

East the Phœnicians were accustomed to round the southern part of Arabia into the Persian Gulf, and to sail southwards along the eastern coasts of Africa, attracted doubtless by the commerce in pearls.¹ Phœnician names and remains indicate their presence in these regions. It cannot be shown with certainty that they circumnavigated Africa,² but it is known that, in the remotest periods of history, they executed voyages over the ocean which might rival some of those of the fifteenth century. (See Plate I.)

The same spirit of intrepid commercial enterprise animated the Carthaginians, who continued the traditions of their ancestors, the Tyrians; but, as in the case of the Phœnicians, all their historical monuments have been destroyed. However, a Greek translation of the Periplus of the Carthaginian admiral, Hanno, has been preserved.³ The date of this voyage, which added much to the knowledge of the Atlantic, cannot be definitely fixed. Pliny says that at the most flourishing period of Punic affairs, "Hanno received the order to make the circuit of Africa."⁴ This period corresponds to the sixth century before our era. The whole of that century was marked by a great intellectual expansion among all the peoples of the Mediterranean, and in that movement geography played a considerable part. Hanno is said to have conducted a fleet, composed of sixty vessels, each carrying five hundred men and women, along the western coast of Africa towards the Equator. This colonising enterprise showed, for the first time, the extension of the Atlantic towards the south. Like almost all early voyages, this one was undertaken in the interests of commerce, and to extend the dominion of the nation which sent it forth. In these ancient expeditions we do not find a trace of the true voyager, imbued with the spirit of observation and a desire to discover new facts in nature.

While Hanno explored the western coasts of Africa, another Carthaginian sailor, Himilco, undertook a voyage of discovery in that part of the ocean situated to the north-west of Europe. An account of this voyage was extant in the fourth century of our era, and its main features have been preserved by the poet Festus Avienus. Beyond the Pillars of Hercules, to the west of Europe, the ocean is represented as stretching towards the horizon without limit; a favourable wind never blows, a breath from heaven never fills the sails, the air is enveloped in a mantle of mist, a thick fog covers the sea

¹ The Ophir of Solomon has been supposed to be situated in the south of Arabia, in India, and in the Bay of Sofala on the east coast of Africa. Each of these identifications has been supported by learned critics. In addition to these three principal views, others with more imagination have endeavoured to show that Ophir was situated in Malacca, in Brazil, or in Peru (see Dr K. von Baer, *Wo ist das Salomonische Ophir zu suchen? Historische Fragen St Petersburg*, 1873; T. C. Johnston, *Did the Phœnicians discover America? Geog. Soc. California*, 1892).

² Herodotus, IV. 42. The Periplus of Necho has been the subject of much controversy. Necho or Neco, son of Psammeticus, who reigned from 610 to 594 B.C., on abandoning the canal he had begun to cut between the Nile and the Arabian Gulf, sent an expedition down the Red Sea, which, in the third year, returned by the Pillars of Hercules. The expedition is said to have been manned by Phœnicians. Herodotus states a circumstance which, he says, "I for my part do not believe, but perhaps others may," viz., that, while sailing round Africa, the navigators had the sun on the right hand. If this means that their shadows were thrown to the south in rounding Africa, as seems to be the case, it supports the view that the circumnavigation really took place (see H. Berger, *Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Erdkunde der Griechen*, p. 39).

³ Geogr. Gr. Min., ed. C. Müller, vol. i. p. 14.

⁴ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, v. 1.