

INTRODUCTION.

plain, must then have been the oldest or the primitive language of man. This must have been the original Chaldee.

2. The Scripture informs us, that in consequence of the impious attempts of the people to build a city and a tower, whose top might reach to heaven, with a view to make themselves a name and prevent their dispersion, God interposed and confounded their language, so that they could not understand each other; in consequence of which they were dispersed "from thence over the face of all the earth."

3. If the confusion of languages at Babel originated the differences which gave rise to the various languages of the families which separated at the dispersion, then those several languages are all of equal antiquity. Of these the Hebrew, as a distinct language, was not one; for the Hebrew nation was of posterior origin.

4. All the words of the several great races of men, both in Asia and Europe, which are vernacular in their several languages, and unequivocally the same, are of equal antiquity, as they must have been derived from the common Chaldee stock which existed before the dispersion. The words common to the Syrians and Hebrews, could not have been borrowed from the Hebrew, for the Hebrews originated from Heber and Abram, several centuries after Syria and Egypt were populous countries. This fact is attested by the Scripture history, which declares that when Abram migrated from Chaldee, and came into Canaan or Palestine, "The Canaanite was then in the land;" and when he returned from Egypt, "the Perizzite dwelt in the land." These declarations, and the history of Abimelech, and of the war of four kings or chieftains with five; as also of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, prove Syria to have been, at that time, well-peopled. The language of the inhabitants then must have been coeval with the nation, and long anterior to the Hebrew as a distinct dialect. It may be added that in the early periods of the world, when no books existed, nations, living remote or distinct, never borrowed words from each other. One nation, living in the midst of another, as the Hebrews did among the Egyptians, may adopt a single word, or a few words; but a family of words thus adopted is an occurrence rarely or never known. The borrowing of words, in modern times, is almost wholly from the use of books.

5. It is probable that some differences of language were produced by the confusion; but neither that event nor any supernatural event is necessary to account for the differences of dialect or of languages, now existing. The differences of modern languages of the Celtic or Teutonic stock, all originated in the natural course of events; and the differences are a great between them as they became the languages of the Shemitic stock.

6. Soon after two races of men of a common stock have separated and placed themselves in distant countries, the language of each begins to diverge from that of the other, by various means.—1. One tribe or nation will suffer one word to become obsolete and be forgotten; another, will suffer the loss of another; sometimes a whole family of words will be lost; at other times, a part only; at other times, a single word only of a numerous family will be retained by one nation, while another nation will retain the whole. 2. The same word will be differently applied by two distant races of men, and the difference will be so great as to obscure the original affinity. 3. Words will be compounded by two nations in a different manner, the same radical words taking a different prefix or suffix, in different languages. Thus *weisdom* in English is in German *weisheit*, [wisehead, wisdom] from *weise, weis*. In English *mislead* is in Danish *förlæder*, from *lead, leder*. 4. The pronunciation and orthography of words will often be so much changed, as that the same word in two languages, cannot without difficulty, be recognized as identical. No person, without a considerable attention to the changes which letters have suffered, would at once suspect or believe the English *let* and the French *laisser* to be the same word.

7. As Abram migrated from Chaldee, he must have spoken the Chaldee language, and probably, at that time, the Syriac, Arabic or Egyptian, had not become so different, as to render it impracticable for him to converse with the inhabitants of Palestine and Egypt. But the language of Abram's descendants, and that of the land of Shinar or the Chaldee land, in the natural course of events, have begun to diverge, soon after the separation; and the changes in each language being different, would, in the course of a few centuries, form somewhat different languages. So in the days of Hezekiah the Syriac and Hebrew had become, in a degree, distinct languages. 2 Kings xviii. In which of these languages, the greatest number of alterations were produced, we do not know; but from the general observations I have made, in my researches, it appears that the Chaldee dialect, in the use of dental letters instead of sibilants, is much the most general in the Celtic and Teutonic languages of Europe. Thus the German only has a sibilant in *wasser*, when the other Teutonic languages have a dental, *water*. I think also that there are far more words in the European languages which accord with the Chaldee or Arabic, than there are words which accord with the Hebrew. If this observation is well-founded, the Hebrew must have suffered the loss of more primitive words than the other languages of the Shemitic family. This however is true, that all of them have lost some words, and in some cases, the Hebrew retains what the others have lost.

8. The Hebrew Scriptures contain many words, which the most ancient writings contain not. Hence probably the strange inference, that the Hebrew is the oldest language; as if the inhabitants of Chaldee and Syria had had no language, for ages before the progenitor of the Hebrews was born.

9. The vernacular words in the Celtic and Teutonic languages of modern Europe, which are evidently the same words as still exist in the Shemitic languages, are of the same antiquity; being a part of the common language which was used on the plain of Shinar, before the dispersion.

