steam tramway connects Beirut with Tripoli. There are carriage roads radiating from Aleppo to the sea at Alexandretta, and to Aintab; and Antioch is also connected with Alexandretta; Beirut and Homs with Tripoli; Damascus with Beirut; and Nazareth with Haifa. But carriage roads in the Ottoman dominions are seldom completely made, and hardly ever kept in repair. The Lebanon district is well supplied with both roads and ma<le mule-tracks.

*Commerce.—*From the Egyptian and Assy no-Babylonian monu­ments we learn that in ancient times one of the principal exports of Syria was timber; this has now entirely ceased. But it continues to export wheat. Other articles of export are silk cocoons, woo!, hides, sponges, eggs and fruits (oranges, almonds, raisins and the like) ; the amounts of cotton, tobacco and wine sent out of the country are small. the only good harbours are those of Beirut and Alex­andretta (Iskanderun). The caravan trade with the East has almost entirely ceased, and the great trade routes from Damascus northwards to Aleppo and eastwards through the wilderness are quite abandoned. The traffic with Arabia has ceased to be impor­tant, being limited to the time of the going and returning of the great pilgrimage to Mecca, which continues to have its mustering- place at Damascus, but leaves mainly by rail. The native industries in silk, cotton and wool have been almost entirely destroyed by the import trade from Europe. The land is poor in minerals, including coal; water-power also is deficient, so that the introduction of European industries is attended with difficulties even apart from the insecurity of affairs, which forbids such experiments as the improvement of agriculture by means of European capital. As regards the cultivation of the soil Syria remains stable; but the soil is becoming relatively poorer, the value of the imports con­stantly gaining upon that of the exports. the latter are estimated at some 2⅛ millions sterling; the former at 4 millions.

*History.—*Rude stone monuments (circles and dolmens) and other prehistoric remains show that Syria must have been inhabited from a very early period. Within historic times a great number of different nationalities have fought and settled within its borders, the majority belonging to the Semitic stock. This last circumstance has rendered possible a considerable degree of fidelity in the tradition of the oldest local names. After the Aramaeans had absorbed what remained of the earlier population, they themselves were very powerfully influenced by Gracco-Roman civilization, but as a people they still retained their Aramaean speech. Of the political relations of Syria in the most ancient times we know but little. Each town with its surrounding district seems to have constituted a small separate state; the conduct of affairs naturally devolved upon the noble families. In the latter part of the 16th century B.c. all north Syria fell under the Cappadocian Hatti domination. The south part of Syria was known to Sargon of Akkad *(Λgade~)* as Ammon and was visited by his armies. This is known as the Canaanite period, succeeded about ιo∞ b.c. by the Aramaean. At a very early period—as early probably as the 16th century B.c.— Syria became the meeting-place of Egyptian and Babylonian elements, resulting in a type of western Asiatic culture peculiar to itself, which through the commerce of the Phoenicians was carried to the western lands of the Mediterranean basin. Indus­try especially attained a high state of development; rich garments were embroidered, and glass, pastes, faience, &c., were manufac­tured. The extant inventories of spoil carried off by the ancient conquerors include a variety of utensils and stuffs. The influence exercised at all times on Syrian art by the powerful neighbouring states is abundantly confirmed by all the recent finds which, in addition to our previous knowledge, show the action of the Aegean culture on Phoenicia and Palestine. The Syrians were more original in what related to religion; every place, every tribe, had its “lord” (Ba\*al) and its “lady” (Ba'alat); the latter is generally called 'Ashtar or 'Ashtaret *(i.e.* Ishtar, Astarte). Besides the local Baal there were “ the god of heaven ” (El) and other deities; human sacrifices as a means of propitiat­ing the divine wrath were not uncommon. But in the Syrian mythology foreign influences frequently betray themselves. Over against its want of originality must be set the fact, not merely that Syrian culture ultimately spread extensively towards the West, but that the Syrians (as is shown by the inscriptions of Teima, &c.) long before the Christian era exercised over the northern Arabs a perceptible influence which afterwards, about the beginning of the ist century, became much stronger through the kingdom of the Nabataeans. The art of writing was derived by the Arabs from the Syrians.

