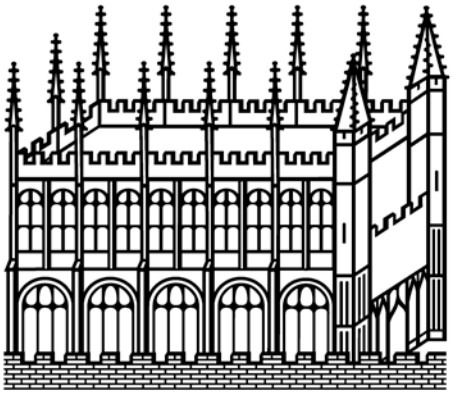


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SYNOPSIS.

DISSERTATION I.

ON THE USES OF HISTORY AS A STUDY.

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HISTORY, in its original Greek signification, means both the acquisition of knowledge by research or inquiry, and the narration of events; its English acceptation has only the latter meaning, except in the term Natural History 3

History forms a great part of the sum of human knowledge, and its acquisition and dissemination require great and varied powers of the mind; its philosophical must precede its historical consideration . . 3, 4

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History is the *narration of real events*, delivered for the information, benefit, and entertainment of those to whom it is addressed . . 5

Fabulous History means compositions in which the fictitious predominates over the real 5

The *substance* of History is the relation of occurrences that have actually taken place. The *end* of History is to establish truth, minister to utility, afford pleasure 6

The leading distinction of History is into sacred and profane . . 6

Sacred History differs from Ecclesiastical History, in that it does not simply record what has happened, in the dispensations of Divine Providence, to the Church; but delivers these, and other important truths, on an authority not to be questioned 6

Universal Histories can be universal only in name; practically they can be mere epitomes of particular histories 7

Particular History is distinguishable into different classes, according as it refers to the limits of *time* or *place*, within which the events occurred; to the nature of the *actions* recorded; or to the *persons* by whom those actions were performed 8

The ordinary distinction of Ancient and Modern History is rather literary than moral or philosophical 9

Time, simply considered, affords no eligible distinction for History. One century, one year, or one day, has no claim in itself to notice, more than any other like portion of time. 8

Age; the distinctions thus suggested: the Dark Ages, the Augustan Age, the Age of Chivalry, &c., belong not so properly to the consideration of time, as to the nature of events 9

Annals, means the narration of events in strict chronological order; History, their narration with regard to their connection with each other, as cause and effect 9

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DISSERTATION I.

ON THE USES OF HISTORY

AS A STUDY.

ON

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AS A STUDY.

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1. THE word History (Ἱστορία) has, in its Greek original, two significations, namely, the acquisition of knowledge by research or inquiry, and the narration of events, real or supposed. The English word History bears only the latter of these meanings, except in the combined expression, *Natural History*, which signifies a knowledge of the various species of natural productions, animal, vegetable, and mineral, with their respective properties and uses. Now, events can only be contemplated by the human mind as occurring in time and space; but a species, being a creation of the intellect, is confined to no certain duration or position. Natural History, therefore, falls within the domain of science, and will be treated of in that part of the Encyclopædia, which includes the Applied Sciences.

Meanings of the word History.

2. HISTORY, in its proper acceptation, must necessarily occupy a large and conspicuous portion of every work which aspires to trace the great outlines of human knowledge; for much of that knowledge is historical, either in form or origin; many powers and faculties of the mind are adapted to acquire, digest, and communicate historical information; the historical records, which exist in the world are numerous, and interesting, and valuable; and, in fine, it is History, which, uniting nations and epochs, gradually aug-

Extent of the subject.

ments the common stock of wisdom, and elevates man in the scale of intellectual being. This great subject, therefore, requires to be developed both theoretically and practically: it must be treated as matter of general speculation, and its progress must be followed throughout the successive ages which it has hitherto embraced; but its philosophical consideration will properly precede its historical application.

Foundation of the study.

3. In the division of the human faculties, that by which we contemplate events as occurring or having occurred, in time and space, with a sense of their reality, forms a peculiar and important feature. It is essentially different on the one side from *Imagination*, which wants the sense of reality, and on the other from *Science*, which contemplates not events but ideas and general conceptions. Hence arises Lord Bacon's well-known division of human knowledge into *History*, *Poetry*, and *Philosophy*. In fact, all that we know, if not poetical or philosophical, must be historical; but in each of these large acquisitions of the mind, we may observe that some portion is cultivated and some uncultivated. Of the former alone it is possible to treat theoretically. The wide deserts and unknown tracts which lie out of the pale of a sovereign's law, and are even untrodden by any who obey his precepts, are not to be reckoned as any part of his political power. It is with distinguishable elements that we work; and not with a dark and confused chaos. All events, which we consider as having actually occurred, however trivial they may be in themselves, or however slightly we may have noticed them, are in truth viewed historically; but History, considered as a study, imports some selection from these notices, some discrimination of these events. It is not enough that a man should recite to us with fidelity things which in themselves are

entirely puerile and inconsequential. We do not call such a babbler an historian. History must instruct and it must interest; it must tend to make us wiser and better, and must gratify our taste, whilst it improves our intellectual and moral faculties. It must, therefore, select such occurrences, and place them before the mind in such an order as may best conduce to the attainment of these important ends.

Definition of the term History.

4. The term "History" has been variously defined. CICERO says "it is a narration of past events beyond living memory," and PLUTARCH employs nearly similar expressions. DIONYSIUS of Halicarnassus calls it "Philosophy teaching by examples." VOSSIUS characterizes it as the knowledge of those particulars, the memory of which conduces to virtue and happiness. And Dr. JOHNSON styles it "a narration of facts and events delivered with dignity." Although each of these definitions is applicable to History considered under a certain aspect, yet no one of them is fully descriptive of it as a great division of human knowledge. In that view, therefore, we define History to be *the narration of real events delivered for the information, benefit, and entertainment of those to whom it is addressed.* This definition, it will be observed, consists of two parts, the one relating to the *substance* of History, the other to its *end.* In point of substance, nothing is to be deemed strictly historical which does not relate occurrences that have actually taken place. Narratives of imaginary events, professedly delivered as such, are called *fable:* and an indiscriminate mixture of these with actual occurrences constitutes *fabulous history.* This latter term, however, is seldom applied to any compositions but those in which the fictitious manifestly predominates over the real. From the fallibility

of human judgment, some alloy of fiction will be found in the works of the most careful historians; and the distinguishing of this from the unalloyed truth is no mean object of the philosophical study of History. The end of History is threefold—to establish Truth, to minister to Utility, and to afford Pleasure: the first of these objects is absolutely essential to the historical character; and of the two others, though utility be doubtless the more important, pleasure is generally the more captivating. The three objects, however, cannot properly be separated in historical composition. Uninteresting and unimportant truths, facts pleasingly told, but doubtful or spurious, and a tedious and inanimate mode of relating events great or small, are alike to be avoided by the historian, if he desires to produce a work, which, in the noble words of Thucydides, shall be "an everlasting possession"—κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί.

Outline of Discussion.

5. In the present discussion, we purpose, first, to consider the main branches into which the Definition above given naturally divides itself; and then to examine the means of cultivating History, either on the part of the Author, or of the Student. The definition relates, as we have said, first to the substance of History, and since that is a narration, its leading distinctions must refer either to the character of the narrator, to the nature of the events narrated, or to the manner of relating them.

Sacred History.

6. The first, most obvious, and most important distinction of History is into *Sacred* and *Profane*. This is a distinction depending on the character of the narrator. Sacred History, properly so called, differs from mere Ecclesiastical History, inasmuch as it does not simply record what has happened, in the dispensations of Divine Providence, to the Church; but it delivers these and other important truths,

from an authority not to be questioned. If the grounds of this distinction be disputed, it belongs to the domain of science, or of faith, or of both, to settle that dispute. We enter not here into such a contest. We assume the existence of the Deity, and the revelation of His will; and these positions being admitted, it must follow that the events delivered by inspired writers, in order to unfold to us more or less plainly the mysteries of the Divine dispensations, must stand on a very different, and a far higher footing, than any facts resting on mere human authority. What rules and canons there are for the exposition of Sacred History; what are its peculiar characteristics; how far its belief is matter of reason, and how far matter of faith; whether there be any degrees of credibility in it, and what they are; and, in short, all the peculiar questions relative to this, as a distinct branch of History, we leave to a future essay; the remainder of our present observations will be understood to refer to History merely as derived from human authority. In Profane, as well as in Sacred History, it is clear, that the character of the narrator is a most material consideration; but it affords no line of distinction sufficiently broad to serve as the groundwork of any plain, intelligible classification.

Definition of Universal History.

7. From the difference of narrators, then, we come to the difference of the events narrated: and here there is a large and extensive field for distinctions. In the first place, History may be universal; or, at least, the name of *Universal History* may be and is commonly applied to works which profess to deliver a comprehensive view of all the affairs which have been transacted in the world. Of histories of this sort, it is to be observed, that they can be universal only in name. They are in reality epitomes, or abridgments, of more particular works. It would be as impossible to record

all events, as it would be to travel through all space, or to exist in all time. Omniscience alone could comprehend, Omnipotence alone could record such a History. General views and slight outlines of what has occurred to the successive races of man are nevertheless useful, in aiding us to arrange and classify our historical knowledge: they are serviceable, too, as works of reference; but the subject is so vast, that it cannot well be brought at once within the grasp of the human intellect, and is unfit for the finest displays of historical talent. Accordingly, few men of great genius have embarked in so vast and hopeless an undertaking: and of those who have done so, the works have in general broken off abruptly, and left a great part of the task untouched, as is the case with the History of the World, by the celebrated Sir WALTER RALEIGH.

Particular History.

8. History, then, to be well written, must of necessity be less comprehensive in its object. Hence, *particular* histories are opposed to universal: and that particularity is again distinguishable into different classes, according as it refers to the limits of *time* or *place*, within which the events occurred; to the nature of the *actions* recorded; or to the *persons* by whom those actions were performed.

Time as a distinction for History.

9. *Time*, simply considered, would seem to afford no very eligible distinction for History. One century, one year, or one day, has no claim in itself to notice, more than any other like portion of time; nor do the events of History demand our attention at all in the proportion of their duration. Nevertheless, there are certain portions of time, which have generally been regarded as fit to form the basis of a classification in History. Thus, we have the great distinction of *Ancient* and *Modern* History, the latter commonly dating from A.D. 467, when the Roman Empire in the West was

terminated by the deposition of Augustulus. This distinction, however, is rather literary than moral or philosophical: it has nothing to do with the great events from which the Christian and Mahometan world respectively reckon; and it is unknown to those whose historical information is derived only from Arabic, Persian, Indian, or Chinese sources. There are certain ages, which the civilized part of mankind has, with justice, considered to be more, and others less deserving of attention. Thus we speak currently of the Dark ages; of the Augustan age; the age of Chivalry, &c.: but these distinctions do not so properly belong to the consideration of time, as of the nature of the events which then occurred. Histories were originally distinguished by the time to which they referred, rather from the ignorance of their compilers, than for any other reason: hence the title of *Chronicles* and *Annals;* which subsequent writers have since adopted, in some measure from modesty, as indicating that either from want of leisure or ability, they had not ventured to attempt a more artificial arrangement. It is in this view, that Tacitus seems to have distinguished his *Annals* from his *History:* the former being written in strict chronological order; the latter having more regard to the connection of the events with each other as cause and effect. It is sometimes convenient to record and give publicity to events soon after their occurrence, either for the speedy gratification of curiosity, or for the perpetuation of testimony which might otherwise perish. Hence our *Annual Registers*, private *Diaries,* and public *Journals;* but all these are to be regarded rather as affording materials to the future historian, than as the work on which a great genius should found his claims to celebrity.

The term Age.

Place as a distinction for History.

10. *Place* presents such a circumscription of narrative, as easily falls in with the natural feelings of mankind. Thus the History of England or of France, or even the History of Cumberland or of Dauphiny, carries on the face of it some importance and some interest. The reason of this difference between time and place is, that the individuals of the human race are grouped and collected together in masses, more with reference to the latter than to the former. Time flows on with an equal and undistinguishing current to all the inhabitants of the earth; and the mere circumstance of their being contemporaries does not necessarily unite them, nor give them any common principles of action, whereas, those who are of the same vicinage, are ordinarily descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, governed by the same laws: they are as a household together, they feel as brethren, and the love of their natal soil is like the love of a common parent, identifying their desires, their affections, their prejudices, and their interests. There is, however, a medium in the choice of historical subjects, according to the limitation of space; and that medium is determined by the circumstances of the age to which the History refers. The History of Modern Europe has much less unity of view than the History of England, but it has much more than the History of Ancient Europe, because in modern times the nations of Europe, not only have a more intimate knowledge of each other, and more constant intercourse, but they have adopted so many common principles, habits, customs, and even laws—they proceed so much in the same track, and toward the same end—that they form, in some sort, one community. The time may come when a History of Europe shall present quite as much

unity of plan as the History of England does now; and in that case it must as much excel the English History in interest and importance as the English History now does a History of Cumberland or of Cornwall.

Actions and Persons, of primary interest.

11. Time and place, however, are in themselves but secondary links in the association of events; the quality of the *actions* recorded, the character of the *persons* commemorated,—these are the true and primary sources of interest to the mind of man. POLYBIUS congratulated himself on the subject of his work, which was a certain portion of the Roman History, not because it related to such an extent of territory, or spread over such a number of years, but because it traced the growth and spread of a memorable nation, and illustrated the consequences of a wise and persevering policy, of great courage, and of great virtue. Long after him, LIVY declared it to be his wish to show with what life and morals, by what men and arts, at home and abroad, Rome had gained and extended her vast dominion; and then to trace discipline relaxing and morals decaying, until Rome had at length reached a period when she could neither bear her vices nor their remedies. Actions, then, and persons, as they are at all times the principal sources of interest, so they often become, without particular reference to their duration, or the local scene of the events, the avowed subjects of the writer's narration.

Actions as descriptive of History.

12. Human *Actions* of the same nature and quality may be taken more or less strictly as descriptive of particular Histories. In the most general sense, we speak of Civil History, Ecclesiastical History, Military History, Literary History, Financial History, and the like, when civil, ecclesiastical, military, literary, financial, or other affairs, form the exclusive or principal topics treated of. This is some-

times the mere judgment of the reader on the author's work; sometimes the writer avows his exclusive object in his very title, as in Brucker's "Institutions of the History of Philosophy," Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History," &c. We often find more limited, but still extensive views of what has been done by particular nations or bodies of men in any one pursuit; as Tiraboschi's "History of Italian Literature," Warton's "History of English Poetry," Sprat's "History of the Royal Society." Again, we may take some longer or shorter course of events leading to one common end; such as the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, the Reformation of Religion, &c. Lastly, certain particular occurrences, such as the Peloponnesian War, the Expedition of Alexander, the League of Cambray, the Council of Trent, Sacheverel's Trial, or Captain Cook's Voyage round the World, may be treated separately and distinctly from all other occurrences.

Contemplation of remarkable persons.

13. If the attention of mankind is strongly drawn to the contemplation of great actions; it is perhaps still more forcibly attracted to that of remarkable *persons*. There is no object so interesting to man as man. There is no glass in which we can so well dress our moral nature. There is nothing that so fully enables us to obey the famous oracle, γνώθι σεαυτὸν. There are no such effectual means to stir up our latent powers; to kindle passions unknown even to ourselves; and to impel us to act by showing us that we possess the means of action. If Cæsar wept before the statue of ALEXANDER; if Burns felt the enthusiasm of a patriot possess his whole soul in perusing the valiant deeds of WILLIAM WALLACE; if the benevolence of the Roman Catholic has been kindled by the example of ST. VINCENT DE PAULE; if the British sailor will for ages to come feel

his heart beat at the name of NELSON;—all this, and a thousand times more, is owing to that most fascinating species of history which is called biography. Of Biography there is again a subdivision, called *Autobiography;* in which a man generally takes himself for his hero, or wishes to make all the world the confidants of his secrets. Works of this kind are often very amusing. They are bought and read; but few people believe them. We are are all sensible how partial we are to ourselves. We all know, that our personal enemies, who pass for very good sort of men in the world, appear in our eyes to be monsters; and that, according to the trivial proverb, all our own geese are swans. We know, that even our humility is too often a piece of gross self-deception, and that we accuse ourselves of all the virtues, under the pretence of pleading guilty to the imputation of them as foibles. Of the most celebrated work of this kind, the Confessions of *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, it has been justly observed, that "there is more vanity concentrated in its ten first lines than in the whole contents of any other book in the world." The defence of a man's character, from unjust aspersion, has been urged as a reasonable motive for autobiography: and this may indeed account for a man's explaining some particular transactions of his life, in which he is the sole depositary of the principal proofs: but it can rarely justify his delineating himself from the cradle, and entertaining the world with a long series of narratives, one-half of which they will probably care nothing about, and the other half they will totally disbelieve. Generally speaking, if a man is so unfortunate as to find no historian but himself to do justice to his character, it is because his character is a matter of very little consequence. The world has certainly lost a great deal in not possessing

Autobiography.

a good biography of Shakspeare; but if the great poet had himself attempted to fill up the chasm, he would have dissolved the spell which now makes us doubly admire his genius, in consequence of his magnanimous disregard of future fame. It is not that great men do not wish to be known to after ages: Milton has well said—

> "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
> To scorn delights, and live laborious days."

But still, this "last *infirmity* of noble minds," is one which we should be as little proud of displaying as we are of exhibiting the traces of any hereditary disease. Biography of this kind, too, has another defect. It can rarely be made the centre of a general history of the times in which the individual lived, or even of the great events in which he was engaged. His knowledge of the one must have been too limited, and his views of the other too partial. We shall have the portrait of the general, instead of the plan of the battle: and understand as little of the course of affairs, as a courtier who accompanies his sovereign in a state coach knows of the domestic economy of the cottages a mile distant from the road. It must not be understood that we mean indiscriminately to censure the practice, in which many great and excellent men have indulged, of noting down at the time, or at subsequent periods, events which have fallen under their observation, or reflections which have passed through their minds. These, when the writer is not prompted by the weakness of desiring to appear in the eyes of his fellow-men, more important, or wiser, or better than he really is, become often valuable either as correcting serious errors, or as exhibiting the finer traits of individual character, or as exemplifying general habits and customs which might otherwise pass into oblivion. Some-

times indeed they are meant to be strictly private; but when that is not the case, they are scarcely to be regarded in the light of historical compositions, but rather as materials, which may be judiciously interwoven, like letters, or other incidental documents, in the work of a professed historian.

Manner of narrating.

14. History admits of a still different classification, according to the *manner* of narrating events; and this, whether we regard the plan of the work, or the spirit of its execution.

Comprehensiveness of plan.

15. The plan of the work may have more or less of comprehensiveness, more or less of unity. By *comprehensiveness* we mean the extent of its compass, either as to time, place, action or person: thus we call the Life of Philip of Macedon, or of Scipio, a more comprehensive work than that of Castruccio Castracani: and indeed Machiavelli, the author of the latter work, himself confesses as much; for he says of his hero, that he would have equalled or perhaps excelled either of those great men, if instead of Lucca, he had had for his birthplace Macedon or Rome. In like manner, we say that the History of the Negotiations of Utrecht is more comprehensive than that of the festivities of the Field of the Cloth of Gold; the Account of the European Settlements in America, than the History and Antiquities of Cambridge; and Millot's General History, than Dodsley's Annual Register. Some of the narrower subjects of the historical pencil are executed with all the delicacy of cabinet pictures; but still the greater efforts of genius are those which unite breadth of colouring with grandeur of outline. There is, however, a due medium to be observed in this respect: we must fill the mind without overpowering it. Biography has here a great advantage. The subject can never be too vast; for wide as are the actual diversities of intellect and disposition among men, all who can reason at all are capable

of embracing the whole of a human character, as well as any part of it: and the interest which they feel is the stronger, the more accurately a character is developed, with all its beauties and deformities.]

Unity of conception.

16. *Unity of conception* is a mark either of original genius, or of cultivated taste. The ignorant and inexperienced, in all arts, proceed without system or design, and heap together parts, without any reference to a whole: so it is in rude and imperfect histories. The author sets out without any definite object in view, and travels through a wilderness of facts, without judgment to direct him in their selection. When we come to the end of this work we find neither the amusement nor the instruction at all in proportion to the labour: the memory is burthened with much dull and much useless matter: and the task of selection and arrangement, which is among the first duties of an author, is thrown wholly upon the reader, who has seldom leisure or ability, if inclination, for its performance. In regard to unity of conception, that may be called a *perfect history*, which has one clear and distinct object, and places that object clearly and distinctly before the view of the reader. Some authors, undertaking to write the history of a given period or country, have arranged its different portions according to the different subjects, which they thought it convenient to treat separately: thus, Dr. Henry's "History of Great Britain" is divided into sections, each of which relates to one great branch of public affairs, civil, military, literary, &c.; but this method is rather a combination of two discordant modes of classification, than a desirable plan in itself: it is a collection of separate histories, awkwardly and inconveniently intermingled, for no reason but because they happen to be written by the same author. When the unity of object is thus de-

stroyed, there is no leading idea, no key-note, as it were, to the whole composition; and the length of the work not only excuses an occasional doze, but of necessity deadens and puts to sleep all power of attention.

Spirit of the execution.

17. Next to the plan of the work, we have to regard the *spirit of the execution:* and it is here principally that we find the personal disposition and character of the writer conspicuous. The spirit in which the work is executed may, for the purposes of the present essay, be considered as of three kinds; the *poetical*, the *philosophical*, and the purely *historical*.

Poetical spirit in historians.

18. The excess of the poetical spirit would lead to mere fable; but it is an error to suppose that an historian should be destitute of many of those powers which characterise the poet. In point of fact, it is only by means of the imagination that we can comprehend any scene or action whatever, of which we are not eye-witnesses. Nay, of that which we see passing before us, it is the power of imagination, which renders the impression vivid, distinct, and permanent. Let us only call to mind the passages which have struck us most forcibly in history, and we shall commonly find, that if they do not contain long and studied descriptions, yet even a single expression serves to paint the scene, and to show that the author contemplated it in his mind's eye, as passing before him. TACITUS is not commonly considered to be a poetical writer; and indeed his genius is rather philosophical; but yet the remark which we have just made, may be illustrated by numerous passages in his writings. Thus, after describing at some length the affected modesty of Tiberius, in pretending to decline the empire when offered to him by the Senate, the historian proceeds thus: "Whilst the senators were descending to the lowest entreaties, Tibe-

Poetical spirit in historians.

rius happened to say that, though he was unequal to the government of the whole state, he would undertake the direction of any part that might be committed to his charge. 'I ask you, then, Cæsar,' said Asinius Gallus, 'what part of the state you wish to have entrusted to you?' Struck with the sudden question, he was for a moment silent; but presently recollecting himself, he answered, 'That it would not agree with his sense of decorum, to choose or reject any particular part, when he wished to be excused from the whole.' Thereupon Gallus, *who saw, by the looks of Tiberius, how much he was offended,* immediately replied, 'That he did not ask this question with any view of separating what it was impossible to divide; but in order to prove, by the confession of Tiberius himself, that as the body of the state was one, so by one mind alone it should be governed.'" In this short narrative, the expression '*vultu offensionem conjectaverat*' is sufficient to give a life and movement to the scene; it produces in the reading an effect quite dramatic; it opens to us at once all the hypocrisy passing in the mind of Tiberius, and all the servility in that of Gallus; and thus incontestably proves that the author possessed that strong power of "bodying forth the forms of things unknown," which is the distinctive faculty of the poet. It is by appealing to the imagination, that history becomes amusing; but that amusement ought to be, and by virtuous writers always is, made the means of elevating or purifying the mind. To great moral truths in action belong great force and beauty of description. This is a want felt by the most common reader: for who could bear to see the death of Nelson recorded as an every-day event; or to be simply told that on the 18th of June, 1815, a great battle was fought, near a place called Waterloo, in

which the united English and Prussians gained the day? Hence a superiority, or defect, in the imagination forms one of the most obvious and popular distinctions between historians. No man hesitates any more to prefer Froissart to Monstrelet, than he does Chaucer to Gower and Lidgate.

The philosophical spirit in History.

19. Opposed in some sort to the poetical spirit is the *philosophical*. The one looks first upon the visible forms of existence, the other on its recondite laws. Philosophy is the root, as Poetry is the flower; the former works in darkness and difficulty, the latter expands in beauty, and splendour, and light. Each has its peculiar excellence, and each has its besetting defect. The one places every scene vividly before us, but the picture may, perhaps, be far different from reality; the other promises sound instruction, but too often ends in empty speculation. The mere name of Philosophy adds little weight to an historical work; for it is a name which has been assumed by almost every shade of opinion, and by doctrines the most opposite and irreconcilable. "HUME" (says one writer) "is justly placed at the head of our philosophic historians." Unfortunately, we know too much of his philosophy, from his earliest work, the "Treatise on Human Nature," not to be convinced that its influence rendered him insensible to the noblest sentiments and loftiest inspirations of man; and, consequently, incapable of describing their historical results. Nearly the same may be said of his contemporary, VOLTAIRE, who, by paying court to one of the French king's mistresses, obtained the place of Historiographer of France. This celebrated writer begins his "Essay on Universal History" by asserting that the History of China is indisputably true; that it is founded on celestial observations,

HUME.

VOLTAIRE.

particularly on an eclipse observed 2155 years before the Christian Era; that 231 years earlier a great Astronomer named *Hiao* ascended the Chinese throne; and that 130 years before him the Emperor *Fo-hi* united fifteen kingdoms under his sceptre. As both these supposed monarchs must, according to the dates here given, have lived before the period which many eminent Chronologers allot to the Mosaic account of the Deluge, M. Voltaire's philosophy affords but a bad pledge for his historical accuracy. Some well-intentioned persons have endeavoured to infuse into History a philosophical spirit of a different kind. They believed that they could distinctly trace the moral government of God in the rise and fall of States, in the elevation and depression of individuals, and in all the other changes and chances which mankind have experienced; and, moreover, that these have been distinguishable portions of one great drama leading up to the perfection of our nature, even in this mortal state. Far be it from us to doubt the overruling power of HIM, without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground; neither do we presume to deny that the moral worth of man may, in some future age, be as far advanced towards perfection as his physical knowledge seems to be at present; but we conceive that these speculations are too lofty and too distant to afford just criteria of historical truth. If adopted, they would make the limited intelligence and partial judgments of men the scale of Divine wisdom and justice; and would, in the end, pervert History into a mere reflection of our own prejudices and passions. But neither this, nor any other misuse of the philosophical spirit, can justify a separation of History from that Philosophy whose province it is to trace events to their appropriate causes, to discern in actions the

operation of principles, to perceive the one in the many, and thence to foresee the many from the one.

Choice of a subject.

20. We conceive that a philosophical spirit should, above all things, prevail in the *choice of a subject* for history. A writer should not record circumstances that have happened merely because they have happened, but because they are of magnitude and importance; because they illustrate some great principle; because some inference is to be drawn from them which may increase the happiness or enlarge the powers of man. Vice should be portrayed to be shunned; virtue to be loved, and courted, and cultivated. Throughout the conduct of the narrative, the philosophical writer will never forget his moral. If, indeed, his mind be turned too much to reflection, he will, in the common phrase, become a sermonizer. He will interrupt the current of his reader's thoughts, to make remarks which the facts themselves sufficiently suggest. Again, if he be too deeply imbued with his opinions, they will render him, even involuntarily, a falsifier of facts, which, viewing them with a jaundiced eye, he must of necessity exaggerate and misrepresent. There is a class of philosophical writers who are so, not from the impulse of natural disposition, but to exhibit their talents in commonplace remark, in a declamatory style, or a superfluity of antithesis and epigrammatic point. Of this class is SALLUST. Quinctilian, a man of no great genius himself, supposes that Livy was jealous of Sallust, whom he accused of disfiguring and weakening the thoughts of the Greek writers. Quinctilian thinks it sufficient to reply that Sallust expressed those thoughts in fewer words; which is the answer of a pedant. Sallust was a man of notorious vices, and yet affected to write like Cato the Censor; he was a

SALLUST.

parasite of Cæsar's, and yet assumed the tone of a stern republican: no wonder that the philosophical spirit of his History is strained and formal, when the man himself was a hypocrite. Very different was the case of TACITUS. He was a virtuous man, who, almost from his infancy, was brought up in the contemplation and abhorrence of everything base and odious under the imperial despotism; and who, in his more advanced age, considered those as times of a rare felicity when he could think as he pleased, and speak as he thought. Under the reigns of Nerva and Trajan, he gave a loose, in his historical writings, to that indignation with which his mind had been so deeply filled by the horrors of the court of Nero, the ignominy of Galba, the sensuality of Vitellius, and the rapine of Otho. He no doubt paints human nature in too gloomy colours, and seems, as an historian, to dwell with pleasure on the dark side of the picture; and it is worthy of remark, that though in his Essay on the Manners of the Germans he describes a whole nation in a more favourable point of view, this picture is evidently in a great degree imaginary, and intended to confirm his own theory of the corruptions of Rome.

TACITUS.

The purely historical spirit.

21. The *purely historical* spirit ought doubtless to predominate in the writing of History, but it is not sufficient to form an historian. Many an old chronicler has recorded with the most scrupulous fidelity the occurrences of his age, and has even displayed a zeal in collecting information, and a pride in communicating it, which are in themselves highly laudable; but these works have not merited the title of history, because they have neither been calculated for entertainment, nor for instruction. The love of truth, as truth, is the first duty of the historian; but it is not his

whole duty. In laying before us the occurrences of past times, he must animate and excite our feelings by powerful description; he must exercise our habits of reflection by appropriate remarks on the causes and consequences of the events related. The only rule that can be laid down on this point is, that the historian should rather be guided by his subject than force it to the display of his own peculiar talents, whether of imagination or of judgment. THUCYDIDES appears to have been framed by nature to a careful and laborious investigation of facts. He complains, with justice, in the outset of his work, "that the search after truth was considered by many people as an intolerable labour, and that they therefore too often took up with such accounts as were at hand, merely to save themselves trouble." His history is remarkable for the plainness, clearness, and apparent fidelity of his statements. Nevertheless he is by no means disinclined to make such remarks as the events which he is relating naturally suggest; of which a striking example is afforded by his celebrated description of the plague at Athens, and of the moral evils which were the result of that dreadful malady. In like manner, LIVY is universally acknowledged to be an unaffected narrator of occurrences, without any other apparent view than that of placing them fairly before his reader; yet the natural liveliness of his genius induces him often to give such reins to his imagination that his narratives are perfect pictures, of which the celebrated account of the Roman army passing under the yoke at the Caudine forks is a memorable example.

THUCYDIDES.

LIVY.

22. We have thought it advisable thus to present to our readers our own classification of History, in regard to its substance. It is right, however, to observe, that other

Bacon's classification of history.

writers adopt other plans of classification: and in particular, Lord Bacon, the great classifier of knowledge in modern times, has given the following:—he first distinguishes History into Natural and Civil. Natural History, he considers, first, *ex statu*, and, secondly, *ex usu*. Under the head of *status* he arranges Generations, Prætergenerations, and Arts; and Generations he divides into those of, 1st, the heavens; 2nd, the airy regions; 3rd, the land and sea; 4th, the elements; and, 5th, the species of animals and plants. No part of this falls within the modern or proper use of the word History. *Civil* History, according to him, includes *Literary*, *Civil* (properly so called), and *Sacred History*. Of Literary History he says, that some particular parts had been touched in a jejune manner by lawyers, mathematicians, philosophers, and others; but that a general literary History was in his time a desideratum. He therefore proceeds to state its substance, the mode of forming it, and its use when formed. He considers that it should include an account of the origin, progress, migration, oblivion, and revival of learning and the arts; the mode of teaching and practising them; their sects and controversies; their encouragements and persecutions; the principal books, authors, schools, and colleges. On the mode and use he makes some judicious observations, and then proceeds to Civil History, properly so called, in which, after touching generally on its dignity, difficulty, and principal defects, he proceeds to classify its productions: first, according to their degree of perfection; the imperfect being memoirs and epitomes; the decayed being antiquities and fragments of old writers; and the perfect histories being those of times, persons, or actions. Those of times he distinguishes—first, into universal and particular; and, secondly, into annals and diaries. A second

classification of Civil History, according to him, is into mere History, and mixed; of mixtures he notices especially two, the mixture of History with civil philosophy, and with natural philosophy. Sacred or Ecclesiastical History, he says, agrees with civil, in being distinguished into that of times, persons, and actions: and it is besides divided, according as it relates to the affairs of the Church, in its advance, establishment, or persecutions; or to prophecies; or to divine judgments. Lastly, this author enumerates, as appendages to History, orations, epistles, and memorable sayings of individuals. It is for our readers to determine, whether these distinctions of Lord Bacon's are, upon the whole, of sufficient practical utility to be adopted with profit by the writer, or student, of History. To us, we frankly confess, they appear involved in that confusion, which pervades some other attempts of this celebrated man to introduce a new order into the prevalent modes of education and study. He sets out from no clear definition, connecting his two great branches, Natural and Civil History. He acknowledges that the one relates entirely to species, the other to individuals: but of species there can be no narration; because a species being a conception of the mind, its contemplation belongs to philosophy and not to History, at least in the modern and strict sense of the latter word. We say nothing of the distinction of generations, prætergenerations, and arts; or of the classes of generations; which in the present state of physical science are perfectly untenable. It is more immediately relevant to our present subject to observe, that the term *civil* seems strangely applied to include Sacred History; and that the great distinction of *sacred* and *profane,* together with the reason on which it is founded, is in consequence entirely taken away.

Other classifications of History.

Vossius.

23. The learned Gerard Vossius divides History into divine, natural, and human. By divine he means the historical part of the Holy Scriptures; and by natural such works as Theophrastus's History of Plants and Aristotle's History of Animals. The human History (with which alone we are here concerned) he distinguishes into true, false, and partially true. The true he again distinguishes into that of places, times, and persons; and that of persons into universal, general, and singular. To the universal belong such works as those of Diodorus Siculus and Trogus, purporting to contain the events of all ages; to the general, in whole, belongs Livy's Roman History; to the general, in part, the History of the Peloponnesian War, by Thucydides; and finally, the singular is confined to Biography. Some authors have classed historical *books*, rather than historical studies. Of that very useful branch of the subject, we shall find occasion to speak hereafter; for the present, we shall merely add, that we have purposely exemplified what was necessary to be said on the distinctions of History, by occasional references to particular authors, for two reasons: first, to avoid the dryness of mere technical enumeration: and, secondly, to afford at once a test of the accuracy of our classification, by an appeal to the common feelings of mankind.

Essential qualities.

24. Our Definition leads us next to consider the *End* of History, which we have said is threefold—to establish Truth, to minister to Utility, and to afford Pleasure.

Lucian.

Lucian strongly contends that those earlier writers who asserted that History should combine pleasure with utility, were wrong, and that utility (which, according to him, implied Truth) was the sole end of History. But this is a narrow view of the subject. We trust we shall show, that History, in order perfectly to attain its end, must

possess three essential qualities. Inasmuch as it must contain a narrative of real events, its first essential quality is *truth*: and, since it is intended to instruct and to amuse, its other essentials are *utility* and *pleasure*. From a happy combination of all these will arise that dignity which belongs to History, in the rank of human studies.

Essentiality of truth in History.

25. "History," says Cicero, "is the light of *truth*:" a noble expression, and one which reflects honour on the pure and upright mind of its author. On the clearness and steadiness of this light, depends its whole value, in guiding us through the obscure and difficult passages of life. We can reason but from what we know; and without truth, our fancied knowledge is worse than that ignorance of which we are aware, and which, at least, does not inspire us with a fatal confidence. It is manifest, then, that an untrue History is no History at all, but a fable, so much the more pernicious because it assumes the garb of truth. The historian who misleads his readers, violates his first duty towards them. If he does it through carelessness and negligence, he is censurable in no light degree; but if he does it wilfully, he is a base and infamous impostor. Yet in human works we must not expect perfection. The truth of History derived from mere human authority must be imperfect. It is an impression difficult to shake off, in the reading of History, that we are perusing an exact account of events as they really happened, without exaggeration or diminution, without suppression or addition. A little reflection, however, will teach us, that this can never be the case in a narrative of any length. Where is the impartial mind, untinctured by prejudice, which can see every fact in its true light? Where is the powerful grasp of knowledge which can embrace all the long and complicated details

that go to the making up of every action of importance? To every human mind, some infirmity of passion or prejudice must cling; from all human knowledge some large deductions are to be made for the absolute impossibility of correcting an error. Hence some writers have foolishly inferred that there is no truth in History; or, at least, that its truth is greatly outweighed by its falsehood; that it is rather a source of error than of knowledge; and that there is no resource to the student but in a general scepticism. This practical absurdity is the necessary result of a philosophy aiming at more than it can accomplish. The abstract nature of truth is first delineated in just and pleasing colours, and then the abstraction is substituted for the reality: we are taught to expect what we can never obtain; and in our disappointment, like children deprived of the toys which they eagerly covet, we foolishly reject or undervalue the advantages in our power. This fault pervades the lectures on History, delivered by M. VOLNEY, about fifty years ago, in Paris. He sets out with an error in ranking History and natural philosophy alike among the sciences; and then, because the evidence of History is clearly different from that of natural philosophy, he infers that History is of far less importance, and of far less social and practical utility, than it had ever before been considered. Ancient writers would not have fallen into this error: they all term History an *art*, and not a *science;* and they would as little have thought of confounding the operations of the mind in matters of science, with those which relate to historical testimony, as of treating politics like a question of abstract reasoning, according to the method of Jean Jacques Rousseau. The truth of History is like the truth established on legal trials. It may not be positive,

VOLNEY.

but with due care, it is sufficient to enlighten the conscience, and to guide the conduct. How weakly would he argue, who should contend that, because judges and juries sometimes err, witnesses sometimes deceive, the innocent sometimes suffer, and the guilty sometimes escape, therefore the administration of the law is altogether an evil, and society would do better without it! Just as weak are the arguments directed against the utility of History, because its evidence is sometimes fallible. This is nothing more than the old sophistical form of argument, from the abuse of a thing, against its use. It is the general commonplace of all those declamations against governments, and society in general, with which the disaffected and factious, in modern times, have sought to bring about revolutions, and to subvert all established order.

Utility essential in History.

26. The next essential quality of History is *utility*. Vain is the difference between truth and fable, if no advantage be derivable from either; and a fable, an apologue, a parable, professedly the work of imagination, is far more valuable, if it inculcate sound doctrine and virtuous sentiment, than a whole volume of History, unmeaning in itself, or written with views pernicious to mankind. The foundation of the utility of History is to be found in the common adage—"Example is better than precept;" an adage which has been somewhat varied in expression by the best classical writers, but which, in the common proverbial form, possesses as much force as truth. "*Pauci prudentiâ,*" says TACITUS, "*honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt; plures aliorum eventis docentur.*" SENECA says, "*Longum iter per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla.*" It is true, that fable agrees with History in presenting instruction in the form of example; but the latter

Utility essential in History.

possesses the great and invaluable superiority which arises from the belief of reality. Hence it is more philosophical. Granted, that History "is philosophy teaching by example;" but the question immediately presents itself, what philosophy is that which History should teach? what is the utility which ought to be its main and principal object? The answer is as ready as the question: virtue, the moral improvement of man, his duties here, and the means which fit him for happiness hereafter: these form not indeed the sole, but certainly the first and highest aims, which both the writer and reader of History should have in view. In this sense, CICERO calls History "the mistress of life;" and TACITUS says, "It is the peculiar office of the annalist to take care that virtue be not passed over in silence; and that men may fear to do or speak evil, from the infamy which may await them in the opinion of posterity." One instance from History, of amiable virtue, or of despicable vice, has often done more than a whole course of ethics, to recommend the former, and discountenance the latter. Has not the continence of *Scipio* become proverbial? And is not a *Nero* the very synonym of a tyrant? To improve us in virtue, however, though the first and highest, is not the only use of History; it also serves to form and strengthen the intellect; it opens to our view the nature of the great scene in which we are called to act a part. It wonderfully multiplies the objects of our thoughts; and, as it were, forces us to the task of comparing them together, and reducing them to order and arrangement. Hence the penetration is sharpened, the attention is fixed, the judgment is strengthened; the mind habituates itself to the divine faculty of "looking before and after;" it acquires the habit of turning itself about more quickly, dis-

TACITUS.

covering expedients and solving difficulties; it is not taken unawares by the shafts of fortune, does not cry out upon chance, or come (as Cicero says) to that foolish exclamation, "Who would have thought it!" but meets unabashed the storm which has fallen on nobler heads, and submits at once, with dignity and humility, to the will of Providence. Hence, "the study of History," says Polybius, "is the best school in which a man can learn how to conduct himself in all the situations of life." It is certainly most useful to those who are destined to act a part on the widest theatre; and it forms an indispensable branch of education to the legislator and the statesman; but above all, must it be useful to nations and communities of men, which would cease to exist, if we were ephemeral creatures, like "the flies of a summer," or only gregarious, for common purposes of spoil and rapine, like the wolves which are driven down from the Alps in winter by the pinchings of hunger, and flee back in the spring, each to his solitude among the mountains. But nations cannot be perpetuated, otherwise than by maintaining certain institutions, and following certain principles and examples; for though there is nothing ever at a standstill in human affairs, and every new age brings new discoveries and opinions, and wants and desires; yet if there be not preserved a constant memory of what has gone before, and a sort of deference and veneration for antiquity, the chain of national identity will soon be broken; and with the body and form of what we once were, will perish the national spirit. Thus it is, that in the words of our great philosophic dramatist—

Utility essential in History.

> "Mighty states, characterless, are grated
> To dusty nothing."

History tends to prevent these perpetual dissolutions of

human society, not only by tracing the salutary principles of our own conservation, but by showing us the fatal accidents which have undermined or broken up the social edifice, in other ages and parts of the world; for it is History which, as Sir Walter Raleigh says, "has carried our knowledge over the vast and devouring space of so many thousands of years." By it we behold the world, as it was first created, inhabited, governed, deluged, repeopled: we see how kings and kingdoms have flourished and have fallen; we see virtues and vices producing their natural fruits; we live with our ancestors, and connect age with age, in one unbroken succession; and, in fine, we are enabled to frame a wise and permanent policy, by calculating the consequences of past actions, if we will not be dazzled by a single light, but compare the various passages of History with each other.

What kind of History is most useful.

27. It has sometimes been questioned whether Histories of recent events, or those of the transactions of distant ages, are of the greater importance; but this, like many other questions of the like nature, is the mere amusement of an idle mind. If it were asked whether it be more useful to read Livy's History of Rome, or some obscure annalist of the reign of George the Third, nobody would hesitate to prefer the more ancient; and, on the contrary, Southey's Life of Nelson must indisputably rank higher in point of utility to an English reader, and especially to an English seaman, than any life in Cornelius Nepos, though the latter was a writer of no mean ability. "Every difference in manners, in civilization, and in government," it is said, "increases the difficulty of making any application of the facts." This is not so, because the application to be made may not at all depend on the difference in question. What has the difference of government between Rome and England to do

with the beautiful anecdote of the Roman matron presenting her children to her female friend, and saying, "These are my jewels?" Does any general of modern times despise the example of Fabius Cunctator, because the state of manners and civilization is now vastly different from what it was when that great man saved his country by well-timed delay? The error of the observation above noticed is the common error of that modern philosophy, which regards facts as mere insulated things, aliquot parts of human existence, all equal in weight and dignity; whereas they should be tried not *numero*, but *pondere*: the piece should be assayed and valued, not by its magnitude, but by the richness of its metal. If we merely apply facts to facts, there can be no use in History whatever; for in no two portions of History can we find facts alike in all their extrinsic circumstances; and again, if we take a fact nakedly, without inquiry into its causes, it is altogether insignificant. Curtius devoting himself to death for the preservation of his country, is merely a young gentleman leaping into a ditch; and the Gaul casting iron into the scale, with the insolent exclamation, *Væ victis!* is only the gross cheat of a tricking huckster. Viewed in this light, the reader has no direct personal concern with the facts of which he reads: "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?"—but he *is* interested in the feelings, the sentiments, the principles, on which alone the application of historical facts depends. He feels himself exalted to a manly contempt of pain and torture, when he reads the story of Regulus: and if he passes from that to the death of Nero, he derives from the contrast an increased power of estimating the vast distance between infamy and honour. The differences in manners, in civilization, and in government, are doubtless to be taken into the account in

estimating the action; they are part of it; but when we have made the estimate, when we have ascertained what was extrinsic to the agent, and what was to be attributed to his intellectual and moral energy, then the result is a matter of permanent and practical utility, whether it happened yesterday or two thousand years ago. It was a fine expression of AURELIUS FUSCUS, who, in describing the lamentable execution of Cicero, through the wicked machinations of Mark Antony, thus apostrophised the former: "*Uno proscriptus sæculo, proscribes Antonium omnibus.*"[1] In short, the utility of History depends, not on loading the memory with facts, but on filling the mind with principles. The art is to discriminate the general principle in the particular fact. All men can do this roughly and in the gross; but he alone who has well studied a multiplicity of cases can determine on the various shades of principle, which distinguish practical virtues and vices, which enable us to make our way through temptations, and to rise proudly above opposing obstacles.

History compared with experience.

28. It is an idle dispute, whether a knowledge of History, or an experience in the ways of the world, be the most effectual means of teaching us how to act with our fellow-men. Both are necessary; but study naturally precedes practice, and fits us for it. It serves to form the judgment and the heart. It accustoms the mind to expansion, and prepares it for temptation and struggle. In the study of History too, if well and powerfully written, we see the picture at full length, the whole succession of cause and effect is traced, the false colouring is washed off, the impostor of the day becomes the convict of posterity,

[1] "Thyself proscribed by one age, thou wilt proscribe Antony throughout all ages."

and he who was blamed and calumniated while living, is embalmed after death in the regrets, the admiration, the love of mankind.

How far History is effectual.

29. It may be said, that History does not always work these wonders. True. Neither have the sweet enticements of poetry, nor the unanswerable arguments of philosophy, nor even the splendid promises and terrible denunciations of religion, yet brought mankind to that happy state, for which, contemplating human nature in the abstract, we should say it is ultimately calculated. This then is no more an objection to the utility of History than to that of any other species of knowledge. It is a proof of human imperfection, and it is nothing else. But are there not some evident advantages which have resulted from the study of History in modern times? Has it not advanced civilization? Has it not perpetuated public virtue, as the images of their ancestors for so many ages kept alive the spirit of the Roman nobility? Has it not broken down many of the barriers which vanity and ignorance raised between nations? Has it not moderated ferocity in war: and barbarous customs, laws, and punishments in peace? Has it not enlightened superstition, allayed bigotry, and annihilated the most odious forms of religious intolerance; and may we not hope that by recording the dreadful effects of pretended philosophy in modern times, it will finally eradicate the fatal madness of atheism? "To converse with historians," says a celebrated writer, "is to keep good company." Surely those who associate with Tacitus and Livy, with Thucydides and Xenophon, with Guicciardini and Davila, must be dull indeed if they do not derive from their companions something more than the entertainment of an idle hour.

30. But is it nothing, that History adds largely to the

History a source of pleasure.

stock of our innocent pleasures? This it does, however rudely executed: this it has done in all stages of the progress of mankind. "*Historia,*" says Cicero, "*quoquo modo scripta delectat.*"[1] It was an early amusement. Achilles, in Homer, is introduced singing to his harp the glorious deeds of former heroes; and few nations are so uncultivated as not to possess some means of recording their deeds; none are so dull as to listen to those records without curiosity, without interest, without delight. The love of History is as inseparable from human nature as the love of fame. Hence the cairn, the Runic song, the knotted threads of the South American savage, and all those various means by which man has sought to connect himself with those of his own race who preceded, and with those who were to follow him. The chief interest of History has been said to arise from the vices and follies of mankind. This is by no means true. The source of the mistake probably originates in this, that curiosity, or the vague desire of knowledge, is one of the deepest-rooted, as well as most useful and necessary, inclinations of the human mind. Hence we are led to devour, too often with an undiscriminating appetite, whatever is related to us in historical connection. We want to see the end of the story; and this, indifferently, whether it be a tale of wo or joy, of triumphant vice, or of virtue persecuted and depressed. But it cannot be said that mankind does not sympathise much more strongly with the virtuous than with the wicked: it is not true that we do not feel greater pleasure in reading those histories which present illustrious examples of patriotism, of generosity, and whatever else ennobles and exalts the human mind, than those which

[1] "History, however written, is delightful."

only abound in petty intrigues, and the various artifices of a lowminded selfishness and corruption. The decline and fall of a great empire is no less instructive than its rise and growth, but it is surely not by any means so interesting; and though the mode of execution may do the writer credit, yet the choice of his subject rather testifies against his heart. Machiavel himself laments that his subject necessarily abounded in examples of weakness and wickedness. "Of these slothful principles," says he, in his introduction to the Florentine History, "and of these most vile arms, my History will be full." But in choosing for a subject the life of Castruccio, he rejoices "that he has found in it many things which, both as to virtue and as to fortune, are highly exemplary." Millot considers in History only two objects,—truth and utility; but why should we suppose that this is the only branch of literature to which the rule of the poet does not apply—

"Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci?"[1]

The Author of nature has not so ordered it, that all our duties should be separated from all our pleasures, nor that we should necessarily acquire knowledge only by dry and repulsive studies. On the contrary, Cicero has observed that, "in those very things which we learn and know, there are certain inviting qualities by which we are moved to learning and knowledge." Children and childish nations, indeed, are delighted with tales of fairies and giants; and Mandeville's fabulous relation of the marvellous things which he pretended to have met with in his travels, may have suited the gross ignorance of the times in which he

[1] "He has effected every point who has combined the useful with the agreeable."

lived, but his ridiculous fabrications would certainly not afford a hundredth part so much gratification in the perusal now, as the journal of the simplest circumnavigator of the globe. The solid and permanent pleasure of History, therefore, does not consist in strange events, in amplifications, and exaggerations, but in the truth, and beauty, and grandeur of the sentiments and descriptions, in the simple and unaffected ease of the narrative, in the endless variety of particulars, all pressing as it were to one goal, all throwing light on each other, and all illustrating the subtle movements of the human heart, the influence of social principles and institutions, or the great laws of Providence in the government of the world. The pleasures of History are indeed less sweet and fascinating than those of poetry; less ostentatious and striking than those of oratory; but they require as much the cultivation of the author, and deserve as much the approbation of the reader; more especially as the rule, *artis est celare artem*,[1] applies to them with peculiar aptitude. They ought to appear to result, as it were, necessarily from the events, never from the author, except in the sole, and, as we think, generally unfortunate case of autobiography. The orator is engaged in an attempt to subdue and carry away the mind of his hearer, and it is therefore allowable that the composition should bear traces of effort and exertion: the poet has chosen pleasure as the first and principal object of his work, and is supposed to write under an inspiration made up of exalted feelings and lively impressions; but the only ostensible business of the historian is to convey to us a faithful record of that which has come to pass in the world, without bias or exaggeration, with lucid order and in a perspicuous style. The

[1] "It is the business of art to disguise art."

lower his pretensions in this respect, the more praiseworthy is his success, if he contrive to keep alive our interest, without flattering our passions, or perverting the truth.

