ORY PRIMERS

by JOHN RICHARD GREEN

CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY

H. F. TOZER M. A.

rs.

ICHARD GREEN.

CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

BY

H. F. TOZER, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF GREECE."

London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

AND NEW YORK.

1887.

STEREOTYPED EDITION.

CONTENTS.

CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REMARKS ON ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY.

1. **Geographical Views of the Ancients.**— The ideas of the Greeks and Romans on the subject of geography, especially in the earliest times, were very limited. As the continent of America was then unknown, and the extremities of the three great divisions of the Old World were unexplored, it was impossible that it should be otherwise. In the Homeric poems we find geographical knowledge confined almost entirely to the eastern basin of the Mediterranean. The cities of the mainland of Greece and both the eastern and western coast of the Ægean Sea are there familiarly spoken of, and Phœnicia and Ægypt are known by name, though by the latter of these words Homer means the river Nile; but the seas and countries to the west of Greece are a region of fable, as may be seen in the mythical descriptions of Ulysses' wanderings in the *Odyssey*, and total darkness hangs over the more distant lands, round which, as the ultimate boundary, the river Oceanus is supposed to flow. By the time of Herodotus the field of knowledge had been considerably enlarged, and that writer by his extensive travels and acute inquiries added greatly to it; but even his views were often erroneous, as where he speaks of Europe as stretching along both the other continents and being much broader than they are; for, though this notion in part arose from his including in Europe much of

what we should now call Russia in Asia, yet, as a matter of fact, the area of Asia alone is nearly five times as large as that of Europe. He also describes the course of the river Hister (Danube) as bending towards the south, in order to make its course correspond with that of the Nile, in accordance with a preconceived theory of a similarity between the northern and southern regions of the world. Much additional information was obtained by the campaigns of Alexander the Great, who penetrated into the north of India, and as far as the Jaxartes in Central Asia; and also by the foundation of the city of Alexandria, which, situated as it was near the meeting of Asia with Africa, and of the Mediterranean with the waters of the Southern Sea, formed a centre for gathering new facts from traders and other explorers. The spread of the Roman Empire further extended the area of knowledge, especially in respect of the north and west of Europe; so that Strabo, the great geographer of the Augustan age, was able not only to give a detailed account of a large portion of the world, but also to fix the boundaries of the great continents in much the same way as they are received now. But even he supposed that the Caspian was a gulf running in from the Northern Sea; and Ptolemy (A.D. 160), in whom the geographical science of the ancients culminated, considered that the south-eastern part of Asia was joined to the extremity of Africa by a southern continent. From his time onwards the knowledge of the subject made but little progress until America was discovered by Columbus, and Africa was circumnavigated by Vasco de Gama.

2. **Seas of the Old World.—The Southern Sea.**—The great sea to the south of Asia and east of Africa bore different names at different periods, and these varied somewhat in their application. Some geographers, as Herodotus, call it the Southern Sea (ἡ νοτίη θάλασσα), while others speak of it as the

Indian Ocean. This latter name, when used in its more restricted sense, signified the part immediately to the south of India, which also forms two great gulfs on either side of that peninsula, viz., the Gangeticus Sinus (Bay of Bengal) to the east, and Mare Erythræum to the west. The term "Red Sea" deserves especial notice, because it often had a more extended application than at the present day. When Herodotus speaks of the *ἐρυθρὴ θάλασσα*, he seems to include the whole of the Southern Sea, together with the two gulfs on either side of Arabia; and when he wishes to distinguish the westernmost of these gulfs, he calls it the Arabian Gulf (*Ἀράβιος κόλπος*). Subsequently this gulf had the name "Red Sea" appropriated to it, as we find it in the New Testament, and as we use it at the present day; while that to the east of Arabia was called the Persian Gulf, from its washing the southern and western shores of the land of Persis. These two great inlets form a contrast to one another, for while each of them is entered by a narrow strait, the Persian Gulf has a more irregular outline, and curves somewhat towards the north-west, where it receives the combined waters of the Euphrates and Tigris; whereas the Arabian Gulf, or Red Sea proper, is distinguished by its greater length and extreme straightness, and at its head divides into two branches —the gulf of Heroöpolis (Gulf of Suez), which runs up towards Ægypt, with an average width of thirty miles, and sandy shores; and the Elanitic Gulf (Gulf of Akaba), which penetrates into Arabia, twelve miles wide, and flanked by rocky mountains. Between these lay the peninsula of Sinai. The Red Sea has been in all ages a great highway of traffic, as it is the natural route by which the products of southern Asia and eastern Africa are brought to the west: thus we hear of Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre, sending a fleet of ships from Ezion-geber, on the Gulf of Akaba, to bring gold from Ophir (1 Kings ix. 26–28).

