

more or less melted into the original language, so that in Britain *different* men, as the Silures and Caledonii, spoke the same British, and the Celtic settlers and Belgian invaders of Gallia employed the same Gallic tongue, while the *same* races of men, on the opposite sides of the Rhine or the sea, required then and require now the aid of interpreters.

For five centuries before the birth of Christ, the British islands were known to the more adventurous of the voyagers from the Mediterranean, and the coasts of Spain, Gaul, and Germany. The Cassiterides or 'tin islands' had reached the ears of the cautious Father of Grecian History* (B.C. 450). Perhaps even then beads, obtained from the Electrides, or 'amber islands,' were sold not only to the neighbouring Teutons†, but transported in the keels of the Northmen to adorn the ladies of Britain. Pytheas could not have been the first voyager from Massilia‡, whose keel ploughed the sluggish waves of the northern ocean; but if he touched (after six days' sail northward from Britain) the shore of Iceland in the long days of summer§, when the sun did not set;—if he landed in Britain and (however rudely) estimated its circumference;—if he, in a second voyage, explored the Baltic coast of the fossil amber||; then this Phocæan navigator must be regarded as worthy of the age of Aristotle and Alexander (4th century B.C.), and no mean specimen of an archaic voyager to the North.

Centuries glide away. Gades, Carthage, Massilia, are crushed beneath the heavy arms of Rome; but Britain remains free and populous, guarded by the sea from all the world except the friendly merchants of Gaul. At length, under the most accomplished of the Roman generals, the country is invaded; and from the day when Cæsar landed in Kent (B.C. 55), our country has not only a history, but a chronology.

* Herodotus, iii. 115—"from which we are said to have our tin."

† Pliny, xxxvii. cap. 2—"proximisque Teutonis vendere."

‡ Marseilles.

§ Pliny, Hist. Nat. ii. cap. 75; iv. cap. 16.

|| Pliny, xxxvii. cap. 2.