Combination of qualities in History.

31. This leads to the consideration how truth, utility, and pleasure are to be combined in History; and on this head there are but two rules: first, that as far as possible these qualities should all enter into the composition; and, secondly, that they should only enter into it in the rank and subordination here designated. The truth should be sacrificed to nothing; it should be sought most earnestly, and detailed most faithfully; it should be diligently sifted from error, and from mere opinion; it should be made out clearly and plainly, without favour or affection, like a testimony delivered under the solemnity of an oath before the tribunal of justice. Utility should not be taken as a test of truth; men should not think that the laws of truth can safely be dispensed with on any vain and foolish notion of contributing to the advantage of themselves or others. Pious frauds are insults to the Divinity, and frauds of an opposite kind, which some modern historians have committed to depreciate religion, are, if possible, greater offences against God and man. If the hope or pretence of doing good is not to be accepted as an apology for falsehood, it is needless to say, that History is not to be corrupted on lighter grounds,—for the sake of saying a witty thing, or telling a wonderful story, to amuse the thoughtless, or to astonish the credulous. But as all truths are not worthy of record, there is abundant scope for judgment in the selection; and the choice can only be made with a view to profit or to delight. Both are legitimate motives, and neither should be pursued alone. In

this respect, however, the natural temper and disposition of the writers will unavoidably betray themselves; while the frivolous fill their narratives with amusing trifles, the dull and plodding will labour to enforce a doctrine which nobody will read: greater geniuses will certainly not fall into such gross errors; but one, like Tacitus, will see all events under a moral aspect, another, like Herodotus, will be attracted by everything novel and interesting. Livy has, in a great degree, united instruction with entertainment; the former predominating, as it always should, in the choice of the subject and in the general scope of the work; the latter enlivening its details, and not suffering the attention to flag. Such a combination is a work of no less difficulty than dignity. It is difficult; for, in the words of BACON, "To carry backward the mind in writing, and, as it were, to make it old—diligently to investigate and faithfully to record, and by the light of language to place before our very eyes, the movements of the times, the characters of persons, the hesitations of councils, the course and flow of actions as of waters, the hollowness of pretences, the secrets of empire—is truly a work of great labour and judgment; especially when we consider the uncertainty of all ancient events, and the danger of meddling with those which are recent." Rare is the conjunction of assiduity and animation, of judgment with integrity, of taste with genius, which is necessary to subdue all these difficulties; and when the task is at all successfully executed, it raises History to a high rank among human studies. In vain has it been urged, that the many falsifications of History deprive it of all real dignity, and render it unworthy of the rank which it has generally held in the scale of education. This is one of

the pretended discoveries of modern days; the result of that philosophy, which in hunting after an abstract and imaginary perfection, overlooks all practical good. The great men of antiquity thought otherwise. Demosthenes is said to have copied the history of Thucydides eight times through with his own hand; and Plutarch tells us that Cato the Censor, who took upon himself a peculiar care in the education of his son, drew up a collection of historical facts for the boy's use, and wrote them over himself in large characters, wishing, as he said, that his son, before going from home, might become acquainted with the great men of his own country, and form himself upon those ancient models of probity and virtue. Doubtless, the study of History will not supply the want of all other learning; nor is the student exempted from the necessity of exercising his own reason, in judging of the truth or utility of what he reads: and this reflection brings us to the next point to be considered, namely, the means of deriving from History those benefits which its essential qualities are calculated to produce.

Means of cultivating History.

32. The means of cultivating History to advantage, naturally divide themselves into two heads, according as they relate to the art of composing History, or to the prosecution of its study; in other words, as they respect the writer or the reader.

33. The art of writing History has been treated professedly, or incidentally, by a great number of authors. Of those who have made it their special object, no one has written with more liveliness or felicity, than LUCIAN, in his celebrated treatise, "How History ought to be written:" and among the incidental notices of History, in this point

of view, few are more close and striking, than those which we find in MONTAIGNE. Our purpose, however, requires a more detailed consideration of this part of the subject: and we shall therefore consider, first, the character of the historian, and then, its aptitude to particular kinds of History. The character of the historian, as such, refers either to the substance, or form of his work: in regard to the former, we may class our observations under the heads of personal qualification, means of knowledge, and motives to write; and, in regard to the latter, under those of arrangement and style.

Moral qualifications of the historian.

34. Among the personal qualifications of the historian, the first place is undoubtedly due to his moral sentiments. This rule, so important in the practical habits of life, cannot but be equally important in our studies:—

"Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis acescit."[1]

We take a guide; but he is blind: we seek counsel; but it is of an enemy:—what must be the result? Unawares we are led into a pitfall; and we become parties to the sacrifice of our dearest interests. If we did not know the deceitfulness of the human heart, we should be surprised, that a man from bad and vicious motives should ever undertake to write History; since "Facts," as it is said, "are stubborn things;" and, distort and disfigure them as we will, to-day, to-morrow, or it may be next year, or even in the following century, they will rise up in judgment against us: and if we think to escape this danger by infusing all our poison into the work, only in the form of reflection and general discussion, we shall but expose our

[1] "Unless the vessel itself is clean, whatever you pour into it becomes sour."

motives to be more immediately anatomised and laid open by the pen of a just but severe criticism.

Sincerity.

35. The first moral quality which the historian should possess, is a great *sincerity*. He should be of a plain and downright honesty,—of a "winnow'd purity" of truth; so that in reading his work one might be sure, that whatever were his mistakes and errors in point of fact, however credulous, however weak in judgment, or limited in his sphere of observation, still there was no obliquity of purpose, no taint in the sweetness of the water at its very source. The irreproachable integrity of Thucydides was one of the qualifications which early attracted the respect of all readers. We do not question his assertions, because we know the sincerity of his heart. So it is with Tacitus, "who," says Montaigne, "was a great man, upright and bold." It was otherwise with Sallust; whose History of the Catilinarian War, with all its beauties of style, is rendered contemptible by the mean and selfish envy which induced him almost to suppress the mention of Cicero, the proper hero of the piece. In modern times we have, unfortunately, historians of great name, in whom we can scarcely read a page, without discovering a lurking and insidious purpose of insincerity. VOLTAIRE, GIBBON, and HUME, are all obnoxious to this charge: and in our eyes, the talents which they possess, but poorly compensate this their radical and most pernicious defect. The remarks of Lucian, on the studious insincerity of some historians, are no less amusing than they are just. "You are partial," says he (we quote only the substance of his observations); "you omit the facts which make against your own party; you extol your own chiefs and leaders to the skies. Do you think that your business is that of a hired

panegyrist? It is very allowable in the poet, when he would paint to us his hero, to describe him with

> 'Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
> An eye like Mars to threaten and command;
> A station like the herald Mercury,
> New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill:'

but only try how all this figurative eulogy would read in History; and you will be convinced that your pen should be guided by plain and simple truth. Excessive praise disgusts the very individual to whom you mean to pay your court by it. The historian Aristobulus, whilst sailing down the Hydaspes, in the same vessel with Alexander, read to that prince a narrative, in which he had described him as fighting alone, on foot, against king Porus on his elephant; but Alexander, indignant at the absurd fabrication, snatched the volume from the hands of the historian, and threw it into the middle of the stream, with a sharp reprimand for its falsehood." "Write," continues Lucian, "the truth, and nothing else. It is not you, who are responsible for events. If your countrymen fled in battle, it was not you that made them run away. Remember that you are not writing for the present age alone; for the unlucky, or the ignorant, or the criminal of the times which you describe: but you write for posterity; you stand on high like a Pharos; and wo be to you, if you guide the mariners who trust your light towards rocks and quicksands!"

The historian must love virtue.

36. It is not enough that the historian is irreproachable in his conduct, and unbiassed in his inclinations; he ought to have a warm love of virtue and an abhorrence of vice. It is an idle supposition, that man can abstract himself from these the fundamental qualities of his moral nature. He

who affects indifference to good or bad, to right or wrong, is already more than half enlisted in the cause of iniquity. He is a judge, who has no veneration for the laws; a soldier, who fights not for patriotism or honour, but for pay. A very little will turn the scale of his judgment: and besides, as he does not admire the beauty of virtue, it is plain that he never contemplated, and therefore cannot describe, her ravishing brightness. It is one of the best-founded accusations against Machiavel, that he recites crimes and virtuous actions with almost equal want of feeling: and the reason is, that he lived in a vicious age, and could not raise himself above the moral level of his contemporaries. Let no one, therefore, presume to become the historian of heroic events, or of virtuous and excellent persons, who is not, in some sort, transported with admiration of their excellencies. The battle of Thermopylæ demands the pen of a patriot: and the lives of the Christian martyrs could not well be written by one, who knew not the nature of sanctity and religious zeal. On the other hand, if we are to paint a people worn out and totally corrupted by the odious vices of despotism; or to portray the madness, the follies, the fury, the blasphemies of a nation, which has cast off all moral restraint; it is scarcely possible that the expressions which annex detestation to wickedness, and hold up a NERO, a SEJANUS, or a ROBESPIERRE, to the everlasting hatred of posterity, can be too forcible or too indignant.

The historian should be religious

37. The historian should be religious. This is, in great measure, to be considered as a corollary of the rule which requires him to be sincere. It may be objected, that there are some individuals, who with perfect sincerity reject the truths of religion, as insufficiently proved, or as

contrary to the best exercise which they can make of their reason. We enter not here into the judgment of such men, their motives, or their understanding; but since they are confessedly few in number, and since their sentiments, feelings, and opinions, must necessarily be so much in opposition to those of mankind in general, they should abstain from the task of the historian: a task, indeed, for which they are obviously unfit; since they cannot fairly appreciate motives which they have never felt, nor estimate the force of events which they are unable to comprehend. Some writers have imagined, that they could dexterously conceal the contempt which they felt for the religious opinions of their readers: and, indeed, it is not difficult for any impostor to delude the unthinking mass of mankind; but a slight degree of attention suffices to detect the cheat, and then he who has attempted to practise it, is exposed to the contempt he so richly merits. Gibbon felt, in the latter part of his life, the odium which he had incurred, by his disingenuous attacks on Christianity. It will occur to every one, that religion is too often mixed with superstition; and that superstition must tend to corrupt the purity of History, not only by the ignorance of the writer, but by his bad faith. When, therefore, we say, that an historian should be religious, we certainly do not mean to become the apologists of superstition. To draw the line between these two great influences of our moral nature, is, indeed, no easy task; and belongs not to our present undertaking. All that we are concerned to show is, that in the work of the historian a sense of religion should be distinctly visible; that it should be fairly and candidly set forth; that it should form a known and certain element in the character

of his narrative. There are some subjects into which it must enter more directly, than into others. The History of the Reformation, must necessarily be more occupied with the discussion of religious topics, than the Florentine History: the life of William Penn, than that of Washington. It would be idle to ask, what religious sentiments should predominate in the labours of the historian, since the answer must be, his own. It would have been neither necessary nor decorous, that Prideaux, in writing the Life of Mahomet, should have feigned to believe the doctrines of that impostor; but in Taylor's Life of Christ, we recognise with pleasure, the zeal and animation of a devout Christian. It will hence follow, that the truth of History must be in some sort warped and vitiated by the errors of different religious sects. Many events cannot be treated by a Protestant historian, in a manner perfectly satisfactory to a Roman Catholic reader: and the manner in which Tacitus has spoken of the primitive Christians (if the passage be not interpolated), must necessarily offend all the followers of the Christian faith. Doubtless, this is an evil; but it is a less evil, than that the historian should strike out of his work everything referring to the Ruler of the Universe, which would be as absurd, as to attempt to paint the beauties of the morning, without even a reflection from the beams of the rising sun. It is for the reader to determine, how much he must deduct from the credit of the narrative, on account of the religious opinions of the author; but the latter should avow those opinions, with perfect candour, and give them their full weight in the composition of his work. It is a common objection against Livy and Tacitus, that they record false miracles and omens. We may regret that such great men were

heathens; but we cannot reasonably blame them for reciting facts, as true or probable, which appeared so to them, and which in those days were generally believed. "Historians," says Montaigne, "record all events of importance: and amongst public occurrences are the common rumours and opinions: it is their part to recite common beliefs, not to regulate and decree them."

The historian must have judgment.

38. This leads us to consider the intellectual attainments which properly belong to the historian; and of these the most essential, without doubt, is a sound and clear *judgment*. His great object is to paint man as he is, and this equally whether the subject of his work be an individual or a community. "To be an historian," says MABLY, "a man should be born such:" an idle and unmeaning remark, if it be understood of the whole turn of mind and attainments; but just and true, if it regard the kind and degree of judgment which are absolutely essential to the writing of History. To the same effect speaks Lucian. It is vain to lay down rules for the acquisition of this gift of genius. *Poeta nascitur, non fit:*[1] and the historian is so far like a poet. It is not enough, that he sit in the council, or take part in the fight; he must comprehend the one and the other, deeply and intimately, in their very first principles; so that the event may appear to him to be merely the development of an idea known and familiar to his mind. Some men indefatigably treasure up all the anecdotes they hear, and pour them forth in vast profusion, without being able to form, still less to convey, any distinct notion of the result of the whole. They are like ignorant portrait painters, who mechanically trace the outlines of the features, and yet cannot make

[1] "The poet is born a poet; he cannot be rendered one."

up a countenance from them all; or who, in putting them together, omit that particular trait on which the similarity chiefly depends. Oftentimes, a single phrase will paint a character; but these compendious portraits of the mind are rarely treasured up, as they should be: "They are generally thrown to the servants," says Montaigne, "and lost in bye places." The same may be said of actions. It is in this respect, that the last-mentioned author so highly commends PLUTARCH. "Only to see this author," says he, "pick out a slight action in a man's life; or a word, that not seeming of much importance, is often in itself a whole discourse." Nothing has so much fixed Henry IV. in the love of all good Frenchmen, as that homely saying of the *poulet au pot:* and that James II. with all his faults, was a real lover of his country, is testified by his exclamation, "Spare my Englishmen!" Who can mistake the character expressed in the two words, *Cæsarem vehis?* or the self-command of him who said, "Strike, but hear"?—Judgment, clear, active, penetrating judgment, seizes at once these key-notes, and is thence led to unfold all the hidden harmony of the mind. The author who can thus penetrate into the abstruse parts of human nature, and contemplate the real man, in his proper shape and dimensions, not as he is seen under the disguises of outward fortune, will not descend to the duller task of stringing together a contexture of gazette accounts, and reports picked up in the streets, which is all that forms the substance of commonplace histories. What we say of individual description, is no less true of the delineation of national character. Some historians speak only in the abstract, of large bodies of men, in different stages of civilization. They apply the terms *Prince, People, Noble, Plebeian,* and

the like, without any regard to the very different situations in which they are respectively placed, by the influence of climate, laws, manners, science, and whatever else contributes to mould and diversify the human character. They do not, therefore, so much narrate, as speculate. They attribute the same, or nearly the same, powers and faculties to a prince of the Merovingian race in France, as to one of the house of Hanover in England; and they describe "the people," in the time of Alfred, as under the reign of George the Third. A recent French writer, M. Levesque, ingenuously confesses his surprise, on finding that the early Franks were in great part *serfs*, or in the language of the old English law *villeins*, in that state of slavery which attached them to the soil. To speak of a barbarous race, thus enthralled, thus destitute of the very rudiments of letters, thus sunk in almost heathen superstition, as one would of the free and enlightened Scottish peasantry of the present day, is an error, in moral description, quite as gross as the geographical blunders which Lucian ridicules in an historian of his day. "This author," says he, "was stout enough to lift up a whole city, with all its inhabitants, and transport them from Greece into the heart of Mesopotamia." Historians who thus confound eras and circumstances, seldom content themselves with delivering their statements in an hypothetical shape. They actually invent narratives of such conduct as is suited to their imaginary personages, and gravely tell us what the clergy, or the people, did in parliaments, long before the very name of a parliament was known. All this is as unworthy the name of History, as the narrative of that other author, mentioned by Lucian, who invented a false death for Severianus, and a false oration at his funeral.

Choice of authorities.

39. The historian may perhaps excuse himself for some of these errors, by attributing them to the authorities which he has followed; but this is only confessing a different error in his own judgment. It is no less essential that he should know how to choose his authorities, than that his own testimony should be unimpeachable, and his own conceptions distinct. What shall we say to Dr. Henry's History of Britain, of which the first volume mainly rests on the authority of Ossian; when the very existence of this poet is questionable; when his era, and the place of his residence, are alike uncertain; and when all that the historian could know of him was derived from a translation indisputably falsified and interpolated? How much more carefully did Polybius proceed, in enumerating the troops that Hannibal sent into Africa, and those which he left in Spain, at the commencement of the second Punic War, B. C. 218! "I found at Lacinium" (says he) "a brazen tablet, on which all these particulars were engraved, by order of Hannibal himself. And, as this was a monument evidently authentic, I closely copied it in my narration." On the other hand, when he quotes the first treaty between Rome and Carthage (B. C. 509), he takes care to add: "I have given the purport of it as accurately as I could; but the language then used was so different from that now spoken at Rome, that the ablest interpreters are often at a loss to explain the meaning of the words." The historian is in all cases necessarily removed from the greater part of the events which he records, either by an interval of time or of space. It may be supposed, that the general, who commands in a battle, must be able to give a faithful account of it; yet Asinius Pollio detected a misstatement in the Commentaries of Cæsar himself, either because the general could

not have his eye on all parts of his army at once, and had given credit to some particular individual, who had not delivered him a true account; or else because the officers who commanded under him, had inaccurately reported what had occurred in his absence. "Thus may we see," says Montaigne, "that the inquisition after truth is a matter of great delicacy, when the report of the same battle is differently given by the different persons engaged in it, without any intention to deceive; and when we cannot decide between the contradictory statements, otherwise than as one would do on a solemn trial at law,—by strict examination and comparison of all the particulars deposed to by the witnesses." This examination must be directed either by natural penetration, or by acquired knowledge of the subjects under consideration. To the first, a sharpness of intellect is necessary, which no less distinguishes one historian from another, than it does man from man, in the more active scenes of life. The only danger is, that this shrewdness may degenerate into an excessive self-confidence, and that a writer may reject credible and important testimony, because it is not consistent with his own preconceived notions, or because he has taken a prejudice against the witness. The other circumstance is still more important. No man, however wise and skilful, can be equally wise and skilful on all subjects. The general historian must embrace a very large diversity of matter: he must speak now as a soldier, or as a sailor, anon as a financier, presently as a physician, a painter, or a husbandman; and in any of these characters, the use of inappropriate terms, much more the statement of erroneous or improbable facts, may subject him to deserved censure. Thus Lucian speaks of an author, who affected to deal much in military details, but who confounded a parallel

line with an oblique one, and marching in front with marching on the flank. In all such cases, the old legal rule is the best to be followed: *cuique in arte suâ credendum est.*[1] We are not to trust to a cloistered monk for the military part of the History of the Crusades: and it would be equally injudicious to rest satisfied with what a distinguished general might happen incidentally to say of civil politics, or of the fine arts. In the present age, every art and every science has been separately and successfully cultivated; nor is it very difficult for the historian to select the best guides, even on the ground of their popular reputation. Thus, the antiquarian will easily mark out for us the period in the history of our own country, beyond which we possess few lights but those of tradition, and will enable us satisfactorily to discriminate between true and fabricated records. BUCHANAN, the Scottish historian, was undoubtedly a man of great learning and singular attainments. He professed to write for the purpose of rescuing the exploits of his countrymen "from the vanity of fables and the injury of oblivion:" and yet he begins with the History of King Fergus, 330 years before the birth of Christ! Sir DAVID DALRYMPLE, who proceeded on very different grounds, commences his "Annals of Scotland" with the accession of Malcolm Canmore to the throne, A. D. 1057: "Because," says he, "the History of Scotland, previous to that period, is involved in obscurity and fable." Thus he passes over in silent contempt, a period of 1387 years, filled by Buchanan with a regular series of Scottish kings! There can be no doubt, but that in the judgment suitable to an historian, Sir David Dalrymple was infinitely superior to Buchanan. Judgment is not only shown in rejecting the marvellous,

[1] "Every man is an authority in respect of his own business."

but in choosing among things probable, that which has the greater probability, not merely in itself, but from the character of its narrator. The historian, therefore, in comparing his authorities, must look well to the bias of their minds, to the opinions which they held, to the party which they meant to serve. The expression, "Punic faith," has become proverbial, for no other reason, than that the historians of Carthage now extant are all Romans. He must consider the state of science at the time in which his authorities flourished. The belief in witchcraft was very general in England until after the Revolution of 1688: the notion of sympathetic action on bodies at a distance prevailed, even among learned men, about the same period: it would, therefore, be wrong, on the one hand, to tax an author of that time with excessive credulity for maintaining either of these errors; and on the other, to credit readily the facts which he asserts in their support. The judgment of an historian may be safely estimated from the authorities which he cites, and the reliance which he places on them. He who should allow the same weight to Archbishop Turpin's supposed History of Charlemagne, which he does to Thucydides, would certainly be little competent to draw from either an accurate representation of facts. With such a writer, every historical statement is a fact; but in return, he carefully avoids supplying anything from the stores of his own imagination. He will not venture to assert that Cromwell was ambitious; but he narrates with scrupulous fidelity, the prodigies that were observed to take place about the time of the Protector's death.

The historian should have taste.

40. It is not enough that the historian be a man of judgment: he must also have some *taste*. He must know how to distinguish the sublime from the insipid or the absurd; how

to maintain an unity of feeling and character throughout his work, how to suit the parts to each other, so that no one should have the preponderance. A man of very sound practical judgment may be extremely defective in this respect. He will resemble the artist, who is exquisite in the detail, but inadequate to the combinations:—

> "Infelix operis summâ, quia ponere totum
> Nesciet."[1]

The taste of an historian is commonly supposed to be discernible chiefly in his style; but there is a more refined species of taste, which regards the general arrangement of the work, the balancing of its parts, the relief, the light and shade, the tone of colouring, which pervades the piece. The author shows his taste in the choice of his subject, as well as in the handling of it. He suits it to his strength; he chooses an argument in which he is at home, and on which he can expatiate. He adapts his expressions to the scene which he has to describe: he is grave and sententious in the council, animated and vehement in the field. He passes hastily over trivial events, and dwells with force and energy on those which are of importance. "It must not be supposed," says Lucian, "that facts present themselves spontaneously, or at hazard, to the pen of the historian: the selection and disposition of them require great consideration and care." In this respect, as in many others, the task of the historian resembles that of the poet. We must beware, however, not to estimate the value of an historical work merely by the taste and refinement of the author. This is an error, perhaps, too prevalent in the present day. Disgusted by the asperities and unpolished roughness of our

[1] "Unfortunate in the completion of a work, because incapable of tastefully putting together its parts."

older writers, among whose works we wander as in a forest of noble trees interspersed with tangled brakes and thickets, the smooth and garden-like surface of a more polished work fascinates the eye, and prevents us from observing that it is really productive of little fruit, and scarcely worth the labour bestowed on its cultivation.

Studies essential to the historian.

41. The judgment and taste of the historian, though they do not wholly depend on his *previous studies*, must be greatly affected by them; it is right, therefore, to advert in this place to such studies as seem to be indispensable preliminaries to the writing of History. We must not suppose that every man is competent to this task who can turn a sentence neatly, and has sufficient patience to consult all the gazettes and state papers of the day, or to make a digest and abstract of the narratives of preceding writers. Far different must be the attainments of one who aspires to rank with the great historians of antiquity. He must have studied man in the abstract, and men

> ——— "in the daily walk
> Of the world's business."

He must have contemplated society in its constituent elements, and societies in their mutual relations. He must possess a competent knowledge of the arts of war and peace, and be so far versed in literature, as is necessary to the clear arrangement of his thoughts, and to the vigour and polish of his language. We have already said, that in all the various topics which may fall within the scope of History, especially in modern times, the historian cannot be equally versed: but in studies which are fundamental to his subject, and without which his errors must be gross and revolting, there is no excuse for total ignorance.

Philosophy of the human mind.

42. The *philosophy of the human mind* stands in the head and front of the indispensable studies. Man's common nature must be known, or the actions of this or that man will be an enigma and a mystery. The historian, therefore, should be a proficient in the science commonly, though somewhat improperly, called metaphysics. We mean not the metaphysics of the French Encyclopédie, which have been aptly described as "the metaphysics of an under-graduate," and paralleled with "the mathematics of an exciseman." We mean not new metaphysics, or new philosophy of any sort. "The common run of fashionable authors, on matters of History and antiquity, and general philosophical research," says a profound and eloquent writer,[1] "have now, for about a hundred years, been telling the world, in at least a hundred publications every year, that till they themselves appeared among us, there was no knowledge on this earth at all:"—just as if we should suppose the falling of stones from the sky, in our own days, to be the very first instances of gravitation. But in our view of the metaphysics necessary to an historian, they are the most ancient of sciences, and to be found in the most ancient and venerable of books. The Holy Scriptures present us with a notion of human nature, to the truth of which every heart bears witness. We there see man described as a weak, fallible, offending, and responsible creature; whose depravity produces want and fear, and whose wants and fears are the natural foundation of society. We see this offspring of natural imbecility called to act a part a little lower than the angels, but to act it only under a guidance and an inspiration which if he abandon or reject, he is lost and irretrievably ruined. This

[1] Professor Wilde.

most ancient system of philosophy places the moral being of man at the head of all his faculties; and teaches that all his powers, mental and corporeal, are only means to enable him to let his *light* shine before others, and that this light "is light from heaven." By this scale, and by this alone, is human greatness to be measured; and the historian who does not possess this clue can never conduct us through the labyrinth of human affairs.

Knowledge of the world.

43. It is true, that History nowhere presents us with the abstract, man: her business is with *men*, engaged in their various occupations and pursuits, instigated by their prejudices and follies, their hopes and fears; seeking wealth, and fame, and honours, and distinctions; stimulated by the necessity of action, or carried away by the love of ease and enjoyment. To conceive the endless variety of this moving scene, we must have mixed with the crowd, and been driven this way and that by its alternate flux and reflux. The knowledge thus acquired is commonly called a knowledge of the world: some writers seem to possess it mechanically, as it were by a natural tact, and an unconscious experience. Machiavel, with very little reflection on the intrinsic merit of virtue, or the natural deformity of vice, was a shrewd and attentive observer of both, as they presented themselves to him in the course of a very busy life, and amidst political changes of great frequency and variety. He abounds, perhaps, more than any other writer, in practical rules, fitted for the conduct of men with a view to their own interest, or that of their faction or country, as separate and distinct from the great interests of mankind. Undoubtedly much is to be learnt from such a writer; but if to his practical knowledge of man, on the mere surface, he had joined a penetrating view into the

nature of human motives, and thoughts, and propensities, the value of his work would have been incalculably augmented.

Political science essential to the historian.

44. Nor is it merely with single individuals that the historian is concerned. Unless he be a biographer in the very narrowest sense of the word, he must speak of numbers acting together;—of tribes, and races, and nations. MABLY, therefore, requires that the historian should have studied *political science*, of which he distinguishes two kinds; one founded on the laws which nature has laid down for the happiness of mankind, the other, on variable and conventional rights established by men—the fruit, as he says, of passion, violence, and injustice, and capable of affording only false benefits and great evils. The acrimonious feeling and declamatory style of Mably render him an inconvenient guide in this or any other study; but it is certainly indispensable, that the historian who undertakes to develop political movements should be a well-grounded politician. He ought not, however, to proceed on any abstract theory, inconsistent with the previous History of mankind; but he should look to the origin of civil society as a matter of fact, and particularly should observe, that as the rise of different forms of government cannot all be referred to one common principle, so neither can the practical rules of policy be the same in all countries. Hence those particular researches, and that information which render a man adequate to undertake the History of France, may be worse than useless to him in attempting that of England; and, in like manner, we may observe, that the foundations of ancient and modern republics being vastly different, their historians should be furnished with very different data, and the works themselves should be composed in as different a spirit and feeling. It is gene-

rally acknowledged, that HUME is an unsafe guide in English politics, because his political principles were as little those of the English constitution, as his belief was that of the English church; and with all the labour which ROBERTSON bestowed on his justly-celebrated History of Charles V., we cannot but consider that his talents were much more fitly employed on his History of Scotland. Foreign politics are often no less necessary to be known by the historian than domestic. The relation of states to each other, both in law and in fact; their clashing interests; their alliances, feuds, and mutual influence on a common balance of power are things which, as they may fall more or less within the scope of the author's work, so they require more or less of his previous attention.

Particular studies.

45. Particular subjects require, in the historian, information of a particular kind. Thus he who has principally to treat of military operations, should, like POLYBIUS, possess a thorough knowledge of the military art: and he who, like DE THOU, has to speak of disputed points of legal and constitutional right, should, like that eminent judge, be profoundly skilled in the laws and institutions of his country. On the other hand, a writer of Ecclesiastical History may be excused for some deficiency in finance, or general statistics: and he who professes to delineate the progress of literature, is not expected to be minutely accurate in his incidental notices of law. The only rule that can be laid down on this point is, that the historian should be a perfect master of those studies which are connected with the characteristic and leading topics of his work; and that, with respect to inferior and secondary matters, he should be guided by authorities of known weight and reputation.

Physical qualities of the historian.

46. It may seem hardly within the scope of such an essay as the present, to speak of the physical qualities of the historian; but yet more depends on them than may at first sight appear probable. The earliest historians, such as Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, encountered great bodily fatigue and peril, in the prosecution of their efforts to collect materials for history; and so Froissart in his plain and simple manner says, "I have searched in my time the greater part of Christendom (in truth, who seeks will find), and wherever I came, I made inquiry after such ancient knights and squires, as had been present at these deeds of arms, and such as were well enabled to speak of them. I sought also for heralds of good repute, to verify and confirm what I might have heard elsewhere of these matters. In this manner have I collected the materials for this noble history: and as long as through God's grace I live, I shall continue it; for the more I work at it, the greater pleasure I receive: like the gallant knight or squire enamoured with arms, who, by perseverance and attention, perfects and accomplishes himself; thus by labouring and working on this subject, I acquire greater ability and delight." The biographer of Froissart, relating a journey which the historian took in company with a knight of high distinction, and of great experience, says: "If they arrived at a town before sunset, they availed themselves of the remnant of the day to examine the outworks of the place, or to observe the parts of it which had suffered from assaults. On their return to the inn, they continued the same conversations, either between themselves or with other knights and esquires who might be lodged there: and Froissart never went to bed until he had put down in writing every particular that he had heard." Nor were his

excursions confined to countries in a state of peace, tranquillity, and cultivation. We find him attending armies, and journeying alone in the Pyrenees, and in the Highlands of Scotland—places where, at that time of day, the law could afford no very sure protection to strangers. He who fears to encounter peril, or is incapable of surmounting fatigue, is certainly to be so far considered as deficient in the requisites of an historian. Modern times, indeed, by facilitating the means of obtaining information, have rendered these qualifications less essential than they were formerly; but certainly they are even yet of no slight importance. To be able to see and handle for one's self—to have experienced the storm and the battle—to have conversed and associated with the classes of men whose actions we describe, cannot but impress the truth more deeply on our own minds, and of course render us more competent to its true and striking description. It has been said, not without justice, that writers are sometimes censured as acrimonious and intolerant, who are in reality only oppressed by bodily disease; and that, what we consider in them as defects of moral character, may have originally needed no other corrective than a good regulation of body. This remark applies as much to the historian as to any other writer; and hence, we may justly reckon among the physical qualities to be desired in him, that suavity of bodily temperament which is generally accompanied by mildness of temper and freedom from prejudice; and which has no distant connection even with sweetness of style, and purity of language. One may easily believe, that Tacitus was a man of bilious temperament; but it is not so conceivable that Livy should have composed his long and easy-flowing work amidst the tortures of the

gout, or under the depression of a constitutional lowness of spirits.

Means of knowledge for the historian.

47. Personal qualifications are not all that is wanting to the historian; he should have superior *means of knowledge:* and these means are to be considered, either with reference to the *time* in which he lives; or to his *rank, station,* and *country.*

48. The historian is either contemporary with, or subsequent to, the events which he relates; and if subsequent, he is more or less distant from them in point of time. It does not necessarily follow that because he lives at the same epoch with the persons and things which he describes, he either can or even ought to publish at the time an exact account of them. Some indulgence is not only due, in charity and kindness, to the failings and errors of those with whom we associate; but such is the nature of human affairs, that it would not always be safe or possible to divulge them at the moment when they occur. Yet at that moment, or shortly afterwards, it may be necessary that some account of them should be given; and, as far as it is given, it should no doubt be strictly true. He who attempts it, however, must be aware, that the very circumstance of his being near to the events, often confounds and dazzles his idea of them. He must feel all the force and beauty of the celebrated address of Horace to Asinius Pollio:—

> "Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ,
> Tractas; et incedis per ignes
> Suppositos cineri doloso."[1]

49. What is essential to the truth and liveliness of

[1] "You are engaged upon a work of dangerous hazard; you walk upon fire concealed beneath deceitful ashes."

Advantages of contemporaneity.

history is, that the narrator should have it clearly before his own mind. But history is in this respect like some pictures; to which, if we approach too closely, we lose all the effect of the light, and shade, and colouring; and are often unable to trace the mere outline of the forms, much less to comprehend their arrangement and composition. Notwithstanding these, and many similar remarks, which might be made on contemporary history in general, it is certain, that some of the best historians have not only lived during the periods which they record, but have taken a considerable share in the transactions of their time. Such were Thucydides and Cæsar. Men of their stamp, indeed, could not write otherwise than instructively; and their productions must necessarily rank high in the class to which they belong. But it is not so much because they lived at the time, as because the situations in which they were placed, afforded them especial opportunities of observation, that their testimony becomes precious; and after all, precious as it is, it must be received with the deductions necessary to be made on account of their partialities and interests. We must never forget, that Thucydides was an exile from Athens, and that Cæsar made his military exploits the steps to political power. A contemporary author, who determines that the publication of his work shall be postponed for many years, may give himself a greater latitude in its composition, than would otherwise be prudent. Lord CLARENDON says of his great History of the Rebellion, that as it was a work in which the infirmities of some, and the malice of others, must be boldly looked upon and mentioned; so it should not be published in the age in which it was written. Yet even this consideration ought not to make us place an entire confidence in a contemporary writer,

Few men appear to have been more conscientiously impartial than the noble author just named; but we should look in vain through his work for the same lively impression of the views entertained by the most honest of the republican party, which we find in the singular and interesting work of Mrs. Hutchinson. The great mass of contemporary information is chiefly useful as affording materials to succeeding historians; materials so much the more valuable, as they often serve to produce the very contrary effect from that which the author himself contemplated. Thus it is probable that BUBB DODDINGTON, in writing his diary, thought as little that he was painting, in his own person, the character of a mean intriguing courtier, as another writer may have intended to display to the world the portrait of a malignant and unprincipled demagogue. Contemporary historians.

50. What length of time, subsequent to great events, is most favourable to their just and useful relation, cannot be precisely determined *à priori;* nor indeed is it to be limited with mathematical exactness. It should be after the passions, which agitated the period described, have in a great measure subsided; when the billows of the storm no longer heave, and the sky has again become serene. Before that period, the voice of the charmer will not be heard, charm he never so wisely. He will be accused of wishing to sharpen the sword anew, and of provoking his countrymen or his party to resume the Subsequent historians.

——— "arma
Nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus."[1]

Before that period, too, he will not easily obtain access to those private documents which often cast an entirely new light on public transactions: for, as Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE

[1] "Weapons clammy with blood not yet expiated."

Epoch of the historian.

observes, in his "Memoirs of what passed in Christendom from 1672 to 1679," the true springs and motions of affairs, both foreign and domestic, are often mistaken, not only by the public in general, but even "in court and parliament;" and thereby, "many suspicions, confidences, applauses, and reproaches, are fastened upon persons; and at times, where they are very undeserved." On the other hand, he should not live at a period too remote. Every age has its habits and feelings, which pass away, evaporate, and are wholly lost, if not consigned to remembrance by a faithful pen: and as those habits and feelings enter largely into all the motives of individual action, we shall mistake the latter if we are ignorant of the former—we shall possess only, as it were, the lifeless form of great events, without their animating spirit; and walk among the kings and great men of antiquity, as we do among the stony effigies on their tombs.

Livy.

The great name of Livy will perhaps be cited as sanctioning the attempt to relate the History of periods long antecedent to the author's age. Livy probably wrote his History about 750 years after the traditionary building of Rome, and near 1200 years from the supposed epoch of the siege of Troy; yet he begins—"*Jam primum omnium* Satis Constat, *Trojâ captâ*," &c. What he means by *Satis Constat*, it is not easy to comprehend; since he himself states, that most of the public and private records of the Romans were destroyed in the conflagration of the city, 365 years after its first building, and near 800 years after the fall of Troy. The truth is, that the early books of Livy are little more than compilations from other authors, none of whom were of very high antiquity: for, in speaking of a transaction which occurred in the 432d year of the city, he says, "there is no writer extant who was contemporary with the

event." Fabius Pictor, the earliest of those whom he expressly quotes, was only about 250 years his predecessor; and as to the annals of the pontiffs, and such other records as those early writers could have consulted, we have the testimony of Cicero, that nothing could be more meagre and jejune than the information which they afforded. The first five books of Livy's work, then, scarcely deserve the name of legitimate History: they reach to the 365th year of the city, and embrace only what the author himself admits to be *res vetustate nimiâ obscuras*.[1] Thus much was evident to us before the noble work of NIEBUHR had come to our hands, or was at all known in this country; but since that most powerful analysis of the early Roman History has been rendered accessible to the English scholar, it is now universally admitted that "the foundation of Rome, like the arrival of the Trojans in Latium, belongs to Mythology;" and in particular, "that the two first kings are altogether mythic, and their exploits are based on no historical foundation." But Niebuhr does not rest here: if he strips off the veil of fable, he with wondrous skill traces under it the hidden substance of reality and truth; and thus renders to History the most important service that it has received in ancient or modern times. The remainder of Livy's work, that is extant, comes down to the 585th year, and leaves us infinite cause to regret the loss of the succeeding 97 books, which included the author's own times. It would be curious to see whether an author, who with such admirable skill has woven together the materials supplied by other hands, could maintain the same apparent candour, and excite a similar interest in the minds of his readers, when he united the characters of a witness and a judge. Different duties

Historian's period should not be too remote.

NIEBUHR.

[1] "Matters obscure from their exceeding antiquity."

Different duties of historians.

belong to historians, contemporary and subsequent; and the advantages which they possess are in like manner different. To the former is chiefly addressed that energetic admonition of Lucian: "Let the historian be fearless, incorrupt, free, the friend of boldness and truth, calling a fig a fig, and a spade a spade; giving nothing to hatred, nothing to love; touched neither by pity, nor shame, nor diffidence; a judge equally just and kind to all parties; a foreigner in his books, a citizen of no state, bound by no laws, subject to no king, utterly careless what this or that man will think or say of his work." To the latter, other rules are necessary. He is not apt to be misled by his interests, but by his studies: not the warmth of his feelings, but the narrowness of his views, is likely to mislead him. Let him, therefore, when he first sits down to write, espouse no theory; let him erect no bed of Procrustes, on which to stretch and distort his facts; let him reject no evidence, till he has patiently heard what the witness has to say, and candidly weighed the credit due to his deposition. The partial accounts of a BURNET, a NORTH, or a LUDLOW, are useful to those who wish to form an estimate of the times. The historian will weigh them against each other: he will do more; he will compare the opinions which an individual may have maintained in the ardour and enthusiasm of youth, with those which he may have corrected by the experience and reflection of age. For it is to be observed, that the writers of whom we now speak, not only possess the advantage of living after the passions, which heated men on both sides, have become cool; but often of hearing exaggerated sentiments retracted, and erroneous statements disavowed. They possess the advantage of trying men by their conduct, and principles by their results: they see

Estimate of partial accounts.

great events ushered in with hope, and brightness, and beauty; but the radiant clouds of morning are charged with the dark and desolating tempests of noon, and "steal unseen to west," in the cheerless gloom of the night. Such contemplations are fitted to produce a mild and meditative temper, which, while it inclines the writer to view with extreme indulgence the common errors and failings of humanity, must give a moral energy to his works, and render them powerfully subsidiary to the great cause of virtue. Much of the advantage here shown to belong to historians, who write at a period subsequent to the event, is lost, if that period be too far extended. Time sweeps away the materials of History and History itself. We have lost the collections of MUCIANUS, as well as the Decads of LIVY: and both losses are irreparable:—

Advantages of writing some time after the events.

——— "data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris."

"The monuments of the dead," says WEEVER, "within these His Majesty's dominions, are, to the shame of our time, broken down, and utterly almost ruinated; their brazen inscriptions erased, torn away, and pilfered; by which inhuman, deformidable act, the honourable memory of many virtuous and noble persons deceased, is extinguished; and the true understanding of divers families in these realms, is darkened." Even of those monuments and records of "the olden time," which are not wholly obliterated, some serve only to excite our wonder, but not to gratify our curiosity. The Pyramids, and Stonehenge, and the temple-caves of India, neither tell us how, nor when, nor by whom they were built: and, from the days of Herodotus to the present time, the hieroglyphic inscriptions of Egypt have afforded matter for doubt and dispu-

tation to the learned. We have been thus diffuse on the epoch of the historian as compared with that of his subject, because there is, perhaps, no question relative to the topic of History, on which a greater diversity of opinion exists, than whether the great ends of History are best to be obtained from the perusal of contemporary or subsequent writers.

Station of the historian.

51. It is not merely the time in which a man lives, but the sphere in which he moves, that enables him to dive into the real motives of action; to trace causes from their very source, and throughout all their meanderings, to disclose the *graves principum amicitias*, and what it is that incites the *civium ardor prava jubentium*. Sleidan observes of PHILIP DE COMINES, that "he had all the advantages for writing the History of LOUIS XI., and his son CHARLES VIII., that could be desired; since, he served both those princes in the quality of ambassador to several courts, and managed most part of the affairs which he mentions in his Memoirs." This is the more important in political History, because, as Lord HERBERT observes, in his Life of HENRY VIII., "the actions of princes are not always drawn from reason of state, but sometimes even from inclination and humour." Nor is this peculiar to those who hold the highest authority: party leaders, and even persons who contribute in a very secondary degree to the conduct of public transactions, are apt to consult their passions or interests in preference to their duties; and one cannot well determine whether they have done so or not, in a given instance, without a knowledge of their characters; which is seldom to be obtained but by living amongst them, or learning, from the most authentic sources, private anecdotes of their lives. Hence one of the greatest excellencies of Lord Clarendon's History, has always been

considered to consist in the characters which he has drawn of the various persons who took part in the disturbances of his time—characters which his various situations in public life gave him abundant means of studying. He, himself, very forcibly points out the utility of this species of information. "By viewing the temper, disposition, and habit, at that time, of the court and of the country, we may discern the minds of men prepared, of some to act, and of others to suffer, all that hath since happened. The pride of this man, and the popularity of that; the levity of one, and the morosity of another; the excess of the court in greatest want, and the parsimony and retrenchment of the country in the greatest plenty; the greatest craft and subtility in some, and the unpolished integrity of others, too much despising all craft or art; all contributing jointly to this mass of confusion now before us." It would be desirable, indeed, that the historian could mix with all ranks, and enter into the feelings of all classes; but this can seldom happen, except in times of confusion and civil disorder. The customs of society, stronger than any written ordinances, usually raise barriers, which it is not easy to overleap; and in such cases, it is better for the historian fairly to avow his ignorance, than to affect an intimate acquaintance with those modes of life and particular scenes, to which his station renders him an entire stranger. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the History of England should be written by an Englishman, and that of France by a Frenchman. There are certain mistakes which all foreigners are apt to commit, but which nevertheless savour of great absurdity. We may easily conceive how inaccurate are most English accounts of the disputes between the *noblesse* and *tiers état* of

Station of the historian.

Nationality of authors.

France, by observing how ridiculously French writers talk of what they are pleased to call the *wighs* and *toris* of England.

Motives of the historian.

52. The *motives* which prompt an historian to write are often sufficiently obvious to show at once what degree of credit is due to his statements and inferences. These motives are either directly or indirectly connected with the events detailed. It has been said that the contemporary writer is a witness, and the subsequent a judge; but there is a character which belongs much more frequently than either of these to the historian, and that is the character of an advocate. We cannot but consider in this light all *autobiography*. It is in vain that a man, about to speak of himself, professes an entire indifference and impartiality: he must necessarily, though perhaps unconsciously, court our admiration, either for his good actions or for the candour with which he avows his faults. In like manner, where a general relates his own campaigns, or a statesman his own negotiations, where a great man's secretary or humble dependent, relates the events in which his patron bore a principal part; or where the conduct of a sect or party is related by one of its most zealous members, we should be on our guard against the partiality of the writer, throughout the whole of the performance. There are other influences which are less obvious and direct. Fox, in his "History of James II.," has strenuously argued against the Tory writers, who represent that monarch to have been less intent on the establishment of absolute power, than on the restoration of the Catholic religion: yet the Stuart papers, since published, seem to turn the balance decidedly the other way. May we not attribute this inclination of Fox's judgment to the Whig principles, which he

Fox.

through life professed? GIBBON, in his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," has taken constant occasion to insinuate objections against the Divine origin and efficacy of the Christian religion. Is it to be doubted, that his own disbelief of Christianity, gave a colour not only to his arguments on this subject, but to the facts on which they were founded? It has often happened that those who were concerned in the religious or political controversies of one age, have published the History of another, only as a covert mode of recommending their own opinions, or of casting odium upon their adversaries. Others, without going so far as this, are evidently anxious to recommend their own principles by examples drawn from former times; in recording which, they are occasionally led into some exaggeration. Thus the justifiable aversion of MITFORD to the excesses of modern democracy, may perhaps have disposed him to view with somewhat too favourable an eye the measures of Philip for the subjugation of the Grecian states, and to have allowed too little merit to the great Athenian orators,— Motives of Historians. GIBBON. MITFORD.

——— "whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie,
Shook th' arsenal, and fulmined over Greece
To Macedon, and Artaxerxes' throne."

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that works in which we can detect any such bias, are to be read with a degree of caution proportionate to the obliquity of the author's motives.

53. Hitherto, we have spoken of the historian, with reference only to the *substance* of History; we must now direct our attention to its *form*. History is an important branch of literature, and historians are perhaps more uni- Form of History.

Literary attainments of historians.

versally known by their literary attainments, and classed according to their literary excellence, than with reference to any other standard. It is not the object of this essay to go at length into a critical examination of the philological principles applicable to historical composition. These will be considered in detail, in another branch of the present work. It will, however, be proper that we should notice the principal circumstances which distinguish historical productions, either as to their arrangement, or as to their style.

Arrangement of History.

54. By the *arrangement* of an historical composition, we mean the manner in which all its parts are disposed, both those which constitute the body of the work, and those which form its appendages; and as to the body of the work, we speak not here of the mere mechanical division into books, chapters, sections, and the like; but of the apt coherence of the *narrative* and *philosophic* parts, so as to give an unity to the whole. The narrative may be distinguished into *principal* and *episodical;* and in each, but more especially in the former, the writer must touch on some matters *introductory* to the main events; he must clearly develop the *events* themselves, and he will often find occasion to advert to their *results.* The *selection* of events, and the *order* in which they are related, require particular notice, and the order to be observed must be either that of *succession* or that of *causation.*

Narrative part of History.

55. We proceed, first, to speak of the narrative part, which in the early and rude attempts constituted the whole of History. Cicero tells us that from the foundation of Rome to the consulship of P. Mucius (that is for a space of 620 years), the chief pontiff wrote down the prin-

cipal occurrences of every year, and these records being preserved were called the great annals, *annales maximi*. Early History, he observes, both in Greece and Rome, was nothing better than the compilation of annals: and Pherecydes, Hellanicus, and Acusilas, the first Grecian historians, like Cato, and Pictor, and Piso, among the Romans, merely left behind them remembrances of times, and men, and places, and exploits, without any attempt at ornament, and without aiming at any other praise than that of brevity. In the works of Aulus Gellius, however (1, 5, c. 18), we find it laid down by Sempronius Asellio, that annals differ from History inasmuch as the former only inform us what happened, and when; but the latter explains the causes and consequences of the events. This distinction, so familiar to the best ages of Greek and Roman literature, is also well known in modern times; and though we can by no means admit that it is but of late years that the true uses of History have begun to be understood, yet we must allow that the proper mixture of recital and reflection manifestly distinguishes the historical productions of the present age from those of the periods preceding the revival of learning.

Narrative part of History.