Something about the ancient political and geographical rela­tions of Syria can be gleaned from Egyptian sources, especially in connexion with the campaigns of Tethmosis (Thothmes) III. in western Asia and the administration of Amenophis (Amen­hotep) IV. (the Tell el-Amarna Letters). The Egyptians desig­nated their eastern neighbours collectively as ‘Amu. Syria up to and beyond the Euphrates is called more precisely §ahi (or Zahi), and is regardcd as consisting of the following parts: (1) Rutenu, practically the same as Palestine (occasionally Palestine with Coelesyria is called Upper Rutenu, as distin­guished from Lower Rutcnu extending to the Euphrates); (2) the land of the Kheta (sometimes reckoned as belonging to Rutenu with Kadesh on the Orontes as its capital in the Ramesside period; (3) Naharina, the land on both sides of the Euphrates (extending, strictly speaking, beyond the Syrian limits). The Canaanites in general are Called Kharu. From these lands the Egyptian kings often derived rich booty, so that in those days Syria must have been civilized and prosperous. Moreover, we possess enumerations of towns in the geographical lists of the temple of Karnak and in a hieratic papyrus dating about 200 years after Tethmosis III. Some of these names can be readily identified, such as Aleppo, Kadesh, Sidon, and the like, as well as many in Palestine. The Tell el-Amarna Letters (15th century b.C.) show Syria held in part by Egyptian viceroys, who are much preoccupied with southward movements in the Buka,a and the rest of the interior beyond their control, due to pressure of Λmorite peoples, and of the Mitanni and the Kheta, whose non-Seιnitic blood was mingled with that of the Aramaeans even in Palestine. On the latter in Syria, see Hittites. It need only be said here that this people bulked most largely in the relations of Egypt with Syria from the 16th to the 14th cen­turies. During the reign of Rameses II. it was centred on the upper Orontes (Kadesh) and had comparatively free access to Palestine and the Egyptian border. Later on we find Kheta focused farther north, on the middle Euphrates (Carchemish), and more or less cut off from Egypt by the Hebrew state. They or their confederacy remained, however, the most power­ful of the Syrian elements till the westward extension of Assyria about 1050 b.C., under Tiglath-Pileser I. Late in the 8th cen­tury Sargon III. took Carchemish and ended Hittite power.

With the fall of the Kheta the Aramaeans were the people who held the most important towns of Syria, gradually advancing until at last they occupied the whole country. Of the Aramaean stocks named in Gen. x. 23, xxii. 21 seq., veιy little is known, but it is certain that Aramaeans at an early period had their abode close on the northern border of Palestine (in Maachah). A great part was played in the history of Israel by the state of Aram Dammesek, *i.e.* the territory of the ancient city of Damascus; it was brought into subjection for a short time under David. The main object of the ccntury-long dispute between the two kingdoms was the possession of the land to the east of the Jordan (JJauran, and especially Gilead). Another Aramaean state often mentioned in the Bible is that of Aram Zobah. That Zobah was situatcd within Syria is certain, though how far to the west or north of Damascus is not known; in any case it was not far from Hamath (IIamah). Hamath in the valley of the Orontes, at the mouth of the Buka\* a valley, was from an early period one of the most important places in Syria; according to the Bible, its original inhabitants were Canaanites. The district belonging to it, including amongst other places Riblah (of importance on account of its situation), was not veïy extensive. In 733 b.c. Tiglath-Pileser II. compassed the overthrow of the kingdom of Damascus; he also took Arpad (Tel Aríad), an important place three hours to the north of Aleppo. I.Iamath was taken by Sargon in 720. Henceforward the petty states of Syria were at all times subject to one or other of the great world-empires, and were still in dispute between Babylonia and Egypt as late as Necho. Thereafter the Mesopotamian powers prevailed, even if in some cases a certain degree of independence was preserved, as *e.g.* by the Phoenician cities. These, however, in spite of more than one revolt, continued to supply fleets to the Persians down to the time of the Macedonia invasion (332 B.c.), and