



A Short History of Carthage

By Charles Rollin

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Carthage formed after the Model of Tyre, of which that City was a Colony. The Carthaginians were indebted to the Tyrians, not only for their origin, but for their manners, language, customs, laws, religion, and their great application to commerce, as will appear from every part of the sequel. They spoke the same language with the Tyrians, and these the same with the Canaanites and Israelites, that is, the Hebrew tongue, or at least a language which was entirely derived from it. Their names had commonly some particular

meaning: thus *Hanno* signified *gracious, bountiful*; *Dido*, *amiable, or well-beloved*; *Sophonisba*, *one who keeps faithfully her husband's secrets*. From a spirit of religion, they likewise joined the name of God to their own, conformably to the genius of the Hebrews. *Hannibal*, which answers to *Hananiah*, signifies *Baal, [or the Lord] has been gracious to me*. *Asdrubal*, answering to *Azarias*, implies, *the Lord will be our succor*. It is the same with other names, *Adherbal*, *Maharbal*, *Mastanabal*, &c. The word *Pœni*, from which *Punic* is derived, is the same with *Phœni*, or *Phœnicians*, because they came originally from *Phœnicia*. In the *Pœnulus* of *Plautus*, is a scene written in the *Punic* tongue, which has very much exercised the learned.

But the strict union which always subsisted between the *Phœnicians* and *Carthaginians*, is still more remarkable. When *Cambyses* had resolved to make war upon the latter, the *Phœnicians*, who formed the chief strength of his fleet, told him plainly that they could not serve him against their countrymen; and this declaration obliged that prince to lay aside his design. The *Carthaginians*, on their side, were never forgetful of the country from whence they came, and to which they owed their origin. They sent regularly every year to *Tyre* a ship freighted with presents, as a quit-rent, or acknowledgment paid to their ancient country; and an annual sacrifice was offered to the tutelar gods of *Tyre*, by the *Carthaginians*, who considered them as their protectors likewise. They never failed to send thither the first fruits of their revenues, nor the tithe of the spoils taken from their enemies, as offerings to *Hercules*, one of the principal gods of *Tyre* and *Carthage*. The *Tyrians*, to secure from *Alexander* (who was then besieging their city) what they valued above all things, I mean their wives and children, sent them to *Carthage*, where, though at a time when the inhabitants of the latter were involved in a furious war, they were received and entertained with such a kindness and generosity as might be expected from the most tender and opulent parents. Such uninterrupted testimonies of a warm and sincere gratitude, do a nation more honor, than the greatest conquests and the most glorious

victories...

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