56. In all narratives there must be some information which it is necessary to premise for the proper understanding of that which is to follow. This is commonly requisite in an especial degree at the opening of an historical work; but it is also useful in many subsequent parts of the composition. The general introduction should be suited to the general nature of the work. Lucian justly ridicules those, who introduce a miserable performance with a laboured opening. The commencement of the History of Thucydides has been much admired. Con-

Introductory matter.

Importance of a proper introduction.

sidering the age in which he lived, and the state of literature in his time, it was certainly more allowable for him than for Livy to ascend to the Trojan war. It is perhaps in imitation of Thucydides, that Machiavel introduces his Florentine History, with an account of the origin of all the states of modern Europe; but the imitation is not very happy, nor is the statement itself very instructive. A much more absurd introduction, however, is that to the Memoirs of Marshal Saxe, whose biographer sets out with an account of the origin of the Saxon nation! In some cases, a formal introduction to the whole work is not necessary, as in XENOPHON'S "Hellenics," which are confessedly a continuation of the History of Thucydides; but Lucian justly censures some authors of his time, who, without the same reason, adopted this mode of beginning a History, imagining that they were treading in the path of Xenophon. Introductory matter is not only necessary at the beginning of the whole History, but at almost every stage in its progress. When a great battle is to be described, some previous description of the ground is requisite; and when an important personage is brought on the scene, it is desirable that his character should be at once comprehended. In this latter particular, Lord Clarendon may serve as a model to all historians; but it must be remembered that he generally delineates from the life, having himself had many occasions of knowing personally the individuals whom he describes. Neither does he unnecessarily occupy the attention of the reader with superfluous matter of this kind, having laid down to himself the rule "not to speak of persons otherwise than as the mention of their virtues and vices is essential to the work in hand."

Lord Clarendon a model.

57. When the historian has thus cleared his path before him, his next care is to select, from the occurrences which present themselves, those only which are necessary to the force and clearness of his narrative. He must be particular, without being minute and trifling. Here again Lord Clarendon lays down the judicious rule, "to mention small and light occurrences no otherwise than as they have been introductions to matters of the greatest moment." There is nothing which more distinctly marks the man of genius, than the skill with which he seizes on the leading traits of any action, passing over all that is trifling and secondary. The predominant fault of the earlier historians, is a wearisome minuteness; that of most modern writers, is a want of particularity, and consequently of truth and effect, in the pictures which they unfold to our contemplation. According to the relative importance of the incident, should be the space it occupies, and the distinctness with which it is related. Lucian wittily ridicules an historian who despatched the great battle of Europus in seven lines, but occupied ten times as many pages in relating the trivial adventures of one of the fugitives. "This," says he, "is to gather the thorn and neglect the rose: it is as if you had been to view the admirable statue of the Olympian Jove, the masterpiece of Phidias, and had only remarked in what manner its footstool was decorated." The art of marshalling events, and characters, and all the accidents of time and place, in their due subordination, depends on the strength and energy of the author's first conception of his object. He who has to describe a battle must first weigh well the mind and intention of the leaders, and he who has to relate a long course of political intrigue must first com-

Selection of events.

The relative importance of incidents.

Importance of a leading idea or conception.

prehend the views and interests of the conflicting parties. Where the leading idea is wanting, all is confusion and disproportion: and though the separate facts may be truly stated, yet they produce a false impression, like a picture which is out of keeping, and out of perspective. Thus FULLER, in his "History of the Holy Warre," despatches the five months' siege of Malta, in 1565, with the single fact that Soliman discharged against it 78,000 bullets; but to make amends for this meagreness of information, he assures us that some of the bullets were big enough to overturn mountains! On the other hand, CAMDEN, in his Annals of Queen Elizabeth, is so particular as to give us the exact formalities of the trial of the Duke of Norfolk, and even the very words in which he was found guilty of treason by his peers, and sentenced to be executed, although these words and formalities differ in no respect whatever from the ordinary legal proceeding in such cases: and the reason which he assigns for his minuteness is, that in great affairs the least circumstances are interesting to posterity. It is indeed difficult for an author easily to foresee the estimate, which future ages will form of any given subject; and some allowance must always be made for his dwelling on those facts which are thought important by his own contemporaries. Thus even

Lord BACON.

Lord BACON concludes his "History of Henry VII." with a grave account of a dream which that King's mother had before her marriage, "that one in the likeness of a bishop, in pontifical habit, did tender her Edmund, Earl of Richmond, the king's father, for a husband." As the earl was probably at that time a handsome young man, the dream was certainly not very miraculous; but yet Bacon enumerates it among the occurrences which, he

says, " may put upon the king somewhat that may seem divine!"—nor is it unlikely that at the time when he wrote such an impression may have been very general from such an event. Perhaps he, in like manner, followed the common opinion of his time, when he spoke of the Court of Star Chamber, confirmed by Parliament in the reign of Henry VII., as " one of the sagest and noblest institutions of the kingdom:" so little are even acute minds capable of anticipating the judgment of that posterity to which they all appeal. We may add, that though Bacon was contemporary with Shakspeare, he does not seem from any passage, either in his private correspondence or his published works, to have been even aware of the existence of a poet universally esteemed at present as the greatest ornament of his age.

Allowance to be made for contemporary historians.

58. The events thought worthy of commemoration by the historian must be related in a certain *order;* and that order, however diversified, does in fact reduce itself to two species, — the order of succession and the order of causation. The order of *succession* consists in collecting and classing events simply according to their dates, and it is only varied by more or less frequent transition from place to place. As there are numberless events passing at the same time in different parts of the world, and as they all pass with different degrees of celerity, the historian who should endeavour to follow, day by day, and hour by hour, the course of time, embracing at the same time a wide range of subject, would soon involve himself and his readers in inextricable confusion. The usual mode, therefore, of writers, who follow the order of time, is to pursue one course of events, in that order, making occasional digressions to the occurrences which lie out of their prin-

Order of events.

Order of events.

cipal sphere. The sphere of the common annalist is narrow; and indeed we have before said that he is not to be called an historian; but where a larger scope is taken, time alone will be found to form an insufficient link of connection between events. "If writers," says VOLNEY, "admitting facts without scrutiny, heap them together without taste; if they reduce their labours to a sterile summary, to a list of the reigns and deaths of princes, to a record of wars, convulsions, pestilences, and famines, like most of the Asiatics ancient and modern, and like all those of the dark ages in Europe; their compositions, void of instruction and animation, will be found to have all the tediousness, and to deserve all the contempt which are usually attached to the name of Chronicles. Such works are but a rude canvas, wholly unornamented; and indeed, even when the facts are well chosen and complete, they form but the first step, they supply but the mere catalogue and storehouse, for the other kinds of History."

Causes and events.

It is, therefore, necessary to resort, at least occasionally, to that higher and more philosophic order which traces the connection of causes with effects; but as, on the one hand, *causation* is not to be wholly overlooked, so, on the other, to throw time entirely out of consideration would be to convert History into philosophy. The only question, therefore, which the historian has really to consider is, which shall be the *predominant* principle in the order which he has to follow, succession or causation: and though the former may give his work a greater appearance of simplicity, the latter will undoubtedly afford occasion for the display of superior talent. In the one case, indeed, he may begin his labour while the events themselves are going on; but then, as the future is hidden

Causes and events.

from his view, he cannot possibly determine the relative weight and importance of different facts. When Columbus sent his brother to Henry VII. of England, to negotiate for embarking on a voyage of discovery, the historians of that day would have scarcely thought it worth while to notice the failure of the negotiation: and yet on this accident has turned much of the subsequent difference between the policy of England and that of Spain. Indeed, History is full of those occurrences which, appearing at first like the cloud which was no bigger than a man's hand, at length involve the whole horizon in tempests, or pour down waters of fruitfulness on the earth. It is only after a course of events has been brought to a distinct and definite close, that we can adequately determine the relative importance of its separate parts: and without such judgment a history cannot be composed in orderly and due proportion. This is perhaps the only just complaint to be urged against Thucydides. Had he waited to the end of the Peloponnesian war before he wrote its history, he would probably have found that some circumstances on which he dwells at length were comparatively inconsequential, whilst others, which he passes over slightly, were of serious import to the final result of the contest. Doubtless in History, as well as in philosophy, causes are to be traced with great care and accuracy. The writer is not to take mere coincidence for causation: he is not to rush hastily to a conclusion from weak and insufficient premises. By clear and satisfactory reasoning he will obviate all paradoxes in History; for historical paradoxes are such only to the unreflecting or the uninformed. The same nation expelled the Tarquins, and submitted to Nero; the same individuals fought under

Skill of the historian in tracing events to their causes.

Brutus, and became parasites of Augustus. It appears strange, that any people should court despotism, or should endure anarchy: but the skilful historian will show us the same cause operating to produce effects at first sight so dissimilar. An over-refinement in tracing causes is however to be avoided. "I am not so sharp-sighted," says Clarendon, "as those who have discerned this rebellion contriving from, if not before, the death of Queen Elizabeth, and fomented by several princes and great ministers of state in Christendom, to the time that it brake out." By such fine-spun modes of reasoning, the expulsion of James II. is traced to the disgust of his grandfather, James I., at the republican austerity of his tutor, Buchanan: but this is rather following the guidance of imagination than of reason. If, avoiding these extremes, the historian apply himself to treat of events in that order which most clearly displays the connection of cause and effect, he will be most likely to attain the true objects of History, — utility and pleasure. This method is most useful, because it best enables us to profit by the examples which it presents; and it is most pleasant, for whilst it equally satisfies curiosity, it less fatigues either the memory or the judgment.

Consequences of events.

59. Historians are again distinguished by the different degrees of skill and ability which they display in explaining and rendering clear and intelligible to their readers the *consequences* of the events which they relate. The same judgment which is able to discriminate the cause will also be competent to point out the consequence; but in this there is a necessary caution to be observed: the historian must remember that he has nothing to do with futurity. Lucian satirizes a writer of his time who, in

narrating the wars then carrying on against the Parthians, predicted that Vologeses would be taken, and Osroes thrown to the lions; that a great victory would be gained (a very desirable event, no doubt, says Lucian, sarcastically); and that these successes would be commemorated by the building of a magnificent city, to be called either Victory or Concord; but which name it is to bear, says Lucian, the author has not yet determined. It is scarcely necessary to say, that historians, who thus overstep the line of their proper occupation, are to be taken neither as models nor as guides. Sir W. Temple, in his Memoirs of the War of 1672, has afforded an example of wisdom highly commendable in this respect. His work was written in 1683, and he mentions in it a prediction that William of Orange would come to the throne of England; but he adds, "though the present state of the Royal Family leave not this without appearance of arriving at one time or other, yet it is at too great distance for my eyes, which, by the course of nature, must be closed long before such an event is likely to succeed." It did succeed, however, in 1688, and Sir William lived till 1700.

Predictions of historians.

60. He who well manages his introduction, the main course of the events, and the general results, will give to history the same unity and completeness which is conferred on an epic poem, by a regular beginning, a middle, and an end. Nevertheless, there must always be much subsidiary matter in the nature of episode; the skilful interweaving of which with the main subject adds greatly to the reputation of the author and to the value of the work. How difficult a part of the historian's duty this is, may be inferred from the following passage in Lord

Subsidiary matter.

On the skilful interweaving of episode.

Holland's preface to Fox's History of James II.:—"In speaking of the writers of that period," says his Lordship, "he (Fox) lamented that he had not devised a method of interweaving any account of them or their works, much less any criticism on their style, into his history. On my suggesting the example of Hume and Voltaire, who had discussed such topics at some length, either at the end of each reign or in a separate chapter, he observed, with much commendation of their execution of it, that such a contrivance might be a good mode of writing critical essays; but that it was, in his opinion, incompatible with the nature of his undertaking, which, if it ceased to be a narrative, ceased to be a history." Fox was manifestly right. Separate chapters of this kind are mere excrescences, and not parts of a well-ordered work. The author is to consider well how far the subsidiary matter is really essential to the completeness of his plan. He is to throw aside, without mercy, all that does not necessarily conduce to the great object that he has in view; and he is to frame and adapt his episodes with the same care, and nearly by the same rules, in history, as he would in epic poetry.

Reflections upon events.

61. The subsidiary matter of which we have just spoken, may consist of facts or of *reflections*: the latter is what we call the philosophic episode. In ancient times this was often thrown into the mouths of fictitious personages, and seems to have been the principal reason for those *speeches* which form so singular a feature in the ancient historians. M. LAHARPE, in his Course of Literature, undertakes to justify the ancients in respect to those harangues, which are commonly considered as belonging rather to the art of the orator than of the historian. He

suggests "that though Fabius or Scipio may not have uttered in the Senate precisely those very words which Livy puts into their mouths, yet they may have spoken to nearly the same effect." He observes, "that the ancients were much more devoted to public speaking than the moderns" (an observation, however, which is less applicable to the English than to the French). He remarks, "Athens was wholly governed by its orators; nothing of importance was decided but by them: throughout all Greece, with the single exception of Lacedemonia, the art of speaking was one of the most essential accomplishments for a citizen; it was carefully cultivated from their very youth, and formed the most important part of their studies." "At Rome," he adds, "whoever aspired to any public office, felt it necessary to be able to express himself with readiness and elegance before three or four hundred senators; to argue in support of propositions which might be attacked with republican freedom; and sometimes to harangue to the assembly of the Roman people composed of an innumerable and tumultuous multitude." Admitting all this, it is hardly credible that the speeches introduced into the histories which we now read, were actually delivered by the persons to whom they are attributed. They are evidently adopted by the historian as occasions to throw in his own reflections, or to comprise a summary of the reasonings employed for or against particular measures. This seems to have been considered as a licence belonging to the historian, just as the ancient chorus was a mode used by the dramatists to deliver their own moral reflections on the scene. In modern time we wisely allow no such fictions. Even if a speech of any length should be preserved, it would hardly be introduced into an historical work, but

Ancient philosophic episode.

Reflections of modern authors.

would be considered as one of the documents to be referred to in the Appendix. Modern authors do not introduce their reflections on the events of history as delivered by fictitious personages; but they reason and argue, sometimes at great length, on the incidents which they record. It would be absurd to say that the historian should never interrupt the thread of his narrative with a general remark, for it would be unnatural that he should not feel, or that he should not express his feelings. The power of drawing general rules from particular incidents, of seeing the universal truth in the insulated fact, is a power of genius and intelligence. Nobody can doubt the superior mind of

TACITUS,

Tacitus. "His thoughts," says an amiable writer, "are of such extent, that every one penetrates them more or less readily. He pierces to a vast depth, but he does it without effort." "Every page, every line of Tacitus," says Lipsius, "is a flash of wisdom, a profound thought, a solid axiom; but he is so rapid and so concise, that much sagacity is needed to follow and to understand him." And to the same effect speaks Montaigne: "There are in his works more precepts than facts; it is not a book to read merely, but to study and get by heart: it is a nursery of ethics and politic discourses for the use and

a philosophic historian.

ornament of those who have any place in the government of the world." Tacitus, then, must be allowed to be a model in this branch of the historian's art; but has he not pushed it to an extreme? has he not in some measure merged the character of the historian in that of the philosopher? In short, is he not too meditative and sententious? These are questions which we would rather propose than resolve, fearing to be considered deficient in respect and admiration for so great a man. Certain it is

that the remarks of Tacitus are at once brief and striking, energetic and refined. The expressions, *odisse quem læseris; intuta quæ indecora; omnia prona victoribus; libentiùs obscura credi*, and a thousand others which might be cited, carry the force of a proverb, and have in many instances become proverbial. After Tacitus, the writer most distinguished by the maxims which he intersperses throughout his work is Machiavel. Some of these are sufficiently remarkable, especially when the discredit commonly attached to his name is considered. For instance, he lays it down as a rule that "where there is religion, every presumption should be favourable; where it is wanting, every presumption should be unfavourable;" that "it is impossible for a man who despises his God to respect his prince;" that "to break a plighted faith can never be glorious, even in war;" that "it is never wise to drive an enemy to desperation;" that "good laws make good men;" that "there should be no change but where there is a manifest defect," &c. The principal question is, how these general reasonings and reflections should be introduced? Is it sufficient to deliver them as digressions; and if so, is it allowable to fill whole chapters with them; or should they not rather be condensed as much as possible, and even melted down, as it were, into the narrative? Certainly the latter mode, wherever it is practicable, is much to be preferred. It is the true historical philosophy which teaches by example, and the moral truth sinks deeper into the mind because it is communicated insensibly. The imagination is made to minister to the understanding and to the heart. Thus Livy tells us that Lucius Junius Brutus feigned madness, "in order that he might be safe in a state of contempt, since there was no safety in

Philosophic historians.

Machiavel;

his philosophic reflections.

How reflections upon events should be introduced.

the protection of the laws." Is not this far more striking than if he had first dryly stated the fact, and then reasoned at length on the general inconvenience which must result to every one when the laws are incompetent to preserve innocence and integrity from persecution? The transition from a narrative to a sententious style stops the flow and easy course of thought. Such changes, indeed, are natural in certain cases. Sometimes when the mind is struck with extraordinary events, it recoils, as it were, on itself, and a general reflection is involuntarily suggested by a particular incident; but in order that these remarks should produce their full effect on the reader, they should be rare, unstudied, and spontaneous; they should be rather breaks in the composition than regular portions in the general plan of the work.

Style of the historian.

62. It is the *style* of the historian, as of every other writer, which principally contributes to the popularity or unpopularity of his works. The first traditionary histories appear to have been generally in verse; and it is curious to trace the continuance of this custom to late periods, in different parts of the world. We possess a translation by Mr. Champion of the Shah Nameh, an historical poem of FERDOSI the Persian, who wrote about A.D. 1000. The Scottish historical poem of BARBOUR, who wrote in 1375, is well known; as is the English Chronicle of FABYAN, compiled about 1505. As civilization advanced, History gradually emancipated itself from the shackles of metre, or at least retained them only in those ballads and trivial poems which serve to keep alive the memory of great events among the populace. But when prose History began to be cultivated by men of taste and genius, it was soon discovered to be suscep-

tible of great embellishment in point of style: it was discovered that it ought to hold a due medium between the low and the turgid, the brief and the redundant, the didactic and the forensic. Lucian has justly and beautifully observed, that the historian should work like the exquisite sculptor Phidias, in marble and ivory and gold combined; that is to say, that his style, never low or mean, should yet possess various degrees and shades of excellence, suitable to the different parts of his subject. He should march with the same pace as the events. In peace, and joy, and prosperity, his style should resemble that of Xenophon, who, as Quinctilian says, "spoke with the sweetness of the Muses:" in war he should "sound the trumpet of Thucydides." The "Sallustian brevity" will best suit those parts in which the writer indulges philosophical reflection: whilst the full flow of the narrative will demand "the milky richness of Livy." "Let him not write," says Lucian, "in an involved and elaborate style, but plainly; for as truth is the one great object of his mind, so clearness should be the one great character of his style; neither vulgar nor pedantic, but such as the unlearned may comprehend, and the scholar admire. When he deals, as he must sometimes do, in figurative and metaphorical language, let the figures be just and obvious: when he is animated with the warmth, or elevated with the loftiness of his subject, let him beware that he be not transported into a bombastic extravagance"—a precept which strongly reminds us of Hamlet's advice to the actors, "that in the very torrent, tempest, and one may say, whirlwind of their passions, they should beget a temperance, which might give it smoothness." "Some there are," says Lucian, "who, at one moment, will soar into

Style of the historian.

Style of the historian.

the pompous phraseology of the epic poet, and describe the commander—'with cares unnumber'd struggling in his breast;' but who will presently afterwards sink down into a vulgarity of expression fit only for the lowest camp-follower." This motley style is ridiculous enough: but it is not more wearisome than that of a pedant whose language is formed on one dull unvaried plan; beginning perhaps with an interrogatory, then introducing a syllogism, then an exclamation, then an interrogatory again, and so on; or forming in every sentence a regular balance of phrase against phrase, in triads or quaternions, as contrary to true harmony as they are inadequate to the expression of real feeling. In order to narrate faithfully and well, it is by no means necessary that the style should be cold and inanimate. Delicate circumstances should be delivered with a delicacy of language; and the pathetic, the noble, the spirited, the tender, should each have their appropriate modes of expression. It is true, that every author may be allowed the indulgence of his own peculiar and characteristic style of writing; but no one should be a mere mannerist: and yet even affectation is more tolerable than dulness; and the prevalence of one marked defect, counterbalanced by some beauties, is better than an uniform insipidity. In fine, History has an eloquence of its own, "flowing and continuous," as Cicero says, "with a certain equability in its course, distinct from the brevity of the judge, or the sharpness of the advocate; and equally remote from the authoritative and sententious manner of the moralist or the preacher."

Particular Historians. — Greek.

63. It remains to notice the degree and manner in which certain distinguished historians have displayed the different qualities of which we have hitherto spoken. HERODOTUS,

the father of Grecian History, has formed his plan with great art and judgment. Taking as its basis the wars of the Greeks and Persians, he has united with it a great variety of incidents, by retracing the power of each belligerent from its origin, and through all the gradations of its progress: thus successively introducing the history of the Lydians, the Medes, the Babylonians subjected by Cyrus, the Egyptians conquered by Cambyses, the Scythians attacked by Darius, and, lastly, the Indians: after which he returns to his predominant object, and concludes with the glorious victories obtained by his countrymen at Salamis and Thermopylæ, over the immense multitudes led by the Persian monarch. This plan is executed with great clearness, with elegance, with facility. He has been taxed with credulity; but, all things considered, the accusation appears unjust. It has been said, that in the details of his plan, he is somewhat immethodical, not sufficiently minute, or full of information; but those who make this charge have not adverted to the extreme difficulty of obtaining and verifying intelligence in ancient times. Upon the whole, it is extraordinary that this very early writer should have at once attained a reputation, from which the lapse of so many centuries has done little to detract, and which still leaves him in the very first class of historians. He was immediately followed by THUCYDIDES, a writer totally different in style, and yet so nearly equal in talent, that critics have doubted which to prefer. "Many (of the Grecians) have written History most admirably," says Quinctilian; "but no one doubts that there are two who are to be greatly preferred to all the rest, and whose respective excellencies have obtained nearly equally praise. Thucydides is close, and brief, and

Greek Historians. HERODOTUS.

THUCYDIDES.

Greek Historians. Thucydides.

forcible; Herodotus sweet, and candid, and flowing: the one is better fitted for the lofty passions, the other for the gentle; the one for oratory, the other for meditation; the one for force, the other for pleasure." Cicero also describes Thucydides as "a writer who excelled all others in the artful construction of his style; who was so rich and abundant in matter, that the number of his thoughts almost seemed to equal that of his words; and again so close and compact in expression that it was difficult to say whether his subject was more adorned by his language, or his language exalted by his subject." Laharpe observes that Thucydides has been reproached with two faults of rather a contradictory nature—the being too concise in his narrative, and too diffuse in his speeches. He abounds, adds this critic, with thoughts, but they are sometimes obscure; and if his style is marked with the gravity of a philosopher, it sometimes betrays the dryness of that character also. Longinus, however, speaks almost in raptures of this great historian, and warmly defends the inversions which give that length and obscurity to his speeches complained of by Laharpe. Upon the whole, it is not perhaps safe to dissent from the decision of so many admirable judges among the ancients, who agree in placing Thucydides, if not above all other historians, yet certainly on a level with the very highest. The literary characters of Herodotus and Thucydides form, it will have been observed, a striking contrast. These writers were followed by one who differed from them both, but was scarcely

Xenophon.

inferior to either. If XENOPHON does not exhibit the endless variety of Herodotus, or the austere grandeur of Thucydides, he possesses a sweetness quite unequalled, and his own. Hence he has been called "the Attic Bee,"

and it has been said, that "the Graces reposed on his lips." He was the pupil of Socrates, the associate of Plato, the commander of the Greeks in that ever-memorable retreat of the Ten Thousand. When such a man took up the historic pen, we might have expected to see a work characterized by a severe philosophy, or by a fierce and unbridled energy of thought; but, on the contrary, nothing can be more mild and equable than all the movements of his mind, unless it be the happy flow of his language, which seems almost to have been composed

Greek Historians. Xenophon.

——— "to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders, such as rais'd
To heights of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd."

This idea corresponds well with the moral dignity and strength of mind which this mild and elegant writer displayed in real life. He was sacrificing to the gods, crowned with flowers, when news was suddenly brought to him that his son had been killed at the battle of Mantinea. At the terrible recital he tore off his garland, and burst into tears; but when the messenger went on to relate, that the young hero, fighting to the last gasp, had mortally wounded the enemy's general, Xenophon resumed his garland, and said "Let us thank the gods—my son's glory consoles me for his death." If the Grecians have left us such models in general history, they have left us one no less celebrated in biography. PLUTARCH has in fact been called "the Prince of Biographers," though we are far from being satisfied with his claims to that title. It is well known that he has written the *parallel lives* of celebrated Greeks and Romans; and Laharpe looks

PLUTARCH.

Greek Historians. Plutarch.

upon the idea of such a comparison between the great men of one country and those of another, as a mark of genius. On the contrary, it appears to us to be an injudicious mode of writing history. Parallels of this kind can never be exact, and the effort to produce an apparent exactness will always produce an unconscious disposition in the writer to distort the facts. In other respects, too, the work of Plutarch is inferior to those of the authors already mentioned. There is little grace or harmony in his style, and the idiom of his language is by no means pure. His narratives afford us little information on the general history of the times, but are confined almost wholly to the individuals intended to be delineated. Considered, indeed, as separate pictures of human character, they have great merit. Plutarch describes man, not by an undigested accumulation of anecdotes, as Suetonius does, but by an admirable selection of characteristic incidents. It is on this account that he is so highly praised by Montaigne, and indeed that he has obtained very general and deserved popularity as a biographer.

Roman historians.

Livy.

64. The Romans have left us models in history, scarcely, if at all, inferior to those of the Greeks. At the head of these is Livy, whom Quinctilian merely reckons equal to Herodotus; but Laharpe thinks him superior. The former critic says, that Livy's narrative style is singularly agreeable, and of the purest clearness; that his harangues are eloquent beyond all conception; that all he says is perfectly adapted to the persons and things described; that he, above all, excels in expressing the mild and gentle passions; and that no historian is more affecting. —"This eulogy," observes Laharpe, "is just in all its points: and we may add, that the genius of Livy, without

ever showing marks of labour or effort, seems naturally to rise with the Roman greatness, and is never either above or below the elevation of his subject." Quinctilian, who compares Sallust with Thucydides, had probably at that time seen none of the writings of TACITUS, who is far more worthy of being brought into such a competition. "I know no author," says Montaigne, "who, in relating public affairs, mixes so much consideration of manners and particular characters, as Tacitus does: his work is rather a judgment than a deduction of history." Hence he has been called, "the Father of Philosophical History;" and his philosophy is of the highest kind—the philosophy of the human mind. "Every line," says Laharpe, "imprints a sentiment in the mind of the reader. Tyrants seem to be punished while he paints them. He represents posterity and vengeance; and I know no reading so terrible for the conscience of the wicked." If it were necessary to produce a parallel to Xenophon among the Roman historians, we could not, perhaps, fix on a better choice than CÆSAR, whose Commentaries might, without impropriety, be compared with the celebrated History of the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. What Quinctilian says of Cæsar's oratory, may be applied also to his historical composition: "It is adorned with a wonderful elegance of language, of which he was singularly studious. Like Xenophon, he possesses that unaffected ease, which no affectation can ever attain;" but it may be questioned, whether he is equally faithful and candid in his narration. Rome produced no Plutarch. Its most celebrated biographer was CORNELIUS NEPOS; whose lives of illustrious men are merely summaries of their principal actions, interspersed with judicious reflections. If this mode of composition exhibit far less

Roman Historians.

TACITUS.

CÆSAR.

CORNELIUS NEPOS.

Roman Historians.

genius than the seizing those characteristic traits which develop at once the minds of the person described, it is at least superior to the dull and plodding method of SUETONIUS, who heaps together every anecdote that he can collect, without selection, and with little remark, leaving it to his readers to form their judgment, as well as they can, out of a rude and undigested mass of materials.

Suetonius.

Modern historians.

65. It would extend this essay too far to draw the characters of modern historians: to several we have incidentally alluded; but the immense numbers who have appeared in the present and two preceding centuries, as well in this country as on the Continent of Europe, almost defy calculation, and render selection next to impossible. One or two remarks, however, we may venture to make: and, first, as to *style*, and the graces of composition, it must be confessed that there are few moderns who can be placed in competition with the ancients. The style of HUME has been much admired, and no doubt it is clear and pure, and flows with a certain natural ease; but it seldom elevates or animates, and still less frequently excites the tenderer emotions. GIBBON has throughout a mannerism which impresses on his work an artificial character, and but for the overpowering interest of the narrative would render the perusal tedious. Of foreign writers we forbear to speak in this respect, since their own countrymen must, as to style, be their only competent judges. The *subjects*, which the modern historian has it in his power to treat, are far more various and comprehensive than those which presented themselves to ancient writers. The progress of *civilization* in modern Europe generally, and particularly in France, has found an eloquent historian in M. GUIZOT. The history of the *Inductive Sciences* has been treated with

Hume.

Gibbon.

Guizot.

consummate ability by Dr. WHEWELL. SISMONDI and HALLAM have ably traced the course of *Literature*; and even *Jurisprudence*, dry and repulsive, as its history may at first sight appear, becomes interesting in the masterly sketch prefixed to Mr. SPENCE'S account of the Equitable Jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery. Again, the *sources of information* to which historians in the present and preceding century have been enabled to resort, afford them advantages, of which they have not been backward in availing themselves. The ample stores of *Criticism* examined by NIEBUHR enabled him to effect that great revolution in the study of Roman History, which at once dispersed, as chaff before the wind, the speculations even of a Machiavel and a Montesquieu. The *Antiquarian Researches*, which gave so much weight at its first appearance to ROBERTSON'S Charles V., have since been carried to a far greater extent. *Oriental Literature* has furnished materials for such works as Sir J. MALCOLM'S History of Persia. *Memoirs*, long concealed in official archives, have been brought to light, as in WASHINGTON IRVING'S Life of Columbus, and PRESCOTT'S Histories of the Conquests of Mexico and Peru. But of all the documents which add weight, authenticity, and interest to the historical, and more especially to the biographical compositions of late years, none are so important as the official despatches and private letters of men who have acted leading parts in the history of their times. From such sources we have learned to admire the chivalrous, and at the same time affectionate character of JOHN SOBIESKI, the deliverer of Europe from the then dreaded power of the Crescent; the unshaken loyalty, and firm confidence in the support of the Almighty, which enabled MARLBOROUGH to save his country and all

Modern historians.

Europe from the overweening ambition of France; and the persevering firmness which led WASHINGTON through unexampled difficulties to establish the independence of the great Transatlantic republic; nor can we doubt but that adequate historians will in due time be found to fill up what is yet wanting in the portrait of our great naval hero, from the documents published by the late Sir Harris Nicolas; and to delineate the character of a perfect General, from the despatches and private correspondence of the Duke of WELLINGTON.

Objects of study.

66. We have said that the means of cultivating History to advantage, relate either to the writer or to the reader: and having descanted at some length on the former branch, we shall have less to observe on the latter. The plans of study proposed by different learned men are so very contradictory, that they cannot possibly be reconciled; and among a variety of conflicting opinions, the only reasonable rules to guide our discretion, must be drawn from a consideration of the proper *objects* of study, which are to *improve either the morals, the understanding, or the taste.*

67. The first rule, then, in the study of History, is *to discard those writers whose works breathe a spirit of decided immorality.* Like some stigmatised or suspicious kinds of testimony, they may indeed be received in cases of extreme necessity, from the *penuria testium:* their pages may be cautiously opened, and closed again when the necessity ceases; but above all things they should be rarely entrusted to the juvenile reader,

> "For in the morn and liquid dew of youth,
> Contagious blastments are most imminent."

From this rule, no fascination of style, no liveliness of wit, no acuteness of argument, should suffice to plead an ex-

ception. On the other hand, a plain and homely writer will sometimes tell a tale pregnant with honourable and virtuous feelings. These incidents are to be met with in the accounts of ancient and modern nations, of barbarous and civilized ages; and wherever they occur, they should be treasured up and committed to memory; for the judgment can only be enriched by the multitude of examples and the clearness with which they are placed before us. It is therefore necessary, that the study of History should be comprehensive; that we should read many and different historians, of many and different ages and countries; but yet this reading must be with selection and care. "Let not the tutor," says Montaigne, "so much imprint on his pupil's memory the date of the ruin of Carthage, as the manners of Hannibal and Scipio; nor so much where Marcellus died, as why it was unworthy of his duty, that he died there: for to some, History is a mere grammar-study; to others, the very anatomy of philosophy, by which the most secret and abstruse parts of human nature are laid open." Dates, however, and local accidental causes often constitute the principal criterion of the merit or demerit of an action. When we find an historian careless of these things, we may be sure he is a bad guide; and it is of no small importance to determine how far a writer is to be trusted, especially where contradictory accounts of the same event are given by different authors. In such cases we should carefully observe the character of the historian himself, which is not difficult to be discerned by an attentive perusal of his work. Is he bigoted or irreligious; credulous, or prejudiced, or insincere? In all these cases a proportionate deduction is to be made from the weight of his testimony. So much for moral improve-

Application of the understanding.

ment.—The next rule regards the understanding. When we have well satisfied ourselves of the facts of History, they become lights to our path; but it is of infinite importance that we do not suffer ourselves to be dazzled by them. Nothing is so dangerous as a precedent falsely applied. *We must see that the cases fit in all their circumstances,* or we must not adopt them as an absolute rule of conduct. Guicciardini observes, on the conduct of Pietro De' Medici, in imitating his father, that it is very dangerous to govern one's self by particular examples. Oftentimes the distinctive trait in the original is lost in the copy; for the poet is abundantly just in his expression—*Imitators, a servile herd!* It is therefore necessary to meditate deeply on what we read in History, and to connect causes and consequences well in our own minds. By so doing we shall store them at once in the memory and in the judgment; for every great event, and every brilliant character will become, as it were, a centre around which numerous minor personages and occurrences will be grouped. The third rule, respecting the objects of study, applies to the reader's taste. Let him *confine his habitual studies to Authors of good repute.* We say his habitual studies; because, for some occasional purposes, it may be necessary to consult the rude records of a barbarous age; but where no such necessity exists, the student should peruse and reperuse the best models of composition; for he may be assured that the general character of his writing will be mainly formed on that of his reading. By employing the term "good repute," however, we mean that the third rule should be in harmony with the first; for we cannot deem an author to be of *good* repute, who conveys poison to the mind in honied phrases.

68. After determining the objects which we should have in view in the study of History, it will be less difficult to agree on the order of study, whether we regard the peculiar situation of the student, or the choice of books to be read. First, as to the situation of the student: it is manifest, that as the statesman requires a knowledge of politics, so the scholar does of literature; the soldier of war; the ecclesiastic of the church; and the like: yet we may say that all alike should be versed in the study of human nature. In early age we read or sympathise with feelings, and passions, and sentiments, of which the seeds are sown in our own bosoms. It would seem, therefore, that the youth should be first enticed to the study of History by single pictures of eminent virtue or ability, which being insulated and detached from all preceding and subsequent matter, might easily fasten on his young mind, warm his heart, and be comprehended by his understanding. The moral nature of man develops itself first, and therefore first demands to be fed with high example, and animated by the sympathies, which, in our youthful imaginations, render us continent as Scipio, or persevering as Hannibal; make us act over the part of Leonidas or of Wallace; and persuade us that we could die like Bayard or Sidney, like Epaminondas or Wolfe. As we advance in life, we become more capable of comprehending the connection of causes and effects; but still we can best understand the occurrences which happened in our own age and country: these therefore we should next be taught; then what has happened to other eminent nations; until, by extending the sphere of our knowledge, the whole map and chart of History lies open before us: after which we may, as circumstances direct, choose some

Order of study.

particular portions for more minute and accurate investigation. Abstracts and epitomes of History are, generally speaking, brought into use in too early a stage of education. It matters little, that a lad of ten years old, should be able to enumerate all the dynasties that have reigned since Nimrod, or to tell us in what Olympiad the first tragedy of Euripides was acted. These are mere exercises of the memory, like the multiplication table, but not so useful, until, in a subsequent state of our studies, they enable us to class and arrange facts: but if they prevent us from acquiring more substantial knowledge, they are to be regarded less as helps, than as hindrances to learning.

Chronology, Geography, &c.

69. The two studies, which have been called the eyes of History, are those which tend to ascertain times and places, namely CHRONOLOGY and GEOGRAPHY. These have been so scientifically pursued that they may be said to have themselves attained the rank of sciences, and will therefore require consideration in separate Essays. But it is to be observed that many studies may occasionally be called in aid of the historian: such as *Astronomy*, on which both Chronology and Geography mainly depend. And, again, *Natural Philosophy*, the discoveries in which enable us positively to decide on the truth or falsehood of many events recorded in History. So the *Natural History* of the human species may throw light on the migrations and unions of different races of men; and these latter circumstances may be still further elucidated by the *Philosophy of Language*, including both Universal Grammar, or the first principles of speech, and Glossology, or the historical relations of languages. These incidental assistances, however, are too partial and indirect, to be much considered in the arrangement of the historical library:

but it is otherwise with what may be called the *Criticism of History*, namely Lectures and Essays on its general spirit and tendency; on the modes of studying it, and the like: to which we may add, finally, the works of *Reference;* such as the Dictionaries of History, Biographical and Historical Charts, Chronological Tables, Atlases, Maps, and other valuable accessions to this important branch of human knowledge.

DISSERTATION II.

ON THE SEPARATION OF THE EARLY FACTS OF HISTORY FROM FABLE.

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THE SEPARATION OF THE EARLY FACTS OF HISTORY FROM FABLE.

Introductory.

1. HITHERTO, we have treated of Profane History as a study, showing both how it should be written, and how it should be read: we now come to treat of its substance, with reference to those early periods, in which it is found to have been universally corrupted by a greater or less intermixture of fiction. To separate the true from the false is often a task of extreme difficulty; but unless this be effected, our historical studies will be fruitless, or may lead to injurious and even fatal errors. Our present object, therefore, is to inquire by what means truth may be distinguished from fiction, in the profane history of early ages. Now, the first points which are to be determined, respecting any asserted matter of fact, are the *time* and *place* of its occurrence; and these cannot be correctly ascertained, except by the authority of some credible record, or by a strict application of the respective sciences of chronology and geography.

Various texts of Scripture.

2. In determining the credibility of its records, as to the date of any given event in early times, Profane History has hitherto received but a dubious aid from Sacred History; because it is still matter of dispute among divines, which of three discordant texts of the Old Testament, the

Hebrew, Samaritan, or Septuagint, is to be deemed chronologically correct. Of these three, the first appears to have been chiefly followed by St. Jerome, in the Latin translation called the Vulgate, which he finally corrected about A.D. 400. It is also the basis of the authorized English version; and, indeed, has been recognised as authentic by the majority of Christian Churches; by some, however, it is rejected, and by many eminent critics it has been powerfully oppugned. They observe that St. Jerome was not a Hebrew by birth, but a native of a country which he himself describes as intensely barbarous; that he admits the copies extant in his time to have been far from uniform—"Every copy a different text;" and that, in fact, many chronological inconsistencies appear on the face of that Hebrew original, which he probably used. The history of the Samaritan text is little known; but though it varies considerably from both the others, it has not wanted supporters among the literati even of recent times. The Septuagint is a Greek version alleged to have been made from the Hebrew, about B.C. 280, by 72 learned Jews, at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus. That such a command was given, and in part at least fulfilled, seems probable, because Manetho's Egyptian history had a like origin. The account of the transaction under the name of Aristæus, is indeed loaded with fabulous circumstances; but that the Greek Text as we now have it, or nearly so, existed and was deemed authentic, in the time of the Apostles, is clear from its agreement with their references to the Old Testament. For these reasons, and also because it serves to throw much light on the early periods of Profane History, the Septuagint has been taken by some of the ablest writers in the present day, for their guidance. It is not our province to pronounce decisively on the authenticity of the Sacred Text. On a former oc-

casion, when the subject had not been so fully investigated as it has been of late, we were disposed to follow the so-called Hebrew Text, as the one most generally received in this part of Europe; at present, however, we think it more advisable, on points of chronology to state the discordances between the three texts, leaving the decision to the reader's judgment. That these discordances are extreme, may be easily conceived, when we observe the conflicting opinions to which they have given rise among learned men. Dr. Hales quotes 120 writers, most of them Christian scholars and divines, amongst whom there is a difference of some *thousands of years*, in the dates which they assign to such all-important events as the Creation and the Deluge. The lapse of time from the Creation to the Birth of Christ is, according to the Septuagint, by one reading 5586 years, by another 5508; according to Julius Africanus, 5526; to Demetrius (with the requisite additions, as he wrote before Christ), 5447; to Bishop Russell, 5441; to Dr. Hales, 5411; to St. Augustine, 5330, to Eusebius, 5200; to Clinton, 4138; to the Hebrew Text, 4004; to Scaliger, 3948; to Rabbi Hanassi, 3758; and to Rabbi Lipman, 3616: making, from the first-mentioned to the last, a difference of 1970 years. From the Creation to the Deluge is, by the Septuagint, 2262 years; by Bishop Russell, 2256; by the Hebrew Text, 1656; and by the Samaritan, 1307. And again, from the Deluge to the call which Abraham received from God, in his 75th year, is by the Septuagint 1207 years; by the Samaritan Text, 1017; and by the Hebrew, only 427. Hence it has been reasonably argued, that it could not have been the intention of the Almighty Creator to make the Sacred Scriptures a criterion of Chronology; but that mankind have

been furnished with other means of determining, so far as may be necessary, the accurate date of any recorded event.

Chronology based upon Astronomy.

3. Recourse must then be had to Chronological science, the proper basis of which is furnished by Astronomy. Now, whole nations, were for many ages totally ignorant of Astronomy, and the observations of those who cultivated it the most, were rather empirical than scientific. "The whole of ancient Astronomy, prior to the age of Chiron" (says M. De Lalande) "was probably confined to observing the rising of certain stars at different seasons of the year, and the phases of the moon, with only an approach to accuracy; for even long after that period, neither the Chaldeans nor the Egyptians knew the durations or inequalities of the planetary movements."[1] The Astronomer Chiron here mentioned, or some other Astronomer who lived about the year B.C., 1163, is believed to have observed the star *k Draconis*, which was then near the pole of the Equator; for Eudoxus, in the third century before the Christian era, speaks of a star so situated, and is therefore thought to allude to some such observation. Chiron, who for his knowledge of Astronomy was said to be a son of Kronos (Saturn, or Time), lived, according to Homer, in the generation immediately preceding the siege of Troy;[2] but no ancient historian has connected his astronomical observations with the date of that siege, which remains in dispute to the present day. In short, Chronology, as a science ancillary to the study of history, may be said to have been altogether unknown to early writers: and this is one reason why modern Chronologers, of considerable repute, are found to differ so widely concerning

[1] Lalande, Astron., vol. i., p. 105. [2] Iliad, xix. 390.

most great epochs. The siege of Troy, to which we have just adverted, is one of those striking events, which lie as it were on the debatable ground between history and fiction; and though most writers ancient and modern believe it to have had an historical foundation, they widely disagree in its precise date; Larcher fixes it at B.C. 1263; Blair, at 1193; Apollodorus and Eratosthenes, at 1183; Clinton, at 1127; and Newton, at 914. Josephus assumes the date to be well known, and says it was 1000 years after the arrival of Danaus in Greece: and as Danaus was, according to Manetho, identical with Armais, who, as Josephus says, lived 393 years after the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, if we add 1000 and 393 to 1263, making 2656, we shall place the Exodus 308 years before the Deluge, according to the Hebrew Text, and only 472 years after it by the Septuagint. It is true that the era given by Eratosthenes and Apollodorus was adopted by Cato, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cornelius Nepos, Lutatius, Solinus, Clemens, Eusebius, and many others; but that was for the simple reason that they all followed Eratosthenes, as an undoubted authority, though in fact his suggestion was merely conjectural. Instances of extreme discrepancy in profane history are innumerable: we shall mention but one more. Sicyon claimed to be the first city built in Greece; its foundation is fixed by Blair at B.C. 2089, and by Newton at B.C. 1080, a difference of above 1000 years!

The connection of Geography with History.

4. The early periods of Profane History receive from Sacred History as little assistance in Geography as they do in Chronology, with exception of the countries immediately connected with the chosen people of God. Not only do we learn nothing of the more distant parts of Asia,

Africa, or Europe, and nothing of any part of America, or of the lands laid open by more recent discovery; but the locality even of some remarkable places mentioned in Scripture is so slightly indicated as to leave room for dispute. Thus Nineveh, which is mentioned as one of the earliest cities built, and is ascribed either to Nimrod or to Asshur, as its founder (for the translations differ on that point[1])—Nineveh, of which we learn, from the book of Jonah, the vast extent, the numerous population, and the immense wealth, is so loosely described, that we know not from Scripture on what river it was situated. Diodorus Siculus places it on the Euphrates;[2] but Pococke, Pastoret, Drummond, and others, place it on the Tigris; and they are fully confirmed by the successful researches of Layard: still it remains a doubt, whether the main part of this once splendid city was near Mosul, or lower down towards the junction of the Tigris with the great Zab. Of all the geographical errors of the classical writers none is more remarkable than their notion that the continent of Africa extended to India; an error which was shared even by the great geographer Ptolemy, in the second century after Christ, and which perhaps, arose in part from the circumstance, that in both countries whole nations were found to be αἰθίοπες, that is "black-faced," a term by which some authors appear to have designated the natives of Ethiopia, and others, those of India. To Astronomy we owe the scientific rectification of all such errors. Uncultivated men suppose that the testimony of their senses proves the earth to be a plane surface; but that very testimony, when closely examined, shows the earth to be a sphere. It is probable, however, that so exact a scrutiny was not made till the

[1] Genesis, x. 11, marg.

[2] Diod., i. 65.

rudiments, at least, of Astronomy were known. At an early period we find a notion prevailing, that the earth was divided into five zones, "the middle one being uninhabitable on account of its heat":— Utility of Astronomy.

"Quarum quâ media est non est habitabilis æstu."[1]

It is manifest that, so long as this fact was believed, the existence of antipodes, though asserted by some, would by the great majority be regarded as a mere theory, which admitted of no sensible proof. It was not till Astronomy had made considerable progress, that the exact positions of places could be known by observing their latitudes and longitudes.

5. The mere ignorance of early historians, in what regards Chronology and Geography, will go but a short way towards explaining the mixture of Truth and Fable which we so often find in their writings. The causes of this aberration from their peculiar duty lie far deeper in human nature. History is a picture of man drawn by himself: and it has shared the fate of its original. It has had its infancy of Fable; its youth of Poetry; its manhood of Thought, and Intelligence, and Reflection; and it has sometimes declined into an old age of Dulness and Decrepitude. Nor have its imperfections been always owing to the Historian: his hearers or readers often choose to be deceived; they hug their shadows; they refuse to be awakened from their pleasant dreams; and this happens not only in barbarous, but in civilized ages. Even in the present day, learned persons may be found who are seriously angry with NIEBUHR for having shaken their cherished faith in the combat of the Horatii and Curiatii, Causes of error in Chronology and Geography.

[1] Ovid, Met. i. 42.

Causes of error in Chronology and Geography.

the heroism of Cocles, and the self-immolation of Lucretia; and for having proved, that what we now call the history of the Roman Kings is merely a prose transcript of Lays and Legends, exquisitely beautiful indeed, but for the most part entitled to no more credit than the adventures of Haroun Alraschid, in the "Thousand and One Nights." Calm reflection, however, will convince us that, whatever tends to purify history from the debasing mixture of falsehood must in an equal degree add to its real value; and it is manifest that this end can only be attained by scrutinising in every case, the probable sources of error, which will be found widely to vary in the different stages of human society.

Man in his savage state.

6. Let us begin with Man in the lowest state of his social existence—Man, as he is still to be found in some parts of the earth, and as he is represented to have everywhere been, in the earliest traditions of nations:—"When rude animals, men, crawled forth upon the first-formed earth, a mute and filthy herd."[1] And when, as another poet describes them:—"They knew not as yet how to employ fire in the preparation of things, or how to use skins, or how to clothe their bodies in the spoils of wild beasts; but dwelling in woods, and caves, and the hollows of hills, when they sought to escape the blows of the wind, or the rain, hid their squalid limbs under the thicker shrubs."[2] These dwellers in the woods, thence called *Silvatici, Salvatici, Salvagii, Saulvages, Sauvages*, gave name to what we call the *Savage* state. On the great and mysterious question, how man, with his vast powers and capacities, ever came to be found in so despicable a condition; and whether, and by what gradations of descent he fell from

[1] Horat., Sat. i. 3, 99. [2] Lucret., v. 954.

any loftier eminence, Profane History is profoundly silent, or renders but a faint echo of some belief in a Saturnian age, a state of purity and justice, a reign of Man in his savage state.

> " Spirits or Gods, that used to share this earth
> With man, as with their friend." [1]

But of this state the savage himself can never form a conception; for his mind, like that of an infant, is a chaos of wonder, confusion, and uncertainty; and no sooner does it pass from the impressions of animal want and gratification to any meditation on the past, or anticipation of the future, than it touches at once on the borders of an ideal world, where shadow and substance are so strangely mingled, that the effort to distinguish them is beyond its power, and soon ceases to be beyond its inclination.

7. Still the mind labours with the too-weighty thought of an Unknown God; and wanting the holy guidance of the Spirit of Truth it loses itself in the endless mazes of error. In the lowest and most degraded states of the human intellect, two forms of superstition appear, *Fetishism* and *Animal-worship*. In various parts of the world savages are to be found, even at the present day, as they have been in former ages, who are ready to ascribe supernatural power to the first object which strikes their limited faculties with awe. The *Fenni*, of whom Tacitus notices the " mira feritas, fœda paupertas,"[2] and who were driven out of Scandinavia by the less-brutalised Teutons, are said to have practised a stupid *Fetishism*, consisting in the adoration of birds, beasts, trunks of trees, and stones. The *Bogas*, near the Rio Nunez, in Western Africa, still take for a *Fetish*, or divinity, the first object which comes into their thoughts, such as the horn of a ram, the tail of an ox, Lowest forms of Superstition.