3. **The Western and Northern Seas.**—The sea to the west of Europe and Africa was from early times called the Atlantic (ἡ Ἀτλαντίς), from Mount Atlas, which was supposed to dominate the west of Africa, and from the mythological being with whom it was associated; and was also called the sea outside the Pillars of Hercules (ἡ ἔξω τῶν στηλῶν θάλασσα), or simply the Mare Externum. By some Latin writers, especially poets, it is called Oceanus. For a long time it was considered not to be navigable, for the western regions were regarded as shrouded in clouds and darkness; but as early as 500 B.C. a Carthaginian expedition under Hanno explored the coast for a considerable distance to the south, while another penetrated north as far as Britain. It was somewhere in this western sea that the Islands of the Blessed (Μακάρων νῆσοι) were supposed to be situated; and when the Canary Islands, Madeira, and the other groups in their neighbourhood were discovered by the Romans, as they were before the Christian era, they were identified by them with that fabulous place, and called Fortunatæ Insulæ; though the beauty of country and delightful climate which are attributed by the early Greek poets to the Μακάρων νῆσοι are so fully realised there as to suggest the idea that the legend may have had some foundation in real information. Whether the Island of Atlantis, which is mentioned in more than one of Plato's dialogues as existing in the western ocean, is anything more than a creation of that writer's imagination, it is hard to say; but it is certain that several classical writers suggest the possibility of there being a great western continent, thus anticipating the discovery of America. The most famous passage to that effect is in the lines of Seneca:—

> "Venient annis sæcula seris,
> Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
> Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
> Tethysque novos detegat orbes;
> Nec sit terris ultima Thule."

The different bays of the Western Sea received different names from the tribes or places in their neighbourhood; thus the part immediately beyond the Pillars was called Oceanus Gaditanus, from the city of Gades (Cadiz); the Bay of Biscay, Oceanus Cantabrius; the entrance to the English Channel, Oceanus Gallicus; and the Channel itself, Oceanus Britannicus. The Oceanus Germanicus, to the north of this, and the Oceanus Sarmaticus, or Mare Suevicum (Baltic), were regarded as parts of the great Northern Ocean (Oceanus Septentrionalis), to which, from the reports of its vast masses of ice, the names Mare Concretum and Mare Pigrum are also given.

4. **The Mare Internum. Its Characteristics.**—Far more important to the ancient world than the seas that have been hitherto mentioned was the great central basin, called in ancient times the Mare Internum (ἡ ἔσω θάλασσα), in contradistinction to the outlying oceans, and at the present day the Mediterranean. About its shores lived the peoples with whose history we are most concerned, and who did most to advance the civilisation of the world. To this result the sea itself in no slight degree contributed, for it was the highway of nations, by which races who were separated from one another by rugged tracts of country were enabled to hold communication. Without it the inventions of the East, such as weights and measures and the alphabet, would not have passed from Tyre to Greece; the colonies, which carried Phœnician and Greek culture to lands before barbarous, would not have been founded; the area of commerce would have been greatly restricted; and a thousand quickening influences, arising from contact with other nations, and the reception and interchange of new ideas, would have been lost. The nature of its coasts combined with the character of their inhabitants to determine the direction which civilisation should take. The comparatively uniform outline of the north of

