results of it before the publication of Dr W. Max Müller's article 'Tarshish' in *Hastings D.B.* (1902). Though the conclusions which I reached are in the main the same as his, there appears still to be room for such a summary of the results of my own independent investigation as this article affords.

III. *The Constructive Evidence.*

Rejecting then as untenable the traditional theory that Tarshish was in Spain, we turn elsewhere; and, remembering the extremely early date at which Tarshish and Tyre were intimately connected (say 980 B.C.), and the primitive means of navigation then existing, we naturally look nearer to the mother-country—among the islands of the Mediterranean. We know that among the very earliest Tyrian settlements were several in Sicily and Sardinia. Passing the dreaded dangers of Scylla and Charybdis, Tyrian mariners traded all along the north coast of Sicily at and from a remote period. Early in the eleventh century B.C. they planted an island colony at Motya in its north-west corner, a colony which they retained uninterruptedly for the next seven centuries. But the greatest and probably the oldest of their Sicilian settlements was that northern city which subsequently was called *Πάνορμος* by the Greeks (its original Phoenician name is now unknown), and which still flourishes under its modern name 'Palermo'.

The Phoenicians on their arrival found the country already occupied, not only by barbarous tribes of aboriginal Sikans, but also by a far more civilized race called the Elymoi. The latter were closely allied to the Etruscans, and it was their renown as metal-workers and builders which probably originated the stories of the Hekatoncheires. Their Cyclopean strongholds at Eryx and Egesta must evidently have closely resembled the Pelasgic structures at Mycenae and Troy.

Passing on from Sicily, still pressing westward, the Tyrian navigators came to Sardinia, where too they established several trading stations. One of these, Tharros, which became an important Phoenician colony, was on an island at the mouth of the river Thyrus (mod. Tirso). The similarity of the names Tharros, Thyrus, and Tarshish may perhaps be only a coincidence, but there is no doubt that the two former names are closely connected with the Turshoi, another highly civilized race, in all probability the Tyrseni of Southern Italy, from whom the Etruscans were descended.

We know from Egyptian records that these Turshoi, with certain Sardinian and Sicilian allies, on two occasions prepared a fleet, and actually menaced the power of the great Pharaohs by invading Egypt. So eminent was their civilization, and so vast their resources, that

Menephah II (the Pharaoh of the Exodus) was only able to expel them with great difficulty; a point which indirectly may have affected his recorded dealings with the Israelites in their contemporaneous demand for emancipation.

Even if (for the sake of argument) we suppose this maritime confederacy to have been brief and temporary, the nations constituting it would continue to flourish; and the Phoenician traders who came in contact with them a century or two later would be only too pleased to maintain intimate and amicable relations with them. So important were they that their entire omission from the list of Ionian nations in Gen. x is difficult to account for. But, of course, if the term Tarshish covers one or more of these allies, all becomes clear. Readers of Dr W. Max Müller's article on 'Tarshish' (in Hastings *D.B.*) will be aware that this is the conclusion at which he also arrived.

In fact the only point on which we really differ is the question as to which people may best be regarded as the predominant partner in the league; the Turshoi, the Sikels, or the Sardinians. Whilst he inclines to the Tyrseni, I consider the evidence seems to point to the inhabitants of Sardinia and Sicily, from the former of which islands the Tyrseni migrated to Italy.

It is in Sardinia that the most numerous and the most ancient remains are to be found. Sardinia still exhibits those enormous stones, so characteristic of the prehistoric builders. Thousands of wonderful erections called 'nuraghi' lie scattered all over the island, similar in plan though varying in size and materials, absolutely different from all other buildings in the world. Centuries before the principle of the arch was understood by the masons of Greece and Rome, every chamber in these Sardinian 'nuraghi' was roofed with a perfect dome or cupola of stones beautifully fitted together. Other Sardinian antiquities—the 'Tombs of the Giants', and the huge upright monoliths called 'perdas'—although of native construction, shew traces of Phoenician influence, thus confirming the inference that the real centre of this obscure civilization was Sardinia, though probably it was tapped by Tyre (and by Greece) first of all in Sicily.

From the earliest ages Sardinia has been renowned for its mines of gold, silver, iron, lead, and other metals. Vast excavations, still extant, shew they were worked for centuries, even as they furnish the main exports from the island to-day. In Sicily also minerals abound, and it will be remembered that it was this metallic wealth which formed the historic basis of those semi-mythical voyages of Hercules, Perseus, and other early Achaean adventurers, and also originated the fables of Zagreus, Medusa, and the Gigantes. Under the analogous Tyrian stories of the Cabeiri, patrons of navigation and metallurgy, we trace

the same foundation of fact. Near Mt. Eryx, which was the ancient citadel of the Elymoi, Homer placed the Cyclops (a Phoenician word, by the way, meaning 'hammerers'), and it was from Chrysorthoas in Sicily that the so-called 'oxen of Helios' (probably bronze) were stolen by Ulysses's companion Eurylochus.¹ From Crete the famous metal-worker Daedalus came to Sicily, where he made statues both of bronze and of tin, similar doubtless to those Sarde idols of which scores are still preserved in Sardinian and other museums.

With the long and bitter struggle for supremacy which ensued between Phoenicians and Greeks, in these Mediterranean islands, we are not here concerned. In fact Tarshish ceased when Carthage began to be. Long ago a curious Phoenician inscription was discovered near Nora in Sardinia, on a sandstone slab. Although opinions, unfortunately, vary considerably as to the purport of the full text, it has been almost unanimously agreed that the first word is בָּתְרַשִּׁישׁ ('In Tarshish'), this being the one solitary occurrence of the name outside the pages of the Bible.²

After thus reviewing all the evidence, though necessarily very briefly, the conclusion which appeals to me is that although we cannot perhaps (as yet) *conclusively* demonstrate the real position of Tarshish, it may be conjectured with all reasonable probability to have been the name under which (at first) Sicily, and (later on) Sicily and Sardinia, were known by repute to Hebrew writers, as the isles whence Tyrian traders obtained various metals in Solomon's day; and where before the era of Isaiah a group of colonies, of first-rate importance, had been established in intimate connexion with Tyre—these being the בָּבִינִים 'young lions' of Ezek. xxxviii 13. Each of them doubtless had a specific name entirely different from the generic 'Tarshish', the etymon of which may possibly be either a jumble or an acrostical combination of the native races—Tursha, Uashesh, Shardana, and Sheklusha—surviving the oblivion of their archaic confederacy.

W. W. COVEY-CRUMP.

¹ *Odyssey* xii 355.

² See *Corp. Inscript. Sem.* i 144.