[1] Coleridge, Wallenst., act ii. sc. 4. [2] Tacit., Mor. Ger., 46.

Lowest forms of Superstition.

a reptile, &c., and to these they offer sacrifice.[1] The red Indian of North America counts in like manner on the supernatural protection he is to receive from his *medicine-bag*, always carried about his person, and consisting of some object of which he has *dreamt*, as mysteriously connected with his own weal or woe. Fasts are often made, and dogs and horses sacrificed, to one of these *medicines;* and days and even weeks of fasting, and penances of various kinds, are suffered by a man to appease his *medicine*, which he imagines he has in some way offended.[2] Closely connected with this senseless superstition is *Animal-worship*, to account for which has caused to the learned no small perplexity. Diodorus Siculus states several theories of its origin.[3] Cicero[4] and Plutarch[5] explain it differently. Sir W. Drummond traces it, as indeed he does all other false religions, to Sabaism (that is, the worship of the stars), and to the symbols thence derived.[6] He errs, however, in supposing that animal-worship was peculiar to Egypt. On the contrary, it has been found to exist in many regions widely separated from each other. The worship of serpents, in particular, prevailed according to Bossman, at Fida, in Guinea; and it was carried to a monstrous excess, as Southey has amply shown, in Mexico. No doubt, in course of time, a great variety of superstitious notions were mixed up with the worship of animals; but the practice must have first originated in the brutal degradation of the worshipper, who was but one degree removed in intellect from the object of his veneration. The learned and perspicacious HEEREN finely observes, that "Man must be-

[1] Caillié, p. 248. [2] Catlin, i., 36. [3] Diod., i., 54.
[4] Cicero, Nat. D., i., 36. [5] Plutarch, Is. et Os.
[6] Drummond, Orig., ii., 170.

come himself a savage before he can be able to judge of the relation in which a savage feels himself towards the brute creation."[1] He may look on one beast with fear of its noxious powers, on another with a grateful sense of its usefulness, and on a third, perhaps, with "a mere childish delight" in its appearance and movements. The nearer a savage approaches in feelings and habits to a lower animal, the more readily does he sympathise with the brute, and suppose it to partake of a nature like his own. So it is with children, in the first dawning of their reason: a very young boy will call his dog "his friend," and think him such. The worthy missionary Heckewelder, who passed the greatest part of his life among the North American Indians, relates a story of one of them, who supposed a *bear* to *understand* his reproaches, and to feel *shame* in the consciousness that they were deserved. Whatever causes may operate in particular instances to connect these gross instincts with a vague feeling of religion, "certain it is" (says Heeren), "from all we know of the history of mankind, that animal-worship existed in the first and rudest periods of nations."[2]

Lowest forms of Superstition.

8. Superstitions so utterly devoid of reason, as those which we have just mentioned, can afford no materials even for fabulous History; but in another stage of belief we enter on a different scene. It has happened in all ages, that among savages of the lowest scale of intellect, individuals have suddenly appeared, sometimes of the same race, but more frequently foreigners, who possessed arts unknown to those around them, and felt or feigned the inspiration of a loftier spirit. By their wondering and awestruck hearers they were listened to as oracles. Their obscure thoughts, expressed in language still more obscure, were imperfectly

Origin of Mythology.

[1] Heeren, African Nations, ii., 184. [2] Ibid., 183.

Origin of Mythology.

caught and vaguely comprehended. Dreams and reveries, and insanity itself, became the substance of belief. These wild recitals were crowded with the phantoms of a disordered imagination :—

> " All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
> Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed ;
> Gorgons and hydras, and chimæras dire ! "

and at length formed the subject of a more or less complex, a more or less extravagant MYTHOLOGY.

The beginnings of all profane History are mythological. Fabulous beings are introduced as gods, demigods, heroes, demons. These appear to be, in some instances, personifications of the great agencies of nature—the storm, and the whirlwind, the flood, and the flame; in some, the sun and moon, the planets, and fixed lights of the firmament; and in others, men of extraordinary strength or skill—kings and warriors, conquerors and teachers, false prophets and the workers of false miracles. The imaginary acts of these supernatural beings are commonly mixed up with shreds and patches of true History, with vague traditions of the creation, and the deluge, of an early state of innocence, and a fall. In proportion as the mythologists acquire arts and letters, they multiply and diversify their fables. They envelop the truth in a new veil of fiction; they speak in parables, and are understood literally; they write in hieroglyphics, and the symbol is taken to be an exact picture. Finally, the poet comes in aid of the priest, and enriches the tale of wonder with all the charms of verse, and all the luxuriance of a fertile imagination.

Gradations of Mythology.

9. We proceed to trace the gradations of mythological fiction. There is a necessary relation between the Speaker and the Hearer, the Teacher and the Taught. The mere

Savage, as we have seen, is prone to ascribe to the material objects of his superstition—to the Fetish, or the Serpent, —to the Sun which warms, or the Wind which chills him, some consciousness of feelings like his own. The Teacher, therefore, who professes to communicate to him notions of religion somewhat more distinct, must accommodate his doctrines to the capacity of the disciple; he must give to the preconceived notions of the latter a personality and a name. Hence, the Bull was still worshipped as *Apis* or *Mnevis*, and the Goat as *Mendes*, the Earth became Ἑστία, or *Vesta*, the Sea, Ποσειδῶν or *Neptunus*, the Air, Ζεὺς, or *Jupiter*. "This" (says Ennius) "is the Jupiter of whom I speak, and whom the Greeks call the Air; he, too, is the Wind, the Clouds, the Rain, and from the Rain comes Cold,"

Relation of Natural Objects to Mythology.

> "Istic est is Jupiter, quem dico, quem Græci vocant
> Aëra; quique ventus est, et nubes, imber postea,
> Atque ex imbre frigus." [1]

In like manner, if the Sun arose in splendour, it was *Phœbus*,

> "Bursting the lazy bonds of sleep that bound him,
> With all his fires and travelling glories round him." [2]

If the vernal airs were calm, the sky cloudless, the earth smelling sweet with flowers, the sea glassy and smooth, it was to hail the approach of *Venus*, the Goddess of natural Beauty and Pleasure—

> "Te, Dea, te fugiunt Venti, te nubila Cœli,
> Adventumque tuum: Tibi suaves dœdala Tellus
> Summittit flores, tibi rident æquora ponti." [3]

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[1] Ennius, Epich. Frag. [2] C. Lamb, Woodville, act ii.

[3] Lucretius, i., 14. "Thee, Goddess, thee and thy approach, the winds and the clouds of Heaven flee from; to thee the earth offers flowers, upon thee the waves of the sea smile."

Relation of Natural Objects to Mythology.

But if, on the contrary, the raging winds blew furiously from every quarter, driving whirlwinds over the land, covering the face of the sky with clouds, involving the sea in pitchy darkness, and producing all the horrors of a storm, it was because *Æolus* had opened the barriers of their prison, and let loose at once *Eurus*, and *Notus*, and *Africus*:—

> ——— "Cavum conversâ cuspide montem
> Impulit in latus ac venti, velut agmine facto,
> Quá data porta ruunt, et terras turbine perflant.
> Incubuere mari, totumque a sedibus imis
> Unà Eurusque Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis
> Africus, et vastos volvunt ad littora fluctus.[1]

Nor were such personifications peculiar to any one mythological system; for they are to be found in the superstitions of nations wholly unconnected, and appear in forms perfectly dissimilar. If the loftiest pine of a Scandinavian forest was shivered by lightning, the blow was believed to be struck by *Thor*, with his ponderous hammer. If the Nile, at its due period, overflowed its banks, it was thought to be *Osiris*, who, in the shape of the bounteous river, spread abundance throughout *Egypt*. Fire was personified, in India, by the God *Agni*; Light, in Persia, by *Mithras*.

Representation of the Elementary Forces.

10. But the mind of man could not rest here. A more reflecting class of worshippers, pondering on the vast variety of natural objects, their combinations, and changes,

[1] Virgil, Æn., i., 81. "Turning the point of his spear, he struck the hollow mountain's side: the winds, as in a formed array, rush forth at every outlet, and whirl over the land in a crowd. They rush down upon the sea—east wind, and south wind, and south-west wind—pregnant with storms, and roll vast billows to the shores."

began to ask, "how it was, by what power, that they were united, held together, grew up," or decayed—

Mythological representation of the Elementary Forces.

> "Unde, ubi, quâ vi, et quo pacto congressa coibant
> Materiæ?"[1]

To these questions the Mythologists answered by ascribing to their personal Deities qualities both active and passive, which substantially represented the *Elementary Forces* attracting or repelling each other. Hence, the great Gods had their Goddesses, and from the union of both sprang an illimitable train of descendants, now uniting to produce beneficial results in the order and harmony of the world, and now, by their contests, stirring up physical evil, and fomenting wars and animosities among mortals and immortals. Thus Hesiod opens the long series of his Theogony—

> "Θεῶν γένος ἀιδοῖον πρῶτον κλείουσιν ἀοιδῇ,
> Ἐξ ἀρχῆς, οὕς Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς ἐυρὺς ἔτικτεν,
> Ὅιτ' ἐκ τῶν ἐγένοντο θεοὶ."[2] ——
>
> ——— "The Muses first in song proclaim
> The venerable race of Gods, who rose
> From the beginning: then the spacious HEAVEN
> And EARTH begot; and all the Deities
> From these successive sprang."

Varro, the learned friend of Cicero, has a remarkable passage, applicable to this part of our subject. "The chief Deities" (says he) "are the Sky and the Earth. They are the same Deities which in Egypt are called *Serapis* and *Isis* — which, among the Phœnicians, are *Taautes* and *Astarte,* as these, again, are the same chief Deities in Latium, *Saturnus* and *Ops.* For the Earth and the Sky, as the Samothracian Mysteries teach, are great Gods, and these, which I have mentioned, with many

[1] Lucretius, ii., 549.

[2] Hesiod, Theog.

Mythological representation of the Elementary Forces.

names. They are masculine and feminine—dry and moist—heat and cold,"—"by their union the Sky and the Earth produced all things; nature, by their means, mixing cold with warmth, and the humid with the dry."[1] This prolific union of the Earth and Sky is poetically described by Virgil in the beautiful and well-known passage—

> "Tum Pater Omnipotens fœcundis imbribus Æther
> Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit, et omnes
> Magnus alit, magno commixtus corpore fœtus."[2]

A like effect was believed in Egypt to result from the conjugal union of Isis with Osiris, whom Varro calls Serapis; whilst, on the other hand, the persecution of Osiris by Typhon represented the pernicious influence of the hot Libyan winds in depriving the Nile of its fertilizing power. Similar personifications of the elementary forces are found in the mythological fables of many other nations; but the forms which they assumed were adapted to the previous habits and feelings of their respective worshippers. If the elements naturally coalesced, their union was that of a God with a Goddess: if they seemed to be incapable of union, they were typified in such contests as those of Oromazd with Ahriman, of Jove with the Titans, of Osiris with Typhon.

Observation of the Heavenly Bodies.

11. An attentive observation of the *heavenly bodies* opened a much wider field for mythological fiction. Hitherto we have spoken only of those sensible phenomena, which were equally obvious to all men, and of those elementary forces, whose operation it needed little reflection to discover. But we are now to advert to facts, which could

[1] Ling. Lat., l. 4.

[2] Georg., ii., 325. "Then Almighty Father Æther descends, in fructifying showers, into the bosom of his joyous spouse; and, great himself, commixed with her great body, gives nourishment to all her offspring."

not have been found out without the careful and connected observations of *many years*. It has been usual to speak of the worship of the heavenly luminaries by the term *Sabaism*, or *Tsabaism*, as one simple system; but by examining it in detail, we shall easily perceive that it must have grown up gradually, and in a long course of time. The Sun, Moon, and Stars had been equally viewed by the grossest barbarians, and the more civilised part of mankind, with admiration and wonder. They had remarked the Sun distinguishing the seasons, and bringing round the Year: they had noticed the Moon duly waxing and waning in her monthly course; but the Stars were as yet "an undistinguishable throng," with the exception perhaps of *Sirius* or some other "bright, particular Star." Long-continued observation, however, showed that though the chief multitude of these luminaries uniformly held the same place relatively to each other, rising in the East, and setting in the West, as regularly as the Sun and Moon, there were a few which seemed to wander backwards and forwards, and which were thence called *Planets*, from the Greek πλάνη, a wandering. Of these, to the naked eye, only five are visible, and their movements widely differ. It is a most important fact in early History, that we find the Mythologies of very distant nations all bearing distinct reference to *Seven* celestial bodies; that these seven bodies consist of the same Five Planets together with the Sun and the Moon; that each of the seven is believed to move around the earth; that each receives a peculiar name; that each is deemed a Deity; that to each is dedicated in succession a Day, thus agreeing with the Mosaic division of time by weeks; and that these seven days always follow in the same order. Now, on the common doctrine of chances,

The rise of Sabaism.

Mythological systems have one common source.

it is scarcely possible that all these coincidences could have happened, unless the different systems had been derived from one common source. And if so, it becomes matter of curious historical research, to ascertain in what country that source existed, and how, and by what gradations, the fictions grounded on it spread even to nations ignorant of the hidden meaning of the fables which they credited.

The Zodiac.

12. But this is not all. The continued observation of the Planets disclosed another great astronomical fact, their relation to the *Zodiac*. When we consider how slowly discoveries in science were made and acquiesced in, until a very recent period in the history of the world; how imperfect were the means of communication, and how slight the actual intercourse of nations, we may readily believe that the discovery, of which we now speak, did not become known until many years after men first began to notice the movements of the celestial bodies. Several revolutions of the Planet Saturn, for instance, must have been noticed, each requiring a lapse of nearly 30 of our years, and several revolutions of the Planet Jupiter, each occupying 12 years, before it could be ascertained, that the apparent motions of these and the other Planets, as well as of the Sun and Moon, were all limited to a broad circle in the heavens, since called the Ecliptic, which cuts the Equator obliquely, so as to rise above it between 23 and 24 degrees in the summer, and to sink as much below it in the winter. This circle was divided, by some unknown, but certainly very ancient Astronomers, into 12 portions; at first, perhaps, as a rude attempt towards adapting the annual revolution of the Sun to the monthly revolutions of the Moon; and afterwards with a further reference to the comparative revolutions of the Planets Saturn and Jupiter.

Multiplying then the 30 years of Saturn by the 12 of Jupiter, and applying the result to the Ecliptic, the whole celestial Circle was distributed into 360 portions. Hence, in very ancient times, we find a year of 360 days established; to which, in consequence of more accurate observations, five days were subsequently added, making the 365, which though in fact nearly six hours too short, is in popular estimation still regarded as forming a year. The duodecimal division of the Ecliptic, however, was retained by the Astronomers. The constellation or group of fixed stars seen in each of the 12 portions was called a *Sign;* as serving to *signify* to mankind what sort of weather, or temperature, might be expected, whilst the Sun appeared to rise at the same, or nearly the same time, with any star in that constellation :— The Zodiac.

> " Atque hæc ut certis possimus discere *Signis*,
> Æstusque, pluviasque, et agentes frigora ventos,
> Ipse Pater statuit quid menstrua Luna moneret." [1]

Those fixed stars which lie out of the Ecliptic, were also divided (though in a confused and irregular manner) into Constellations, and received various names, such as Arctus, Bootes, Orion, &c. Those within the Ecliptic were chiefly named from animals; and as the Greek term for an animal is ζῶον, or ζῴδιον, the whole circle was called the *Zodiac.*

13. The time when the zodiacal constellations received the names imposed on them, and the reasons for such imposition, are circumstances which have occasioned much dispute among the learned; nor is it known whether these, or the constellations lying out of the Ecliptic first Antiquity of the Zodiac.

[1] Virg., Geor., i., 351. "And that we may learn these things by positive signs—heat and rain and cold-bringing winds—Jove has appointed what the monthly moon should indicate."

Antiquity of the Zodiac.

received distinct appellations. We are disposed to think with M. De Lalande, that the signs of the Zodiac were the earliest named. Some stars belonging to both classes indeed seem to be mentioned in very ancient writings; but it is not always clear what particular luminaries are meant. In the book of Job, which is undoubtedly of high antiquity (for some critics even suppose it to be anterior to the time of Moses), mention is made of certain constellations which are rendered in the Vulgate "Arcturum and Oriona, and Hyadas" (ix. 9), and elsewhere "Pleiadas," (xxxviii. 32). In our translation these are respectively called "Arcturus," "Orion," the "Pleiades," and "Mazzaroth." Homer, who is believed to have lived nearly 900 years before our Saviour, speaks of the "Pleiades," "Hyades," "Arctus," "Orion," and Bootes:"[1] all of which, and also "Sirius" are noticed by Hesiod,[2] half a century perhaps later. In the second book of Kings (xxiii. 5) we read of persons, who burned incense "to the Sun, and to the Moon, and to the Planets," which last word is rendered in the margin "the Twelve Signs, or Constellations:" and the fact referred to is one which occurred in the year 624 before Christ. Herodotus, who probably visited Egypt about 160 years later, was there informed that the Egyptians had from very ancient times divided the year into twelve months, *according to the Stars*. Eudoxus, who about the middle of the fourth century before Christ had studied astronomy in Egypt, brought from thence into Greece, a knowledge of the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, as they are described by his copyist Aratus, under the names and in the order in which we have them now, viz., the Ram, the

[1] Iliad, xviii., 486; Odys., v., 272.
[2] Op. et Di., v., 381, 607, 613.

Bull, the Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Virgin, the Balance, the Scorpion, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and the Fishes. The annual apparent passage of the Sun through these signs, the enlivening effect of the six first, and the gloomy character of the others, furnished matter for numberless mythological allegories: to these were added the various relations which the planets bore to each other, and which both they and the Sun and Moon bore to the other Constellations; and the whole was represented under personifications at one time splendid and striking, as the Olympian Jove of Phidias; at another time monstrous and revolting, as the brutish idols of India and Egypt. Antiquity of the Zodiac.

14. To a mythological origin may be ascribed two other remarkable forms of false religion, which have greatly tended to pervert the truth of history: these are *Symbol-worship* and *Hero-worship*. There were two modes in which *Symbols* were connected with mythology: sometimes a sensible object had been first worshipped by a superstitious savage, and afterwards received a more refined signification in the way of allegory; sometimes, on the contrary, a sensible object was first employed allegorically as a symbol of some great physical or moral principle, and afterwards a gross fable was built upon it: and in both cases the symbol itself in the course of time came to be regarded by uncultivated and unreflecting minds as something divine, to which they might offer up prayer and praise. Of gross fables evidently built on allegories the tales of the Poets are full; they are vehemently reprehended however by Plato,[1] and Cicero says of them "A physical theory of no tasteless character is sometimes enclosed within monstrous fables."[2] Of animal-worship Symbol-worship.

[1] Plato, Repub., ii.

[2] Cicero, Nat. De., ii., 24.

Symbol-worship.

raised to an allegorical signification, perhaps the Bull (*Apis*) and the Goat (*Mendes*) may be taken as examples. That the symbol itself became an object of worship, is seen in the instance of the early Sabines, who worshipped the *Lance* as a symbol of Mamers their God of War.[1] The *Serpent*, lifted up by Moses in the Wilderness as a symbol of health and salvation, is said to have been subsequently worshipped by some idolatrous Israelites. Nay, there is but too much reason to believe that in dark ages, and by some miserably ignorant persons, the *Cross*, originally regarded as a symbol of that Truth which Christ sealed by an agonizing Death, became itself an object of adoration. Again, it is to be observed, that symbols were not always worshipped separately, but sometimes served to characterise a monstrous or indecent figure of some supposed Divinity; as the head of a hawk was joined with a human body in Egypt, the head of an elephant with a human body in India, the horns of a ram with a human head in Libya, &c. The prevalence of one particular worship of this kind in countries distant from each other may help to illustrate the obscure history of their ancient connection.

Hero-worship.

15. *Hero-worship* may be considered as including the worship of human beings, living or dead; either on account of their fabulous descent from some false Deity, or as evincing, or having evinced, in their mortal existence, a degree of power, wisdom, or goodness, beyond the natural faculties of man. The first sort of belief was an inevitable result of that Mythology, which personified the objects of nature, the elementary forces, and the movements of the heavenly bodies. When once the air was personified as the God Jove, it became easy to believe that

[1] Guigniaut, ii., 399.

he was united to a Goddess, as Ceres,[1] or Juno;[2] or to a Nymph, as Eurynome;[3] or even to a mortal female, as Alcmene;[4] and the same may be said of all the other principal Gods. The immediate descendants of a Divinity were naturally supposed to partake of a divine nature, and were numbered among the Gods, though of a lower order. To this class many real individuals, who displayed extraordinary power or talent, were believed by the credulous vulgar to belong. Thus *Hercules*, probably a warrior of great bodily strength and prowess, was reported to be a son of Jove;[5] so *Æsculapius*, a skilful Physician, was said to be a son of Apollo, the God of Medicine;[6] so *Aristœus*, who taught the cultivation of the olive, was called the son of Apollo, considered as the Sun which ripens the fruit; and so *Theseus*, probably because he came by sea to Athens, was said to be the son of Neptune,[7] though according to Homer, his father was Ægeus, a mortal prince.[8] This class of beings Hesiod describes as "a divine race of mortal heroes, who were called Demigods:" Hero-worship.

> "Ἀνδρῶν Ἡρώων θεῖον λένος, οἳ καλέονται
> Ἡμίθεοι ——"[9]

In later ages, as the names of various Deities were assumed by Kings, or given to them by the flattery of their followers, the truth of History was still further obscured; and it became difficult to determine between several, who bore the name of Hercules, or Osiris, or Buddha, or Odin, whether any one or more of them ever had a mortal existence, and if so, to what age of the world he belonged. Eventually, too, human beings in their insane vanity, became ambitious of receiving divine honours.

[1] Hesiod, Theog., 912. [2] Ibid., 921. [3] Ibid., 907. [4] Ibid., 943. [5] Ibid., 316. [6] Cicero, N. D., iii., 22. [7] Ibid., 18. [8] Iliad, i., 265. [9] Hesiod, Op. et Di., i., 158.

Hero-worship.

Alexander of Macedon, on whom Grecian flattery bestowed the title of "the Great," consulted the Libyan oracle of Ammon to know whether he was not the son of Jupiter, and received an answer, which though ambiguous, served to foster his stupid pretension.[1] The Ptolemies were designated as gods by the impious adulation of the Egyptian priests: the Heathen Emperors of Rome were, after death, regularly enrolled among the *Divi* by decrees of the Senate: and to the utter disgrace of the Christian Emperors they assumed the designation of *Divus*, even while living.

Image-worship.

16. All the different forms of mythological superstition were concentrated, and rendered as it were tangible and visible in the worship of *Images*, under which term are to be comprehended as well Paintings as Sculptures, regarded as objects of veneration. Many nations, however, though attached to superstitions of their own, held this mode of worship in great abhorrence. Herodotus informs us, that the Persians had neither temples nor altars, nor statues of the Gods;[2] and in consequence after they had conquered Egypt, they destroyed great numbers of the Egyptian Idols, and sent the most valuable into Persia. The Mahometan conquerors of India were still more sanguinary persecutors of Hindoo Idolatry. Nay, so late as the latter part of the sixteenth century, certain practices, which were thought to savour of idolatry, were subjected by the laws of Scotland to the punishment of death.[3] The worshippers of idols on their part were equally incited to fury by any contempt shown to objects which they deemed sacred: and the animosity thus created on both sides could not but deduct greatly from the credibility of an historian of the one party, when recording the conduct of the other party. It is true that the more enlightened

[1] Arrian, iii., 2. [2] Herod., i., 131. [3] Scots Acts, 1581, No. 104.

supporters of Idol-worship always distinguished between the adoration of the image itself, and the veneration due to the being it represented. Plato says, "We fabricate images of the gods, and whilst we honour these lifeless things, we believe that the living Deities themselves will be on that account propitious to us."[1] Roman Catholic writers too, define *Latria*, to be the adoration due to the supernatural being, and *Dulia* to be the respect paid to its bodily similitude; as no one would willingly trample under foot the likeness of his parent or his friend. An old English Canonist assigns a further reason for the *adoratio Duliæ*, viz.: that these images and pictures stand to the great mass of the Laity in the place of books and writings,[2] a reason more applicable to his day than to the present. We may, however, easily believe that these distinctions escape the intellect of barbarous nations, and of the dullest and least-instructed individuals in all countries, to whom therefore the Idol appears to be itself a Divinity. Hence it has happened, that Ceremonies in which statues of the Gods were exhibited, or carried in procession, have been represented as appearances or movements of the Deities whom they represented. In this manner a much-litigated passage in Homer may perhaps be explained— Image-worship.

"Ζεὺς γὰρ, ἐπ' Ὠκεανὸν, μετ' ἀμύμονας Αἰθιοπῆας
Χθιζὸς ἔβη μετὰ δαῖτα, Θεοὶ δ' ἅμα πάντες ἕποντο·
Δωδεκάτῃ δέ τοι αὖθις ἐλεύσεται Ὀυλυμπόνδε."[3]

"For yester eve Jove o'er the Ocean sped,
And with him all the Gods, to share the feast
Of Ethiopia's blameless sons. Twelve days
They stay, and to Olympus then return."

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[1] Plato, de Leg., l. 11. [2] Lyndwood, iii., 27, ut paroch.
[3] Homer, i., 423, &c.

Image-worship.

This is believed by the best critics to allude to an annual procession of the priests of Ammon, carrying the statues of their Deities from Egypt into Ethiopia, and returning in twelve days.

Mixed Fables.

17. Such being the variety of mythological objects to which mankind have in different ages and countries paid adoration, the Historian should neither rashly reject all explanation of them, nor should he attempt to bend every mythological fable to any one simple theory. It may be true, that some heathen Gods were mere deifications of skilful or powerful men: in some, we may perceive obscure traces of antediluvian greatness, as of Noah and the Deluge: others may be mere physical or astronomical facts allegorically personified; but we may be assured that no single postulate will solve all the problems of a blind superstition, which has originated in the numberless weaknesses of the human mind. It must be remembered that Mythology never offered to a whole people any definite creed. A few learned and contemplative individuals were perhaps initiated in the greater mysteries, and may have thus acquired a knowledge of the first principles of a pure Theism; but they held them as a sacred deposit, not to be profaned by disclosure to the vulgar; whilst the articles of popular faith were so vague, that they might be easily mixed up with any wild and incoherent legend. Hence it happened, that the Deities of one country were considered as mere mortals in another; that some Deities known by very different names were supposed to be one and the same being; and some bearing one and the same name were manifestly figments of different origin. Herodotus explains certain Scythian Deities as identical with the Greek, viz., *Tabiti*, with Vesta; *Papæus* with Jupiter;

Œtosyrus with Apollo; *Artimpasa* with the celestial Venus; *Thamimasidas* with Neptune; and *Apia* with the Earth.[1] Again Macrobius, so late as the fifth century of the Christian era, says that the God *Majus*, worshipped in his time by the Tusculans, was identical with Jupiter, and that the Goddess *Maja*, was said by different writers to be the same as Juno, or as the wife of Vulcan, or Terra, or Mater Magna, or Bona Dea, or Fauna, or Opis, or Fatua, or Proserpine, or Hecate, or Semele, or the mother of Mercury, or the daughter of Faunus, or Medea.[2] On the other hand, Cicero shows that the name of *Hercules*, was given to at least six different Divinities: first to the most ancient Hercules, son of the most ancient Jove; secondly, to a son of Nilus in Egypt; thirdly, to one of the Idæan Digiti (sons of Minerva and the Sun); fourthly, to a son of Jove and Asteria; fifthly, to the Indian Hercules, called Belus; and sixthly, to the son of Jove and Alcmena.[3] Again, the simpler fictions were interwoven with the more recondite. The Sun, which as a visible material substance had been looked up to by savage nations with stupid awe, came, when personified as a living Deity, to be invested with new attributes as representing the elementary operations of heat and light: in a more advanced stage of science it allegorically illustrated the laws (so far as they were then known) of Astronomy; then it became a symbol of intellect; and lastly it was typified in some God or Hero; and the transition from one to the other of these significations being wholly capricious and susceptible of endless variation, the intended meaning was often lost in unintelligible allusions. Macro- Mixed Fables.

[1] Herod., iv., 59.

[2] Macrob., Sat. i., 12.

[3] Nat. De., iii., 16.

Mixed Fables.

bius, with great plausibility, argues, that all the principal Gods were personifications of the Sun. Thus (says he) that Luminary being looked upon as the leader and governor of all the lights of Heaven, it was imagined that he could not enjoy less power in the guidance and direction of terrestrial concerns.[1]

Allegories of the Sun.

Accordingly, when the Sun's appearance is thought to forebode a future event, he is Apollo, the God of oracular prediction.[2] When the Sun by enlivening the minds of men, excites them to the discovery of language and letters, he is Mercury.[3] So, the course of the Sun is allegorised by Apollo in the diurnal, and by Bacchus in the nightly hemisphere.[4] So, the heat of blood and fervour of the mind caused by the Sun is ascribed to Mars.[5] So, Esculapius, Serapis, and others, are identified with the Sun.[6] So, the twelve labours of Hercules, have been often proved to typify the Sun's progress through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The Sun, too, is shown to be the *Adonis* of the Phœnicians, the *Atys* of the Phrygians, and the *Osiris* and *Horus* of the Egyptians;[7] and, again, to be *Nemesis*, and *Pan*, and *Saturn;*[8] and even *Jove*, who is identified with the Assyrian *Adad*, and is addressed in the Orphic Hymns, as "Zeus, Dionysus, Father of the Abyss and of the Earth, the all-generating, ever-varied, golden-beamed *Sun*."

"Ἀγλαέ Ζεῦ Διόνυσε, πάτερ πόντου, πάτερ ἀίης,
Ἥλιε πανγενέτορ, παναίολε, χρυσεοφεγγές."[9]

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[1] Macrob., Saturn., i., 17.
[2] Virg. Geo., i., 463.
[3] Saturn, ut sup.
[4] Ibid., c. 18.
[5] Ibid., c. 19.
[6] Ibid., c. 20.
[7] Ibid., c. 21.
[8] Ibid., c. 22.
[9] Ibid., c. 23.

18. Lastly, some mythological fables seem to have arisen from a mere misconception of the meaning of words, or from the mode of writing them. Possibly the fable of Deucalion and Pyrrha throwing behind them stones, which turned into men, may have arisen from confounding λάας, a stone, with λαὸς, people:[1]— Meaning of Words.

> "What the man threw, assumed a manly face;
> And what the wife, renewed the female race."[2]

The similarity of the words λύκος, a wolf, λύκη, the dawn, and λυκία, Lycia, gave rise to three different legends of the birth of Apollo, whom Homer calls λυκογενὴς, either because Latona, in the shape of a *wolf*, gave him birth,[3] or because, as the Sun, he is said to be born of the *dawn*,[4] or because, according to a third fable, he was born in *Lycia*.[5] The word λύκος, a wolf, has contributed to some misconceptions also in geography. Sir W. Drummond observes that a river now called the *Zab*, which rushes from the mountains like a wolf, and falls into the Tigris, was anciently called by the natives, in the Chaldean Language, *Diab*, the Wolf River, which the Grecian writers, therefore, called the Lycus. From *Diab*, the adjacent district was called *Adiabene;* but this word Suidas erroneously derives from ἀδιαβάινω, "because in this region there are many rivers, which make the passage difficult." Of errors arising from the mode of writing, it has been supposed that the Greek word Ἀθήνη, "Minerva," affords an example; for it may have arisen from reading the name of *Neith*, an Egyptian deity, as written from right to left, *Thein*, and adding to it the Greek prefix 'A, and suffix η. Egyptian legends of the one Goddess may pos-

[1] Keightley. [2] Ovid, Met., i., 411. [3] Ælian, Anim., x., 26.
[4] Macrob., Sat., i., 17. [5] Homer, Il. iv., 101, ed. Clarke.

sibly have been confounded with the Grecian legends of the other.

Political Fictions.

19. Mythology, however, was not the only source of falsification in early history. *Political Fictions* contributed largely to the same effect. These tended to maintain among men the distinctions of Caste, of Race, of Family, of Country, and of Faction; and thus created adverse interests and strong prejudices, utterly irreconcilable with the pure and simple love of truth, many of which, unfortunately, continue to operate at the present day, rendering it unsafe to give entire credit even to our best Historians.

Distinction of Caste.

20. The distinction of *Caste* divides the Members of the same civil community into portions separated from each other through all generations by impassable barriers, raising some to privileges almost supernatural, and degrading others below the common level of humanity. Alien as such an institution is to the habits and feelings of this nation, it prevailed for ages in some of the countries formerly most civilised, and still prevails among millions of subjects of the British Crown in India. That it should ever have existed in human society appears at first sight an inexplicable problem. A very able writer has suggested that it was first introduced by a race of conquerors, who formed themselves into a military Caste; but to us it appears more probable that the Priests first devised an institution so conducive to their power and influence. Superstition seems to have been its earliest, as it certainly was its most deep-laid basis. The individuals who first impressed on the savage mind new and striking notions of personal Deities owed their influence not solely to their doctrines, but to their superior knowledge of the

powers of nature, which caused them to be regarded with awe as workers of wonders, Magicians, Augurs, Soothsayers, controllers of the elements, men who communed with Demons, Nymphs, and Deities, and were filled with their inspiration. Thus admired and feared, it was but a short step for them to assert that they were framed of different materials from the rest of mankind—"of a better clay:"[1]—and even that they partook in some degree of a Divine nature, which rendered their persons sacred and inviolable. Such seems to have been the origin of the priestly Caste, which, in all countries where this mode of distinction was known, always ranked the first. But we see, in very early times, a class of Warriors arising who were disposed to set at nought all pretensions but those of martial skill and bravery. In many ancient traditions, evident traces are perceivable of a struggle for superiority between the more warlike and the more learned body, which generally ended in a compromise, in virtue of which, the warriors were recognized as a military Caste, and their chiefs were sometimes flattered with the reputation of a divine origin, and the concession of a kingly rank, whilst the Priests, Magi, or "Wise Men" retained their character for sanctity and wisdom, and became, in consequence, the real guides and directors of the whole community. Mechanical arts, and the occupations of buying and selling were left to a less privileged body, and below the whole were the humble beings devoted to mere manual labour. Herodotus makes a sensible remark on this subject:—"It seems" (says he) "to be an established prejudice, even among nations the least refined, to place mechanics and their descendants in the lowest rank of citzens, and to esteem those as the most noble who

Distinction of Caste.

Struggle between Sacerdotal and Military Orders.

[1]Juvenal, Sat. xiv., 35.

Distinction of Caste.

have no other occupation than that of arms, to the exercise of which the highest degree of honour is attached. This notion prevails throughout Greece, but more particularly at Lacedæmon: the Corinthians, however, do not hold mechanics in disesteem."[1] It may seem extraordinary that the great majority of the population in any country should submit to be degraded into the lower classes, without a possibility of elevation; but as the fact is certain, we have only to suggest probable reasons for such an institution. It may be inferred, from various circumstances that there were some original diversities of race among the Castes. There is, generally, reason to believe that the sacerdotal and military Castes came from some distant country, the former, perhaps, as peaceful adventurers, the latter bent on conquest and dominion. It may, also, be assumed that some differences of constitution, temperament, or habit existed among the old inhabitants, the more industrious dwelling together in villages, and following some regular occupation, the others leading a wandering and uncertain life in woods and wilds, though all, from conscious inferiority, must have yielded a more or less ready submission to their Teachers and Conquerors. Again, in the Caste of Agriculturists and Traders, there must, necessarily, have been subdivisions, which became more numerous, as in the course of civilization new occupations were from time to time devised. Now, in each subdivision there must have been a national desire on the part of the father to bring up his sons to his own occupation, to communicate to them the secrets of his art, and secure to them his own property and rank in society. Of that rank, too, he may have been as proud as any member

[1] Herod., ii., 167.

of the hierarchy was of his. Diodorus observes that the artisans of Egypt, from the experience of many generations, had become more skilful than those of other countries, and that the same was to be said of the agriculturists.[1] Moreover, to violate the rules of his Caste insured to an individual (as he was taught, and firmly believed), not only temporal degradation, but the punishment of ages in a future existence; and the whole scheme was wrought into the practice of daily life, by allotting to every Caste, and to every subdivision of a Caste, its outward sacred marks, its daily religious ceremonies, and its peculiar protecting deities. Added to all this there was a still more effectual preservative of the whole system, in the existence of a miserable set of beings, who were *without Caste*. These were far below the lowest members of the lowest Caste. They were universally despised and abhorred, as is still the case with the *Pariahs* of India. So monstrous a system could only be connected with early History by the most extravagant falsifications of time, place, and person; and, as the authors and expounders of those falsifications were members of the priestly class (the sole depositaries of learning in the countries where the system prevailed), their fictions could not be detected, nor even suspected, but were received by successive generations with implicit belief. It is true, that in the course of time, sects arose which threw off the bonds of Caste; but this led to contests of which we at present know but little, except that they gave both parties new motives for perverting history by exaggeration on the one hand, and depreciation on the other.

Distinction of Caste.

21. In most ancient countries, whether or not there was

[1] Diod. Sic., ut sup.

Distinction of Race.

a distinction of Castes, there was a distinction of *Races*. By the term "Race" we do not here mean to refer to the primary origin of mankind, or to any physiological classification of the Genus *Homo* in its species or varieties; but to bodies of men existing at some known periods, claiming a common origin, and distinguished from their contemporaries in personal appearance, dress, language, or habits. Thus we find in Greece the Pelasgian and Hellenic races very early distinguished, and subsequently the Dorians, Ionians, &c. In the north of Europe were the Scythians, in the west, the Celtic and Teutonic races: and every Race, in the course of time, split into tribes, many of which again coalesced, or grew up singly into nations. It has been observed, and the remark is unhappily confirmed by very recent experience, that the pride of race is the last to be extinguished in the social mind. It is also one of the first to arise. In the dawn of history we see it operating. A community is taught to believe that it descends from some imaginary being, divine or mortal. It soon identifies itself with him, and confounds the traditional history of the race, nation, or tribe, with that of its supposed ancestor. Thus the Lydians claimed descent from a fictitious Lydus, the Mysians from Mysus, the Pelasgians from Pelasgus, the Hellenes from Hellen, the Dorians from Dorus, the Ionians from Ion, &c. &c. A careful attention to this circumstance will help us to discern traces of real history in many personal narratives. If the name of an individual be taken to signify a tribe, then his genealogy may indicate a connection of that tribe with other tribes, or with certain localities; his wars and triumphs may typify struggles between contending sects or factions; his expeditions may be nothing more than the migrations of barbarous hordes, or of more

civilized colonists; and the institutions ascribed to him may have arisen spontaneously from the emergencies of his supposed age and country. Distinction of Race.

22. Family descent afforded another species of fiction, especially where polytheism prevailed. They who made Gods in their own likeness gave them all their own failings. Although most of the Gods were said to be matrimonially united to Goddesses, yet, as concubinage was very generally allowed among mortals, it was thought nothing strange that the Divinities should use the same licence. Royal and noble families boasted of such an origin. The Dorian chiefs who, 1100 or 1200 years before Christ, invaded Peloponnesus, belonged to the Hyllæan tribe, the asserted descendants of Hyllus, a son of Hercules, and were, therefore, called Heraclidæ. The first Tarquin is said by Dionysius of Halicarnassus to have been of the family of the Bacchiadæ of Corinth, sprung from Bacchus. The Julii, in Rome, claimed as their ancestor Julus, the son of Æneas and grandson of Venus, whence Cæsar gave as his battle-cry at Pharsalia, "Venus victrix!" If this pedigree, however, be absurd in an historical point of view, we probably owe to it the Æneid, the most splendid piece of court flattery ever paid to an Imperial patron. The notion of a divine descent in families was not confined to Greece or Rome. We discover it in the most distant parts of the world. The Incas of Peru claimed descent from the Sun and Moon, as did several of the monarchs in the Gangetic Peninsula; and till comparatively modern times several Scandinavian and Teutonic sovereigns pretended to trace the origin of their houses to Woden. It is manifest that pretensions founded on such an imaginary basis could only be supported by the grossest perversions of historical truth. Family Distinctions.

Distinctions of Nations.

23. National prejudices exist, perhaps, at the present day with as much intensity in some parts of the world as they did in ancient times; but they are certainly to be taken into account, when we estimate the credibility of particular passages in early history. The supreme contempt with which the Greeks in general looked down on barbarians (a designation which they bestowed on all but their own countrymen), must make us detract much from their authority, when used, as it frequently was, to the disparagement of other nations. A splendid exception to this prejudice was indeed afforded by their first great historian, Herodotus, than whose candour there can be nothing more admirable, and whose veracity, though at one time much questioned, and even broadly denied, becomes daily more conspicuous, the more our discoveries enable us to test it by comparison with facts before unknown. To the national prejudice, or rather national malignity of the Romans against Carthage, we owe the irreparable loss of the whole mass of Punic literature. The works of Juba alone, could they be recovered, would be of inestimable value. To the same cause may be ascribed the proverbial reproach of *Punica fides,* which, perhaps, had we a faithful history of the conduct of Rome and Carthage to each other, would be found as unjust as the vulgar abuse of "perfidious Albion" by ignorant Frenchmen, or the still more senseless calumny of England, as the enemy in the present day of Ireland. We have a less glaring but still obvious instance of national prejudice in the Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus; for though he was a painstaking and not intentionally faithless historian, his partiality to his own country made him erroneously ascribe to a Grecian origin many institutions which were purely Roman, or, at least, Italian.

Influence of Faction.

24. The last political source of falsification in early History which we shall notice, is one equally if not more productive of error in our own times than at earlier periods: it consists partly in the incapacity of adverse factions, sects, or parties, to believe anything fair and honourable in the character of each other; and partly in the unwillingness to publish any such belief, though privately convinced of its truth. Nor does this unfairness regard only the conduct of the Historian's contemporaries. He sees with a jaundiced eye the actions of men, who, in preceding times, have held opinions different from his own; and he is indulgently blind even to crimes and atrocities, if perpetrated by men with whom, in other respects, he sympathises. The existence of factious, or political parties, implies, no doubt, a considerable advance in the organization of society. The great contest, for instance, between Brahminism and Buddhism, in India, seems not to have taken place till many ages after that country had made much progress in civilization: and we hear of no great struggle between the Patricians and Plebeians of Rome until after that state had existed, according to the ordinary calculation, 260 years, when the secession of the latter to the mountain, afterwards called *Mons Sacer,* took place. Such contradictions and uncertainties beset the history of both these great events, that all the vast ingenuity and learning which of late years have been employed on Indian affairs, have not sufficed to determine whether or not Buddha was a real person, nor whether his followers were reformers of a corrupted creed or upholders of one more ancient than that of their opponents. And after all the deep research and admirable penetration of Niebuhr, all that we really learn of the secession of the Roman Plebs is, that such an event actually took place, and that it gave

occasion to a compact by which the Tribunitian authority was established; but as to the particular circumstances which attended this struggle, no one of the inconsistent accounts that have been given of them appears more entitled than another to be credited by posterity.

Modes of recording History.

25. Profane History, thus loaded with mythological and political fictions, was for a long while rendered still more obscure by the modes in which it was preserved, either oral or written. On the extreme vagueness and uncertainty of mere oral history it is needless to insist. This

Tradition.

constitutes Tradition, which, in early ages, and amongst rude, uncultivated people, is nothing more than the belief of one credulous generation handed down to succeeding and equally credulous generations, with additions and variations at every stage. It generally, if not always, contains an original particle of truth; but to separate that particle from the vast alloy of prejudice and error is often beyond the power of the most acute and diligent investigator. The written record presents difficulties of another and equally formidable kind. We hear of knots called *Quipos* in Peru, but to untie the mystery which they contained is impossible. The Mexican *picture-writing* was little more intelligible. Far more ancient and venerable

Hieroglyphics.

than these, were the Egyptian *hieroglyphics*, which, as their designation imports, were sacred sculptured characters. These still exist in great numbers on buildings, obelisks, and tablets of stone, and were manifestly intended not to be understood by any but a class interested to perpetuate a belief in the fictions thus recorded: and though very great ingenuity has been recently employed in deciphering them, much remains to be discovered. It would seem from the latest and best accounts of the *Chinese characters*, that the

most ancient remains of these were of a rude and imperfect kind, and must have always admitted a great latitude of explanation. The *arrow-headed* letters of Assyria and Persia, now first attempted to be interpreted, do not appear to have been known to any historians at present extant. No literary works, and very few inscriptions, remain in the *Phœnician* characters; and the *Greek* letters, which, as Herodotus admits, were derived from them, were in process of time changed both in sound and form. He adds, that he has seen inscriptions in a Bœotian Temple in some very ancient characters, purporting to be of the fourth generation from Cadmus (say B. C. 1200), which were "considerably *like* those afterwards used by the Ionians."[1] But on another occasion, he admits that a certain inscription in another temple was a forgery of the Priests.[2] Hence it follows that an early Historian could derive no very certain information from such inscriptions; for if genuine they might not be (to him at least) intelligible, and if intelligible they might not be genuine. In the present age, indeed, when archæology has become a science, and the forgery of writings, coins, and tabular inscriptions has been rendered easy of detection, such contemporaneous records of ancient events may prove of inestimable importance; but at the date of the histories of which we now speak, archæological science was little known, the fabrication of false documents was easy, and there were few means of testing their accuracy. What we have said of the Greek letters may be said *mutatis mutandis* of the *Latin*. Polybius, the earliest extant writer of Roman history, and a man of scrupulous exactness and veracity, says, that the Roman language of the first treaty with the Carthaginians (B. C. 509), engraved on brass and

Modes of recording History.

Importance of Archæology.

[1] Herod., v., 59. [2] Ibid., i., 51.

extant at the time he wrote (about 360 years afterwards), could hardly be understood by the best antiquarians.[1]

Poetical Histories.

26. Of materials so corrupted, mythologically and politically, and from evidence oral and written so uncertain, was Profane History in its early stages composed. But there is yet another consideration to which we must carefully attend. The first Historians everywhere were Poets; and History, or what pretended to be History, was either the Lay of a Bard, or an Epic Romance, and both were more or less mixed up with mythological fables and exaggerations of heroic exploits. In India the two great Epic Poems, the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayana*, give, in a mythological form, the earliest historical traditions of that country. The *Shah-Nameh* of FERDOUSI contains a similar mixture of the ancient mythological and historical traditions of Persia. What the usage was in the time of Homer we learn from the Lays of Demodocus, at the Court of Alcinous, who first sang—

> "The bright-crowned Venus' love with Battle's King."[2]

And afterwards—

> —— "To Ulysses' acts did breathe a fire
> So deadly quickening, that it did inspire
> Old Death with life."[3]

It was not till near four centuries after the probable era of her great Epic Poet, that Greece possessed a prose Historian of any account. The intermixture of mythological fables in the poems of Homer and Hesiod was severely blamed by Plato, though otherwise an ardent admirer of their productions. He says, they framed false fables of the Gods and Heroes quite unlike their real nature. Hesiod,

[1] Polyb., b. iii., c. 3.
[2] Chapman's Odyss., 8. [3] Ibid.

for instance, makes Saturn mutilate his father Cœlum. Homer represents the Gods as fighting with and deceiving each other, battling with Giants and with Heroes, and doing acts which should not be mentioned, especially to young readers, even as allegories.[1] The foundations of Roman history were of a like nature; and if less mythological were equally filled with heroic fictions. Every great family had Lays sung in its honour at convivial entertainments. "What we now call the history of the Roman Kings" (says Niebuhr) "was rendered out of these songs into prosaic narrative." "As the pontifical annals falsified history for the Patricians, so there prevails throughout all these fictions a Plebeian feeling of hatred against that order." "The founders of the Commonwealth are represented as mostly Plebeian." "Among the Patricians, the Valerii and Horatii, both Gentes favourable to the Plebs, are the only ones honourably distinguished."[2] Poetical Histories.

27. Thus we have seen, that before Profane History attains to a true historical character, it generally passes through three stages, which may be called the mythological, the mytho-historical, and the poetico-historical. In the first, the actors are mere personifications of certain physical or intellectual principles; in the second, human warriors and sages are confusedly mixed together with supernatural beings, and partake of their mysterious character; and in the third, the author borrows fictions from the two preceding sources, heightens them by the brilliant touches of imagination, and gives them "a local habitation and a name," as of the countries and the men in which we feel a personal interest. What the great Critic last quoted has said of mythological narratives in general, may be applied to General Result.

[1] Plato, Repub. l. ii. [2] Niebuhr, Rom. Hist., vol. i., c. 16.

General Result.

each of these classes. "They are often like the imagery of a *Fata Morgana,* which is formed by laws of reflection and refraction unknown to us, or is at least too indistinct to enable us to discover its material type; yet such magic apparitions are not mere dreams: they are never without a hidden groundwork of reality."[1] To form a reasonable conjecture what that groundwork may be, in any particular instance, we must first ascertain the character of the delusion in which it is veiled. This will be found to differ widely in the early Histories of different nations, the most remarkable of which we shall now proceed to examine.

Egypt.

Scriptural Account.

28. We begin with the history of *Egypt,* and for this we must refer to three different sources, the Sacred Scriptures, Greek and Latin authors, and recent discoveries. The earliest and plainest account of this country is to be found in the Old Testament. Moses, the great historian to whom we owe that information, was himself a native of Egypt; he was versed in all its learning, and he delivered his narrative to a people who had sojourned there (they and their ancestors) for many generations. Moreover, the books containing his statements are probably the earliest specimens of alphabetic writing now in existence, having been completed a thousand years or more prior to the birth of Herodotus, the father of Grecian history. According to Josephus, the country afterwards called Egypt was originally named *Mesren,* and the people *Mesraioi*— τὴν γὰρ Αἴγυπτον Μέσρην, καὶ Μεσραίους τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους ἅπαντες οἳ ταύτην οἰκοῦντες καλοῦμεν[2]—and he considers these names to be derived from *Misraim,* who is reckoned by Moses one of the sons of Ham.[3] The learned Bochart, however, thought that

[1] Niebuhr, Rom. Hist., vol. i., c. 15.