Africa forms a striking contrast to that of southern Europe, which is broken up into numerous deep inlets, while these again are subdivided into countless bays and harbours of smaller size, and fringed with islands. Besides this, while on the side of Africa no river of any importance except the Nile flows into the Mediterranean, on the north it receives the waters of the Ibērus, Rhodănus, and Padus, and through the Black Sea those of the Hister, Borysthĕnes, Tanais, and others. To navigators it has been at all times a dangerous sea, owing to the currents formed by its numerous gulfs, the fickleness of the winds, and the sudden storms that descend from its projecting headlands. But these drawbacks were more than compensated by the nearness of land and the shelter of commodious harbours—safeguards which were wanting in the open sea, and were especially needed in the infancy of navigation.

5. **Its Divisions.**—This sea naturally divides itself into three great basins: the easternmost being formed by the Island of Crete, together with the coast of the Cyrenaica, which bends forward from the continent of Africa to meet it, and comprising the waters that wash the coasts of Ægypt, Syria, and the south of Asia Minor, together with the Ægean Sea. The central basin is still more strongly defined at its western extremity, where the angle of the Carthaginian territory, now Cape Bon, approaches closely to Sicily. This portion includes the Adriatic and the Ionium Mare, which lies beyond the outlet of that sea, between Greece and Sicily; while to the south, where the African coast forms a bay between Cyrene and Carthage, lie the two gulfs called the Syrtes, well known for their dangerous reefs—the Syrtis major forming the eastern, the Syrtis minor the western angle. The western basin extended from Sicily to the Straits (Fretum Gaditanum), the two lofty rocks on either side of which, that of Calpe (Gibraltar) on the Spanish,

and that of Abŷla (Ceuta) on the African shore, were called the Pillars of Hercules. In this lay the two large islands of Corsica and Sardinia, and those of the Balearic group. The part immediately to the west of Italy was called the Mare Inferum, in contrast to the Adriatic, which was called the Mare Superum. In exploring this sea the Phœnicians were, as usual, the first in the field. The foundation of their colony at Gades, at a distance of 2,000 miles from Tyre, where the Tyrian Hercules was worshipped and gave his name to the Straits, is a proof of their boldness in navigation; and their daughter and rival city of Carthage, standing as it does at the meeting-point of the central and western basins, and at the point of nearest approach of Europe and Africa, shows their penetration in the choice of a site. The Greeks followed but slowly in the same track. At first, as we have already seen, their knowledge was confined to the eastern basin, and almost entirely to the Ægean Sea; then they cross from the southern islands to Africa and found Cyrēne, and feel their way round the north of the central basin by the extremity of Italy and the east coast of Sicily, where their earliest colonies in that island were established; but, though the Phocæans, in founding Massilia on the south coast of Gaul, ventured on a bolder track, it was long before the Greeks had more than a vague knowledge of the western basin. At the height of the Roman power the entire sea was so completely enclosed by the provinces of the Empire, that the Latin writers frequently speak of it as Mare Nostrum. The Euxine Sea, and the others in the same system with it, together with the inland seas, like the Caspian, will be spoken of in connection with the countries in their neighbourhood.

6. **Mountain Systems of the Old World.**—In tracing the connection of the mountain chains of the Old World we must begin from Eastern Asia.

There two great ranges have their origin—to the north the great Altai chain, to parts of which the name Imāus was given in ancient times, starting from the extremity of the continent near Behring's Straits, and following a south-westerly course into Central Asia; while from the south-east the Himalaya runs diagonally to meet it, forming the northern boundary of India. Between these lie the vast elevated plateaux of Tibet and Tartary, the height of which in some places is 10,000 feet above the sea. From the point where these two chains approach nearest to one another, near the sources of the Indus, the ground descends westward to a lower, but still elevated, plateau, that of Iran or Ariāna, on the north of which run the mountains that separate it from the Caspian Sea, on the south those that border the Southern Sea, and are continued through Persis and Media, forming the eastern boundary of the great Assyrian plain. To the south-west the ground again rises in the highlands of Arabia, of which the chain that runs through the north of Africa, not far from the coasts of the Mediterranean, may be regarded as a further continuation. To the north-west the plateau of Iran is continued in Armenia, and throws off two great branches; to the north the lofty chain of the Caucasus, which stretches, like a massive wall, from the south-west of the Caspian to the north-east of the Euxine; to the south the mountains of Syria and Palestine. Still further to the west, in Asia Minor, the elevated land of the interior is separated from the Mediterranean by the Taurus ranges, from the Euxine by those of Olympus; and these again are the parents of the principal European chains. In Europe the all-important line of demarcation is that which separates the central from the southern portion, rising first in the Hæmus, which is connected with the mountains of Asia Minor by lower hills; then continued westward, first in the Dinaric Alps, and afterwards in the Alps themselves to the north of Italy; and