The descendants of Japheth peopled the northern part of Asia, and all Europe; or if some colonies from Egypt planted themselves in Greece, at an early period, they or their descendants must have been merged in the mass of Japhetic population. Certain it is that the Greek language is chiefly formed on the same radical words, as the Celtic and Teutonic languages.

The Japhetic tribes of men, whose descendants peopled the south and west of Europe, were first established in the country now called Persia, or by the natives themselves, Iran. Of this fact, the evidence now existing is decisive. The numerous words, found in the Greek, Latin, Gaelic, English and the kindred tongues which are still used in Persia, prove, beyond all question, that Persia must have been the residence of the people whose descendants introduced into Europe the languages from which the modern languages are derived. The fact proves further that a great body of the original Persians remained in their own country, and their descendants constitute the mass of the population at this day.

In the early stages of society, men dwelt or migrated in families, tribes or clans. The family of Abraham and Jacob in Asia, and the clans of the Gaels in Scotland, exhibit to us the manner in which societies and nations were originally formed. The descendants of a man settled around him, and formed a clan, or tribe, of which the government was patriarchal. Such families often migrated in a body, and often the personal characteristics of the progenitor might be distinctly traced in his descendants for many generations. In process of time, some of these families became nations; more generally, by means of wars and migrations, different tribes became blended, and the distinction of families was lost.

In rude ages, the families or tribes of men are named from some characteristic of the people; or more generally, from the place of their residence. The Greeks gave the name of *Seythia* to the north of Europe and Asia, but the primitive inhabitants of the west of Europe, they called *Keltos*, *Kelts*, *Celts*, a word signifying *woods men*.^{*} These were descendants from the same ancestors as the Greeks and Romans themselves, but they had pushed their migrations into Gaul, Spain and Britain. The first settlers or occupiers of these countries were driven forward by successive hordes, until they were checked by the ocean; there they made their stand, and there we find their descendants at this day. These may be considered as the descendants of the earliest settlers, or first inhabitants of the countries where they are found. Among these are the inhabitants of France, south of the Garonne, and those of the north of Spain, called by the Romans Aquitani and Cantabrigi, in more modern times Gascoigns, Basques, and Cantabrians, who still retain their native language; and in Great Britain, the Gaels in Scotland, and the natives of the north and west of Ireland, who also retain their primitive language.

The first inhabitants of the north and west of Europe, known to the Greeks and Romans, to whom we are indebted for our earliest accounts of that region, were the Cimbr, who inhabited the peninsula of Denmark, now called Jutland, and the tribes which belonged to the Teutonic and Gothic races, which were established in Germany and on both sides of the Baltic. Whether tribes of Celtic origin had overspread the latter countries, before the arrival of the Gothic and Teutonic races, and all Europe had been inhabited by

^{*} Welsh *celt*, a cover, or shelter, a *Celt*; *celtiad*, an inhabitant of the covert or wood; *cello*, to conceal, Lat. *celo*. In Gaelic the word is *colt* or *colt*, and originally signified a Celtic or Teutonic nation inhabiting the north of Italy, or the still more northern territory.

I purposely omit all consideration of the different families, tribes or nations of first people Greece and Italy. In Greece, we read of the *Ἕλληνες* or *Ἑλλᾶς*, the Hellenes, the Achæans, the Dorians, the *Ἔλληνες*, the Ionians, the Pelagii, &c. In Italy, of the *Illyrii*, the Liburni, the Siculi, the Veneti or Hæneti, the Iberi, Ligures, Sican, Etrusci, Insubres, Sabini, Latini, Samnites, and many others. But as these nations or their descendants gave the name of *CELTs* to the Umbri, or nations that dwelt in the north, in the less cultivated part of Europe, and to the inhabitants of Gaul; and as all the tribes, under whatever denomination they were known, were branches of the great Japhetic stock, I shall call them by that general name, *CELTs*; and under the general name of *Goths* or *Teutons*, shall comprehend the various tribes that inhabited the north of Germany, and the country north of the Baltic or Scandinavia.

A late writer seems to consider the Teutonic races, as the only ancestors of the Greeks and Romans. But from Celtic words, still found in the Greek and Latin; words not belonging to any of the Gothic or Teutonic languages; it is demonstrably certain that the primitive settlers in Greece and Italy, belonged to the Celtic race. Thus the Greek *βραχίον*, Lat. *brachium*, the arm, is formed on the Gaelic *bragh, bragh, w. bragh*, a word not found among the Teutonic nations. So the Welsh *mocian*, to mock, is found in the Greek *μαζαα*, and French *moquer*, to mock, and Ir. *magadh*, a mocking; but not in any of the Gothic or Teutonic languages. Many similar facts prove that the Celtic races were among the earliest inhabitants of Greece.