[2] Joseph., Antiq., i., 6.

[3] Genesis, x., 6.

the name was derived from *Matsor*, a fortress; that *Misraim*, being a word of a dual termination, signified the two countries of Upper and Lower Egypt; and that this appellation was subsequently given to the son of Ham, as the ancestor of the people of both regions. The extent of the territory so named is uncertain; it was seated on the banks of the Nile, and may possibly have been occupied in very ancient times by several distinct tribes.

Egypt. — Scriptural Account.

29. The first mention of it in the Mosaic writings is, that Abraham went thither on account of a famine prevailing in Canaan.[1] This event occurred, according to the Hebrew Text, B.C. 1920, and after the Deluge only 428 years; but, according to the Septuagint, B.C. 2551, and after the Deluge, 1207. Egypt was then an agricultural country, and the Patriarch's life was pastoral; but no dislike of him was shown on that or any other account. The part of the country which he saw was under the dominion of a chief called by the name or title of Pharaoh; but whether he was the sovereign of the whole country, or merely of a particular district, and if so whether he had any and what pre-eminence over the chiefs of other districts, does not appear. The same title of Pharaoh, however, is applied in Scripture to Egyptian Kings down to the sixth century before Christ, which affords an inference, that, for that length of time at least, the Egyptian language was unaltered. No other circumstance relating to the religion, politics, sciences, or arts of Egypt, in the time of Abraham, can be ascertained with any degree of clearness from this authority. It has been contended, that at the period in question "powerful kingdoms were already established, great cities had been built, and regular armies were main-

Abraham.

[1] Genesis, xii., 10.

Egypt. — Scriptural Account.

tained;" that "mankind already witnessed the *pomp* of Courts, and the luxury of individuals;" and that "*Pharaoh appeared surrounded with his Princes.*"[1] Now, whatever proof of all this may be collected from profane history, it is at least an exaggeration of the Scriptural evidence, as applied to Egypt. We learn, indeed, that besides the king, there were some "head-men" (as we say in speaking of rude communities), ἄρχοντες, as the Septuagint terms them, and "Princes," as our translation designates them;[2] but that the Monarch appeared "surrounded" with them; that he held a "Court," and displayed "pomp" at it; that he had built any "great city," or maintained any "regular army," are all the *gratis dicta* of the commentator. Kingdoms, in those days, were often of very limited extent. A few years after his short sojourn in Egypt, Abraham with only "three hundred and eighteen trained servants" defeated four Kings, who had previously overcome five other Kings.[3]

Joseph.

30. After a lapse of nearly 200 years, we find merchants from Gilead trading with camels loaded with spices and drugs,[4] who carry down Joseph and sell him as a slave to an officer of the king of Egypt, which king, like his predecessor, was also called Pharaoh.[5] Potiphar, the officer in question, was captain of the king's guards,[6] &c., and keeper of his prison;[7] and it appears that Pharaoh had, among other principal officers, a chief butler,[8] and a chief baker:[9] these circumstances seem to indicate some advance in the political institutions of the Egyptian monarchy; but it is to be remembered, that the period here spoken of was at

[1] Drummond, Orig., i., 102. [2] Genesis, xii., 15. [3] Ibid., xiv., 8-16.
[4] Ibid., xxxvii., 25. [5] Ibid., xxxvii., 36. [6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., xl., 3. [8] Ibid., xl., 2. [9] Ibid.

least 620 years after the general deluge, a space of time within which it is easy to conceive that men would have been led, in situations so favourable as that of Egypt, to unite in society, to dispose themselves into ranks and orders, to pass laws, to build cities, to coin money, and to exhibit all those political phenomena which occur in the history of Joseph. This history shows that there was then a class of men in Egypt, called in our translation magicians and wise men, who professed supernatural arts, such as the interpretation of dreams,[1] and it would seem that they were the priests; but what were their religious ceremonies or doctrines we do not learn. It is clear, however, that they possessed a portion of the lands,[2] and that the rest were held in absolute property by the private occupiers, until by the procurement of Joseph, the paramount, or as we should say, the allodial property of the whole was transferred to the king, who, however, made no other use of that right than to place the former occupiers in the state of tenants *in capite* (to speak the language of the feudal law), bound, not indeed to military service, but to the payment of a rent, or land-tax, of one-fifth of the produce, which Moses distinctly says, continued to be the law of Egypt down to his time.[3] Among the arts in use in Egypt at that time, we find particular notice of embalmment,[4] and that it was practised by a class of men called, in our translation, "Physicians." The word, however, in the Septuagint is ἐνταφιαστὴς, which implies solely a person employed in preserving or anointing bodies. For the learned Beza observes, that the verbs θάπτω, to bury, and ἐνταφιάζω, to anoint for the funeral, are entirely distinct in signification. We find notice too of the use of

[1] Genesis, xli., 8.
[2] Ibid., xlvii., 22, 26.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., l., 2.

Egypt. Scriptural Account.

chariots and waggons, vestures of fine linen, rings, gold chains, silver cups, and other traces of great civilization and opulence. And among their customs, we observe, that though they themselves possessed herds of cattle, yet the attendance on them was thought so servile as to be held an abomination;[1] and probably for this reason the Egyptians also held it an abomination to eat with Joseph's brethren, who were by profession shepherds, and who, on that account, were planted as a colony apart from the natives, in the land of Goshen. In this situation, the Hebrews, the descendants of Joseph's family, remained for 215 years, during which time they had multiplied exceedingly; but being considered by the Egyptians as an inferior caste, they had been grievously oppressed, employed in many laborious and servile works,[2] and at length treated with the most horrid and revolting cruelty: nor will this circumstance appear surprising to those who are aware of the unnatural and brutal manner in which the despised caste of *Pariahs* are treated in India: nay, we wish we could not say that there are some civilized Europeans, who, to this day, think and speak of their fellow-beings with the same unchristian arrogance, because they have had the misfortune to be born in slavery, and to inherit from their ancestors a sable complexion.

Exodus.

31. The scriptural account of the Exodus (or departure) of the Jews from Egypt, and of the miracles which preceded and accompanied it, is too well known to be here dwelt upon. The class of Egyptians whom we consider to be the Priests, and whom our translation calls "wise men," "sorcerers," and "magicians,"[3] practised, at

[1] Genesis, xlvi., 34. [2] Exod., i., 11.

[3] Ibid., vii., 11.

this time, delusions which are termed "enchantments." It does not appear whether the military then formed a caste; but they must have been numerous and well appointed; for the King pursued the departing Jews in his own chariot, and took with him "six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt and captains over every one of them."[1] Their numbers and appearance must have been very formidable; for the Israelites fled in terror before them, notwithstanding their own numbers amounted "to six hundred thousand on foot, that were men, beside children, and" beside "a mixed multitude who went up also with them."[2] "All Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen" were on this occasion overwhelmed by the sea; but their exact number is not mentioned; neither is it distinctly asserted that the King himself perished, though such is the common tradition. It is not our object here to pursue the History of the Israelites, except so far as it is connected with that of Egypt. Although they subsequently became a very powerful nation, took Jerusalem, which they strongly fortified, were engaged in frequent wars, and were several times reduced by neighbouring nations to subjection, but eventually extended their conquests "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates;"[3] yet for many centuries they were in no degree molested or interfered with by their former oppressors the Egyptians. Indeed, the first mention of Egypt which occurs after the Exodus in the Old Testament is of a friendly nature; for "Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David,"[4] about B. C.

[1] Exodus, xiv., 6, 7.
[2] Ibid., xii., 37, 38.
[3] Genesis, xv., 18.
[4] 1 Kings, iii., 1.

Egypt. Scriptural Account.

1017 or 1013. It is not until the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, that we find mention of the Egyptians as conquerors of any country whatever; but in that reign (about B. C. 975 or 978) *Shishak*, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, with twelve hundred chariots and three score thousand horsemen, and the people were without number that came with him, the Lubims, the Sukkims, and the Ethiopians."[1] Subsequently to this period mention is several times made of wars of the Egyptians with the Jews and other nations; and the title of Pharaoh is generally though not always given to the Egyptian monarch. Thus we find a notice of "*Zerah* the Ethiopian"[2] (B. C. 941), probably a sovereign of Egypt, and of "*So*, king of Egypt"[3] (B. C. 725), probably an Ethiopian in origin; but at later periods we meet with *Pharaoh Necho*[4] (B. C. 610), and *Pharaoh Hophra*[5] (about B. C. 590), both kings of Egypt.

Classical Account.

32. The classical and other writers of Greece and Rome were, until recent times, the only sources, except the Holy Scriptures, from which any considerable information of the early state of Egypt could be obtained. We shall begin

Homer.

with the earliest of these, Homer: for though his personal existence has been questioned by some, and the period at which he lived (if at all) is doubtful; yet we venture to assume that the two great Poems extant under his name were composed about 900 years before Christ. At that time Egypt had been for many ages, and still was, under the dominion of its native sovereigns; and had within the previous century actually brought into the field the large army above mentioned of King Shishak. One hypothesis makes Homer himself to have been a native of

[1] 2 Chron., xii., 2, 3. [2] Ibid., xiv., 9. [3] 2 Kings, vii., 4.
[4] Ibid., xxiii., 29. [5] Jer., xliv., 30.

Egypt; but the little that he says of that country evinces scarcely any acquaintance with its institutions, and none at all with its History. To its peculiar mythology he makes no allusion, unless one slight circumstance may be accounted such. It is this: he gives the name of Egypt to the river which we call the Nile, as well as to the land through which it flows; but the former he calls Αἰγυπτος,[1] with a masculine termination, and the latter Αἰγυπτη,[2] with a feminine; which may have arisen from some vague knowledge that the natives regarded the river as a male Deity, and the land as a female; or may have merely referred to the masculine Ποταμος and the feminine γη. He does not mention some remarkable objects, which, had he seen them, must have made a strong impression on his imagination; for instance, the brute animals everywhere worshipped as Deities, the dead bodies embalmed, and preserved with so much ceremony, the hieroglyphic inscriptions on all the temples, and, above all, the stupendous Pyramids. Either these singular edifices must have been built after his time (which is improbable), or else if he had ever been in Egypt they must have attracted his notice. In other respects, his statements concerning that country agree tolerably well with those of the Scriptures. He speaks, with perhaps a poetic exaggeration, of Thebes, as possessing a hundred gates, through each of which two hundred men might pass with horses and chariots;[3] but his allusions to the general wealth of the inhabitants, as evinced by their possessing talents of gold, and baskets, bathing-tubs, and tripods of silver,[4] are easily credible when we remember the gold and jewels mentioned in the time of

Egypt. — Homer.

[1] Odyss., iv., 351.
[2] Ibid., 229.
[3] Iliad, ix., 381, 383.
[4] Odyss., iv., 125, 128, 129.

Egypt. Homer. Moses, and even of Joseph. Of any great Egyptian conqueror, however, an Osiris, a Sesostris, or a Rameses, though all these are said to have reigned before his time, Homer evidently never heard. Still less is to be learnt from Hesiod, except as to the name of the river, which he calls the Nile.[1] Nor is the ignorance of Egypt at all remarkable in these Poets, for the Egyptians never received any Greeks among them till the reign of Psammetichus, above two centuries after the Homeric writings.[2]

HERODOTUS. 33. From the time of Homer and Hesiod, Egypt is not mentioned by any extant Greek author for nearly four centuries. Several eminent Grecians indeed travelled thither; among whom may be reckoned *Pythagoras*, and possibly *Solon* and *Plato;* and there were two writers, *Hecatæus* and *Hellanicus*, each of whom composed a description of Egypt; but their works are now lost. The fullest accounts extant are those of HERODOTUS and DIODORUS, both of whom visited that country, but with a long interval between their respective voyages. Herodotus was there about the year B. C. 460, when Egypt was under the dominion of the Persians: and Diodorus in the year B. C. 56, when it was nominally subject to a Grecian monarch, but substantially under Roman control. Both these Historians were men entirely trustworthy, so far as their personal observation went: but they were foreigners, ignorant probably of the spoken, and certainly of the written language: and they owed their information to the Egyptian Priests, who, from the interests of their caste, and the prejudices of their race, were most likely to deceive them. Moreover, the authorities which the priests cited, were written in hieroglyphics, or in sacred characters, which they alone

[1] Theog., 338. [2] Herod., ii., 154.

could decipher, and which they could consequently expound as they thought fit: and, after all, the accounts obtained by the two Historians, the one at Memphis and the other at Thebes, are for the most part irreconcilable with each other. Both authors indeed begin with mythological fables: both state that Egypt was first governed for a long period of time by Gods, then by Demigods, and lastly by mortals; but they do not agree either in the names of these pretended sovereigns, in the duration of their reigns, or in the acts which they performed. Both, too, are puzzled to account for the discrepancies between the Greek and Egyptian mythologies. And here we must observe, that though the common practice, in modern Europe, is to speak of the Grecian deities by their Latin names, it is not so with Greek writers generally, and particularly with the two Historians in question, who uniformly call Jupiter *Zeus*, Saturn *Kronos*, Vulcan *Hephaistos*, Mercury *Hermes*, Neptune *Poseidon*, or *Poseideon*, Hercules *Heracles*, Bacchus *Dionysus*, Juno *Heré*, Vesta *Histia*, Ceres *Demeter*, Minerva *Athené*, Proserpine *Persephoné*, Venus *Aphrodite*, &c. And though Herodotus gives it as his opinion, founded on the assertion of the Egyptian Priests, that Egypt communicated to Greece the names of almost all the Gods,[1] it does not appear either that any Grecian name of a Deity occurs on an Egyptian monument, or that Herodotus himself knew the Egyptian Deities by their proper names, except *Ammon*, *Isis*, *Osiris*, and the beings connected with the two latter, viz., *Horus*, *Typhon*, *Apis*, and *Anubis*. He mentions indeed a temple of *Aphrodite*[2] at *Atarbechis*; but he does not seem to be aware that *Atar* or *Athor* was the Egyptian name of a

[1] Herod., ii., 50.

[2] Ibid., 41.

Egypt. Herodotus.

Goddess similar in some attributes to the Greek Aphrodite. What seems to have struck him as particularly remarkable, is, that three Egyptian Deities, whom he regarded as identical with the Grecian Heracles, Dionysus, and Pan, were stated to have existed in Egypt *several thousand years* prior to the date of their supposed birth in Greece! According to his information, there were eight great Gods, who reigned successively in Egypt, and from these were descended twelve minor Gods, who also reigned in turn.[1] This author does not distinctly specify the names or reigns of the Gods and Demigods; but he says that *Pan* is deemed the most ancient; that *Hercules*, a God of the second rank, reigned 17,000 years before Amasis;[2] and that Bacchus, a God of the third rank, reigned 15,000 years before the same mortal sovereign.[3] Now Amasis, as we shall presently see, came to the throne B.C. 565; Hercules, therefore, according to this account, reigned 17,565, and Bacchus 15,565 years before the Christian era.

Diodorus Siculus.

34. Diodorus Siculus finds the same difficulty as Herodotus in comprehending the Egyptian mythology. "Speaking generally" (says he), "there is great discrepancy in the accounts of these Deities; for the same Goddess is called by some Isis, by some Demeter, by others Thesmophoron, by some the Moon, by some Heré, and from some she receives all these names together. Osiris, too, is at one time called Serapis, at another Dionysos. Sometimes he is thought to be Pluto, sometimes Ammon, sometimes Zeus, and often Pan."[4] Diodorus, however, goes much at large into the actions and attributes of the different Deities, declaring, as Herodotus had done, that several of them had reigned at

[1] Herod., ii., 145.
[2] Ibid., 43.
[3] Ibid., 145.
[4] Diod. Sic., l. i., p. 21. Ed., 1604.

Egypt.
—
Diodorus Siculus.

very early periods in Egypt. Of these, the first, he says, was the Sun, and then in succession, *Kronos, Rhea, Zeus, Heré, Hephaistos, Hestia,* and *Hermes.*[1] These, therefore, were, in his view, the eight great Gods spoken of by Herodotus. After them came five of their descendants, also Gods, and sovereigns of Egypt, viz.: *Osiris, Isis, Typhon, Apollo,* and *Aphrodite.*[2] Elsewhere he speaks of the Elements as Deities, viz.: fire as *Hephaistos,* air as *Athené,* water as *Nilus,* and earth as *Demeter,* and to these four he adds *Zeus,* as the vital spirit.[3] But these again are resolved into *Osiris* as the Sun, the source of vitality, and *Isis* as the Moon, governing the earth and the water; whilst the air serves as a medium uniting the action of the two primary principles. On the fabulous history of Osiris, Diodorus dilates at great length. This deity (he says) found the Egyptians in a state of utter barbarism, cannibals, illiterate, and ignorant of agriculture. He taught them that corn afforded a better food than man's flesh, which latter he forbade them to eat:[4] his sister, Isis, who was also his wife, instructed them in the cultivation of the earth and in legislation,[5] and his chief councillor, Hermes, taught them letters and arts.[6] He made long expeditions to Ethiopia, Arabia, India, and *the end of the earth!*[7] and returning through Asia Minor, crossed the Hellespont into Thrace, where he founded the kingdom of Macedonia. On his return to Egypt, he encountered the animosity of his brother, *Typhon,* by whom he was killed, and cut into 26 pieces,[8] which, however, were eventually recovered, and he was restored to life; his creative power, which had for

[1] Diod. Sic., l. i., p. 21. Ed., 13.
[2] Ibid., p. 13.
[3] Ibid., pp. 11, 12.
[4] Ibid., 13.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid., p. 41.
[7] Ibid., p. 17.
[8] Ibid., p. 18.

Egypt.

Diodorus Siculus.

some time been lost, being also restored. Of this last event a certain symbol in the Egyptian mysteries (and in the Grecian, derived from them), is said to be a memorial.[1] Finally, Osiris was buried in the Nilotic isle of Phylæ, where 360 vessels of milk were daily offered to his memory.[2] It is observable that 360 Priests daily carried water to the same Deity in the city of Acanthus;[3] and to him also was supposed to relate a golden circle of a cubit in breadth, on which the stars were figured, in 365 divisions, in the tomb of King Osymandyas.[4] As to the duration of the reigns of Gods and Demigods, Diodorus varies in the accounts, which he probably received from different Priests. At one time, he says, the Priests reckoned 23,000 years from the reign of the Sun, the first of the divine Kings, to Alexander's invasion of Asia (B. C. 334).[5] At another time, he says, the mortal Kings were 4,700; but it is evident that if this number had reigned only five years each on an average, the result would have exceeded the former estimate of Gods and mortals together. The great Gods, as he was informed, reigned 1,200 years each, the minor Gods 300;[6] but he suggests that the former may be months, and that the latter may be seasons of four months each,[7] which would bring all the divine reigns within the comparatively reasonable compass of a century to a sovereign; though even this is manifestly incredible.

Animal-worship.

35. Both Herodotus and Diodorus dwell at length on the *Animal-worship* in Egypt, which excited their surprise, and prevailed throughout the country in their time, as it did still later in the time of Juvenal. "Quis nescit" (says the Satirist)—

[1] Diod. Sic., p. 19. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 87. [4] Ibid., p. 46.
[5] Ibid., p. 22. [6] Ibid., p. 63. [7] Ibid., p. 22.

" Quis nescit, Volusi Bithynice, qualia demens
Ægyptus portenta colat? Crocodilon adorat
Pars hæc: illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibim.
Effigies sacri nitet aurea cercopitheci—
Illic cæruleos, hic piscem fluminis, illic
Oppida tota canem venerantur—
Porrum et cepe nefas violare ac frangere morsu." [1]

To such a pitch was this superstition carried, that Diodorus says he personally witnessed the rage of a riotous multitude, who would have torn a Roman to pieces because he had by mere accident caused the death of a cat.[2] During a famine in Egypt many persons were driven by hunger to feed on human flesh, but no one dared to taste the flesh of any sacred animal.[3] As to the devotion paid to the bull Apis at Memphis, the bull Mnevis in Heliopolis, the Goat at Mendes, and the Crocodile in the Lake Mœris, it is much easier (says Diodorus) to narrate these stories than to obtain belief for them.[4] To give a reasonable explanation of the causes of this worship, adds he, is a matter of much perplexity. Some say, that the Gods, in very ancient times, assumed the shapes of different animals;[5] others, that different bodies of men, when they went to battle, bore the figures of animals on their standards, and the conquerors ascribed their success to the animal under whose flag they had fought.[6] A third theory is, that certain animals were worshipped for their utility.[7] Finally, a poli-

[1] Juvenal, Sat. xv., 1, &c.—" Who has not heard of the monstrosities the insane Egyptian worships? One set of them adore the crocodile; another set crouch before the ibis gorged with serpents; in one place you see the golden effigy of a long-tailed monkey; here they worship sea-fish; there fish of the river; elsewhere whole towns venerate a dog; elsewhere, again, it is a sin to violate a leek or onion with a bite."

[2] Diod. Sic., i., 53. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid., p. 54. [6] Ibid. [7] Ibid.

Egypt. — Animal-worship.

tical reason is adduced, namely, that some artful sovereign divided the country into districts, and persuaded the inhabitants of each district to worship some particular animal, in order that they might rather dispute with each other on the sacredness of their respective divinities than combine together to overturn the government.[1] Such are the speculations of the Sicilian historiographer; but the concurrent traditions of the Egyptians themselves afford the best solution of a practice so degrading to human nature; for they all agree that in the earliest ages Lower Egypt was inhabited by rude and barbarous tribes, destitute alike of moral and intellectual cultivation—men in that state of degradation in which, as we have observed, superstition is likely to take its very lowest forms: hence it may be well conceived that animal-worship was an early practice in that country; and as different tribes may have admired or feared different animals, this circumstance may account for the multiplicity which was eventually found to exist in the objects of their adoration.

Growth of Mythology.

36. Deeply sunk in ignorance as the poor savages were, whom we have just described, they yet had doubtless some vague notions of the power of the Sun and Moon to give light, of the Libyan wind to scorch them, of the overflowing Nile to fertilize the soil, and of the Earth to produce the roots which were their chief subsistence. When we are told that *Osiris* tamed these wild and brutal men, and that *Isis* taught them agriculture, we must understand that such effects were wrought by Priests of those deities, men who came perhaps from some other country, and whose skill in natural science made them pass for magicians and sorcerers. The Priests, in propagating their own superstí-

[1] Diod. Sic., l., p. 56.

tions, could only raise their converts a few steps in intellectual elevation. They could only describe their Gods by terms familiar to their hearers. The word *Osiris*, for instance, is derived by some etymologists from the Egyptian *osh*, great, and *seir*, which seems to have signified in various dialects, "bright," or "light;" so that the compound word would mean "the great light," "the Sun."[1] To address to the ignorant hearers any abstruse reasoning on the nature of the visible Sun, thus personified, would have been of no avail; but to display before them powers which they deemed miraculous, and to supply them, by means of agriculture, with plenteous and palatable food, would command their ready acquiescence in the religious doctrines of their teachers. They would thus be led to recognise the Sun as Osiris, a personal God, powerful to punish their perseverance in the forbidden practice of cannibalism, and the Earth as Isis, a gracious Goddess ready to afford them nutriment, if they would follow the directions of their agricultural instructors. Yet as consistency is no character of polytheism, some Priests might persuade those who had worshipped a Bull, or had prayed to the river Nile, that the object of their adoration was still the same Osiris in a different shape. Other Priests, addressing themselves to the worshippers of the Crocodile or the Goat, might declare the former animal to be a form assumed by the God *Typhon*, or the latter to represent the God *Pan*. In like manner, the names of Gods might be given to those elementary powers which had appeared to the untutored mind of the savage to be active causes of his enjoyments, or of his sufferings. Fire, in its genial warmth, might be described as one Deity, and in its desolating flame as another. Air, felt in the cooling breeze,

Egypt. Growth of Mythology.

[1] Drum., Orig., ii., 69.

Egypt. Growth of Mythology.

might be *Neith;* in the withering blast, *Nepthys.* Every advance that the new Teachers of Religion themselves made in physical knowledge, furnished them with fresh mythological legends. There is in the human mind an innate perception, however vague or obscure, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above."[1] Therefore, if a Priest of *Thoth* discovered the rudiments of letters, arithmetic, or geometry, he asserted, and perhaps believed, that the deity whom he worshipped was the inventor of these sciences. So *Ptha* (the Vulcan of the Latins) was said to have first imparted to men the arts of fusion and working of metals. The Agriculture of Egypt suggested numerous incidents in the wild romance of the sufferings of Osiris. "Hence" (as Plutarch has observed) "analogies were traced by some between the history of this God, and the various changes which happen in the air, during the different seasons, or those which take place in the Earth during the production of corn."[2] According to one legend, the burial of Osiris typified the sowing of the seed; his revival, its appearance above ground. Isis perceiving her pregnancy was the earth moved beneath its surface by the first development of the plant from its root. The birth of the infant Harpocrates was the tender blade of the corn as it first appears above the soil. Again, when Osiris was said to be the Nile, he was regarded as the beneficent Deity who supplied the place of vernal showers in fertilizing Egypt. The extreme heats of that country begin in March, when the scorching winds blow from Libya. These winds were personified by Typhon, the evil deity, who, with 72 companions (that is, for a space of 72 days),[3] persecuted Isis,

[1] James, i., 17. [2] Plut., Is. et Os., s. 65.
[3] Guigniaut, i., 397.

that is, burnt up the land of Egypt, while Osiris, the Nile, feeble and languishing, was detained in Ethiopia. But soon the River begins to increase, Osiris returns in strength, and at the summer solstice the whole country is inundated. The worshippers of great Rivers, especially of those whose sources are unknown, such as the Ganges and the Nile, are easily persuaded that the streams flow from a Deity. Hence Homer speaks of the Nile as Διῒπετὴς ποταμὸς[1], a "River flowing from Jove;" and in this view, Osiris was called the son of Ammon. As a knowledge of Astronomy began to be cultivated by the Priests, their traditions concerning Osiris were still further varied. It was in his character as the Sun, that in an early age, when the year was calculated at 360 days, the above-mentioned offerings of milk at Philæ, and of water at Acanthus, were made to him. When the science was more advanced, a year of 365 days was prefigured by the golden circle at the tomb of Osymandyas, and subsequently a nearer approach to perfection was made by adding six hours.[1] Again, if we regard Osiris as the Sun, we cannot be surprised that he should be said to have carried his triumphant arms "to India, and the ends of the earth." But other Deities also were explained to be the Sun. *Ammon,* with the head of a Ram, was the Sun entering *Aries* at the vernal equinox. This was the beginning of an equinoctial year. Another year was solstitial, and this was opened by the heliacal rising of *Sirius,* with which star *Thoth* was identified. Besides, each Planet had its deity. The planet Jupiter was the star of *Osiris,* Mercury was that of *Horus,* Venus of *Isis,* Mars of *Typhon,* and Saturn of *Anubis.* The endless confusion which could not but result from combining together these different fictions is

[1] Odyss., iv., 477. [2] Diod., i., 32.

Egypt. Growth of Mythology.

obvious; for the mythologist (as we have before said) was restrained by no fixed creed from uniting in one strange combination the most incongruous fables. Incidents related of Osiris, at first, as a symbol of the grain sown in the earth, may have been afterwards told of the same Osiris, as the Nile personified; and these may have been mixed up with others only explicable allegorically in relation to the course of the Sun. Nay, the old Animal-worship continued to be practised under the cloak of new legends: and the same may be said of the Symbol-worship; for it is expressly asserted that the symbol of generative power received divine honours in pursuance of a pretended ordinance of Isis, when she reigned in Egypt.[1]

The Priest Caste of Egypt.

37. Superstition being thus the basis of civilization and order among the inhabitants of Lower Egypt, it followed that the first possessors of political authority were the Priests. The "wise men" were looked up to with awe and veneration, as a superior race of beings; they naturally disdained to unite themselves with individuals far inferior in intellectual capacity; they handed down their power and influence, through successive generations, to their own descendants exclusively; and thus were gradually laid the foundations of a *Priestly Caste*, which, as it was the first in time, so it was the highest in rank among the classes of society. It is stated by Diodorus, that the first civilizers of Egypt came from Ethiopia, and this theory has not been without supporters in our own days; others contend that the Egyptian system of policy and religion was introduced from India, and others that it came from Chaldea. Be this as it may, some centuries had probably elapsed before the Priests were recognized as a body entitled to hold a large portion

[1] Diod., i., 19.

Rise of the Priest Caste.

of the territory of the state, as their absolute property, free from tax or tribute. Such, however, was certainly the case 1700 years, at the very least, before the Christian era, and such it continued to be in the time of Diodorus (B.C. 56). Meanwhile, they used every art to implant their system deeply in the minds of the people. Their fictions were brought before the eyes of the gross multitude at frequent festivals and in public processions, accompanied sometimes (as described by Herodotus) with most indecent Ceremonies; whilst for more intelligent individuals, the secret *Mysteries* were devised, which, in the successive degrees of initiation, gradually brought the mythological fictions to a nearer semblance of religious Truth. Hence Iamblichus asserts that the existence of one God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, was the belief of the Egyptians. Hence, too, the inscription on the veiled Statue of Isis, "I AM ALL THAT HAS BEEN, IS, AND EVER SHALL BE," expressions, which, though they may perhaps be expounded in a pantheistic sense, forcibly bring to mind the 14th verse of the 3rd chapter of Exodus: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." On these grounds, not only certain philosophers in ancient times, such as Plutarch and Iamblichus, but even modern writers, have spoken with much respect of the Egyptian system, as if it belonged to the nation at large; forgetting that however pure or refined the doctrines may have been which were revealed to a few members of the highest degree in the Greater Mysteries, the great mass of the people were plunged in the lowest depths of gross idolatry. It is vain to say, that they who adored the living bull Mnevis, or the goat Mendes, or bowed down to the "Effigies aurea sacri

Egypt.

Rise of the Priest Caste.

cercopitheci,"[1] "did not reverence these creatures for their own sake; but looking upon them as the most lively and natural mirrors wherein to behold the divine perfections, and as the instruments and workmanship of the Deity, were thereby led to pay their adoration to that God who orders and directs all things."[2] Such reflections were far beyond the capacity of the untaught multitude; and those who entertained them had still the guilt of turning away their countrymen from the spiritual worship of God, inasmuch as "they glorified him not *as* God," but "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."[3] Upon delusions such as these was the whole fabric of the priestly power in Egypt built, a fabric which for above two thousand years resisted every change of dynasty, every predominance of foreign conquerors, Ethiopian, Persian, Greek, and Roman, and only gave way at last to the spread of the Christian Faith.

The Military Caste.

38. The power which the Priests had obtained was exercised over the *minds* of the people: *bodily* power was acquired by a class of Warriors. We have no means of knowing whether these men came from abroad as conquerors, or arose from accidental circumstances among the natives—most probably the former; but it has been seen that so early as the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, the military were numerous, and apparently well armed and disciplined. Herodotus reckons them in his day (probably from an exaggerated report) at 410,000.[4] It does not appear, however, that in the time of Joseph they formed a Caste: at least they had not then a portion of land, tax

[1] Juvenal, xv., 4.
[2] Plutarch, Is. et Os.
[3] Rom., i., 23.
[4] Herod., ii., 165, 166.

free, as the Priests had; but they appear to have been so endowed in the time of Herodotus; and in that of Diodorus, they possessed a third part of the whole kingdom.[1] The royal families seem, with a few exceptions, to have belonged to this caste; but we learn from other sources, that the Priesthood connected every King with their own body, by a special initiation, on his accession to the throne.[2] The very existence of a military caste implies a correspondent degradation of the labouring class, which grows in time to be a real slavery; and this accounts for the immense command of human labour that the Egyptian Kings had obtained (probably not till after the Exodus of the Israelites), when it was wasted on those stupendous, but useless, monuments of pride, the Pyramids.

Egypt. — Military Caste.

39. Between the time of Herodotus and that of Diodorus, there were several authors whose works, if extant and complete, might throw light on the early history of Egypt; but they have either wholly or partially perished. Among those, of which the extant portions demand especial notice, there are three drawn up in the Greek language, but purporting to be translated partly from the sacred books of the Egyptian Priests, and partly from hieroglyphical inscriptions on stone tablets in the temples and elsewhere. The first, in point of time, is an *Anonymous Chronicle* of the Sovereigns of Egypt, composed probably some time between B.C. 400 and B.C. 350; the second was written by *Manetho*, an Egyptian Priest, by order of Ptolemy II. (Philadelphus), about B.C. 280; and the third was compiled by *Eratosthenes*, the Secretary of Ptolemy III. (Evergetes), about B.C. 240. Fragments of the first and third were preserved by Georgius, a monk of the eighth century of our era, who is com-

Authors between Herodotus and Diodorus.

Anonymous Chronicle of the Kings of Egypt.

[1] Diod., i., 47.

[2] Plutarch, Is. et Os.

Egypt.

Historians between Herodotus and Diodorus.

monly called from his ecclesiastical office *Syncellus:* and considerable portions of the second occur in the works of *Josephus* in the second century, *Julius Africanus* in the third, and *Eusebius* in the fourth, as well as in that of Syncellus. On comparing these remains, however, we find that though all purport to be drawn from the sacred Egyptian records, they differ widely from each other, and equally so from Herodotus and Diodorus. The Anonymous Chronicle is said by Syncellus to have comprehended, besides an indefinite time assigned to the reign of Vulcan in Egypt, 36,525 years; but to this total the details do not exactly answer. He says, that there were 30 dynasties; that the Gods and Demigods reigned for 34,201 years; that 443 years were occupied by 15 generations of the Cynic Cycle (an expression altogether unintelligible); and (assuming 15 dynasties, as it should seem to be thus completed) 15 subsequent dynasties of mortal sovereigns are given in detail, ending some short time prior to B.C. 350. The 27th dynasty is that of the Persians, beginning with the invasion of Cambyses, B.C. 525; and the preceding 11 dynasties make up 1552 years; so that on this computation we have an exact date for the beginning of the 16th dynasty (viz., B.C. 2077). To the Persian dynasty are allotted 124 years, after which there is a chasm and a confusion of three dynasties, occasioned probably by the disturbances which ensued, when some native Princes, held as vassals of the Persian monarch, and others, endeavoured to reassert their independence. It has been proposed to fill up the first chasm by giving to the 29th dynasty a duration of 184 years;[1] but this while it might suit one part of Syncellus's theory, would be fatal to another; for instead of making the

Chronological discrepancies.

[1] Drum., Orig., ii.

Anonymous Chronicler precede Manetho, it would place him 185 years later. The real author was doubtless an Egyptian; and it may be inferred from his assigning only 124 years to the Persian dynasty, that he wrote after B.C. 400, when Psammetichus began to reign as a vassal of Persia, and before B.C. 350, when Darius re-established his dominion, by the expulsion of Nectanebus, the last native Prince.

The Anonymous Chronicler.

Manetho was an Egyptian of high rank, Chief Priest and Prefect of Heliopolis. He also begins with Vulcan and the other Gods and Demigods, and comes down, after many thousands of years, to mortal Sovereigns. The whole space of time over which his chronicle extends is, according to one calculation, 10,000,000 years, and, according to to another 53,535. It is difficult, indeed, to discover what it really contained or purported to contain. In order to bring the extreme length of the early reigns within reasonable limits, it has been suggested that the word *Years* applied to them should be taken to signify *Seasons*, or *Months*, or even *Days*. Another hypothesis is, that several of the different Dynasties should be regarded as contemporaneous and not consecutive; and a third hypothesis is, that Manetho's "sole object was to furnish a Commentary on the third part of the Anonymous Chronicle, where the human reigns, properly so called, are understood to commence; but that Africanus and Eusebius thought it necessary, in order to complete the full number of 30 Dynasties, to *interpolate* between the genuine 16th and 17th, *fifteen suppositious ones*."[1] The first suggestion is inconsistent with the Lists on the face of them. It is manifest that the later reigns are measured by actual *years*, as is seen by comparing them with the statements in other

Manetho.

Chronological discrepancies.

[1] Russell, Connection, iii. 210.

Egypt.

Chronological discrepancies.

histories both sacred and profane, and it would be absurd to interpret the same term differently in different parts of the same documents. For a similar reason we must take all the Dynasties to be consecutive; for so they appear on the face of the document. Again, to charge Eusebius, a Christian Bishop, and Africanus, a Christian Priest, with falsifying an historical record by the interpolation of 15 whole dynasties is a grave accusation, and one which should not be admitted without strong evidence. We confess that Eusebius, though a powerful writer, was not a man of very sound judgment. In the contests which, unhappily, disturbed the Christian Church in his time, he took an active, and not a very creditable part, siding with the Arians when they were supported by the Emperor, and changing sides when the imperial favour was withdrawn; but of the integrity of Africanus we are not aware that there is any impeachment. He was a convert, and, as far as appears, a sincere one, from Paganism, and appears to have been regarded as an ornament of the Christian Priesthood; and yet if the falsification was committed, the chief blame of it must rest with him, for he preceded Eusebius nearly a century. The 15 first Dynasties, whether filled up by Manetho or not, are, at all events, given differently by Africanus and Eusebius; so that the latter cannot be said to be a mere transcript of the former. According to Africanus, the 30 dynasties from Menes to Darius included 452 Sovereigns in a course of 4,950 years, beginning therefore B.C. 5300. According to Eusebius, there were, in the same number of Dynasties, only 334 Sovereigns; and the time extended only to 4,818 years, beginning B.C. 5168. The numerous discrepancies between the two Lists, both purporting to be taken from Manetho's work, are noticed

in detail by Sir W. Drummond:[1] how they can be accounted for, it is not easy to say; and with respect to the totals, it is needless to argue that the Egyptian Monarchy cannot have begun, even under mortal kings, at an epoch which would place it some 1200 or 1300 years before the Creation, according to Usher, or within three centuries after it, according to Russell. The List of *Eratosthenes* begins with *Mines* (i.e. Menes), and is stated by Syncellus to have contained 91 Sovereigns, of whom the names of only the first 38 are preserved. These, however, are totally unlike the names in Manetho's early dynasties: and as they extend over no more than 1,076 years, they help but little to fill up the vast chasms in the other accounts.

Chronological discrepancies.

Chronicle of Eratosthenes.

40. It is needless, in comparing the three Lists abovementioned with the statements of Herodotus and Diodorus, to enter minutely into the fictitious reigns of Deities in Egypt. One circumstance, however, demands remark. Instead of the *eight* great Gods mentioned by both the Grecian historians, the Anonymous Chronicle speaks of *twelve*, and Manetho of *seven* Gods, as the first rulers of Egypt. Now, the *eight* seem to refer to a Mythology founded on the deification of the four elements. "Ægyptii" (says Seneca) "quatuor elementa fecere; deinde ex singulis bina, marem et fæminam."[2] Accordingly each element was represented by a God, and the four Gods were accompanied by four Goddesses, their consorts. This was probably one of the earliest forms of Egyptian mythology. The numbers seven and twelve imply a considerable advance in science, the former having reference to the movements of the sun, moon, and five visible planets, the latter to the signs of the zodiac, a much later astronomical discovery.

Reigns of Deities.

[1] Drum., Orig., ii., 386.

[2] Senec., N. Q., iii., 14.—"The Egyptians designed four elements; and then of each of these, two, masculine and feminine."

Egypt. MENES.

41. Of the sovereigns described as mortals, the first is called, by Herodotus and Manetho, *Menes;* by Diodorus, *Menas;* and by Eratosthenes *Mines.* The personal existence of this individual has been assumed as certain by several eminent chronologists of modern times; but as to the period at which he lived, though they of course reject the 11,000 or 12,000 years of Herodotus, they differ among themselves above 1,400 years. The beginning of his reign is placed by the Chevalier Bunsen at B.C. 3643; by Dr. Hales at B.C. 2412; by Dr. Prichard at B.C. 2214; and by another able writer at B.C. 2190: as if some future critic should fix the landing of Hengist and Horsa in Britain at A.D. 1849, instead of A.D. 449, the time assigned to it by Mr. Sharon Turner. Moreover, no one of the above dates can be assigned to Menes consistently with the authorities on which the evidence of his very existence rests; for he stands at the head of a long list of dynasties, all the latter part of which is undoubtedly continuous in regular succession. To bring the first 15 dynasties within anything like plausible limits, several of them must be supposed to be contemporary; but which are to be so deemed depends altogether on the caprice of the chronologist. It is suggested, for instance, that while the fifth dynasty was ruling at Elephantina, the ninth and tenth at Heracleopolis, and the eleventh at Thebes, the sixth, seventh, and eighth governed at Memphis. Other transpositions of dynasties have been adopted by other theorists, and many ingenious arguments have been no doubt employed to support the different hypotheses; but it is our duty to caution the historical student against taking ingenuity of argument for conclusiveness of evidence. Manetho or Eratosthenes may not have meant to deceive, but the documents on which

they relied came from the hands of professed Mythologists; and it is hardly to be presumed that the inventors of fabulous animals to suit fabulous deities would all at once become veracious chroniclers of a human reign. A sudden transition from Mythology to pure History is very uncommon—the intermediate step is usually to the mytho-historical. Hence it seems probable that Menes is an allegorical being; and this may be accounted for in various ways. Sir W. Drummond has very strongly and learnedly contended that *Men* signified the Sun, and that Menes was identical with Osiris, as typifying that luminary.[1] Again, it has been observed that, as the first legislator in India was called *Menu*, and the first legislator in Crete *Minos*, we may not unreasonably conjecture, from the radical connection of the Indo-European languages, that all these names have some affinity to the Latin *Mens*, and that they allegorically indicate the power of *Mind* over brute material instincts, as displayed in reducing the barbarous inhabitants of Lower Egypt, India, and Crete, under the yoke of civil polity. The arts ascribed to Menes far transcend any power that he could possibly have attained, in the circumstances in which he is represented to have been placed. Menes (says Diodorus) first taught the Egyptians how to worship the Gods, and to perform other divine services. He taught them to cover their tables and beds with tapestry, and introduced a taste for luxurious pleasures and magnificence.[2] He rescued from the water (says Herodotus) all the land on which Memphis stands, and he built thereon the city. He diverted from it the course of the Nile, by erecting a bank 100 stadia distant, digging a new channel for the river, and forming a vast lake as a reservoir; and, lastly, he built there a mag-

[1] Drum., Orig., ii., 417. [2] Diod., i., 29.

Egypt. Menes.

nificent temple to Vulcan.[1] It is plain that all these great works could not have been executed by one man instructing a body of such barbarians as the early inhabitants of Lower Egypt are universally admitted to have been. Undertakings so vast and various imply the previous existence of many arts and sciences, not in the mind of one man only, but in many minds for several successive generations. If Menes was a personal sovereign, so highly talented and so successful in his undertakings, he must have been surrounded by followers, assistants, and admirers, and his example, even if lost on his immediate successor, would have soon excited the emulation of following sovereigns. But we are told by Herodotus that, in a long line of 330 sovereigns (including 18 Ethiopians and a queen named Nitocris), who succeeded this illustrious monarch, not one was distinguished by any act of magnificence or renown, except Mœris, the last of them,[2] who, it was said, began to reign about 900 years before Herodotus visited Egypt,[3] and consequently about B.C. 1360. According to the computation which Herodotus adopted from the Egyptian priests,[4] of three generations to a century, Menes must have assumed the government 11,000 years before Mœris, that is, B.C. 12360, a date which alone is sufficient to stamp the personal existence of Menes as a pure fiction.

Mœris, &c.

42. Mœris may be reasonably believed to have reigned in Egypt about the time specified by Herodotus, and to be identical with the Myris of Diodorus. Both historians speak of his useful works in nearly the same terms; and the large reservoir which was constructed by him to receive the exuberant water of the Nile existed and bore his name in the time of them both.[5] The previous interval, however,

[1] Herod., ii., 99. [2] Ibid., 101. [3] Ibid. i., 13. [4] Ibid. ii., 142. [5] Diod., i., 34.

between his reign and that of Menes is very differently related by the two authors. Instead of the entire blank which it presents under the pen of the one, it exhibits in the narrative of the other several striking events. Diodorus, indeed, admits that, for "many generations" after Menes, nothing remarkable happened; but at length (says he) a king arose, called *Gnephactus*, of whom we learn that he was the father of *Bocchoris* the wise, that he invaded Arabia, and that he recorded in all the temples an imprecation on the luxury of Menes. After him the Egyptian history was again barren of events for 1,400 years. Then came *Busiris* the first, and, after seven more generations, *Busiris* the second, who, it is said, built the famous Thebes of "the hundred gates."[1] He was succeeded (but at what interval does not appear) by *Osymandyas*,[2] from whom the eighth in descent was *Uchoreus*,[3] the founder of Memphis, whose grandson was *Ægyptus*;[4] and twelve generations after him, we arrive at *Myris*, whose epoch has been already fixed, on probable grounds, at B.C. 1360. Reckoning backwards, then, from 1360, and allowing three generations to a century, Diodorus affords us the following dates; *Ægyptus* (12 generations) B.C. 1760; *Uchoreus* (2 generations) B.C. 1826; *Osymandyas* (8 generations) B.C. 2093; previously to which we have two fixed periods, of 1,400 and 267 years, besides two of uncertain date, one of them including "many generations," so that we cannot well reckon less than 2,000 years between Osymandyas and Menes, which would fix the commencement of the Egyptian monarchy, under its first mortal king, at B.C. 4093. This indeed is far within the limits of Herodotus, but we need hardly say that it transcends all historical credibility.

[1] Diod., i., 29. [2] Ibid., 30. [3] Ibid., 32. [4] Ibid., 33.

Egypt.

Mortal Kings of Egypt.

OSYMANDYAS.

43. Passing over the indefinite hundreds or thousands of years which followed the reign of Menes, and coming down to B.C. 2093, which, according to Usher, was 95 years before the birth of Abraham, and, according to Russell, only 20 years after it, what rational evidence is there that any such king as Osymandyas then existed? Herodotus not only heard nothing of him, but was informed that neither at the epoch in question, nor for many centuries previous or subsequent to it, was any one king distinguished by any one act of magnificence or renown; yet Diodorus was told that the Bactrians, who had previously been subjected to Egypt, having revolted, Osymandyas marched against them with 400,000 foot and 20,000 horse and subdued them;[1] and that the palace, since called his tomb, was one of the most magnificent structures ever erected by man, being adorned with colossal statues, and with numerous sculptures and paintings of his battles and victories, and, above all, with a golden circle 365 cubits in circumference, and one cubit in breadth, each of the divisions being inscribed with the stars which rise and set for one day in the year.[2] So said the Egyptian priests; but beyond their bare assertion there is not the slightest reason to suppose that Bactria, a country east of the Caspian Sea, and northwest of India, was ever subject to the inhabitants of the valley of the Nile, from which it is some thousands of miles distant; or that Egypt, which was never reckoned to contain eight millions of inhabitants, at the very highest estimate, and which has at present less than two millions, and doubtless had much fewer at or about the time of Abraham, could set forth and maintain, for so distant a warfare, so numerous a body of fighting men. That a palace, of im-

[1] Diod., i., 31. [2] Ibid., 32.

mense extent and vast splendour, existed at Thebes at the period of the Persian invasion, upwards of 1,500 years later, is indeed certain; very probably, too, it was adorned with some such sculptures and paintings as are above described; but they would agree as well with the legends of Osiris as with those of Osymandyas; and the golden circle, if any such existed, was more suitable to the former than to the latter personage. Nor is the name of Osymandyas inapplicable to the supposed Deity, for the first syllable of both words signifies "great," and as the one is the great *Seir* (already explained), the other may be the great *Man du*, which is another name for the same Egyptian Deity; so that we may well agree with some modern writers in considering Osymandyas as a mythological being.[1] Of *Uchoreus* we find no distinct trace in any author but Diodorus. Pliny indeed mentions a *Nuncoreus*, the son of Sesostris,[2] but this is some centuries subsequent. *Ægyptus* occurs in many, but totally irreconcilable, passages. Plutarch makes him a son of Vulcan and Leucippe.[3] Eusebius says he was identical with Rameses, the last king but one of the 18th Dynasty, who reigned B.C. 1481, and gave the name of Egypt to the country. Hesychius, on the other hand, says that the name of the country was derived from that of the river; and Sir W. Drummond considers Ægyptus to be a Greek corruption of an Egyptian expression signifying that the country was the land of Vulcan, the first of its divine kings.[4]

Egypt. — Mortal Kings of Egypt. — Osymandyas.

44. The Anonymous Chronicle and Manetho (as the former is stated by Syncellus and the latter by Eusebius) agree in assigning to the 17th Dynasty, a duration of only 103

The Shepherd Kings.

[1] Guigniaut.
[2] Plin., Nat. Hist., xxxvi., 16.
[3] Plut. de Flum., 16.
[4] Drum., Orig., ii., 56.

Egypt.