finally forming the Pyrenees between Gaul and Spain. In the two eastern peninsulas of the Mediterranean, Greece and Italy, the mountains that intersect them run southward at right angles to this base-line, but in the westernmost, Spain, they follow the same direction with it, running from east to west in parallel lines. The mountains of Central Europe are of less importance for ancient history; but they may be conveniently grouped as forming an arc, the chord of which is the same base-line. These are the Cevennes, which start from the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees, and run northward on the western bank of the Rhone; the Jura, between France and Switzerland; the Vosges, between France and Germany; after which the various ranges of Germany bend round towards the Carpathians, and these last descend to the Balkan. It only remains to add the mountains of Britain and the Scandinavian peninsula, which form a cluster in the north-west of Europe.

7. **The Three Great Continents.**—The idea of dividing the world into three continents seems to have arisen subsequently to the Homeric age, for the names by which they were afterwards distinguished—Europe, Asia, and Libya (the Greek name for Africa)—are not found in the Homeric poems. These names were well established before Herodotus' time, but that writer disapproved of this distribution of the continents, since, according to his views of geography, Ægypt was not rightly included in Libya, and Europe extended to the north of Asia. Still, a glance at the map will show that the received division is a reasonable one, especially in the case of Africa; and though the boundaries between Europe and Asia are not equally well defined, yet the continuous line of demarcation formed by the Ægean, Propontis, Euxine, and Palus Mæotis, together with the course of the river Tanais, which flows into the last-named

sea, was enough to suggest and to justify Strabo's view that the limit should be fixed here; and this is in some respects more accurate than the modern view, which places it at the Ural Mountains, the Caspian, and the Caucasus.

8. **Physical Configuration of Europe, Asia, and Africa.**—Now when we come to compare these continents in respect of their configuration, we are at once struck by the contrast they present to one another as regards their organic character. Africa, with its vast levels, its extensive lake-systems and river-valleys, but little divided by definite mountain chains, and its uniform coast-line, rarely broken up into bays or indented with harbours, is the lowest in the scale of development, an almost inorganic mass of ground. The numerous peninsulas of the coast of Asia, and the clearer demarcation of its various districts, give that country a considerable advantage; but its huge proportions, exceeding those of Europe and Africa together, cause a great part of its area to be removed from the sea, and the elevated table-lands, which occupy so large a portion of its surface, impede communication and are ill suited for the habitation of man. The continent of Europe, on the other hand, is like a highly developed organism. If Africa may be compared to the hoof of one of the more unwieldy animals, and Asia to the finer and more flexible paw, then Europe resembles the human hand, from the elaborate division of its parts and the opportunities it affords for contact. On every side, except towards the east, where it attaches itself to Asia, the sea penetrates deeply into the land, so that the peninsulas occupy about one-fourth of the whole area; and the coast-line is further indented by numerous creeks and harbours, whence arises its extreme length in comparison of the mass of the country. Besides this, the mountains, though sufficiently well-defined, are not so massive as to prevent communication; there are no

great table-lands or desert regions, but the surface generally is distributed into plains, hills, and valleys of moderate size; and the country is watered by numerous rivers, which rise at no great distance from one another in the centre of the continent.