The Shepherd Kings.

years; but according to Josephus, Manetho allotted to it 511 years, and enumerated six sovereigns belonging to it whose united reigns make up 211 years, whereas the Anonymous Chronicle speaks of only four generations. These numbers are manifestly irreconcilable. But there is another circumstance connected with this dynasty which has occasioned much greater discussion. We allude to the designation of *Hycsos*, given to it by Manetho, who expounds the word to signify "Shepherd Kings," from two Egyptian words, *Hyc*, a king, and *Sos*, a shepherd. Elsewhere, however, he says that *Hyc* was interpreted by some, not "a King," but "a Captive." The word *Hycsos*, therefore, might signify "Shepherd Captives." His account of them, as quoted by Josephus, is, that in the time of a King of Egypt named *Timaus*, they came from the east, and, as some say, from Arabia; that they made a sudden irruption into Egypt, subdued it, and tyrannized over the natives with great cruelty for many generations. At length (he says) *Alisphragmuthosis*, an Egyptian, overcame and confined them to the city of Avaris, which they fortified. Here *Thummosis*, the son of Alisphragmuthosis, with 480,000 men besieged them, until they agreed to quit Egypt, which they did, with their families; that they were in number 240,000 men; and that, retiring through the desert into Syria, they there built Jerusalem.[1] Josephus contends, and, as it seems to us, with great appearance of reason, that these Hycsos were no other than the Jews, who were not "Shepherd Kings," but, in effect, "Shepherd Captives," and were not the oppressors, but the oppressed. As shepherds they were "an abomination to the Egyptians,"[2] whose political system was founded on

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[1] Jos. c. Apion, i., 14. [2] Genes., xliii., 32.

agriculture; and, as worshippers of the One God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, they could not but be odious to the priests of a monstrous polytheism. The district inhabited by them was that of Goshen, in which Avaris was situated; and Avaris is believed to have been identical with Raamses, one of the "treasure cities" which the Jews built and fortified, not for themselves, but for the Pharoah their oppressor. That the Exodus (or departure) of the Israelites from Egypt was a real event is agreed on all hands, though chronologists differ as to its date. Usher makes it B.C. 1491, Eusebius 1509, Jackson 1593, Russell 1608, and Hales 1648. The expulsion of the Hycsos by a king, who is called, in different quotations from Manetho's work, Thummosis, Tethmosis, and Amosis, and who stands at the head of the 18th Dynasty, happened, according to the Canon of Eusebius, B.C. 1721, a date differing from that of the Exodus, as stated by Dr. Hales, by only 73 years. On the other hand, the very existence of a dynasty of "Shepherd Kings" *rests on the single assertion of Manetho*, who lived between 1,400 and 1,500 years after their asserted expulsion. We know not why modern chronologists in general have taken for granted the existence of such a dynasty, when the very documents from which Manetho drew his information may have intended to speak of "Shepherd Captives," a term sufficiently applicable to the Jews. To us this narrative appears to be a manifest falsification of history, prompted by the wounded pride of nation and of caste. The Jews, from a small and despised body of dependents on the kings of Egypt, had grown up, long before the time of Manetho, to be a mighty nation. Their pure religion had shamed the superstitions and delusions of the Egyptian priesthood; and it was not likely that a

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true account of their deliverance from thraldom would be found in records replete with exaggeration and falsehood. Nor is Manetho's narrative, on the face of it, so much as plausible. Can we believe that an ancient monarchy, of many thousand years' standing, which had led triumphant armies of 400,000 or 500,000 men in every direction—to Arabia, to Ethiopia, to Bactria, to India, to Thrace—would allow itself to be overrun, kept in subjection, and tyrannised over for centuries by a few nomadic tribes, the conquerors never amounting to more than 240,000 men, when the conquered actually brought double their number into the field against them? Or is it credible that, unlike all other barbarians who have established themselves by conquest in rich and fertile territories, the Hycsos, in so long a lapse of time, never acquired any taste for the arts or agriculture of the Egyptians?

Manetho's second tale respecting the Jews.

45. This, however, is not all. In order to account for the origin of the Jews, Manetho relates another, and still more inconsistent tale. He says, that 518 years after Tethmosis expelled the Hycsos, the Jews were expelled by one *Amenophis;* and as (according to Eusebius) he gives a detailed list of all the Kings for that time, the Amenophis in question must be the third king of the 19th dynasty, whose reign ended B.C. 1214. Now this is several centuries after the Exodus, whether we fix that event according to Usher at B.C. 1491, or, according to Hales, at B.C. 1648; and in either case it will be found that in 1214, the Israelites were, and had long been, under the government of Judges in the Promised Land. The date then of Manetho's second narrative is alone sufficient to prove it a gross fiction. Nor is it less incredible in substance. Manetho says that in the reign of this Amenophis, 80,000 native

Egyptians having become infected with leprosy, the King at first compelled them all to work in the stone-quarries, and afterwards confined them to the town of Avaris. Here they fortified themselves, and chose for their chief *Osarsiph*, a Priest, who afterwards took the name of *Moses*. Under this Moses, they rebelled against their sovereign, cast off their religion, and sent to the descendants of the Shepherd Kings at Jerusalem for aid. An army of these men, 200,000 strong, came at once to help them, and so much alarmed Amenophis that he fled for refuge to Ethiopia, but returned thirteen years afterwards, and drove the united lepers and men of Jerusalem into Syria. In this ill-connected tale, Josephus convicts Manetho of numerous inconsistencies. One glaring absurdity appears at the first glance. The leprosy is a tremendous disease, disabling those afflicted with it from any great bodily or mental exertion; yet these wretched sufferers are first set to hard work in the quarries, and then have energy enough to build the fortifications of a large town, to constitute themselves into an independent state, to choose a monarchical form of government, to defy the power of a sovereign who had armies of many hundred thousand men at his command, and to form an alliance with the people of a distant country, differing from them in origin, religion, and language. Again, leprosy, in those climates, is viewed with peculiar dread; yet 200,000 men voluntarily shut themselves up in a town with 80,000 lepers, and the King, with his countless hosts, abandons his dominions without daring to face a far inferior force. Let it be observed, that if this latter tale be false (as it most clearly is), it reflects falsehood also on the former; for both were manifestly fabricated with the same view of casting odium on the Jewish nation;

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the one agreeing nearly in point of time with their residence in Egypt—the other obscurely alluding to the plague which prevailed just before their departure. The fact of the Exodus, as we have said, is indisputable, and the record of Moses purports at least to be contemporaneous with it, and is constantly referred to as authentic by a long train of Jewish writers through several succeeding ages; but we must remember that Manetho's statements, inconsistent and contradictory as they are, were written above twelve centuries and a half, at the very least, after the event; the records on which he relied having been all that time in the hands of men who, as they had most shamefully corrupted Religion, could have had little scruple in falsifying History.

Other accounts of the expulsion of the Jews.

46. From similar sources the Greek and Roman writers who allude to this portion of History drew their information. Two of these, CHÆREMON and LYSIMACHUS, are quoted by Josephus. They agree in attributing the expulsion of the Jews to their being affected with the plague; but differ as to the name of the King by whom they were expelled, which Chæremon says was *Amenophis*, but Lysimachus calls him *Bocchoris*. TACITUS, who wrote about A. D. 120, seems to have chiefly followed Lysimachus on both points.[1] None of these authors appear to have heard of a dynasty of Shepherd Kings, nor indeed do we find a trace of them in any other writer than Manetho. Diodorus Siculus can scarcely have been a stranger to Manetho's work, yet he appears to have given no credit to either of his two tales above mentioned. Of the Shepherds he says nothing; and he states the departure of the Israelites from Egypt as follows:—"A plague having broken out in Egypt, many

[1] Tacit., Hist., v., 3.

persons attributed the cause of the evil to the anger of the Divinity; for there were many strangers there from all parts, who used foreign rites in the sacred ministries and sacrifices, whence it came to pass that the ancient honours of the gods fell into neglect: and the original inhabitants began to fear that unless they removed from among them the foreigners, they should never be relieved from their afflictions. The men of other nations therefore were expelled: and of these the noblest and bravest, under the guidance of Danaus, Cadmus, and other celebrated leaders, came into Greece and the parts adjacent; but the more numerous body were driven out into Judæa, a country adjoining to Egypt, but at that time wholly deserted. The leader of this colony was named Moses, a man of excellent wisdom and fortitude, who occupying that region, built there many cities, and particularly the most celebrated of all, Jerusalem, with its temple."[1] He goes on to say, that Moses instituted laws and religious ceremonies; taught the Unity of God; forbade images of the Divinity; and divided the people into twelve tribes; set apart a class of men for the priesthood, and established customs and modes of life different from those of all other nations, in order to keep his people separate and distinct: and in another passage he says that Moses pretended to be inspired by the God *Jaoh*.[2] Justin, the abbreviator of Trogus, in the age of Antoninus Pius, speaks still more particularly of Joseph's being sold into Egypt, and of Moses leading out the Israelites; he also mentions, as the reason for expelling the Jews, that they were infected with the plague: thus agreeing both with Scripture and with Diodorus, in the fact of a plague having existed at this time in Egypt. He

[1] Diod., i., 40, ed. 1.

[2] Ibid., 59, b.

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adds, that Moses, by stealth, carried away the sacred things of the Egyptians, and that the latter, seeking to recover them by force of arms, were driven back homewards by tempests: a mode of relating the scriptural story which approaches as near to the truth as national pride would permit an Egyptian to record it. Tatian, Justin Martyr, Clemens of Alexandria, and other ancient writers, as well as some moderns, have considered the expulsion of the Shepherd Kings, and that of the Israelites, to be the same event; and, if we reject this supposition, in what way shall we be better able to reconcile truth with fable, or obscure and partial tradition with real History? It is either the voluntary falsehood of men, or their ignorance, which corrupts the truth; and the account of the Shepherd Kings has been affected by both causes. The Priests, who framed the hieroglyphical records, were interested to falsify the history of this great event. To the pride, which in all ages renders nations unwilling to acknowledge inferiority, were added the superstitious horror with which they must have viewed the contempt shown to their idolatrous rites and ceremonies by the Jewish nation, and the strong interest which they had to maintain in the minds of the people at large, an antipathy toward the opponents of idolatry; and even granting that Manetho may have fairly interpreted the sacerdotal writings, he lived too long after the event to correct them by his own knowledge.

Expedition of Sesostris.

47. The last point, on which we observed that Herodotus and Diodorus agreed, was the reign of Mœris, or Myris. The next Sovereign, of whom they both speak, and to whom they both ascribe great celebrity, is *Sesostris*, or *Sesoosis*, a Monarch by whom it would seem that the warlike exploits of Osymandyas and the peaceful arts of Mœris were alike

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eclipsed. Diodorus ingenuously confesses that there are great discrepancies not only in the Grecian accounts of this King, but in the narratives of the Egyptian Priests, and in the poems which celebrate his praise.[1] The substance of the statements of the two historians is, that Sesostris, with the deliberate intention of making himself master of the whole world, began by subduing Arabia and great part of Libya; then he led an army of *six hundred thousand* infantry, 24,000 cavalry, and 27,000 war-chariots into Ethiopia, which he conquered. Next he fitted out 400 long ships, with which he obtained possession of the Isles and coasts of the Indian Ocean. Then, with his vast land forces he overran all Asia, not only those countries which were afterwards subdued by Alexander of Macedon, but the whole of India beyond the Ganges as far as to the Ocean; thence turning to the North he overcame all the Scythians to the banks of the Don. He settled a Colony at Colchis, and brought under his dominion the whole of Asia Minor and most of the Cyclades. In Thrace his progress was stopped by want of provisions; and after an expedition of nine years, he returned to Egypt with an immense booty, and a vast number of captives, having first fixed the tribute which the conquered nations were to pay, and compelled their kings to bring it annually to Egypt, and yoke themselves to his chariot in a public procession. After this he somewhat inconsistently found it necessary to build a wall 180 miles long, to protect Egypt from the incursions of the Syrians and Arabians. The very learned Heeren seems to give some credit to this extraordinary narrative: he considers the splendid period of Egyptian History to have begun with the reign of Sesostris, to which he assigns the approximate date of B.C. 1700, and

[1] Diod., i., 59, b.

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to have continued for nearly a thousand years. We are unwilling to differ from so eminent an authority; but we must confess that to us it appears almost superfluous to scrutinize a narrative on the face of it so incredible. It would be vain to ask how the Egyptians, who never could discover the sources of the river on whose banks they dwelt, found their way to the Ocean beyond the Ganges; or how they equipped and subsisted an army of near 700,000 men, besides camp followers, for nine years together, on their long marches and counter-marches; or what became of the vast empire which Sesostris founded by his conquests; or from what distant regions the subject Kings brought their annual tribute; or how long they continued to submit to the indignity of dragging their paramount Suzerain in his chariot; or how it happened that Egypt itself, the seat and centre of so matchless a power, could not be safe against attacks from the inconsiderable tribes in its neighbourhood, without a wall of such length. Unfortunately, History affords no answer to any of these questions, except what may be pretended to be drawn from mysterious hieroglyphics by Egyptian Priests, the convicted falsifiers of Annals of thousands of years.

Epoch of Sesostris.

48. In what age of the world this Monarch lived scarcely any two Authors agree. We have seen that Heeren fixes the epoch at or about B.C. 1700. It would seem from Herodotus that he was the son of Mœris, and therefore lived about B.C. 1330. Diodorus places him seven generations after Mœris, which would bring him down to B.C. 1127, and make him one of the Kings of Manetho's 20th Dynasty. On this hypothesis he would be coincident with the fall of Troy, according to Clinton's date of that event, or 47 years after it, according to the more commonly received date.

Herodotus, on the other hand, places him two generations before the reign of Proteus, who lived (as all admit) during the siege of Troy; which would give either 1249 or 1193 for the date of Sesostris. Another ground for calculation is supplied by the statement of Manetho, that *Armais*, the treacherous brother of Sesostris, was the same person who led a Colony to Greece under the name of Danaus. Now Danaus is conjectured to have lived five generations before the fall of Troy, which would give either 1349 or 1293 for the epoch of Sesostris: and between these we find an intervening period fixed on by Bishop Russell, viz., B.C. 1308, which corresponds to the 11th year of Ramses, the second King of Manetho's 19th Dynasty. These discordant estimates leave a space of no less than 573 years, in different parts of which this Monarch's reign has been supposed by different writers to have commenced. But neither in the Poems of Homer, which relate to the latter part of the period in question, nor in the Jewish Scriptures, which comprehend the whole of it, nor indeed in any other contemporary history, do we find the least trace or hint of a great Egyptian Conqueror.

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49. At a subsequent period we do indeed hear of a King of Egypt as a successful warrior. "In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak, King of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem;"[1] and as the best Chronologists differ only four years in regard to the accession of Rehoboam, we can positively fix this expedition at B.C. 975 or 971, which does not differ nearly so much from the lowest of the above-mentioned conjectural dates, as that date does from the highest. Josephus thinks that the traditions concerning Sesostris were mere exaggerations of the exploits of Shishak.

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[1] 2 Chron., xii. 2.

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Very eminent Chronologists have adopted this opinion: others, perhaps equally or more eminent, dissent from it: upon the whole, we are disposed to agree with the celebrated author of the "Jewish Antiquities," who had more ample means than we possess of testing the conflicting statements both of Greek and Egyptian chroniclers. In the first place, the names given to *Sesostris* by different writers agree better with *Shishak* than with any other Egyptian King. It must be remembered that neither of these is an Egyptian name: the one comes to us through the Greek, the other through the Hebrew; but the original name, so far as we can express it in English Letters, was probably *Sheshonk;* and even this may have been varied by the Theban or Memphitic dialect. The terminating syllable "*is*" was added by the Greeks to adapt it to the construction of their own language, and they used *s* for *sh*, because they had no consonant, or combination of consonants, answering to the latter articulation. Hence we find Greek writers varying the Egyptian *Sheshonk* into *Sesonchis*, *Sesonchosis*, *Sesoosis*, *Sethosis*, *Sethos*, *Sesostris*. Secondly, the epoch of Shishak coincides with that of the first King of Manetho's 21st Dynasty, to whom he gives the name of *Smendes;* and this is believed to be the same as *Osymandyas*, with whose fabulous achievements those of Shishak appear to have been confounded. Thirdly, there was a lapse of above 500 years between the reign of Shishak and the researches of Herodotus, who is the first extant writer that mentions the name of Sesostris, and in that long space of time circumstances may have given abundant occasion for error, intentional or unintentional, on the part of the Priests, from whom he obtained his information. Lastly, and what is most material, there was an actual

groundwork of truth in the victories of Shishak, on which an edifice of fiction might, with some plausibility, be raised. "The accounts which have been preserved of the reign of Sesostris," as Sir W. Drummond justly remarks, "afford no useless lesson to the reader who wishes to examine how fact and fable have been mixed together in those fallacious records which the Priests of Egypt pretended to interpret to the credulous Greeks."[1] "In all countries," says Bishop Russell, "it is usual to hear the fame of a popular monarch increased by having ascribed to him not only all the heroic deeds transmitted by the Chroniclers of the olden time, but also all the magnificent palaces and gorgeous temples, of which the remains afford to the multitude a gratifying proof that their nation was once not less wealthy than powerful."[2] Now the case before us is certainly that of a "popular Monarch." Shishak had attained popularity both by his victories and by the splendid trophies which he displayed. Before he invaded Judæa, he had reduced to subjection, by force or persuasion, the people of Libya, the Sukiim (Arabian Troglodytes), and the Ethiopians, of which last nation Herodotus says no Egyptian was ever sovereign except Sesostris. Nor was his conquest of Judæa a barren victory; for he plundered the magnificent temple of Jerusalem, so lately built, and so richly ornamented; "he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the King's house: he took *all:* he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made;"[3] and, finally, he compelled the Jews to acknowledge themselves "his servants."[4] No doubt some former sovereigns had been victorious in contests with the Ethiopians, the Libyans, the Arabians, and

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[1] Drum., ii., 481.
[2] Russell, iii., 202.
[3] 2 Chron., xii., 9.
[4] Ibid., verse 8.

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the Syrians; but the repeated triumphs of King Sheshonk, or Shishak, would very probably stimulate the adulation of the Priests, not merely to crown him with their laurels, but to connect his name with that of Osymandyas or Osiris, the fancied conquerors of India. Hence he would become the popular hero of Egyptian Fable, as Charlemagne was of the old French and Italian Romances, Arthur of the Armorican lays, and Fingal of the Gaelic songs. They who maintain "that Sesostris was one of the greatest princes that ever lived,"[1] may consistently enough deny his identity with Shishak; for it has been justly said, that "if Sesostris and Shishak were the same individual, it would be vain to speak of his conquests as having extended beyond the Jewish territories to the banks of the Indus, and even to those of the Ganges."[2] Undoubtedly it would be vain to ascribe to Shishak such extensive conquests; but it would be equally vain (as we think) to ascribe them to any other King of the narrow valley of the Nile. It is admitted that we may well be sceptical "as to the extent of Sesostris's conquests;" and that "we cannot confidently ascertain the period at which he flourished."[3] If so, on what grounds are we to assume that he was "one of the greatest Princes that ever lived?" "On the tradition of ages," it is said—"on the records of history," and "on the authority of monuments."[4] The tradition of ages and the records of history are, in this case, equally vague. There is no more prevalent error among the writers or readers of history than the taking of repetition for confirmation. We have seen that Herodotus and Diodorus derived their information from Egyptian Priests;

[1] Drummond, ii., 517. [2] Russell, iii., 210.
[3] Drummond, ii., 518; Russell, iii., 210.
[4] Ibid., 517; Ibid., 214.

that the tales told to them were irreconcilable with each other; that they were mixed up with falsehoods of the grossest kind; that they bore on the face of them monstrous exaggerations, and that they were recited many centuries after the alleged events. It adds little to their credibility that they were re-echoed, with further variations, by subsequent authors. Justin, who lived in the age of Antoninus Pius, or Trogus, who was contemporary with Augustus, may have meant Sesostris by Vexores; but when they say that this prince made war on the Scythians 1500 years before Ninus, and when we consider that, according to Ctesias, Ninus began to reign B. C. 2127, which would place Sesostris 3627 years before the Christian era, we cannot think that this is any confirmation of his reigning in Egypt B. C. 1700, or B. C. 1308. When Dicæarchus asserts Sesonchosis to have been the immediate successor of Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis, or when Ælian reports that Sesostris was instructed by the God Hermes, it is surely no proof that "one of the greatest Princes that ever lived" bore the name either of Sesonchosis or of Sesostris. And on the authority of what *monuments* are we to believe that the triumphant standard of Egypt was ever displayed on the Yellow Sea or on the Don, or anywhere beyond the Euphrates? True it is, that Herodotus says, he saw certain pillars in Palestine with obscene sculptures, which were ascribed by his informants to Sesostris;[1] but these were at least as likely to have been erected by Shishak, and still more likely to relate to the worship of the Syrian deity Baal-Peor. He says also, that there were two figures of this kind in Ionia, with inscriptions in the sacred characters of Egypt;[2] but he does not say that he saw the statues, nor

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[1] Herod., ii., 106. [2] Ibid.

Egypt. if he had seen them could he have understood the inscriptions: and after all, any monuments in Ionia or Palestine would be no proof of conquests in India or Scythia.

Pyramids. 50. It is probable that Shishak, like many of his predecessors and successors, erected palaces, temples, and other monuments of regal power and wealth. The real authors of many such structures became eventually unknown, and the works were ascribed by different traditions to different individuals. The celebrated edifice called the Memnonium, for instance, was attributed by some to Memnon; by others, to Rameses, Ismendes, &c. The Pyramids are remarkable instances of such doubt; some persons have supposed them to be meant by the "treasure cities" that the Israelites were compelled to build; and others have ascribed to them still higher antiquity; but as both Herodotus and Diodorus speak of the earliest of them as built by Mœris (about B. C. 1360), and the principal ones much later, there can be little doubt but that they were all built long after the Exodus of the Israelites. Their purpose, however, is still obscure; but, probably, the largest ones were intended as Tombs of the Kings. They are justly ridiculed by the elder Pliny as "an idle and foolish ostentation of royal wealth;"[1] and "though many have written about them (says he), it is still uncertain by whom they were erected, chance having most justly obliterated the remembrance of their vain founders."[2] Their construction would seem to imply an early knowledge of mechanics; but it must be remembered that the religious and political supremacy of the kings of Egypt gave them an almost unlimited command of the exertions of the labouring caste. Pliny, following Diodorus, says, that in the construction of the

[1] Plin., N. H., xxxvi., 16. [2] Ibid., s. 17.

largest Pyramid, 360,000 men were employed for twenty years.[1] The denomination given to these enormous piles of stone has received various explanations: the most plausible is that which derives it from *Piromis*, a word signifying, as Herodotus was told, "good" or "virtuous;" and applied to the High Priests, and doubtless to the Kings when initiated into the priestly caste. Egypt. — Pyramids.

51. Having thus compared the Greek and Roman writers with the scriptural records, and traced the fabulous narratives of Egypt so far, in their gradual approach toward credible history, we have to inquire what further light has been thrown on this obscure subject by modern research. At the date of our first publication, the investigations made by Dr. Young, M. Champollion, and others, into the hieroglyphics and sacred writings of the Egyptians, had scarcely begun; and we could neither estimate the extent to which they might be carried, nor their eventual importance in relation to history. Now, however, we are enabled to speak with a certain degree of confidence on both points; and first as to the course which the researches in question have taken. The objects investigated may be classed under five heads, first, *Hieroglyphics* properly so called, from ἱερὸς, sacred, and γλύφω, to engrave; that is, engravings on stone of figures having a signification originally known only to the Priests; secondly, *Writings* either in the characters called *hieratic*, as practised by the Priests, or in those called *demotic* or *enchorial*, as adapted to the use of the people at large; thirdly, *Paintings;* fourthly, *Statuary;* and fifthly, *Architecture:* from each of these sources historical information more or less distinct has been gleaned. Recent discoveries in Egypt. Objects investigated.

[1] Diod., i., 40. Plin., N. H., xxxvi., 17.

Egypt. Hieroglyphics.

52. We must speak of Hieroglyphics and Writings together; since the common purpose of both is to preserve by permanent signs the transient thoughts and words of mankind. That hieroglyphics were of very early use in Egypt is indisputable. The first allusion to them by any extant author, is made by Herodotus, who says "the Egyptians were the first that engraved the figures of animals on stone."[1] In speaking of their letters, he says "they have *two* sorts, one of which is appropriated to sacred subjects, the other is used on common occasions."[2] The former is evidently what we now call the *hieratic*, the latter the *enchorial* or *demotic*. Diodorus speaks to the same effect. He says, "the Priests instruct boys in *two* kinds of letters, those called sacred, and those used for more common purposes."[3] Elsewhere he repeats that the Egyptians have *two* kinds of letters, one (δημώδη) used by the people at large, the other (ἱερα) used by the Priests alone; but he adds that the Ethiopians use both kinds commonly; and after adverting to other topics, he describes the hieroglyphics as something distinct; stating that they do not depend on the combination of syllables, but on picture and allegory, as a hawk signifies swiftness, a crocodile malice, &c.[4] The prevalent notion of the Greeks and Romans undoubtedly was that hieroglyphics and alphabetic characters were of different origin and use; the former being peculiar to Egypt, and possessing a mysterious or magical power; the latter derived from Phœnicia or Syria, and suited to the common purposes of life. Hence the poet says:—

[1] Herod., ii., 4.
[2] Diod., i., 51.
[2] Ibid., 36.
[4] Ibid., iii., 10.

"Phœnices primi, famæ si creditur, ausi
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.
Nondum flumineas Memphis contexere biblos
Noverat, et saxis tantùm volucresque, feræque,
Sculptaque servabant *magicas* animalia linguas."[1]

"Phœnicia first devised, if fame speak true,
The art to fix the voice by figures new.
Memphis her marsh-grown tomes not yet had known:
Her *magic* words, by sculptured forms alone
Of beasts and birds, were typified in stone."

So Tacitus plainly distinguishes hieroglyphics from letters. "Primi per figuras animalium Ægyptii sensus mentis effingebant. Ea antiquissima monumenta memoriæ humanæ impressa saxis cernuntur. Et literarum semet inventores perhibent. Inde Phœnicas quia mari præpollebant intulisse Græciæ, gloriamque adeptos tamquam repererint, qui acceperant."[2] "The Egyptians first expressed the thoughts of the minds by the *figures* of animals. These most ancient monuments of human memory engraved on stone are still to be seen. They also assert that they were the inventors of *Letters;* and that the Phœnicians, being predominant at sea, imported them into Greece, and were honoured as if they had discovered what they had only learnt." "I have always been of opinion" (says Pliny) "that the first letters were Assyrian;"[3] by which he probably meant Syrian, or Phœnician. Elsewhere, indeed, speaking of an obelisk which had been transported from Egypt to Rome, he says "the sculptured figures which we see on it are Egyptian letters;[4] but he evidently does not mean that they are alphabetic letters, but merely that they have certain significations understood by the Egyptians. Ammianus Marcel-

[1] Lucan, iii., 220.
[2] Tacit., An., xi., 14.
[3] Plin., N. H., vii., 57.
[4] Ibid., xxxvi., 14.

Egypt. Hiero-glyphics.

linus has preserved the explanation given by Hermapion of the hieroglyphics on an obelisk erected by Rameses, and subsequently brought to Rome, but unfortunately it is not known whether or not that obelisk is one of those at present existing in the "Eternal City." Several hints of the allegorical signification of hieroglyphics occur in ancient writers, and many moderns exercised their ingenuity on them to little purpose, until, by the chances of war, it happened, that a stone was found at Rosetta, and subsequently brought to England, which contained what has been called a trilingual, but should rather be called a trigraphical, inscription, in Greek letters, enchorial Egyptian letters, and hieroglyphics: and the first being found to contain an eulogy on Ptolemy V. (Epiphanes) B.C. 196, it was justly concluded that it might serve as a key to the others, which in fact it did. This threw light on a passage in the Stromata of St. Clement of Alexandria about A.D. 200, which had previously seemed obscure; but which, when carefully considered, led to an inference that the hieroglyphic characters might be employed not only as mere pictures, and as allegories, but sometimes to express articulate sounds; as if in English, for instance, the figure of a hawk were employed to signify first the bird so named; secondly swiftness, because the bird is remarkably swift; and thirdly the letter H, because the name of the bird begins with that letter. The discovery of the Rosetta stone was followed by that of the table of Abydos, containing, as is believed, a list of Egyptian Sovereigns; and subsequently several zealous individuals devoted themselves, with admirable perseverance, to the examination and comparison of the hieroglyphics on the ruined monuments in all parts of Egypt. Nor were hieroglyphic characters found only in the engravings on

stone: they were written on the covers of mummies, and intermixed with the hieratic writings on papyrus, of which several specimens have been brought to Europe: until at length it was believed that the phonetic powers of the three different sorts of characters could be reduced to a consistent and intelligible system. Egypt. — Hiero-glyphics.

53. This system was further illustrated by the paintings discovered in some buildings, and particularly in tombs. That the art of painting was very early practised in Egypt is beyond a doubt. Plato mentions it as a well-known fact, that pictures existed in that country which were said to be ten thousand years old, and which were perfectly similar in their forms and colours to those made in his own day.[1] This, although an exaggeration, renders it probable that some of the paintings still existing may have long preceded the era of Plato. At the same time, we must admit that the art was always in a very low state; for though the outlines are often spirited, they are seldom strictly accurate; the colouring is coarse, and there is a total defect of light and shade, as well as of perspective both linear and aerial; of which any person may be easily convinced by inspecting the specimens in the British Museum. The subjects, however, are so extremely numerous and various as to bring before us the whole life, both public and private, of the Egyptians. All the operations of agriculture, in the cultivation of the earth and in the rearing and management of cattle—domestic economy in all its branches—arts and trades—amusements—navigation—military exercises, battles, and sieges, all are minutely described; and the various productions of the animal and vegetable kingdom are portrayed, if not with scientific accuracy, yet so Paintings.

[1] Plato, Leg., b. ii.

Egypt.

distinctly as to impress the beholders with a strong sense of their similitude to nature.

Statuary and Architecture.

54. The same degree of skill, the same predominant spirit, and, we must add, the same want of a pure and correct taste, are observable in the remains of statuary and architecture, which are visible at the present day. To surprise and overawe by magnitude and monstrosity, rather than to captivate by beauty of form, or elegance of arrangement, seems to have been the aim of sculptors and architects. The statues of Deities and the busts of kings and queens are, in many instances, colossal. The features are often elaborately designed, but they have no appearance of distinct personality about them. A certain stamp of royalty, rather as it should be on some peculiar theory, than as it ever existed in Egypt or anywhere else, was the sculptor's model for centuries: and little difference of intellectual or moral character is observable between the countenances of two monarchs, whose reigns were separated by the lapse of a thousand years or more. In regard to the Deities, the case is still worse: one god has the head of a jackal, another of an ape, the Goddess of Beauty charms us with the face of a cow, and the fair Diana is a lion-headed divinity. In the architectural works of man, magnitude is a quality which must produce a striking impression on the mind of the beholder: and hence those otherwise unmeaning masses of stone, the Pyramids, have always been classed among the wonders of the world. A like effect must have been produced by the vast temple-palaces of Thebes, when perfect; since, even at the present day, their remains are viewed with feelings so admirably expressed by the energetic and talented Belzoni. "It is absolutely impossible" (says he) "to imagine the scene displayed without seeing it. The most

sublime ideas that can be formed from the most magnificent specimens of our present architecture would give a very incorrect picture of these ruins. It appeared to me like entering a city of giants, who, after a long conflict, had been all destroyed, leaving ruins of their various temples, as the only proofs of their former existence." And again, speaking of the temple of Luxor, he says: "It presents to the traveller at once one of the most splendid groups of Egyptian grandeur. The extensive propylæon, with the two obelisks, and colossal statues in the front—the thick groups of enormous columns, the variety of apartments, and the sanctuary which it contains—the beautiful ornaments which adorn every part of the walls and columns—cause in the astonished beholder an oblivion of all that he has seen before." Such, we admit, is the natural effect of vast proportions in their first impression on the human mind; but when we come to consider these immense works in detail, we see them replete with the most absurd monstrosities: not only are the walls, columns, and obelisks, covered with hieroglyphical combinations of the human form with that of various brutes; but we find whole avenues of colossal Sphinxes, of a mile or more in length, every figure in one avenue having the head of a ram, in another that of a bull, and in another that of a human being. Instead of those noble and beautiful creations of Grecian taste, the Olympian Jove, the Apollo Belvedere, and the Medicean Venus, we are presented with "the distorted visions of a feverish dream"—

Egypt. — Statuary and Architecture.

"——— velut ægri somnia vanæ
Finguntur species." [1]

55. What, then, is the historical value of the recent researches? How far do they correct former impressions

General Result.

[1] Horat., Ars Poet., 7.

Egypt.

Result of recent Researches.

of the ancient history of Egypt, or furnish us, in relation to it, with additional and accurate information? Opinions are divided on this point. At first, as was natural in the ardour of new discovery, nothing less was anticipated than clear and distinct proof of the existence of an Egyptian monarchy nearly coeval with, if not antecedent to, the Scriptural account of the deluge, according to that text which affords the greatest latitude of interpretation. The character of Manetho as a veracious chronicler, in recording at least the reigns of human sovereigns, would be rescued, it was supposed, from all impeachment; and many of the apparent exaggerations of Herodotus and Diodorus would be found to be faithful recitals of actual fact. On the other hand, it has been of late asserted, "that no assistance has been hitherto derived, either from the interpretation of the numerous hieroglyphs which decorate the ancient buildings of Egypt, or from the inspection of those more formal records, brought to light during the present century." "Many learned men (it is said) in France, England, Italy, and Germany, have devoted their attention to the study of sacred sculptures, but without conferring upon history and antiquities any material benefit." "Hopes were indeed at one time fondly entertained, that a careful examination of the slabs in question would supply a standard for fixing the principal epochs of Egyptian chronology, and, in particular, for coming to a clear decision relative to the dynasties in Manetho's canon. The result, however, has not in any degree fulfilled the expectations that were formed, nor justified the confident assertions, with which, in some remarkable cases, they are known to have been accompanied." [1]

[1] Russell, Connection, iii., 215.

56. A medium between these conflicting opinions will perhaps be nearest the truth. All that important part of history, which regards the state of the arts and sciences, and of the customs and habits of a people, is now brought much more distinctly within our comprehension in respect to the Egyptians than it ever was before. Of their skill in the mechanical arts a curious instance has lately attracted public notice. It consists of a lock, imitated from one of the sculptures at Thebes. A similar contrivance has long been in use in Turkey[1]; and our best artists in that line admit that the principle of its construction is the same as that on which most of the ingenious locks of the present day are formed. The numerous designs of Sir Gardiner Wilkinson alone are sufficient to give us a clear insight into the occupations, amusements, and manners of every class of society in ancient Egypt. Some remarkable practices which have continued to the present day, are delineated on very old monuments. For instance, the artificial incubation of eggs, now exhibiting in London, and noticed by Pliny as peculiar to Egypt,[2] appears among the paintings of a tomb lately opened.[3] Curious coincidences, too, may be remarked between the Egyptian usages, and some existing among our own peasantry. The playing at backsword is, or was not long since, a frequent amusement in the West of England; and in this sport it was a peculiarity of the Somersetshire players to protect their arms with a padded covering, exactly as is described in one of Sir G. Wilkinson's plates representing a similar contest between two Egyptians. The relations also of the different classes of society to each other are illustrated. The men who tend cattle are often

Egypt. Arts and Sciences.

[1] Eton, Turk. Emp., 224. [2] Plin., N. H., x., 75.
[3] Wilk., 2nd Series, i., 133.

Egypt. Arts and Sciences.

represented in the paintings as deformed and dirty;[1] evidently showing that they were a degraded and despised caste; which sufficiently accounts for their being held in abomination by the Egyptians, without supposing that there ever was a dynasty of Shepherd Kings. In short, numerous traditions which have come down to us from the Mosaic records, from Herodotus, Diodorus, Plutarch, &c., and which relate to circumstances peculiar to Egypt, *but not in their nature impossible, or in any high degree improbable*, obtain from these discoveries the stamp of historic truth.

Mythology.

57. The case is somewhat different with regard to Mythology. Of course we can expect no confirmation of the thirty thousand years' reign of the Sun as a real occurrence, nor of the contests between Osiris and Typhon, and the numberless other tales of a like nature, with which the credulous populace were for so many ages deluded. But we have a complete nomenclature of the Egyptian Deities, which was not to be collected from the authors before known. Great numbers of the idols have been brought to the British Museum and other European repositories; and the appropriate Egyptian names and characteristics of the Deities which they represent can now be correctly ascertained. Thus we can distinguish the four great Gods, *Kneph, Amun, Ptha*, and *Khem*, who together with their consort Goddesses, *Saté, Maut, Bubastis*, and *Neith*, make up the eight spoken of by Herodotus and Diodorus.[2] We have the secondary Gods, *Thoth, Khonso, Sabak, Onouris*, &c.; the Sun, *Ra;* the River Nile, *Osiris;* the Land, *Isis;* the Genii of the infernal regions, *Amset, Hapé, Kebhsnauf*, and *Sioumautf;* besides several others, such as *Horus, Hapimoon, Anubis, Serapis*, &c. The remark of Diodorus, that

[1] Wilk., 2nd Ser., i., 126, 128, &c. [2] Ibid., 185.

the same Deity had often different names, is fully confirmed. We find that *Maut* is otherwise called *Buto*; *Bubastis* is otherwise *Pasht*, or *Tafne*; *Horus* is otherwise *Hor*, *Har*, or *Hobs*. Sometimes the character of the Deity is varied by adding a peculiar attribute, as *Isis-Thermuthis*, *Pasht-Merephtha*, *Hor-phocrat*, *Osiris-Onophris*. Sometimes, too, one Deity assumes the character of another, as *Ammon-Ra*, *Ammon-Cnoubis*, *Phtha-Khons*, *Khons-Kneph*, *Osiris-Ammon*, *Osiris-Joh*, &c.[1] It is to be expected that the names and descriptions of these Deities will lead to various theories explanatory of Egyptian Polytheism. The Greeks and Romans were frequently wrong in assuming identities between their own Deities and those of the Egyptians. *Amun* did not always answer to Jupiter, *Phtha* to Vulcan, *Maut* to Latona, *Bubastis* to Diana, *Neith* to Minerva, *Athor* to Venus, *Osiris* to Bacchus, *Netpe* to Rhea, *Isis* to Ceres, *Thoth* to Mercury, *Savak* to Saturn, *Khonso* to Hercules, nor *Onouris* to Mars.[2] It is not easy to determine what Deity Herodotus meant, when he said that the Egyptians considered *Pan* to be the most ancient of the Gods.[3] Possibly from certain peculiarities in the form of *Khem*, when he represents "the Sun as the generative power of nature,"[4] he was the Deity intended. Be this as it may, there were many and wide differences between the mythological systems of Egypt and Greece; though the latter undoubtedly received from the former several obscure traditions. In the present state of our knowledge, it would be premature to adopt any one theory as satisfactorily explaining that complex idolatry, which, for so many ages, reigned dominant through the whole course of the Lower Nile. It

[1] Wilk., 2nd Ser., i., 185.
[2] Ibid., 257, 261.
[3] Herod., ii., 145.
[4] Ibid., 172.

Egypt. Mythology.

is a favourite notion with many persons, that the several Egyptian Deities were only considered as emblematic representations of the different attributes of the *One* sole God. Such an hypothesis may, perhaps, have served to tranquillise the consciences of a few speculative members of the Egyptian Priesthood; but it was totally unknown to the great mass of worshippers; and it does not account for the first introduction of so complex and monstrous a system, as that which was eventually established. Some have attempted, but with little success, to trace all the mythological tales to perversions of the scriptural history of certain events and persons. Others, with a very different view, have explained them all as figurative modes of teaching Astronomy; and one author contends, that "the whole fabulous history of Egypt, as well as of Phœnicia and Greece, belongs to Chemistry!" "Tota fabularis historia Græca, Phœnicia, Ægyptiaca ad chemiam pertinet."[1] The most probable supposition is, that the mythology evidenced by hieroglyphics, idols, and brute animals deified, was derived not from one but several sources. In Egypt, as elsewhere, the very dawn of history shows us two forms of religious belief, followed by two classes, or perhaps races of men, in different stages of civilization; the one class wanderers, calling no soil their own, but subsisting precariously on the casual produce of the earth, or on the produce of hunting or fishing; the other class having fixed abodes, practising agriculture, and consequently enjoying the institutions of landed property and civil government. The religious impressions of the former, however strong, were indistinct and transient, resulting only from momentary hopes or fears;

[1] Tollius, Fortuita.

those of the latter were more permanent, and partook largely of the imagination, which "bodies forth the forms of things unknown." In whatsoever way it may have happened that these two bodies of men became incorporated together, whether by conquest, compact, or otherwise, it could not be but that their religious systems, like their habits and customs, would be modified, the one by the other. Hence we see the worship of animals in Egypt not only allowed directly to the blind multitude, but indirectly sanctioned by giving to one Deity the head of a Ram, to others, that of a Crocodile, a Lion, a Hawk, a Jackal, &c. We see the worship of the Elements typified by that of the four great Gods, with their Consorts; the worship of the Sun by that of *Ra* or *Phra*, the King, ἄναξ Ἀπόλλων; and the worship of the River and the Land by that of Osiris and Isis. It was evidently in a later stage of the mythological progress, that more recondite meanings were ascribed to the different fables. The sun setting in the West became *Osiris Pethempamentes*, descending to *Amenti*, the Egyptian Hades: and thence followed the numerous incidents illustrative of a future life, and a transmigration of Souls. It would, no doubt, be most interesting, if future researches should enable us, to determine at what period in Egyptian history these important doctrines were first taught. All that we can reasonably say at present, is, that they were never distinctly asserted except in the Mysteries; but that these were practised in Egypt some ages before they were adopted in Greece. They were probably first devised by men of the priestly caste, who had acquired from tradition and study considerable knowledge in physics, and thus obtained clearer views both of natural and supernatural truth, than their contemporaries possessed. These Priests, however, partly

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perhaps from fear of popular opposition, and partly from a vain desire to augment the reverence paid to their Caste, communicated their doctrines only to a chosen few, and that with strict precautions to prevent their being further divulged. It is not impossible that Moses, who is said to have been "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,"[1] may have been one of the initiated; though he was afterwards called to the nobler mission of publishing divine Truths to the whole of the chosen People.

Triads of Divinities.

Among the peculiar forms of Egyptian Worship, none is more remarkable than that of the *Triads* of Divinities. These, too, seem to have been of high antiquity; and to have gradually assumed, in the esoteric doctrines, a more refined and mystic character. The first step from worshipping *Osiris* and *Isis* as the River of Egypt and the Land, was to deify *Horus*, the product of their union;[2] and the like may be said of the honours paid at Thebes to *Amun*, his consort *Maut*, and their offspring *Khonso;* and, in short, of the different Triads adored at Syene, Philæ, Edfoo, Silsilis, Mahsara, Ombos, Hermonthis, &c.[3] In all these, the population at large saw nothing but monstrous or obscene idols, which they were taught to bow down to and worship; and it is quite inconsistent with the plainest historical evidence to suppose that the populace of Egypt was in this respect one whit more intelligent, refined, or delicate, than that of Greece or Rome. The initiated individuals, in all those countries alike were led on by degrees from the grosser to the more refined notions. They were first brought to see in the Triad an allegory of the sexual principle, which operates thoughout all nature to perpetuate the species of

[1] Act Apost., vii., 22.

[2] Wilk., 2nd Ser., i., 185.

[3] Ibid., 232.

animals and vegetables; afterwards they were taught to believe that as Time has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and as man's existence is comprehended in Birth, and Life, and Death, so there is a creating, a preserving, and a destroying Deity. In another view, they learned to regard the Triad as representing Mind and Body, and the result of their reciprocal action; and this was illustrated by fanciful analogies of Figure and Number, as of a right-angled Triangle, in which the perpendicular represented the active power, the base the passive, and the hypothenuse the result of their mutual relation; and this again was typified by the numbers, three for the perpendicular, four for the base, and five for the hypothenuse; the square of the two first being equalled by the square of the last. In a strain of loftier speculation, they regarded the first person of a Triad as the intelligent Creator, the second as the Matter subjected to his plastic energy, and the third as the Universe created by him out of Chaos; but to all these conceptions the people in general, we repeat, were wholly strangers; and nothing which modern investigation has brought to light tends to prove that they were other than gross and blind idolaters. Egypt. Mythology.

58. The question most litigated, in relation to the recent researches in Egypt, is whether they have thrown any and what new light on the political history of that country, the periods of which for many ages are chiefly distinguished by the prevalence of certain Dynasties and the reigns of individual Sovereigns. Here, however, we are met by several difficulties. It is urged, and apparently with reason, that the phonetic system, by means of which the names of the Sovereigns are deciphered, is as yet imperfect; so that we cannot rely with certainty on any of those names as hitherto expounded. In the next place, the names sup- Political History.

Egypt. — Political History.

posed to be hieroglyphically expressed have little or no resemblance to those given by any of the previous authorities. Again, several of the names are often repeated, and we have no very satisfactory ground for determining the order of succession. We must rely entirely on the judgment of M. Champollion, or of Sir G. Wilkinson, to determine whether the Rameses mentioned in any given inscription, is Rameses I., or Rameses IX.; which may lead to as great errors, as if we were to ascribe the Reform Bill of William IV. to the epoch of William the Conqueror. Uncertainties of this kind with regard to Egypt, are in our present state of information inevitable; because there is no known chronological era to which we can positively refer the date of any event recorded in hieroglyphics, prior to the reign of Shishak. The Egyptian Priests indeed told Herodotus, "that they had always computed the years, and kept written accounts of them with the greatest accuracy."[1] But as they asserted this no less positively respecting the thousands of years allotted to the reigns of Gods, than respecting the shorter reigns of mortal Kings, the assertion was, no doubt, equally false in both cases. These same Priests showed the historian 341 wooden figures, in proof that so many High Priests had regularly succeeded each other, since *Menes*, at the rate of three to a century, for above 11,000 years. Something similar to this we formerly saw in Holyrood House, where the portraits of 111 Scottish Kings were exhibited; but these would certainly not have been received as evidence in any Court that the Monarchs had actually existed. In the Turin collection there are representations, which the late M. Rosellini thought genuine, of sixty-six Egyptian Kings; but it was well ob-

[1] Herod., ii., 145.

served by a French critic, that the unerring similitude of feature among them all, and their total want of distinct personal character, conclusively proved them to be *ex post facto* fabrications.[1] Egypt.

59. Among the numerous names of Sovereigns which have been extracted from the hieroglyphics by MM. Champollion, Wilkinson, &c., it seems that there are few or none suggested with any degree of confidence to be earlier than the beginning of Manetho's 16th Dynasty. Sir G. Wilkinson, indeed, mentions Menai, B. C. 2201[2], and Menmastep, Menmaf, or Menmoph, B. C. 1830,[3] and considers the latter to be a king of the 15th Dynasty; but neither of these seems to agree with any Sovereign mentioned by the ancient authorities. According to Eusebius, the beginning of the 16th Dynasty was coincident with the birth of Abraham, which he fixes at B. C. 2014; and from this period to the conquest of Egypt by Persia, B. C. 525, the dates of the successive dynasties and of most of the sovereigns are consistently reckoned. The 16th Dynasty, Manetho says, lasted 190 years (*i. e.*, to B. C. 1824), but he specifies by name only the last king, *Timaus*. Sir G. Wilkinson, however, names three, neither of them so designated. The 17th Dynasty, Manetho says, lasted 103 years (*i. e.*, to B. C. 1721); they consisted wholly of the *Hycsos*, and he names four of their kings, but says nothing of a contemporary Egyptian dynasty. Wilkinson, on the other hand, names three, evidently Egyptians, and supposes this dynasty to have reached to B. C. 1575. Early Egyptian Sovereigns.

60. The 18th Dynasty, however, is that which has afforded the greatest scope for discussion. According to The 18th Dynasty.

[1] Journal des Savans, 1834, p. 465.

[2] Wilk., Theb., 508. [3] Ibid., 509.

Egypt. — Early Sovereigns.

Manetho (in Eusebius's Canon) it began B. C. 1720, and lasted 348 years, *i. e.*, to B. C. 1372. On a former occasion we made a comparative statement of the different designations of the kings of this dynasty, in the accounts taken from Manetho by Josephus, Africanus, and Eusebius, and with reference to the date of the Jewish Exodus, according to the Hebrew text, viz., B. C. 1491. But those differences are immaterial; and the text which Eusebius followed in this part of his calculations was that of the Septuagint, making the Exodus B. C. 1509. This, therefore, we shall take as the basis of a comparison between the 18th Dynasty, as stated by Manetho, by Wilkinson, and by Rosellini, respectively.

B. C.	Manetho.	B. C.	Wilkinson.	Rosellini.
1720	Amosis, Tethmosis, Thummosis.			Amenof I., Amenoftep.
1695	Chebron.	1575	Ames (Chebron).	Thutmes I.
1682	Amenophis, Amophis.	1550	Amunoph I.	Thutmes II.
1660	Memphres, Mephres.	1532	Thothmes I.	Thutmes III.
1648	Mispharmuthosis, Mephramuthosis.	1505	Thothmes II.	Thutmes IV. Amenof II.
1622	Tuthmosis, Thmosis.	1495	Thothmes III.	Thutmes V.
1613	Amenopthis, Memnon.	1456	Amunoph II.	Amenof III.
1582	Orus.	1446	Thothmes IV.	Hor.
1545	Achencherres.			
1533	Athoris, Rathoris.			
1524	Chencherres.	1430	Amunoph III.	Ramses I.
1508	Acherres.	1408	Amunmen.	Menephtha I.
1500	Cherres.	1396	Ramesses I., Remesso.	Ramses II.
1485	Armais.	1385	Osirei I.	Ramses III.
1480	Ægyptus, Ramesses, Armesses.	1355	Amunmai, Ramesses II.	Menephtha II.
1412	Menophis, Amenophis	1289	Pthahmen Thmeiostep.	Verri.

These seem to be names of kings. Some females, however, are mentioned. Josephus mentions Amyes as sister and successor of Amenophis (1682), which seems to agree with Amense, sister, according to Rosellini, of Thutmes II., and included by Wilkinson in the reign of Thothmes I. According to Josephus, Orus had a daughter, named Acenchres, who seems to agree with Rosellini's Tmauhmot, a daughter of Orus, and with Wilkinson's Maut-m-shoi, a queen succeeding Thothmes IV. We have prefixed dates to the reigns in the two first lists. Those in Manetho's list are from Eusebius, adapting his calculation, from the birth of Abraham to the corresponding years before Christ. The grounds on which Sir G. Wilkinson fixes the dates of the sovereigns mentioned by him, we do not fully comprehend. He seems, however, to place the dynasty about 120 years later than Manetho, as stated by Eusebius, and, therefore, cannot well be considered as confirming the Egyptian chronicler.

First question respecting the 18th Dynasty.

61. The first great questionable event in this dynasty is that with which it is said to have begun—the expulsion of the *Hycsos* or Shepherd Kings from Egypt. We must repeat that, prior to the late researches, the very existence of these Hycsos, *as a Dynasty of Kings*, not only rested on the single and hesitating testimony of Manetho, but seemed altogether inconsistent with the accounts of Herodotus and Diodorus. The question then is, what clear proofs of their existence, of the conduct ascribed to them for a long course of years, and of their first expulsion, their return, and their second expulsion, have resulted from the recent discoveries? In the sculptures and paintings which represent the exploits of the Egyptian Kings, there generally, or at least often, appear hieroglyphical sentences specifying the names of the

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parties intended, or significant of the event recorded. In several of the sculptures and paintings lately discovered, persons of barbarous dress and appearance are introduced among the conquered, who have been supposed to be meant for the Hycsos. We are not aware that the word "Hycsos" appears in connection with them; but if it do so, it may simply mean, as Manetho admits, "Shepherd Captives;" and it is extremely probable that the agricultural and civilized Egyptians were frequently engaged in contest with the pastoral and barbarous tribes in their neighbourhood, and took many of them prisoners. That Shepherd Kings of the 17th Dynasty could not be meant is clear; for the figures in question are found among the sculptures representing triumphs of *many* of the Pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty; whereas, according to Manetho, the Hycsos were expelled by the first King of that dynasty, and never re-appeared in Egypt till 518 years afterwards, when (as we have seen) a king of the 19th Dynasty was on the throne. These sculptures and paintings, therefore, so far as they have hitherto been examined, add no historical proof to the asserted existence of a dynasty of Shepherd Kings in Egypt, which assertion still rests, as it did before, on the unsupported, improbable, and inconsistent testimony of the tainted witness Manetho.

Second question respecting the 18th Dynasty.

62. The next important question concerning the 18th Dynasty is whether the recent discoveries confirm, disprove, or modify, the opinions previously held of the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt. The scriptural account of that event is well known, and the accounts given by profane historians we have briefly stated. Recent researches have brought to light nothing whatever on the subject; and should nothing be discovered hereafter, we may say of the

Egyptian monuments, *cum tacent clamant.*[1] Loaded as they are with innumerable records of the triumphs of their Kings, their silence on this point decisively shows that the expulsion was productive to Egypt of nothing but misery and disgrace. Different chronologists having fixed this event at B. C. 1648, 1608, 1593, 1531, 1509, and 1491, all of which dates fall within Manetho's period of the 18th Dynasty, it follows that several sovereigns of that dynasty have been supposed to be the Pharaoh who then reigned, *ex. gr.*, Memphres, Amenophthis, Achencherres, Chencherres, and Cherres; but it does not appear that the discoveries hitherto made either corroborate or weaken any of these conjectures.

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63. The third question relates to the Sesostris, Sesoosis, or Sesonchis before mentioned. This monarch, indeed, would seem, from the Grecian historians, to have lived some time after the dynasty in question; but he is strongly maintained by most recent investigators to be identical with the last Sovereign but one in the above lists. We have stated how that question stood before the late researches were instituted: we have now to examine the effect of the new evidence produced. In the first place, neither Manetho, Champollion, Rosellini, Wilkinson, nor any other person, has applied a name to any one Monarch of the 18th Dynasty, resembling in the slightest degree Sesostris, Sesoosis, or Sesonchis; and considering the immense number of inscriptions that have been examined and explained, this circumstance, of itself, seems to afford a strong inference that no such monarch existed within the 348 years, during which this dynasty lasted. It is said that the last King but one on the lists was called by some

Third question respecting the 18th Dynasty.

[1] Seneca. "Their silence cries aloud."

Egypt. Early Sovereigns.

Ammonmai, by others Ægyptus, by others Rameses, and by others Menephtha, and therefore he may also have been called Sesostris. This is rather a weak argument; but let it pass: we will suppose "Rameses II.," or "Rameses the Great," as he has been called, to be the Sesostris in question; a far more important question remains: what sculptures, paintings, and hieroglyphic inscriptions prove him to have led such immense armies, as Egypt never before or since produced, to "the shores of Ocean beyond the Ganges, and the ends of the earth," or entitle him to rank as "the most fortunate among warriors, and the greatest among conquerors?" It would present some extraordinary problems in the study of history, and much ground for political reflection, could we by any means be assured, that the greatest empire that the world ever saw, was suddenly raised by the boundless ambition and unprovoked aggression of one man, only to be extinguished like a meteor, and utterly lost to memory in the ignorance of ages. Diodorus was informed that Sesoosis "raised two obelisks of hard stone 120 cubits high, on which he inscribed the greatness of his power, the amount of his revenues, and the names of the nations that he had subdued."[1] If the information received by the Historian was correct, these obelisks may still exist, and if explained might at once prove the identity of this sovereign, the time of his reign, and the extent of his dominions. We have alluded to one obelisk erected by a Rameses and explained by Hermapion, but from that no such statistical intelligence was to be obtained. There appear to have been several Kings of Egypt who bore the name of Rameses; and more than one of them perhaps may have been successful in war,

[1] Diod., i., 37.

and caused his victories to be recorded in sculptures or paintings; but hitherto those records have afforded no convincing proof of a greatness beyond what the scriptural account allots to King Shishak. In the splendid work entitled "*Monumens de l'Egypte et de la Nubie*," published some years back under the auspices of the then government of France, views are given in great detail of victories gained by a King Rameses over some nations or tribes called (as appears by the inscriptions) *Scheti* and *Robour;* but what people were meant by these designations it would now be vain to guess. On other monuments the adverse hosts are called *Moskausch;* but the conjecture which finds in these terms the Scythians, Russians, and Muscovites of an early age, is purely arbitrary and capricious. The only inscription of this kind which appears to admit of no doubt is *Melek Joudah*, "the King of Judah;" but this records the triumph—not of a king of the 18th Dynasty, but—of Shishak, the more than probable original of the fictitious Sesostris.

Upon the whole, then, it may be admitted, that the recent researches have conferred on History an inestimable benefit in developing the monstrous system of Mythology adopted in Egypt, and thus illustrating how a false religion may be made to rivet the chains of despotism on a nation for ages. They have been no less serviceable in showing how the same vicious system may be combined, in the higher classes of society, with great luxury and refinement, with an extraordinary progressiveness of art and science, and even with much profound metaphysical speculation; while the mass of the people remain sunk in the grossest superstition and moral nullity. But hitherto these researches have added little to our knowledge of the political events in Egyptian history,

Egypt. and nothing of importance in that view, beyond what we had previously learned from other and less doubtful sources.

INDIA. 64. From Egypt we turn our views at once to INDIA, a country similar to Egypt in its pretensions to an incredible antiquity, in the principal features of its early fables, in the prevalence of an idolatry shocking to reason, and in the division of castes which has contributed to perpetuate all its abuses, moral and political. Of India we learn nothing

Scripture Account. from the scriptural narrative, further than that it was one of the boundaries of the Persian Empire, under the dominion of Ahasuerus (believed to be Darius Hystaspes), about B. C. 520.[1] Nor do the early Greek authors throw

Classical Account. much more light on this subject. Homer manifestly knew little or nothing of the Indians; though he may possibly have had a confused notion of them as included under the term Αἰθίοπες, Ethiopians, literally "black-faced men;" for it seems to have been generally thought that there were Ethiopians in Asia as well as in Africa; and even that there was a land-communication between their countries. The passage in the Odyssey is well known—

"Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαίαται, ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν,
Οἱ μὲν δυσομένου ὑπερίονος, οἱ δ' ἀνιόντος."[2]

"Æthiops, the last of men, whose twofold race
The rising and the setting suns embrace."

But Pliny seems to explain this correctly, as implying that there were in the desert of Africa two countries called Ethiopia, one towards the East and the other towards the West.[3] Herodotus speaks vaguely of the Indians, from loose report. "Under the name of Indians," he says, "many nations are comprehended, using different languages."[4] He

[1] Esther, i., 1.
[2] Homer, Od. i., 23.
[3] Plin., N. H., v., 8.
[4] Herod., iii., 98.

adds, "they are the most numerous people of whom we have any knowledge."[1] Yet he does not seem to have heard of any great independent state or kingdom among them; but speaks of them, with some exceptions, as forming "the twentieth Satrapy, or provincial government, of the Persian Empire."[2] He is equally ignorant of their distinction into Castes, and of their peculiar religious opinions. The customs of the few tribes, which he notices particularly, imply a very low state of civilization. Some, he says, are clothed in rushes woven together;[3] but the dress of those who served in the army of Xerxes appears to have been made of cotton. The expression is obscure—ἀπὸ ξύλων πεποιημένα:[4] it seems, however, to be explained by another passage, where he says "they possess a kind of plant, which instead of fruit produces wool, of a finer and better quality than that of sheep, and of these the natives make their clothes."[5]

Alexander the Great.

65. The lawless invasion of India by Alexander the Macedonian first gave Europeans some knowledge of that country, or at least of the Western parts of it, B. C. 327. Among his chief companions in arms were Ptolemæus, Aristobulus, Nearchus, and Onesicritus, each of whom left a written memoir of what he had observed; as did also Megasthenes and Diamachus, who subsequently resided for several years as Ambassadors at the Court of the Indian Prince Sandracottus (supposed to be Chandra Gupta). These compositions no longer exist in a perfect form; but a great part of their information is to be found in the extant works of Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, the elder Pliny, Quintus Curtius, Arrian, and Solinus. The extent and local pecu-

[1] Herod., iii., 94. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., iii., 98.
[4] Ibid., vii., 65. [5] Ibid., iii., 106.

India. — Classical Account.

liarities of the country were thus known so far as Alexander had advanced, namely to the banks of the Hyphasis (now called the Beyah), one of the five rivers which give name to the Punjaub. The division of the people into Castes was observed by Megasthenes, who reckoned the number of those Castes at seven, including probably some subdivisions. He also noticed a distinction between the *Brachmani* and *Sarmani*, now known as Brahmins and Buddhists; and again between the worship of Bacchus and Hercules, names which he probably applied to the Indian Deities, *Vishnu* and *Siva;* and what is still more remarkable, he said that all the opinions which the Greek philosophers held in his day on the nature of things, were to be found among the Indians. Many singular practices existing at the present time were also recorded in some of these works. Hence Cicero (B. C. 44) speaks of the Gymnosophists (*Vanaprastas*); of the prevalence of Polygamy; and of the voluntary burning of widows (*Suttee*), which last our Indian Government is still so laudably exerting itself to abolish.[1] Propertius, about thirty years later, touches on the last-mentioned custom:—

> "Namque ubi mortifero jacta est fax ultima lecto,
> Uxorum fusis stat pia turba comis:
> Et certamen habent lethi, quæ viva sequatur
> Conjugium: pudor est non licuisse mori."[2]
>
> * * * *
>
> "Now the last torch is thrown upon the bier;
> The pious train of wives stand suppliant near;
> Their contest is for death; none would survive
> Their Lord; he dead, it were a shame to live."

The fullest account of India afforded by any classical author is that afforded by Diodorus Siculus, a faithful and

[1] Cicer., Tusc., v., 27. [2] Propert., iii., 11, 17.

industrious compiler from the best authorities then known; but as he had never been in that country himself, he falls into some errors naturally to be expected, and easily to be excused. Thus he supposes Alexander to have reached the Ganges, and to have been deterred from proceeding further by finding the Gandaridæ drawn up with four thousand elephants to oppose him;[1] whereas it is well known that he was prevented from penetrating beyond the Hyphasis by the positive refusal of his troops to march further.[2] As to the political state of the country at that time, it differed but little from the state in which it was found, thirteen centuries later, by the first Mahometan invaders, and in which indeed great part of it still continues. Certain wild tribes retained the barbarism and independence which marked them in the time of Herodotus; but these formed a comparatively small part of the population. The remainder were distributed in numerous cities, towns, and villages, forming states governed for the most part by sovereigns, who lived in extreme splendour, and kept large armies in their service; though most of them probably paid a sort of feudal homage to one paramount Monarch. Such seems to have been the case with Porus, the chief opponent of Alexander. The force which he brought into the field in his last great battle is variously stated; but by the most probable account, it amounted to 40,000 foot, 6,000 horse, 420 war-chariots, and above 200 elephants.[3] After his defeat, he passed into the same state of princely subordination to the conqueror, in which he is thought to have previously stood to the native occupant of an imperial throne. It is needless to add, that the institutions here

[1] Diod., ii., 86. [2] Arrian, v., 29.

[3] Arrian, v., 14.

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described imply ages of previous civilization, and a very considerable progress made in arts and sciences, even before they had been so successfully cultivated in Greece.

Brahminical books.

66. Still the knowledge to be gleaned from the Jewish and Grecian writers leaves us much in the dark, as to the early history of India; and we naturally turn for fuller information to the native authorities. These, however, were for a long time so little known in Europe, that the very learned Cœlius Rhodiginus, the instructor of Scaliger, does not hesitate to state it as the general opinion of his time (in the reign of our Henry VII.), "literas prorsum ab Indis ignorari,"[1]—"that letters are quite unknown to the Indians." On the contrary, their writings are innumerable; but, alas! there is, among them, of works at all deserving the title of historical, a perfect blank. As the whole fabric of society among the Hindoos was based on religion, so their history, their poetry, their jurisprudence, were all to be sought in their sacred books, or in works replete with mythological fables, regarded as scarcely less sacred. Some ancient inscriptions on stone and metal have been found, and these, as well as the sculptures still existing in temples and temple-caves, coincide with, but do not much illustrate, the written volumes. We have adverted to the great leading division of the ancient religion of India into Brahminism and Buddhism, of which the former has long obtained the almost entire ascendancy in that country, whilst the other has spread itself still more extensively over the neighbouring regions from Tibet and Bootan on the North, to Ceylon on the South, and eastward through Arracan, Siam, and Tonquin, to the Chinese Empire. Both Brahmins and Buddhists have numerous books: we shall begin with those

[1] C. Rhodig., xviii., 31.

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of the Brahmins. They are extremely voluminous, and written in a peculiar language called *Sanscrit*, which has for many ages ceased to be a living dialect in any part of India, and was wholly unknown in Europe, till towards the end of the last century. Since that time, however, it has been cultivated, both in this country and on the Continent, with extraordinary zeal and success, and is now publicly taught at Oxford, Bonn, Berlin, Breslau, and other universities. It is found to be the most artificially constructed language ever spoken by man; and its relations to other tongues extend through numerous ramifications, beginning with the extinct Zend, Pehlevi, and Gothic; spreading through the Greek, Latin, Sclavonian, Lithuanian, Scandinavian, and Teutonic, to their modern descendants;[1] and forming altogether one vast class, now commonly called the Indo-European. As the language itself was perhaps never fully known in India, except to the sacerdotal caste, so the alphabetic character, in which it was written, differed from all other alphabets. The sacred books were for a long time concealed from European inquiry. Perseverance, however, has overcome that obstacle. We are now enabled to take a general survey of Brahminical literature: our libraries, public and private, possess numerous Sanscrit manuscripts; and of some of the most curious and important works, translations have been published in English and other modern languages. The compositions which claim the highest antiquity, and are undoubtedly among the most ancient now known in India, are the four *Vedas*, said to have been originally only one, but to have been divided into four by a divine (or divinely inspired) person named *Vyasa*.[2]

The Vedas.

[1] Bopp, Vergleichende Grammatik.

[2] Colebrooke, As. Res., v., 8.

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They are entitled respectively the *Yajur*, *Rig*, *Sama*, and *Atharva* Vedas, and are appropriated to four different classes of Brahmins; indeed, so sacred are they deemed, that for a man of the Suder caste to read, or hear them read, is severely punishable, but to get by heart any portion of them is a capital crime.[1] It would seem that each Veda consisted at first of only the portion now called *Sanhita*, or *Mantra*, and was no more than a collection of appropriate hymns and prayers addressed to different Deities; but as the Vedas are now to be met with, other and evidently later compositions are commonly added to each of them, called *Brahmana* and *Upanishad*, the former consisting of precepts, the latter of theological treatises, and both kinds are occasionally found separate. As connected also with the Vedas some other compositions may be considered, viz., the *Upavedas*, *Angas*, and *Upangas*. Of the Upavedas indeed little seems to be known but their general subjects, viz., medicine, music, the fabrication of arms and handicraft arts. The Angas treat of grammar and astronomy, and the Upangas of logic, ethics, jurisprudence, and history. The works, which we have hitherto enumerated, are known only to a few learned persons; but those which exercise an extensive and practical influence upon Hindoo society are

The Puranas.

the *Puranas*, which are of a legendary nature, interspersing, among the fabulous achievements of Gods and Heroes, strange and fantastic theories of the origin of all things, the creation, destruction, and renovation of worlds, religious doctrines, rites, &c.[2] Possibly under this veil of fiction traces of the early history of India may hereafter be discovered, which may serve as effectually to connect the origin of its inhabitants with that of the other parts of the

[1] Halhed, Gent. Law, xxi., 7. [2] Colebr., As. Res., v., 7.

globe, as the recent study of Sanscrit has connected their ancient dialects with the languages spoken at the present day over the whole of Europe. Hitherto little progress has been made in such researches; but the materials are gradually and silently accumulating, out of which rational conjectures approaching to historical certainty may eventually be framed. Besides the two great classes which we have mentioned of the Vedas and the Puranas, some works called *Sastras* may be said to form a third class, consisting chiefly of glosses and commentaries on more ancient works as the *Dharma Sastra Manava*, which is a Commentary on the Institute of Menu. Dramatic works, fables, and other light compositions form a fourth class. Many portions of all these classes have been rendered accessible to European scholars by translation into Latin, English, German, French, &c. Portions of all the Vedas have been translated, more particularly a part of the *Rig Veda* by the late Dr. Rosen; a continuation of which by his successor in the undertaking is now in process of publication. The whole of the *Vishnu Purana* has been ably and faithfully translated by Professor H. H. Wilson. One of the earliest English versions was that of the *Dharma Sastra Manava* by Sir W. Jones; but the most striking and interesting to English readers, are the various extracts which have been made from the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, poems properly to be deemed Puranas, though by some considered as a separate class. They are in fact epic poems treated mythically, the former recounting a civil war on the continent of India between the two heroic races of Pandu and Kuru, which is supposed to have happened in the fourteenth century before the Christian era; the latter founded on the conquest of Ceylon by a King of Oude at a later period. The great poetical merit of both

The Sastras.

India. — The Puranas.

these poems has been forcibly illustrated by a distinguished critic, who designates them "the Iliad and the Odyssey of the heroic, or rather the mythological, age of Sanscrit poetry:" and adds, "these extraordinary works, in comparison to the stately and uniform structures of the Grecian bard, are as the Himalaya to the 'bifidi juga Parnassi.'"[1]

Dates of the Brahminical Books.

67. The actual dates of the literary productions of India are for the most part uncertain; the more so, because there can be no doubt but that all of them, and especially the most ancient, have been from time to time interpolated, and altered, to suit new emergencies; and because the copies which are to be found at the present day in different parts of India are marked with singular variations; nor is there any established canon, or paramount authority, to which they can be referred for correction. The Brahmins carry up most of the works of the three first classes above mentioned to an antiquity of several thousand years from the present time: and as to the four Vedas, they state them to have flowed, at a period long prior to the Creation, from the four mouths of Brahma himself. The probability is, that these mystical books existed, in some more simple form, long before the time of their compiler Vyasa, whom some of our writers place in the thirteenth century before Christ, and none later than the tenth. The laws of Menu, in their present shape, are assigned by the ablest European critics, from internal evidence, to the ninth century before Christ; but they are manifestly a compilation, in part at least, from earlier ordinances. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata may have been composed some centuries after the wars which they are supposed to commemorate. It has even been suggested, that the Mahabharata contains an allusion to the

[1] Quart. Rev., xlv. 6.

Greeks established in Bactria by Alexander of Macedon; and that the Poem, therefore, could not have been composed much above two centuries before the Christian era. But the allusion is by no means clear; and the inference built on it is unsound, since the passage may have been an interpolation; or the word *Yavana*, interpreted "Ionians," may have meant "Javanese." The earliest date given by rational chronologists to any of the other Puranas is the eighth century of the Christian era; and some are judged to be as late as the sixteenth. The Sastras also are comparatively modern; and still more so, the dramatic and lighter pieces.

Dates of the Brahminical Books.

68. The primitive doctrines of the Vedas seem to have been of like origin with those to which we have ascribed the belief in the eight great Gods of Egypt; that is to say, they seem to have resulted from a personification of the elementary forces. Diodorus Siculus says that, according to the accounts of the Indians themselves, the *aborigines* of that country were a half-barbarous people, living dispersed in villages, when Bacchus invaded it from the west, and introduced arts and civilization. Now, in mythological story, the conquest of a country by a Deity signifies the introduction of his worship into that country. The previous barbarism of the inhabitants is avowed in the Puranas and other works still extant; it is confirmed by the existence of many untamed mountain-tribes at the present day; and it may perhaps, in some measure, account for the existence of those low and degraded castes which have always formed part of the population. When the celebrated Mohammedan sovereign, Akbar, led his troops into Cashmeer, about A.D. 1555, the natives presented him with a Sanscrit book entitled *Raj-Turangee*, purporting to contain the history of their Kings for more than 4,000 years. It set out with the

Primitive doctrines of the Vedas.

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account of an inundation of the whole country, except the mountains; and added, that when the waters had subsided *Kushup* brought the Brahmins to inhabit Cashmeer. All other accounts agree that the members of this caste came first to India from a foreign country: and that they obtained an influence over the barbarous tribes by the same means as the classic writers tell us Orpheus civilized the barbarians of Thrace:—

> "Silvestres homines, *sacer*, interpresque *Deorum*,
> Cædibus et victu fædo *deterruit*, Orpheus." [1]

They spoke as invested with a *sacred* character; they declared the existence, and announced the will of *Gods*, and, by the mysterious fear of divine vengeance, *deterred* the savage people from brutal murders, and the horrid repasts of cannibalism. Their hearers were easily led to believe that there were *Gods of the Elements*. Accordingly, we see in the most ancient and simple parts of the Rig Veda, hymns or prayers to *Agni*, the God of Fire, and to *Vayu*, the God of the Air. Indeed, Professor Wilson justly observes, that the prevailing character of the ritual of the Vedas is the worship of the personified elements; of *Agni*, or fire; *Indra* or the firmament; *Vayu* the air; *Varuna* the water, and *Aditya* the sun. The Sun, however, is too striking an object even to a savage not to play a conspicuous part as well in his own simple worship, as in the new and ever-varying tales of the Mythologist which captivate his imagination. The first impressions of that glorious luminary on the untaught mind are strikingly, though fancifully described by the poet—

[1] Horat., Art. Poet., 391. "Orpheus, the sacred man, and interpreter of the Gods, deterred savage men from slaughter and inhuman food."

" So when first Man did, through the morning dew,
See the bright sun his shining race pursue,
All day he followed with unwearied sight,
Pleased with that other world of moving light,
But thought him, when he missed his setting beams,
Sunk in the hills, or plunged below the streams." [1]

Siva, Vishnu, and Brahma.

The Brahmin could easily find a "local habitation and a name" for the imaginary Lord of that "world of moving light." Many reasons point to *Siva* as one of the first personifications of the solar orb: and hence, he has been confounded with Osiris and Bacchus; in fact, *Baghis* was one of his Indian names. *Siva* thence, by an easy transition, represented the element of Fire, as *Vishnu* did that of Water, and *Brahma* that of earth.[2] More profound reflection taught the philosophical members of the Brahminical caste, that these elements must be united in one common system and guided by one supreme mind. Hence the doctrine of the *Trimourti*, or union of Brahma, Siva, and Vishnu, in one ineffable Being whose mysterious and peculiar name the pious Hindoo fears to pronounce, but who is indicated by the neuter word *Brahm*, as distinguished from the masculine *Brahma*. Of Brahm, indeed, the great mass of the people know nothing. They see the idols of the Trimourti, and of the separate Gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva; but here begins an endless and inextricable mass of confusion: every Purana has its peculiar legends, and every legend the peculiar Deity which it "delighteth to honour." Practically, however, and throughout all ages, the main popular division of Brahminical sects has retained traces of the conflicting elements of hot and cold, fire and water, and their supposed sources, the Sun and the Moon. Hence India is still divided between the Sivaites and Vishnuyans; for

The Trimourti.

[1] Marvell, v. 3, p. 510.

[2] Guigniaut, i. 150.

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it is a remarkable fact, that of Brahma scarcely a single temple of any magnitude is to be found in India. The separate worship of Siva seems to be the more ancient: Brahma may be supposed to have represented the earth simply as the seminary of all future organization; but Siva or the Sun had the double faculty of calling those organized beings into life, and of terminating their vital existence. Of the former faculty his symbol was the obscene Phallus; but, as fear is a more potent cause of superstition than love, the worship of Siva gradually took a darker hue; and to him as *Cala*, and his wife as *Cali*, even human victims were offered. Nay, in our own day, we have seen that Goddess considered as their patroness by the sanguinary Thugs, who thought they pleased her by the murders which they committed. It was to moderate these horrid excesses that a rival sect arose, who took Vishnu for the main object of their worship; and described him in the most amiable light, as the supporter, preserver, and enlivener of all nature. Whether these sects ever came into violent opposition does not distinctly appear; but as they both uphold the sacred character of the Brahmins, and the authority of the Vedas, and both recognise the divine nature of their common Deities, they live together at present in apparent amity, and appear to have done so for many ages.

Gradual change in the Brahminical religion.

70. It is evident, that since the original composition of the Vedas, the Brahminical religion has undergone two gradual, but remarkable changes. On the one hand, by the contemplative class, it has been raised from a rude worship of the elements, to a refined and spiritual theism; whilst on the other hand, to the people at large, it has assumed the form of an infinitely wild and complicated idolatry. Into the support of this latter system all acquisitions in art and

science have been sedulously pressed. A curious instance of this is given by Sir W. Jones in his Essay on the Musical Modes of the Hindus.[1] The whole scheme of harmony is presented to the eyes, as it were, by a graduated series of personifications. The four fundamental systems are represented by four nymphs: the key-note is figured as a Goddess, &c.

Astronomy the prolific source of Mythological Fables.

71. But Astronomy is here as elsewhere the science most prolific of mythological fables. The most ancient measure of time in India was lunar, and 12 months, of 27 days each, made up a year of 324 days. Hence the constellations were anciently divided into 27 mansions, each mansion being figured as a Wife of *Chandra*, otherwise called *Soma*, the God of the Moon. The 12 months were divided into three Seasons, four cold months being allotted to Brahma, four hot to Siva, and four temperate to Vishnu. When the five visible Planets began to be observed, these, together with the Sun, were each dedicated to a Deity; and it is a very remarkable fact, that the same seven celestial bodies, in the same order of succession, have been allotted to seven analogous deities, among nations whose intercourse, for that purpose, must have taken place at periods beyond the reach of history, and often of tradition. Hence the Indian *Auditya, Soma, Mungela, Boodha, Brihaspat, Shukra,* and *Shenischer;* the Persian *Schid, Mah, Behrum, Tir, Ormuzd, Nahid,* and *Kevan;* the Egyptian *Re, Joh, Typhon, Thoth, Osiris, Isis,* and *Anubis;* the Roman *Sol, Luna, Mars, Mercurius, Jupiter, Venus* and *Saturnus,* and the Anglo-Saxon *Sunne, Mona, Tyw, Woden, Thor, Frea,* and *Sœter.* In all, or most of these cases, too, a separate day was allotted to each Deity, as *Auditya War,* Sunday; *Soma War,* Monday; *Mungela*

[1] Asiat. Res., iii., 67.

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War, Tuesday, &c.[1] At a period probably long subsequent to the designation of the Sun, Moon, and Planets, was formed the Indian Zodiac, also agreeing with that which has been handed down to us from the Greeks; the signs, twelve in number, having similar names, and being arranged in the same order as *Mecha* the Ram, *Idava* the Bull, *Michouna* the Twins (male and female), &c. The Zodiac, moreover, was divided into 360 degrees; and it seems evident, that the 12 signs on which the 12 months of the Solar Year depended, were of later invention than the Lunar Mansions, because they are named from twelve of the latter; which a Purana allegorically intimates by ascribing to the months 12 Genii, the offspring of 12 of the 27 Wives of *Chandra*. Among these legends, too, we find the origin of the Dance of the Gods, described with such animation in the Homeric hymn to Apollo:—

> "But here the fair-haired *Graces*, the wise *Hours*,
> *Harmonia*, *Hebe*, and sweet *Venus*' powers
> Danced, and each other's palm to palm did cling:
> And with them danced not a deformed thing,
> No forspoke Dwarf, nor downward Witherling.
> Dart-dear *Diana*, even with Phœbus bred,
> Danced likewise there: and *Mars* a march did tread
> With that brave Bevy.—
> *Phœbus-Apollo* touched his lute to them
> Sweetly and softly, a most glorious beam
> Casting about him as he danced and played."[2]

"The first elements of dancing" (says Lucian) "were seen in the movements of the starry choir, and in the harmonious combinations of the planets with the unmoving stars."[3] And, further on, he adds—"The Indians, when they rise at dawn of day, salute the Sun with dancing, in

[1] Halhed, Code of Gentoo Laws, Pref., xli.
[2] Chapman, Hymn to Apollo, v., 302, &c.
[3] Lucian, De Saltatione.

imitation of the Dance of the Gods."[1] Milton, who, from the mass of his stupendous reading ever culled the most poetic conceptions, has touched the same chord:— India.

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"——— What if the Sun
Be centre to the world, and other Stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, *dance* about him various rounds?"[2]

It is more especially in the legends of Crishna (an incarnation of Vishnu) that the Indians have personified the "attractive virtue" of the Sun, as causing the harmonious movements of the planets and other celestial bodies. In one great picture, Crishna is seated with his consort Goddess, both together representing the Sun, in the midst of a circle of Dancers representing constellations. The God and Goddess regulate the step and figure of the dance by the sound of pipes; and this is accompanied on other instruments by musicians typifying the Seasons.[3]

72. It has been often observed, that there is no tradition more generally prevalent among nations, in all parts of the globe, than that of a primitive age of purity and happiness among mankind, followed by periods of successive deterioration. We find it in one of the earliest Greek Poets, who dwells on it at great length, in the well-known passage beginning— Four Ages of Man.

"Ὡς ὁμόθεν γεγάασι θεοὶ, θνητόί τ' ἄνθρωποι
Χρύσεον μὲν πρώτισα γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
Ἀθάνατοι ποίησαν, ὀλυμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
Οἱ μὲν επὶ Κρόνου ἦσαν."

"When Gods alike and Mortals rose to birth,
A *golden* race th' immortals formed on earth
Of many-languaged men. They lived of old
When Saturn reigned."[4]

[1] Lucian, De Saltatione.
[2] Par. Lost, viii., 119.
[3] Moor, H. Pantheon, pl. 63.
[4] Elton's Hesiod, W. and D., 148.

India. — Tradition of the Four Ages.

The same tradition is embellished with like circumstances by a Latin Poet:—

> "*Aurea* prima sata est ætas, quæ, vindice nullo,
> Sponte suâ, sine lege, fidem rectumque colebat." [1]
>
> "The *golden* age was first—Laws were unknown,
> And Faith and Truth loved for themselves alone."

This last passage a learned Commentator supposes to have been founded on Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.[2] Unfortunately, the vision of the Assyrian monarch was 200 years at least subsequent to the poem of Hesiod above quoted, and there can be no doubt but that the tradition was known in India several ages earlier. It gave occasion to the monstrous fiction of the four *Yugs* or *Jogues* into which the Puranas assert the duration of the present world to be divided, viz. the *Satya*, *Treta*, *Dwapar* and *Cali* Yugs, the length of each of which is supposed gradually to diminish compared with the preceding; but to what extent, and in what proportions, the various sects and various sacred books widely differ: all of them, however, are marked by the common tendency of the Indian writers to incredible exaggerations of space and time. The authorities referred to by two of our earliest writers on the subject, Mr. Halhed and Sir W. Jones, give the following results:—

	Halhed.[3]	Jones.[4]
	Years.	Years.
Satya Yug	3,200,000	1,728,000
Treta Yug	2,400,000	1,296,000
Dwapar Yug	1,600,000	864,000
Cali Yug	400,000	432,000
Total . .	7,600,000	4,320,000

[1] Ovid, Metam., i., 89.
[2] Crispinus, not., ibi.
[3] Code of Gentoo Laws.
[4] Laws of Menu.

Both these, and many other statements of a like nature, are manifestly founded on astronomical calculations. It is easy, after an observation of time (correctly or incorrectly made), to reckon backward, by repeated multiplications of that time, to any extent; and, in fact, even the four Yugs, by such multiplications, become only parts of a greater portion called a *Mesha Youga*, or great Yug, and that again of a *Manwantara*, involving alternate creations and dissolutions of worlds, but, as actual measures of duration, utterly vain and useless. Of the calculation which gives for the four Yugs 4,320,000 years, it has been observed that the fundamental number 4,320 is exactly the number of minutes in three days,[1] which three days, therefore, we may suppose to have had relation to the three Divinities of the Trimourti, allotting a day to the predominance of each. Various attempts have been made to accommodate the four Yugs to known and actual Chronology. Thus, as the Cali Youga now in progress began, according to the Hindus, B.C. 3101, it has been supposed that this was a loose conjecture relating to an astronomical conjuncture which occurred sixty-three years earlier; that at this point (viz. B. C. 3164) the Satya Yug might be fixed; and that the other Yugs might be adapted to certain subsequent epochs, *ex. gr.* the Treta to B. C. 2204, the Dwapar to 1484, and the Cali to 1004.[2] But little reliance can be placed on calculations so purely conjectural; and we can only conclude with Professor Heeren, that though the tradition of the four gradually corrupted ages is doubtless of high antiquity, the numerical calculations applied to it are the work of Brahmins in comparatively modern times.

[1] Link., Urwelt ũ Alterthum, i., 278, &c.

[2] Asiatic Researches, viii., 224, &c.

India.

Brahminical Avataras.

73. The Indians did not believe (like the Greeks and Romans) that mortal Kings and Heroes could be elevated to the rank of Gods; yet, as many of their great men were named after Deities, it was easy to confound the exploits of mortals with those of immortals. Thus the hero of the Ramayana, who appears in the Poem to be the Deity, Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, was probably Rama, a King of Oude. But the distinguishing feature of the Brahminical Mythology was the doctrine of the *Avataras*, or Incarnations of the great Gods themselves, especially of Vishnu; and there is a remarkable gradation of the forms which he is said to have assumed; appearing first as a Fish, then as the amphibious animal, a Tortoise, then as the quadruped, a Boar, then as the compound animal *Narasingha*, a Man-Lion, then as several successive human beings, first, the dwarf, *Vamana;* then the two Ramas in succession, *Parasu Rama* and *Sri Rama;* then *Crishna;* and, lastly, *Buddha*. Such is the most generally received series of the Avataras; but on this, as on every point of the Indian mythology, the most irreconcilable contradictions are to be met with, between the accounts given in different books. As to the parts acted by the incarnate Deities, they are described in fictions of the most puerile extravagance; for instance, the Dwarf, *Vamana*, asks a Giant to give him three paces of land, to which the latter agrees; whereupon Vamana suddenly enlarging his bulk, takes one stride over the whole earth, a second over the heavens, and as he is about to step over the infernal regions, the giant falls down and worships him—a tale which would be laughed to scorn in a European nursery! The hidden import of most of these fables is unintelligible; but the three or four latter tales evidently contain a covert allusion to collisions, which occurred in early times

between different Castes or Sects. *Parasu Rama*, for instance, typifies a struggle between the Military and Priestly Castes; *Crishna*, a modification of the barbarous rites of Siva, by the milder worship of Vishnu; and *Sri Rama*, a momentary triumph of Brahmanism over Buddhism in the island of Ceylon.

74. The Brahmins claim to have been the first teachers of that most important and most holy doctrine, the *Immortality of the Soul.* It is doubtful how far that doctrine can be justly said to form part of the religion inculcated in the most ancient part of the Vedas, viz., the *Sanhitas;* though it is clearly taught in the *Upanishads,* which we consider of later date, and in the Puranas which are comparatively modern. Be this as it may, the view taken of it by the more reflecting part of the Brahmins led directly to a belief in the *Metempsychosis,* or transmigration of the soul from one body to another. They regarded Brahm, or perhaps Brahma, as *Atma,* the universal spirit of life pervading all things in their different degrees of sensibility or intelligence. In the human system it combines (said they) *Bhoutatma,* the vital spirit common to all animals, with *Djivatma,* the willing and moving power, conscious of right and wrong. At death, the soul, which by contemplation has been enabled to embrace *Paramatma* (the knowledge of the Divine Nature), is either absorbed at once in Atma, or at least is raised to an equality with some of the many superior classes of beings, Devas, Richis, Menous, &c., which the Indian mythology recognises. The individuals who attain this blessed state are, of course, few; but as the nature of Djivatma is immortal, it must, when leaving one body, pass into another, which, according to its conduct in the first, will be either of inferior, equal, or superior dignity. The

India. Metempsychosis.

most grovelling soul may animate a creeping insect, the highest a Brahmin. To decide the lot of the departed souls there must be certain Judges and Ministers of Justice. Siva himself, under the name of *Roudva*, performs the part of the classic Pluto; and he has two sons, *Dherma*, the administrator of earthly justice, and *Yama*, of the future judgment. The greatest possible merit is ascribed to the performance of penances, and these are practised, even in the present day, with the most extraordinary variety of self-imposed tortures, not as penalties for past sin, but as forming indisputable claims to veneration on earth, and to the highest rewards in a future state.

Buddhist Books.

75. So much for the Brahminical religion; we have now to speak of its successful rival, which is supposed to be professed by two hundred millions or more of human beings. Some persons think that Buddhism must have preceded Brahminism in India; but the contrary seems more probable. By the labours of Messrs. Hodgson, Upham, Armour, and others, we are enabled to peruse large portions of the sacred books of the Buddhists, which appear to have been first composed in the Pracrit dialect of Magadha (now South Bahar) in India, and afterwards translated into the languages of Tibet, Burma, Ceylon, &c. The most important of these books are known in Ceylon by the titles of the *Pitakattayan*, the *Atthakatha*, and the *Mahawanso*; the first being doctrinal, and the two others historical. The oldest, the *Pitakattayan*, which in Tibet forms one hundred volumes, designated *Kagyur*, pretends in neither country to any higher date than the death of *Sakya*; but the Tibetans believe that event to have happened about a thousand years prior to the Christian era; whilst the Ceylonese, on far more reasonable grounds, fix either his birth

or death (on which there seems some doubt) at the precise year B. C. 543, the first of the chronological era by which they still reckon. The other books are of later dates, viz., the Atthakatha, about B. C. 307, and the Mahawanso about A. D. 470. India. Buddhist Books.

76. *Sakya,* the individual whose death is here referred to, is the same person called in Sanscrit *Buddha,* and in Hindostani *Boodh.* In Japan he is known by the name of *Siaka;* in Ceylon, Siam, &c., by that of *Gautama;* and in China, of *Fo.* Some also think that he is the Teutonic *Wod* or *Woden.* In fact, he was a native of Magadha, and a member of the *Gautama* family, the then reigning dynasty of that country, where, in his lifetime he was highly venerated as the head of a religious sect; but it must be observed that in the Matawanso he is designated "the successor of former Buddhas." Other personages, therefore, either mythical or historical, bearing the name or title of *Buddha,* were believed to have existed before the appearance of Sakya; though perhaps, according to Indian notions, he may have been regarded as spiritually identical with the whole series. The name, *Buddha* in Sanscrit, or *Boodh* in Hindostani, signifies, simply "the Sage;" and we have seen that the Brahmins gave that title to an Avatara of Vishnu. If first applied by them to a human being, that individual must of course have been of the same faith as themselves; but this was probably when the Vedas were in their simplest form, and before the wild fables of the Puranas had been invented. In such a state of things, Sakya's followers may have lived as peaceably with their contemporaries as the worshippers of Siva and Vishnu now do with each other: and such, indeed, appears to have been the case, more than 200 years after Sakya's death, when India first became Buddha.

India. — Buddha.

known to the Greeks. It would seem, that at that time Buddha was regarded as a sort of vague, mythological being, like Crishna, another Avatara of the same Deity; and that the Buddhists were only a Brahminical sect, paying peculiar veneration to him, and, perhaps, affecting greater austerity or purity than their co-religionists. In this view, Buddhism may be considered to have been a reform of Brahminism, probably gradual, slow, and for a long time insensible. At length, the differences (we may suppose) grew to be such that the reformers rejected the Vedas (the common bond of union among all the Brahminical sects), and adopted books of their own; and as this most probably excited the indignation of the Brahmins, and produced endeavours on their part to put down the reform by force, the Buddhists at length denied the sacred character of the Brahminical caste, and, as a consequence, renounced the distinction of castes entirely, and being driven from India spread their tenets through other countries. In all this there is much similitude to the gradual progress of the Reformation of the Christian religion in Europe, until it led to the violent rupture of the sixteenth century, and produced the religious wars of that and the following age. But here the parallel ends. The Indian Reformers, instead of establishing, like those of Europe, simple, pure, and spiritual systems, only adopted new forms of an idolatry as gross as that which they had quitted.

Present state of Buddhism.

77. In many countries, Sakya is actually worshipped, under some or other of the above-mentioned names. His idol is placed in temples, together with those of his most eminent disciples, and to all of them divine honours are paid. It has been justly observed that Buddhism is in substance the same as Brahminism. Its philosophy is that of certain

Brahminical sects. It retains the doctrine of the Metempsychosis. By rejecting the Brahminical fables, most of which were of a local nature, it greatly facilitated the diffusion of its own superstition through neighbouring lands; but its fables were nearly as degrading to the human intellect as those which they supplanted. As a specimen of these, we may refer to the accounts of the *Tooth-relic*, which being considered by the Ceylonese as the palladium of their country, is now officially preserved in the custody of the local government, under a military guard. This relic is asserted to be the *left canine tooth* of Sakya, who had bequeathed it as a precious treasure, at his death, to an Indian Rajah. After it had been for several centuries in the possession of this Prince and his descendants, it was sent for by the Emperor of all India, a Brahminist, to be destroyed. Every attempt, however, to do so by casting it into a fiery furnace, treading it into the ground by elephants, and beating it on an anvil, was in vain. The Emperor at last being converted, "the tooth (says the author) resplendent in the form of a jewel alighted on his head, shedding around a white halo." "The Emperor built a splendid temple for its reception, and dedicated to it his whole dominions!" The tooth afterwards went through numerous and extraordinary adventures, until A.D. 310, when it was brought by a Prince and Princess, in disguise, to the Island of Ceylon, where it has ever since remained. The Buddhists, it is true, made a great advance toward civilization by the abolition of caste; but they soon fell back into injurious institutions by the creation of a numerous priesthood to attend on their idolatrous worship, forming them into convents, devoting them to celibacy, occupying their whole time in the vain ceremonies of a superstitious ritual; and in Tibet

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Buddhist Fables.

Tooth-relic of Ceylon.

Abolition of Caste.

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placing at the head of their hierarchy a living representative of Buddha himself.

The Mahrattas.

78. The Buddhists are not the only sects in India which have thrown off, or at least relaxed, the restraints of caste. The powerful confederacy of the *Mahrattas* was formed by a combination of several low castes, who, without disputing the sanctity of the Brahmins, assumed to themselves the privileges of the military caste, and became formidable warriors.

The Jains.

The *Jains* form a sect who are said by some to be scarcely distinguishable from Buddhists; they have a Chief Pontiff in Mysore, and several notices of them are to be found in the ninth volume of the Asiatic Researches.

The Sikhs.

The *Sikhs* were originally Hindoos, chiefly of low castes, until a teacher named Nanukh arose, who prevailed on them, some centuries since, to reject many Brahminical observances, to discard the distinctions of caste, and to unite into one body, which at first was merely religious; but being afterwards driven in self-defence to take up arms, they finally became so warlike a people as to defy the British power; and though soon conquered, they still present a formidable appearance in the event of future hostilities. Neither the literature of the Buddhists, however, nor that of the later sects can throw light on those fictions which have obscured the very early history of India; and imperfect as is the assistance to be derived from the Brahminical books and monuments, it is to them only that, for such a purpose, we can have recourse. Of the Parsee and Mohammedan writings we shall speak elsewhere.

Connection of India with Egypt.

79. A much-agitated question still remains—namely, whether there was any connection, and what, between India and Egypt, in early ages. Many distinguished writers, who agree in thinking that such a connection existed, differ

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Connection of India with Egypt.

as to its origin. The acute and learned Warburton held, that the Brahmins, Magi, and Druids, all derived their knowledge and tenets from Egypt. Herder adopted the opinion of Lucian, that Philosophy (and, of course, Mythology and Arts) came from the Brahmins to Ethiopia, and thence to the Egyptians: and Bishop Russell, one of the latest and ablest writers that have handled this question, seems to accede to this hypothesis.[1] Others again, hold that the doctrines of the Indians and Egyptians were alike derived from the Caucasian mountains, or the banks of the Euphrates. The subject is one attended with great difficulties, in whatever light it may be viewed; but we have at present to consider it only in its tendency to illustrate the early history of the two nations above examined.

Similarity of Indian and Egyptian institutions.

80. From what has been already said, it will be obvious that there were many and great similarities between the institutions, habits, and customs of India and those of Egypt. The most striking of all is the institution of Castes. True it is that some such distinction (between the two portions, at least, of a community) has been found to exist in many parts of the world, and in most ages; but it has generally depended on a difference of race, and been traceable to hostile contests, which ended in dividing the inhabitants into conquerors and conquered; the latter of whom were reduced to a state more or less approaching to slavery. Thus the Lacedæmonians had their *Helotes;* the Thessalians their *Penestæ;* the Cretans their *Clarotæ* and *Mnoitæ;* the Mariandyni their *Doryphori;* the Sicyonians their *Corynophori;* and some other Greeks their *Gymnites.*[2] Such, too, was the probable origin of the Norman *Villein* and the Russian *Serf;* and similar distinctions of a superior

[1] Russell, S. and P. H., iii., 187. [2] Julius Pollux, iii., 8, 3.

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and inferior race existed in many half-civilized communities of America and Australasia, when they were first discovered. But in Egypt and India, as we have seen, the system was more complex: it may, indeed, have been founded, in both cases, partly on conquest and partly on diversity of race; but in both there was a leading Caste widely separated from the other by the sacredness of its character and supposed origin, by the natural powers which the individuals were believed to possess, and by their exclusive knowledge of certain religious mysteries. This institution may possibly have arisen spontaneously in both countries, or may have been received by both from a third; but if it was derived by one from the other, the Egyptian, being the less artificial of the two, was probably the original. Both in India and Egypt the domination of the priestly Caste was connected with the allodial possession of land, and in both countries their title to it was of high antiquity. An old Sanscrit inscription declares that "land belonging to the Brahmins is the King's sister;" all other land was deemed his wife. We know not the date of this legal axiom; but the work in which it appears can hardly be earlier than the time of Joseph, at which period the principle was undoubtedly recognised in Egypt. The traditions of both countries represent their systems of religion and polity to be derived from abroad. According to Diodorus, the Indians declared that the aborigines of their country were a half-barbarous people, living dispersed in villages, until Bacchus invaded it *from the West*, introduced arts and civilization, and established a sovereignty, which descended to his sons.[1] Now Bacchus, who answers to the Indian *Siva*, had been previously stated by Diodorus to be

[1] Diod., ii., p. 87.

the same as the Egyptian Osiris;[1] and as the conquest of a country by a God signifies, in mythological story, the introduction of his worship, this tradition favours the opinion that the worship of Siva (one of the earliest forms of religion in India) was introduced from Egypt. On the other hand, Diodorus holds that the worship of the Egyptian Gods originated in Ethiopia.[2] It is clear that the Ethiopia here intended was not India, but the country which Pliny says was first called Ætheria, then Atlantia, and finally, from Æthiops, a son of Vulcan, Æthiopia;[3] and which begins at the upper part of the Nile. But it is suggested that at a still earlier period the Ethiopians may have received instruction in religion, arts, and science, from merchants or colonists arriving by sea from India. The obvious answer to this is, that if an intercourse existed between the three nations, the Ethiopians may have been alike the instructors of the Indians and of the Egyptians, or (what is still more probable) the medium through which the learning of Egypt was conveyed to India. The earliest mythology of both the last-mentioned countries appears to have been founded on the deification of the elements. In both countries the mythological system was afterwards complicated by astronomical allegories; and in both countries the astronomical system, on which those allegories were founded, was evidently the same. The year in both countries appears to have been first lunar, and afterwards solar. It was divided by both nations into three seasons of four months each. The solar year was reckoned by both first at 360 days, afterwards at 365, and finally at 365¼. But the most remarkable instance of identity is that of the months and

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Mythological systems of India and Egypt.

Astronomical Allegories.

[1] Diod., i., p. 9. [2] Ibid., iii., p. 100.
[3] Plin., N. H., vi., 35.

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Similarity of the systems of India and Egypt.

weeks, the former depending on a division of the Zodiac into twelve portions, marked by the same signs and arranged in the same order, and the latter distinguished by the same seven celestial bodies, also in like order. Both in Egypt and India, the prevalence of symbol-worship was alike remarkable, and the same gross symbols were had in reverence. And, lastly, the Priests in both countries possessed sacred books, unintelligible or inaccessible to the mass of the community, and involving recondite doctrines of the nature of the One Supreme God, the immortality of the human soul, and its reward or punishment by means of a Metempsychosis.