9. **Political Comparison of the three Continents.**—From the foregoing comparison it will readily be understood that the character of the three continents must have greatly influenced their history. Even if the inhabitants of Africa had been of a high type, it would have been difficult for them, under such unfavourable conditions, to attain to a superior culture. It is true that it was in the valley of the Nile, and in the neighbourhood of the Tigris and Euphrates in Asia, that the first great civilisations arose; nor must we omit to mention in passing the early development of the races of India and China. But these were not destined to influence in any great degree the fortunes of mankind, and the stationary character and sudden decline of the culture of the Ægyptian and Assyrian kingdoms are to be attributed to the same causes as their early and rapid rise. For in primitive times, when commerce was hardly known, and it was necessary that every country should provide for its own wants, the combination of a hot climate and a well-watered soil was necessary to provide the means of life for a large population; and without a large population it would have been impossible that the great works, such as pyramids, temples, and palaces, should have been constructed, which are the principal monuments of the civilisation of those countries: but as the people were kept for the most part in a state of degradation, the culture came to an end with the dynasties by whom it had been maintained. In Europe, on the other hand, we find all the conditions of the highest and most permanent civilisation. Instead of the torrid climate of Africa, and the extremes of heat and cold which prevail in Asia,

that country enjoys a temperate and equable climate, which neither impedes the industry of man nor relaxes his energies. Instead of producing articles of luxury, such as spices and gems, it is capable of affording an ample supply of the necessaries of life, and allows of the gifts of many other lands being naturalized within its limits. The seas which washed its coasts, by penetrating far into the interior, at once divided the inhabitants into distinct nationalities, and provided them with the means of communication; and the same effect was produced in the more continental parts by the numerous rivers and the moderate height of the mountain-chains. It was only in such a country that political freedom could be developed, and varied forms of civilisation arise. There, by the independent existence and growth of various peoples, different types of national character, and different forms of government were produced, and freedom of thought was fostered in individual men, because they were not subject to uniform conditions of life, like the great masses of people of which Oriental states are composed. And while the separate peoples were thus stimulated to a healthy rivalry, and learned to look beyond themselves and their own ideas, there were no insuperable barriers to prevent them from acting in common. Of this process of development we see the earliest and perhaps the most striking examples in Greek and Roman history, and further progress has been made in the same direction in subsequent ages.

10. **Races inhabiting the three Continents.**—The races by whom these continents were peopled are generally divided into three great families, viz., the Indo-European, the Semitic, and the Turanian. The last-named of these, which is also called Allophylian, is mostly composed of nomad and barbarous tribes, and includes the majority of the inhabitants of Africa, and those of Central and Northern Asia. The

Semitic family is represented by the Jews, the Phœnicians, the Arabians, and, to some extent, the Assyrians. But the family from which the races of greatest importance to ancient history, with the exception of the Jews, have proceeded, is the Indo-European or Aryan. The original home of the ancestors of this family is the plateau of Iran, or Ariana, in Asia, of which we have already spoken. When the tribe broke up from this primitive seat, it divided into two main branches, Eastern and Western. To the eastern belong, on the one hand, the Medes and Persians; on the other, the Indians, who ultimately descended on to the peninsula that has since borne their name. The western branch includes most of the inhabitants of Europe, and is in its turn divided into four great stocks, the Slavonic, the Celtic, the Teutonic, and the Pelasgic. To the Slavonic stock belong the Sarmatians and other inhabitants of what is now called Russia; to the Celtic the races of Gaul and Britain, and in part also of northern Italy; to the Teutonic the inhabitants of Germany, and most of the tribes whose irruptions ultimately broke up the Roman Empire. The Pelasgic, or Græco-Italian stock, included the Hellenes and other cognate races of the Greek peninsula, together with several of the tribes of Asia Minor, and most of those who inhabited the centre and south of Italy and Sicily, the Etruscans, perhaps, being an exception. In any historical review of the various countries of the world it is important to bear these relationships in mind, especially because, as a general rule, it is only races which have some affinity to one another that combine satisfactorily to form one nation.

11. **Historical Influence of Mountains, Rivers, &c.**—Before proceeding to the description of the various countries of the ancient world, it is important that we should notice the influence that the different physical features have exercised on their