Supposed dissimilarities.

81. On the other hand, it has been urged that, on some points, the dissimilitude between the Egyptian and Indian systems is as remarkable as the similitudes which we have noticed. That the people of the two countries were not of the same race, in whole or part, seems probable from the difference both of their bodily constitutions and of their languages. But this is not incompatible with the fact that a small number of teachers may have proceeded at a period far beyond memory or tradition, from one country to the other; that they may have adopted the language of those whom they addressed, and that their descendants, few in number, may have become, in the course of ages, undistinguishable in appearance from other natives of the country where they had so long been settled. It is generally believed that the first civilizers of Greece were Phœnicians and Egyptians; but no traces either of their native language or personal appearance are to be detected in the earliest Grecian records. It may be thought that, on the hypothesis which we are examining, the Egyptian and Indian names of the Deities, at least, would be the same, which they can

hardly be said to be in a single instance. But it must be remembered that the Grecian mythology was also in great part derived from Egypt, and yet the names of the Deities seldom agree. *Ptha* no more resembles Ἥφαιστος in sound, than it does *Agni;* nor is *Cneph* more like to Ζεὺς νεφελη-γερέτης, than it is to *Vayù;* and though the words *Osiris* and *Iswara* may be said to approximate in pronunciation, they may perhaps differ in etymology. A foreign teacher, in order to make himself understood, must adopt expressions intelligible to his hearers; as a Roman monk, in preaching to Teutonic heathens, must have used the German word *God*, instead of the Latin *Deus*. For a similar reason, the forms of the Indian and Grecian idols must have differed from those of Egypt. The Elephant, in India, being known as the most rational of animals, its head, as symbolic of wisdom, is allotted to the idol of the Indian God, *Ganesa;* whereas the analogous Egyptian Deity, *Thoth*, bears the head of the Ibis, an Egyptian bird unknown in India. A remarkable peculiarity in the Indian fictions, not found in those of Egypt, is the faculty which they often ascribe to their God of appearing at the same time in several repetitions of their own, or other forms; as in the Episode of Prince Nala, in the Mahabarata, where five Deities appear at once in the form of Nala. The important Indian doctrine of the Avataras, which we have explained above, appears also to have been unknown to the Egyptians. But both this and the preceding peculiarity may have been introduced into the Indian fictions at a time subsequent to the intercourse (if any such existed) between India and Egypt. On the other hand, the hieroglyphics, which abound so much in Egypt, are not to be traced in India, which would seem to prove that they had

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Supposed dissimilarities in the Indian and Egyptian systems.

India. not been invented until after the supposed intercourse of the two countries had ceased.

General result. 82. The result of these remarks is, that Mythology, Science, and Art were probably, at some obscure period of time, communicated from one of these countries to the other, and that Egypt has, upon the whole, the fairest claim to be regarded as the benefactor; but the latter point is still doubtful, and requires the aid of much future research, and of discoveries as yet beyond conjecture, for its accurate determination. We have dwelt thus long on the early history of Egypt and of India, not only because they both pretend to so high and extravagant an antiquity, but because, amidst their monstrous fictions, we think we perceive something like a light breaking in upon the obscurity, both of their own and other records. We think, too, that this examination strongly illustrates the childish credulity of modern philosophers, who, in their zeal to discredit the Scripture History, have set up in opposition to it, as "records of high antiquity and perfect credibility," a chaos of monstrous fiction, of which it is scarcely possible to ascertain the real date or origin.

China. 83. Another country, the unfathomable antiquity of whose annals was, for a long time, vaunted by writers who affected to doubt whether Christ ever preached in Judæa, is the strange and anomalous empire of China. We were expected to believe that this people, not sufficiently cultivated to adopt alphabetic writing, was in possession of a complete body of literature thousands of years before letters were known in western Europe. We were told, in the words of an Italian writer, that "the history of this nation, the most ancient and most polished on earth, would com-

pensate the sterility of that of most other nations." In fine, what says the luminary of French literature, the celebrated Voltaire? "Shall we dare," exclaims he with indignation, "to speak of the Chinese without referring to their own annals? It is evident that the empire of Chira was formed about four thousand years ago. If any annals bear the stamp of certainty, it is those of the Chinese —the Chinese empire was subsisting in splendour when the Chaldeans began those nineteen hundred years of astronomical observations which Callisthenes sent into Greece." Such was the opinion of a man who dared to assume the direction of historical belief in the age in which he lived. The lowest student in History, who reads for solid information, would be ashamed to utter such a rhapsody.

China. — Fallacies of Chinese Annals.

84. Let us see what authorities we can find for Chinese history devoid of fable. The Jewish records here afford us no assistance, and the Greek and Roman very little. The Chinese people first appear in classical literature under the name of Σῆρες, *Seres*. Pliny, after alluding to the northern parts of Scythia, which he considered to extend to the Eastern Ocean, and to be uninhabitable, says, "that the first known people met with are the *Seres*, distinguished for the woolly production of their forests;"[1] but this short sentence shows two errors prevalent in his time. First, the inhabitants of a part of the country which we now call China, were confounded under the name of Seres with a Tartarian race dwelling to the north of India, and hence different authors described them by the most opposite characteristics. Horace couples the Seres with the Indians, as subjected (or to be subjected) to the dominion of Augustus,[2] and names them, together with the Bactrians and

Authorities for Chinese History.

[1] Plin., N. H., vi., 20. [2] Hor., Od. I., xii., 56.

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Authorities for Chinese History.

dwellers on the Don, as occupying the politic attention of Mæcenas;[1] and again, with the Goths and Persians, as bound, or to be bound, by the Julian Edicts;[2] and he particularly alludes to their skill in archery.[3] These vague expressions show that the poet was entirely ignorant of the local habitation of the people in question, but believed them to be of warlike habits, as Propertius did,[4] when speaking of their war-horses;[5] and the notions of both poets were probably applicable to the *Seres*, a tribe mentioned by Pausanias as situated on the Ganges. Later writers, however, describe the Seres as a mild people, "averse indeed to intercourse with foreign countries, but not rejecting those who came to them for purposes of trade;[6] and again, as "inoffensive to their neighbours, and willing to sell their productions, but not disposed to buy those of foreign countries"[7]—peculiarities which have for many ages distinguished the policy of the Chinese. The other error of Pliny in the passage above quoted is the confounding the origin of silk with that of cotton. Before China was known to the Western world, the Assyrians and Coans are said to have fabricated a sort of transparent gauze from the webs of certain insects called *bombyces*, from whence our word *bombazine* is derived.[8] These manufactures, however, seem to have been superseded by a different kind of texture, understood to be brought, by a circuitous commerce, from the distant country of the *Seres*, and thence called *Sericum*, the origin of our word *Silk*. For a long time, however, the substance of which silk is composed was

[1] Hor., Od. III., xxix., 27. [2] Ibid., IV., xv., 23. [3] Ibid., I., xxix., 9.
[4] Propert., El., IV., iii., 8. [5] Ibid., IV., viii., 23.
[6] Plin., N. H., vi., 20. [7] Ammian. Marcel., l., 23.
[8] Plin., N. H., xi., 25, 26, 27.

believed to be produced, like cotton, from a plant. Virgil says,—

"Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia *Seres*."[1]

And it would seem to have been at first imported in the raw state, and worked up in Europe:—"Unde geminus fæminis nostris labor" (says Pliny) "redordiendi fila, rursumque texendi. Tam multiplici opere, tam longinquo orbe petitur, ut in publico matrona transluceat!"—"Whence our women have a double labour, first in unravelling the thread, and then weaving it up. So manifold is the toil, so distant the climate from which we bring the means of enabling our matrons to appear publicly in transparent dresses!"[2] This state of things continued till about the middle of the fifth century of our era, when the silkworm's eggs were first brought to Europe; but little was known of the country from which they were procured, until several ages later. It is stated, indeed, that the *Seres* twice sent ambassadors to Rome, viz., in the year B.C. 24, and in A.D. 273; but these were probably not Chinese: they no doubt came from *Serica*, a territory which Ptolemy describes as lying to the north-west of the country of the *Sinæ*. Now it is from the latter people that our word *China* is derived: and both Serica and the country of the Sinæ were included in *Shen-si*, one of the northern provinces of the present Chinese Empire.

85. When we turn to the information which the Chinese afford us of their early history, we meet at once with a startling fact. It is asserted that so late as B.C. 246, or as others say, 187, the reigning Emperor caused all the books

[1] Virg., Geor., ii., 121. "Thus the thin fleece the Seres comb from leaves."

[2] Plin., N. H., vi., 20.

China. Chinese Literature.

then extant, except those of law and physic, to be burnt This, however, is probably a fiction of modern writers to account for the paucity of early records. The earliest historical work extant in China is the *Chun-Tsieu*, ascribed (but with considerable doubt) to *Kung-Fu-Tse*, known in Europe by the name of Confucius, who was born B. C. 551. The author, however, admits that he could find no satisfactory materials for History above 170 years before his own time. A more considerable historian, *She-Ma-Tsien*, who wrote B. C. 37, and whose work bears greater marks of authenticity, speaks nearly to the same effect, though he admits traditionary accounts of a far earlier period. Consistently with this, we find that though books of law are said to have been spared, yet Sir George Staunton, the celebrated translator of the Chinese Penal Code, could obtain authentic intelligence of no compilation earlier than that of *Lee Quee*, who is supposed to have lived B. C. 250. A collection of laws, however, made at that time, presupposes that the people had been united under regular government for some considerable time previously; and this is confirmed by the Treatise on Government called *Ta-Hyo*, written by Confucius, and translated into English by that admirable Chinese scholar Dr. Marshman. In the early part of the Treatise we find the following passage:—

Kung-Fu-Tse.

She-Ma-Tsien.

Lee Quee.

"The ancients who wished to restore reason to its due lustre throughout the *Empire*, first regulated the *Province* which they each governed. Desirous of governing well their provinces, they previously established order and virtue in their own *Houses*. For the sake of establishing domestic order, they began with *Self-renovation*. To renovate their minds, they first gave a right direction to their affections. Wishing to direct their passions aright, they previously

corrected their ideas and desires; and to rectify these they enlarged their knowledge to the utmost." We do not mean here to speak of the practical effect of this Treatise. It must be remembered that this was the work of a Chinese in the sixth century before Christ, an entire stranger to the dawning civilization of Europe, and probably to that of India also. It must be remembered, too, that the Treatise was not addressed to the people at large, but written for the instruction of the Sovereign and the governing authorities. But we quote it principally to show that in the time of Confucius the government of the Empire, of the Provinces, and even of private Families, was subject to laws and customs, which this Philosopher did not first establish, but merely endeavoured to reform, and to improve. We shall hardly err, therefore, if we conclude, that permanent political institutions existed in China at least eight hundred years before the Christian era.

Chinese Institutions. B.C. 800.

86. This computation, however, stops exceedingly short of what some of the Chinese are said to maintain. They hold, it seems, that the world had existed from the beginning of its creation, six ages, or 64,800 years, when their first Emperor *Ya* was born. It is probable, that these extravagancies are the mere echo of Indian traditions, introduced at different times by the Buddhist missionaries; for we have seen that about the time of Confucius, the followers of Buddha, either expelled or voluntarily migrating from different parts of India, spread their doctrines into the neighbouring countries, and so by degrees into China, where the idol of their teacher, under the name of *Fo*, is still worshipped, with a great variety of superstitious usages, by the lower classes of people. The priests of this idolatry, as well as of a similar sect called *Tao-tse*, are tolerated by

Chinese theories of the world's age.

China.

Religion of the Higher and Lower Orders.

the government, but held by it in very low estimation;[1] whilst the religion of the Sovereign, and of the learned men in general, seems to differ but little from pure Deism. The Emperor *Kien Lung*, in a valedictory address to his subjects on resigning the throne to his son *Kea King*, in 1796, speaks only of THE SUPREME BEING as the object to which his prayers were addressed;[2] but still there are certain ceremonies which are performed at stated periods by all persons in authority, and which may probably have been derived from the religion of Buddha. It was perhaps from the Buddhists, too, that those opinions and practices of the Chinese were derived, which made some persons consider them to be a colony of Egyptians; an hypothesis attacked and completely overturned by M. De Pauw. It is needless to add, that the Chinese themselves knew as little of their imaginary migration from Egypt, as the Egyptian priests in the time of Herodotus and Diodorus did of the existence of China, which they otherwise would have doubtless included among the pretended conquests of Sesostris. Some writers have supposed that Noah in his old age retired to China, and that he was identical with the Emperor *Fohi;* but this is just as little consistent with the Chinese accounts, which say nothing of any flood in the time of Fohi, whom they consider not as the head of a family of eight persons, but as the sovereign of an established monarchy. At what time *Fohi* lived, if he ever lived at all, is very doubtful. One of his successors, *Yao*, is placed by some writers in the year B.C. 2357, by others in 1357: a difference of a thousand years in such a matter sufficiently evinces its total obscurity.

87. From *Yao* to *Ping Vang*, who began to reign

[1] Ta Tsing Leu Lee, Appendix, No. 18. [2] Ibid., App. 1.

Abstract of Chinese History.

B.C. 770, M. De Guignes has given an abstract of the Chinese history, taken principally from the *Shu-king*, a work held in some measure sacred. The inferences which he draws from the whole are striking. "This part of their history," says he, "is entirely destitute of facts, extremely uncertain, and one might say completely null, if it were not for a few moral discourses inserted in it here and there. It plainly demonstrates, that whilst there subsisted in other parts of the world several large empires, and even after several kingdoms had disappeared from the face of the globe, the empire of China, *according to the statements of its own historians*, was of very trifling importance indeed. It was only composed of a few hordes, by no means numerous, living amidst barbarous nations, and moving to one place or another, according as circumstances or the advantages presented by those migrations might dictate: in a word, that this empire, far from having existed, as has been pretended, 3,000 years before Jesus Christ, had not been united together, in a durable manner, above 529 years." M. de Guignes observes, that this inference is to be drawn from the statements, meagre as they for the most part are, of the Chinese writers themselves. In proof of this, we may read what they say of *Ven-Vang*, the first sovereign of the Tcheou dynasty, whose reign is said to have begun B.C. 1122. "This prince and his son *Vou-Vang* reigned over the country round about *Sy-gan-fou*, in the province of *Shen-si*. They did not occupy a very extensive district; for the greater part of what now forms that province, was possessed by barbarians. In general there were no cities, and of small towns and villages there were very few; there were also large tracts of land which have not been brought into culture till of late. China, properly speaking, was not

China. Abstract of Chinese History.

furnished with cities till long after that time; and it was the *Tsins* and the *Hans* who subsequently built them, to keep in subjection the barbarians whom they had conquered." The successor of *Vou-Vang* was named *Ching-Vang:* he consulted *the oracles* to know where he should fix his residence: and the oracle having very wisely determined that a place called *Fong* was the middle of the world, the king went thither, and built a city *in five days.* This was B.C. 1109, and of course the pretended city was little better than a Tartar camp. At that time, ten of the present fifteen provinces were wholly occupied by savages who had never been subjected to any yoke, and the other five were occupied, partly by pastoral tribes, and partly by the inhabitants of a few cities, which, with their neighbouring lands, were dignified with the name of kingdoms. It is not easy to say at what periods, and by what degrees, these petty kingdoms were united so as to form the present extensive empire of China; but it is most certain, that that empire is not now, and never has been, in any other than a low state of civilization. Much has been said of the Chinese astronomy, and Father Du Halde builds confidently upon an eclipse of the sun, said to have been observed by them, B.C. 2155; but it is tolerably certain that this eclipse was the invention of a very recent writer, and that the astronomical knowledge of the Chinese was extremely limited; for when the Jesuits first came among them, they were utterly unable to calculate eclipses, or indeed to make any celestial observations whatever. We may apply to the Chinese what we have said of the Egyptians: if their civilization and power had been so early, it would have been known to other ancient nations. But the bulk of the Chinese nation appears to be of Scythian origin; and the Scythians them-

selves were unknown till about the year B.C. 637, when under the command of their king Madyes, they broke into Media, killed Cyaxares, and advanced with their victorious hordes to the confines of Egypt. This Madyes is by some called Indothyrsus, and seems to be the same person who in the Tartar histories is called Ogus Khan, and is said to have conquered Cathay, or part of China.

China.

Conquests of Madyes.

88. The Chinese themselves place their Emperor *Fohi* in the province of Shen-si, which, as above mentioned, includes the ancient Serica and the country of the Sinæ. Previously to him, indeed, they mention some few other sovereigns, who lived before men were united into regular society, or knew how to build so much as a hut or cottage, or even to strike fire from flints. Nevertheless, these wondrous monarchs were great astronomers and geometricians, and by the advice of their wise counsellors established fairs and markets for the promotion of commerce. Fohi, however, who was a divinely-begotten personage, carried political science a great deal further, for he taught his subjects to live in towns, invented a symbolical mode of writing, and composed, or rather copied in it, a code of laws which he had the good fortune to see inscribed on the back of a dragon-horse, as it rose from the bottom of a lake by the side of which he was walking. He also invented music and dress-making, the custom of sacrificing six different kinds of animals at the solstices, and of distinguishing persons by different names. Moreover, he was the first sovereign who discovered the utility of naming a prime minister, and of establishing mandarins to govern his provinces. All this, it must be owned, was a great deal for one king to accomplish; but then he reigned 115 years, according to some of his biographers; while others

Fohi, his Inventions.

China. — Reign of Fohi.

more sensibly admit, that the exact length of his reign is unknown. The only fact that we can discern with any real sort of distinctness in this monarch's history is, that the Chinese empire, in its first origin, was formed by a union of four tribes, since it is said that this was the number of mandarins, each of whom had a province allotted to him to govern. The succeeding emperors for some time were great inventors in art and science. *Shin Nong*, the successor of Fohi, reigned 140 years, during which time he occupied himself in discovering the practice of physic, the art of making salt from sea-water, and various other useful matters, particularly the construction of ploughs—an art, however, in which he did not show much genius, and to which unfortunately no succeeding monarch has sufficiently attended; for modern travellers observe that the present Chinese plough is the most rude and inefficient instrument that can well be imagined; that the Chinese never plough above four or five inches deep, and seldom so much; and that two-thirds of the land under tillage is cultivated with the spade or the hoe. *Whang Ti*, the third of these early emperors, was no less accomplished than his predecessors. He spoke, say the historians, as soon as he was weaned from the breast. He was elected to the throne at twelve years of age, and soon afterwards discovered the compass! It is unnecessary to pursue the detail of his inventions, and those of his ministers, of whom he had six, little inferior to himself in originality. We must not, however, forget to notice that one of these ministers invented the gamut, and another the art of ringing little bells, a favourite entertainment of the Chinese. Though Whang Ti reigned only a hundred years, yet his discoveries were much more numerous, and evinced a much greater facility of talent than those of both

Shin Nong, his Discoveries.

Whang Ti, his Inventions and Accomplishments.

China.

Re-inventions of Inventions.

his predecessors united. His descendants, eighty-five in number, reigned over China for 2,457 years; in the earlier periods of which time their principal inconvenience arose from the bad practices of certain magicians, who disturbed the order of sacrifices, and frightened the people with spectres and goblins. On the other hand, we find the successive emperors by no means inattentive to the good example of their ancestor, but inventing over again many of the things which he had invented before. Some grave writers employ their time very unnecessarily in controverting these puerilities: for our part, we think it quite sufficient to produce a short sample of them, and to let them speak for themselves.

The Antiquity of the Chinese discussed.

89. The principal arguments, on which the claim of the Chinese to high antiquity as a nation rests, are the following:—

1. That they possess (as asserted) an unbroken series of national annals for many thousand years.

2. That the peculiar form and construction as well of their spoken as written language evince their early separation from the rest of mankind.

3. That their political institutions being founded exclusively on the principle of paternal authority, and attaching, on that principle alone, an extreme sacredness to the person of the Sovereign, without ascribing to him a divine origin, differ from those of every other nation.

4. That the chief distinction of ranks (with exception of the imperial family), being founded on the learning of the individual, has been, from the earliest times, a circumstance distinguishing the Chinese government from every other.

China.

5. That the entire exclusion of mythology from the only established religion, that of the Sovereign (all others being merely tolerated during the Emperor's pleasure), evinces an origin more ancient than that of any monarchy elsewhere known to History.

Annals of the Chinese.

90. These arguments we shall briefly examine: and first as to the Annals.—They may be reduced to three classes, the wholly fabulous, the historico-fabulous, and the properly historical. The first profess to reach from the beginning of time to the reign of the Emperor *Yao;* and the second, from that to the time of *Ping Vang.* These two classes, taken together, no doubt contain some glimmerings of truth: we may perceive in them some vague notion of the first origin of society; we may see wandering tribes like those of North America, induced to settle on the banks of some great river (perhaps the *Hoang-ho*), growing formidable by union; gradually enlarging their dominion; becoming an agricultural people; receiving the first rudiments of civilization, imperfect arts, and awkward, inconvenient letters; but dwarfed in intellect, and arrested in the natural progress toward improvement, by the very institutions which they consider as the acme of human wisdom. The *Tcheou* or *Chew* Dynasty, to which the Emperor *Ping Vang* belonged, reached down to B. C. 240 or 220; since which time there have been eighteen Dynasties, produced partly by internal revolution and partly by foreign conquest. About B. C. 240 or 220, the Dynasty of *Tsin* obtained dominion; that of *Han*, B. C. 202; *Tsin* (2nd) A. D. 255; *Sung*, 240; *Tse*, 480; *Leang*, 502; *Chin*, 557; *Suy*, 590; *Tang*, 619 (five short dynasties from 905 to 960); *Sung* (2nd), 960; *Yuen* (the *Mongol* Tartars), 1280; *Ming*, 1368; and *Ta Tsing* (the *Mantchu* Tartars), from 1664 to the present time. It must

China.

Chinese Dynasties.

not be understood, however, that these Dynasties had the same or anything like the same extent of territory. In the sixth century of our era, a Tartar Dynasty, named the *Wei*, ruled in the northern part of China.[1] In the tenth, the *Leang* Dynasty occupied those provinces,[2] but was expelled in the twelfth by the *Kin*, an illiterate Tartar tribe, the ancestors of the present *Mantchus*.[3] The great *Kublai Khan*, in the thirteenth century, established the Mongol dominion, at first over the northern provinces, and then over the southern; and thus added all China to the immense empire of the Mongol Tartars, which, however, was overturned in less than a century, by the Chinese Dynasty of *Ming;* and the latter, after three centuries, gave way to the Mantchus, the present masters of China. Hence it is clear, that the Chinese empire, far from having stood unshaken for thousands of years, a singular monument of recorded wisdom, can only be traced with historical certainty for about one-and-twenty centuries; during which period it has undergone most violent changes; has been subjected, at different epochs, to the domination of barbarians; and is governed at the present day by a foreign race, differing in habits and language from the great mass of the population.

Antiquity of the spoken Language of China.

91. It is no doubt true that the *spoken* language of China belongs to a class of languages which probably at one time prevailed in all the countries west and south of China up to the very borders of Bengal.[4] On the hypothesis (which seems most consonant with the *literal* sense of the Scriptures) that all mankind originally spoke one common language,[5] this class must have formed a very early and distinct offshoot from the common stock; since its monosyllabic

[1] Langlès, Alph. Mant., p. 18. [2] Ibid., p. 25. [3] Ibid., p. 29.
[4] Marshman, Ch. Gr., p. 151. [5] Genesis, xi., 1.

China.

Antiquity of the written Language of China.

forms place it in contrast to all other known and cultivated systems of speech. This, indeed, renders it probable that the Chinese *race* is very ancient; but it proves nothing as to the antiquity of the empire. The *written* language, though wholly unconnected with the spoken, is also of considerable antiquity; but its real date is extremely obscure. There are no extant manuscripts, which can be proved to be above 700 or 800 years old: and some of the Chinese authors themselves ascribe the invention of block printing (for they have not yet learnt to use moveable types) to the reign of *Ming Tsong*, A. D. 926. Inscriptions on durable substances are found of much earlier date; but these, in proportion to their antiquity, differ considerably from the characters at present in use. Still the very principle on which they are formed seems to show that the art of writing in this manner must have been practised before the inhabitants had any intercourse with nations using an alphabetic system. That principle, it is well known, is to employ a character for a *word* with reference to its *signification*, but without any reference to its *sound*. Hence, the written language of China might be read in English, or any other language, just as the musical notes of Italy can be played by English or any other musicians. If a given character be understood to signify a man, it will equally represent the Chinese word *yin*, the English word *man*, the French *homme*, the Greek ἀνήρ, the Latin *vir*, &c. The Chinese characters agree, in this respect, with the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the Mexican picture-writing, but in other respects differ from them widely. All these modes of expressing the thoughts of the mind may probably have originated in attempts to delineate the objects of sense. To draw an outline of a visible object is an art common to the

most barbarous people, and is stated by *Li Yang Ping*, a Chinese writer (with whom Sir W. Jones and Dr. Marshman agree), to have been the primary source of the Chinese characters. Rude outlines of a given object must be identical, whether the drawings be made in Egypt, Mexico, China, or elsewhere. A savage will represent the sun by a circle, and the moon by a crescent: and so far the Chinese system, at its outset, must necessarily have agreed with others; but time and accidental circumstances soon cause the different systems to diverge. In China, what was once a picture has generally become a mere arbitrary character. The circle which represented the sun has been gradually changed to a parallelogram; and the outline of a man has lost all but two diverging lines, which were originally meant for his legs. Again, in all systems of this kind, the form of a visible object must be used metaphorically to express a quality or act of that object, or an analogous quality or act of the mind; but the analogies which suggest such metaphors are endless: one nation, therefore, contemplate one analogy, and another nation a totally different one. *Swiftness*, for instance, may be typified by a bird, a wing, or an arrow; *strength*, by an arm, a club, &c. And if this be the case with single objects, it is much more so with compounds, when used (according to Dr. Marshman's distinction) either as primitives or as formatives. The Chinese character answering to "man," receives in composition as a primitive 23 elements; and as a formative it is joined with more than 700 characters.[1] The written language of China is, in these respects, to the eye, exactly what the spoken languages of Europe are to the ear. Our spoken word "Man," first represents a visible object, viz., an adult male

[1] Marshman, Gram., p. 47.

China.

Early written Language of China.

of the human species; we apply it, however, by analogy to a male *child*, a male *servant*, a *vessel of war*, &c.: we use it as a verb, signifying to fortify or strengthen, to guard with men, or to furnish with men: and we employ it in compounds, as a Milkman, a Horseman, a Frenchman, a Maneater, Manslaughter, Horsemanship; manhood, manly, manful, manfully, mannish, &c. But other European nations do not always contemplate the same analogies in the formation of their words; the French do not call a ship *un homme de guerre*, nor manslaughter *homme-meurtre*, nor a milkman *un Laithomme;* nor do we translate the French *bonhommie*, goodmanness, nor the German *mannschaft*, manship, nor the Italian *omaggio*, manage. Hence it seems reasonable to believe that the written language of the Chinese was gradually formed from rude picture-writing at an early period of their social existence; that it was peculiarly their own; but that it affords no sufficient indication at what time they were first united together as a nation; more especially, because the signification of the characters appear to have undergone great changes in the course of time. "The characters which are now translated *Emperor*, *Province*, *City*, *Palace*, meant no more in former times than *Chief of a tribe*, *District*, *Camp*, and *House*."[1]

Ancient Institutions of China.

92. The patriarchal form of the Chinese institutions, no doubt concurs with other indications to induce a reasonable belief of their antiquity. It differs widely from the barbarous ferocity of many of the neighbouring Tartarian tribes; and no less so from the Brahminical predominance of a priestly caste based on monstrous superstitions. It could not therefore have been borrowed from either of these models; and it seems to have long preceded the intro-

[1] De Guignes, Dict. Pref.

duction of the sects of *Tao-Tse* and *Fo* from India. We may, therefore, conjecture, that the first settlers, who quitted the roving habits of the mountain tribes for the more quiet and orderly pursuit of agriculture in the low countries, consisted of a few families, each under the guidance of a Father, to whom his children looked up with reverence; a circumstance which would well accord with and explain the mild character ascribed by Pliny and Ammianus to the Seres. Tradition represents the first Emperors to have been elective: and the election would probably fall on one who had been long reverenced as a Parent. This parental authority would impress on the Emperor something like a sacred character, which would be most liable to abuse, and would at length produce on the part of his subjects that slavish submission which the History of China has for several centuries exhibited. Still the universal prevalence of filial affection in all classes of society, and the peculiar claim which the Emperor always asserts to it as the Father of his People,[1] implies in the imperial authority, a simplicity of origin to be found only in very ancient times.

China. First Emperors elective.

93. Until the invasions of the Tartar hordes, there appears to have been no *military* class among the Chinese; and as there was also no established *priesthood*, the *learned* men alone were qualified to form a privileged body. This, however, could not have arisen till long after the formation of the written language; and, therefore, adds nothing to the proofs already considered of the antiquity of the Chinese Empire.

Learned men the only privileged body.

94. The last argument which we have to examine is the absence of any Mythology from the religion of the State.

Religion of the State.

[1] Ta Tsing, L. L., Appendix 1.

China. Religion of the State.

This is indeed a very remarkable circumstance, when compared with the history of India, Egypt, and the other great Empires of the heathen world; but it only tends to show, that until long after the Chinese had attained political organization, either as separate tribes, or as an united kingdom, they had no intercourse with any of those Empires, and were consequently ignorant of their various systems of religion. Nor was it difficult to maintain this state of isolation, at a period when the means of communication between different countries by sea or land were so few; when such vague notions were entertained of geography in general; and when that of China in particular was to Western Asia and to Europe an absolute nonentity.

SCYTHIANS and other Tribes.

95. From China, our view naturally carries us over the continent to the north and west of that empire. Above a thousand years after civilization had begun to spread itself along the coasts of the Mediterranean, and while the great empires of Assyria and Persia were growing up and falling to pieces, the immense region, which reaches from the sea of Okotsk to the British ocean, and from the north of India to the Polar regions, by far the largest compact portion of the habitable world, was either a desert, or only occupied by wandering tribes; of whom, some subsisted by fishing and hunting, and others gradually adopted a rude sort of pastoral life. The most general name of these tribes, in ancient times, was *Scythæ* or SCYTHIANS, whom we are now in the habit of considering as the origin of the Tartars; but there were many others, as the *Getæ* and *Massagetæ*, supposed to be ancestors of the Goths; the *Sauromatæ*, or Sarmatians, of the Sclavonian nations; the *Ugri*, or *Unni*, of the Huns, &c., who were sometimes distinguished

from, but more frequently confounded with, the Scythians. The population of some of these tribes becoming at length redundant, driven by casual famine, or incited by the hope of plunder and conquest, they at different periods, and in various directions, burst forth from their homes, often repelled, but more frequently overrunning and subduing countries richer and more polished than their own. It has pleased some fanciful speculators, in modern times, to discover among these barbarous savages the cradle of all the arts and sciences; and they have in these wild plains erected an Utopian empire of light and splendour, while all the countries known to history, sacred or profane, were lost in gloom. This extravagant notion still less deserves examination, than the pretended antiquity of the empires of China, India, and Egypt. We shall begin, as before, with the earliest accounts on which reliance can reasonably be placed. The Scythians first became known to the Grecian writers by that name in consequence of their invading the territory of Media, and thence overrunning Upper Asia and Syria, as far as the very confines of Egypt. They were afterwards obliged to return, and were finally conquered by Cyaxares, king of the Medes, who at first had opposed their progress without success. The whole duration of their incursion occupied several years, some say not less than twenty-eight; and their final overthrow took place a short time before the eclipse of the sun, which is said to have prevented a battle between the Medes and the Lydians, and which Sir Isaac Newton places B. C. 585; though this date differs from the Grecian accounts, and the eclipse itself is doubted by recent astronomers. About two years prior to the last-mentioned period, the prophet Ezekiel had described "Gog, the land

Scythians.

Tribes on its northern and western confines.

Scythians.

Tribes on its northern and western confines.

of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal,"[1] sometimes using the word Gog, as a noun of multitude, and sometimes Magog, as if he meant to express by either term indifferently the same nation, or by both terms, two tribes of an united race. In prophesying their defeat and repulse, he says, they are "a great company and a mighty army,"[2] —"all of them riding upon horses,"—"all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company, with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords,"[3]—with bows in the left hand and arrows in the right hand,[4]— with "hand-staves," and with "spears."[5] Commentators generally understand by Gog and Magog the Getæ and Massagetæ: and the Prophet's description agrees remarkably with that which Herodotus gives of the Massagetæ, who, he says, "resemble the Scythians both in their food and clothing;"—"they fight on horseback and on foot, and are both ways formidable: they have spears and arrows, and battle-axes (probably the hand-staves of the Bible): their spears, the points of their arrows, and their battle-axes, are made of brass; their helmets, their belts, and their breast-plates, are decorated with gold."[6] These nations, therefore, must have had some skill in metallurgy and other arts; but still they were not a settled people: they lived in waggons (whence one tribe was called *Hamaxobii*), and Herodotus asserts, that the Massagetæ "sowed no grain, but subsisted upon cattle, and upon the fish which the river Araxes abundantly supplied;" and that "milk also constituted a part of their diet."[7] He elsewhere says, the Scythians used mare's milk,[8] so that they

[1] Ezek., xxxviii., 2. [2] Ibid., ver. 15. [3] Ibid., ver. 4.
[4] Ibid., xxxix., 3. [5] Ibid., ver. 9.
[6] Herod., i., 215. [7] Ibid., 216. [8] Ibid., iv., 2.

were perhaps known to Homer, as the Ἱππημόλγοι γλακτοφάγοι (Iliad, xiii., 5.); and some of them, at least, as the "Κιμμερίοι, living in constant darkness" (Odyss., xi., 14.); but of neither people had he any distinct information. Scythians.

96. The accounts given by the Scythians themselves of their origin, plainly showed that in the time of the Grecians they had neither records nor traditions of any antiquity to refer to. Madyes, who led them into Upper Asia, was said to be the grandson of Sagillus, the fourth in succession from Scythes, the ancestor of the whole Scythian nation: and Scythes they represented as the son of Jupiter or Hercules, by a woman who had the body of a serpent. He had two sons, Palos and Napos, who divided his empire. By the former we are perhaps to understand the ancestors of the Polish nation, and by Napos those of the Napitæ, a people mentioned by Pliny. Among the Scythian tribes, as in most distant extremities of the earth, the ancients had placed singular beings, partly human and partly monstrous. In that country were the Oigurs, who probably became the Ogres of our fairy tales. There also were the Pygmies, who fought with the Cranes; which fable has been supposed to relate to a war between the Monguls and some other Tartars. The *Pygmæi* are described as a small but remarkably strong race of men; and it is singular that the same tradition exists to this day in Scotland concerning the *Pechts*, or Picts, whose name may perhaps be of the same origin. The Cranes was a name given to the Massagetæ, who subsisted, as has been seen, partly on fish and partly on hunting; and were, consequently, to be found, like cranes, in the marshes during the summer, and in the woods during the winter. Other Pygmies, who were probably nothing but monkeys, were placed by the ancients in Ethiopia, be- Their own account of their Origin.

Scythians.

cause that also was a country little known, and therefore, to a proverb, fertile in monsters. In the farther Scythia, we find the one-eyed *Arimaspi*, and the *Griphi*, alluded to by Milton, in his description of Satan "half on foot half flying:"—

> "As when a Griphon, through the wilderness,
> With winged course, o'er hill and moory dale,
> Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
> Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
> The guarded gold."

Their numerous Tribes.

97. Pliny, speaking of the Scythians, or people confounded under that name by classic authors in general, justly adds, "Multitudo populorum innumera—nec in aliâ parte major auctorum inconstantia." "The multitude of tribes is innumerable—nor in any other part (of geography) is there a greater inconsistency among authors."[1] In endeavouring to reduce these tribes under some general classification, we may observe that several of those noticed in ancient times have become extinct, and some have never emerged from their ancient barbarism; but from a third portion have arisen many of the great empires and kingdoms known to modern history. These latter tribes may be classed, with reference to their cognate languages, as belonging to the race of Tartars, Sarmatians, Huns, and Goths.

The Tartars.

98. The term TARTAR, or Tattar, though so familiar in modern history, is far from definite. It was originally applicable to a single tribe, but has been since extended to many communities of similar physical appearance and language. The most remarkable of the Eastern branches are

[1] Plin., N. H., vi., 19.

the *Mongols* and *Mantchus*, of which the former for a considerable period obtained the sovereignty both of India and of China, and the latter still governs the Chinese empire. Of their origin they possess none but the most fabulous accounts. Even the Emperor Kien Lung, the most enlightened of the Mantchu sovereigns, asserted the ancestor of his race to be one *Kioro*, miraculously born of a celestial virgin, on the White Mountain, 180 leagues north of Pekin.[1] The most distinguished of the Western branches are the *Osmanlis*, the present occupants of the Turkish throne. They are, however, only a branch of the Turk family. The name *Turcæ* (if it be not a clerical error) is found in Pliny.[2] Gibbon says the name and nation of the Turks were first revealed to Europe, A. D. 525, by an embassy of the Avars to Constantinople. In speaking of their earlier history, however, he appears to have confounded them with some other Tartar tribes. Mr. Davids, whose premature death was so great a loss to Oriental literature, gave a brief but luminous account of the tribes that speak different dialects of the Turk language.[3] The *Ouighur* dialect, spoken between Cashgar and Camoul, appears to have been the first cultivated; but no earlier manuscript of it is known to exist than one of A. D. 1434. In the *Jaghetai* dialect were written the "Institutes of Timur," and the "Memoirs of Baber." Some works have appeared in the *Kabdjak* and *Kirghiz* dialects, but none of these are very old. The most northern tribes, such as the *Yakouts* and *Tchouvaches*, are altogether illiterate, whilst on the other hand the *Osmanlis* have cultivated their language to a high degree of refinement. Still even by them no great

[1] Langlès, Alph. Mantch., p. 15. [2] Plin., N. H., vi., 7.
[3] Davids' Turkish Grammar, Prel. Disc., p. xxvii.—xlix.

Scythians. — Tartars.

light can have been thrown on ancient history; since they derive their name and existence as a nation from Osman, a Chief of the Oghuzian Tartars, who invaded Bithynia, A. D. 1299.[1]

The SARMATIANS.

99. Of the SARMATIANS, called in Greek Σαυρομάται, Herodotus relates a fabulous origin. They seem to have been different from the Scythians, properly so called, and to have comprehended several distinct tribes. "According to the various accidents of peace and war, of alliance or conquest" (says Gibbon), "the Sarmatians were sometimes confined to the banks of the Tanais: and they sometimes spread themselves over the immense plains which lie between the Vistula and the Volga."[2] In the time of Ovid, a tribe of them dwelt along the coast of the Euxine, and are supposed to have been the same who about seventy years afterwards were settled on the banks of the Pathissus or Tibiscus.[3] It is generally understood that the Sauromatæ were the stock from which the Sclavonian nations descended: Gibbon, however, does not allude to this origin, but says somewhat vaguely—"the wild people who dwelt or wandered in the plains of Russia, Lithuania, and Poland, might be reduced, in the age of Justinian, under the two great families of the Bulgarians and the Sclavonians."[4] The former he seems to consider as descended from the Huns, the latter from the Tartars; but modern research distinguishes from both of these the Sclavonian race, which is seen, by the affinities of language, to comprehend the Russians, Poles, Lusatians, Bohemians, Dalmatians, Servians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Carniolans, Wallachians, &c.

Their Origin and Locality.

[1] Davids' Turkish Grammar, Prel. Disc., p. xxvi.
[2] Gibbon, c. xviii. [3] Plin., N. H., iv., 25. [4] Gibbon, c. xlii.

Scythians. HUNS.

100. The HUNS, who have given name to the modern kingdom of Hungary, appear by the same test of language to differ from all these, and to be allied in origin to the Finnish tribes, although from these they have been widely separated by events which History is at present unable to trace. The similarity of name has made various authors consider the *Hyoung-nou*, who about B. C. 200 rendered the Chinese their tributaries, to be identical with the more modern Huns;[1] but it is now satisfactorily shown that the former were of Turkish origin,[2] and consequently differed both in language and features from the latter. We therefore know nothing certain of the history of the Huns, until the reign of the Emperor Valens, when they threatened Rome.[3]

GOTHS.

101. The GOTHS, who seem to have been comprehended by ancient writers under the name of Scythians, were evidently distinct in language from the tribes above enumerated, and became the source of nations which have acted, and are still acting, a most conspicuous part in the civilization of mankind. Of the name *Goth*, Wachter observes: "Hujus nominis tanta est obscuritas quanta celebritas,"—"of this name the obscurity is as great as the celebrity." Of the various etymologies which he notices, the most probable is that derived from the language of the Goths themselves, who called each other *Goth*, that is, good; as in old English and Scottish the master of the house is called the *Goodman:* or (as Grotius suggests) they may have been called *Gothi* (good) by their neighbours, on account of their hospitality, as the inhospitable tribes were called *Quadi* (bad); for the Dutch word *kwaad* still signifies bad,

[1] Gibbon, c. xxvi. [2] Davids' Gr. Tur., ix.
[3] Gibbon, iv., 350.

Scythians. — Gothic Tribes.

or wicked. We find in Suidas the term Γότθοι, applied to them; and it is commonly thought that they were the Γέται of Herodotus and *Getæ* of the Roman writers. These people are first noticed as resisting Darius, on his invasion of Scythia, B. C. 508.[1] The *Teutoni*, evidently belonging to the Gothic race, are afterwards heard of as joining with the Cimbri to invade Italy (B. C. 102), but the fullest account of their habits and manners is that given by Tacitus in his well-known treatise "De Moribus Germanorum;" for the denomination *Germani* (which probably signified *War-men*) was an appellation given to the Gothic tribes who inhabited the country, thence called by us "Germany." The great Gothic family has two main branches, the German and Scandinavian. "The German, or Teutonic tribes (says the learned Dr. Bosworth) may, according to the nature of their language, be separated into two divisions, the Low German and the High German, between which may be placed the Francic."[2] From the former are derived the present English, Dutch, and the German as spoken in Prussia, Hanover, Brunswick, &c.; from the latter the German, as spoken in Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Baden, &c.: the Francic supplies the Gothic element in the French language. The Scandinavian branch is still very distinguishable in the languages which originated with it, viz.: the Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish. Besides these main branches, which founded nations in the north of Europe, there were others which proceeded to the south, as the Ostrogoths and Lombards (Eastern Goths and Longbeards) to Italy; the Visigoths (Western Goths) to Spain and Portugal. In all these countries the Gothic is still the predominant race, but it has

[1] Herod., iv., 93. [2] Bosworth, Orig. of English, &c., p. 13.

received much admixture; and though the basis of the language is generally Gothic, it has everywhere received a tincture, more or less marked, of Greek and Roman. Scythians.

102. The religious opinions of the Scythians have not been clearly explained. According to Herodotus and other authors, they worshipped many of the same gods and goddesses as the Greeks, but under other names, as we have before shown. The Getæ had a peculiar deity called *Zamolxis*, or Zalmoxis. Some pretend that this last-mentioned personage was a mortal. He was, say they, a Geta by nation, the slave of Pythagoras, whom he accompanied into Egypt; and afterwards, returning to his native land, he civilized his countrymen. Herodotus, however, makes him live before Pythagoras;[1] so that he was possibly a Buddhist from India, or perhaps the name of Zamolxis was given to Buddha himself. It is most probable that various tribes received their idols from different sources: some, therefore, might have been of Phœnician origin, derived through the colonists at Colchis; but there is certainly good ground to believe that many came from India. We have seen that the Buddhists had communicated their doctrines to the neighbouring nations, at least as early as the sixth or seventh century before Christ. Hence, not only is the Sanscrit mythology to be found under various modifications from the Ganges eastward to China, and northward to Tibet; but among the Mongul Tartars, subject to the Russian empire, are traditions of the cosmogony abounding with terms evidently Sanscrit. It is not unlikely, that the celebrated *Odin*, or *Woden*, was identical with Zamolxis; for the people who came from the neighbourhood of the Euxine sea to the shores of the Baltic, brought with them the wor- Religious opinions of the Scythians.

[1] Herod., iv., 96.

Scythians. Their Religion.

ship of Woden, and were therefore said by their descendants to have been led by that deity. It is recorded, that the ancient Getæ consigned the souls of the deceased to Zamolxis, and so did the Scandinavians to Odin, in words to this effect, "Odin receive thee! mayest thou be with Odin." That Odin was considered the same as Mercury by the Roman authors, is well known; and the coincidence of *Boodha War* with *Mercurii dies*, and with *Woden's day*, cannot be accidental; more especially as it is only part of a systematic division of time (namely, the division into weeks), which in the whole, and in all its parts, is perfectly accordant.

Their Sacrifices.

The barbarous Scythians, indeed, disregarded those mild doctrines of Buddha which forbade all sanguinary sacrifices—for many tribes even practised human sacrifices; and yet if we rightly consider this point, we shall perceive that shocking as it is, it is a step towards the humanizing of savages; for the mere brute man listens only to his ferocious passions and horrid appetites, and slays and *devours* all the enemies he can conquer; but the priest, persuading him to select only the best and bravest as sacrifices to his protecting deity, and promising him that after death he shall be rewarded by quaffing ale with Odin, in Valhalla, from the skulls of the victims, thereby in fact preserves numberless lives, and puts an end to the cannibalism which has justly been looked on as the last degradation of human nature. The existence of human sacrifices among these savage tribes is no proof that their other notions of religion were not derived from the Buddhists, although one of the marked distinctions of these latter from the Brahmins was an abhorrence of the sacrifice of animals; for we see that Christianity itself, when planted among savages, is too apt to be mixed up with their old idolatrous rites: and the doctrines of

Buddha, before they reached the savages of Denmark and Sweden, may have gone through numerous degradations, passing from one race to another, over wild and extensive regions, and during whole ages of barbarism. Scythians.

103. As to the stories which are related of Woden, it cannot be expected that we should enter into a minute detail of them. He was, say the Gothic writers, a king of the Asæ, who dwelt at *Asgard*, between the Euxine and the Caspian seas, where in fact there was anciently a city called by Strabo *Aspurgia*, the metropolis of a province denominated *Asia*. Woden foreseeing, by the art of magic, in which he particularly excelled, that he and his posterity should reign for many ages in the northern parts of the world, set off on his expedition, and fortunately conquered all the kingdoms that lay in his way until he reached Sweden, where (captivated perhaps with the genial warmth of the climate) he fixed his abode, and dying there, was worshipped by his followers as a god. His course does not appear to have been very direct; for he first subdued all the country from the north of the Euxine to the Baltic, then embarking, he went by sea to the north of Germany, and there made himself master of Saxony, Westphalia, and Franconia; and afterwards returning, took possession of Jutland, from whence he crossed over to Sweden. All that can be collected from this incredible tale is, that the same Scythian tribes, or at least some priests and teachers of the same doctrines, spread their rites and customs, at successive periods, through all the countries here named, and that they originally came from near the Caspian. The date of Woden's expedition is fixed by the Danish writers near 1100 years before the Christian era: most modern writers, however, bring it down to B. C. 66, when Pompey defeated Woden. His Exploits.

Scythians. — Exploits of Woden.

Mithridates in Upper Armenia; but as we do not believe in the existence of Woden as an individual, neither do we think that the time or circumstances of that event at all correspond with the notion of any such expedition. Mithridates was the most learned, the most polished, and the most magnificent sovereign of his day; and those who had been accustomed to the splendour and elegance of his court, who had viewed his statues of Minerva, Mars, and Apollo, of pure gold and exquisite workmanship; his own statue eight cubits high, of the same metal; his two thousand cups of onyx, set in gold—and all the other marks of wealth and power, of taste and voluptuousness, which he constantly displayed—could have had little appetite for the bleak and miserable life of shivering savages in Sweden.

History of the Scythians doubtful before the Tenth Century.

104. Existing authorities then afford us very little credible history of the Scythian nations before they embraced Christianity; except in so far as they may have come into contact with the Greeks and Romans. The Danish history, which begins with one *Dan*, B. C. 1050, and the Swedish, which sets out from B. C. 2000, might, from this circumstance alone, be accounted fabulous; even if they were not loaded, as they are, with giants, dragons, and the other concomitants of their old idolatrous superstitions. In the course of the tenth and eleventh centuries *after* Christ, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, and Poland, became Christian. Before that time they had no *means* of history, but the songs of their scalds or bards, and the sacred mysterious letters called *Runic*, which latter they used in their spells and enchantments, but whether they ever employed them for the purpose of recording events is matter of doubt. No books written in that character exist, nor are any preserved in translations. Some inscriptions on stone have been found, which

Scythians.

Connections of different Tribes.

are supposed to be Runic; but they afford no historical information of any earlier period. As to our Saxon ancestors, who also claimed descent from Woden, their chronology differed extremely from that of their Danish brethren. Hengist, who came to Britain, A. D. 449, pretended to be only the great-grandson of this divine hero, who must therefore have lived above 1300 years later than by the Danish account. It does not, however, appear that either Hengist or the Danes were any great arithmeticians: and as no author of common sense of the present day would think of writing the history of the American tribes for a single century from their own traditions; so *that* is by no means to be called History, which is recorded from the dreams of the Scandinavian scalds, or built on some indistinct traditions of these Saxon freebooters. There are two principal modes of tracing the connections of nations where credible records fail; one is by a comparison of their physical conformation, the other by their language. The descriptive portrait of Attila, the formidable chief of the Huns, surnamed "The Scourge of God," as drawn by contemporary writers, about A. D. 450, proves that he was of the same race as the present Calmucks: and Sir W. Jones assigns strong reasons to believe that the pure *Hindi*, or aboriginal language of India, was of an origin totally different from that of the *Sanscrit*. The comparison of language has recently proved that the traditions relative to a cosmogony, which exist among the Mongol Tartars subject to the Russian empire, abound with Sanscrit terms. Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, with some confidence, that the same idolatrous system which prevailed in India, was communicated at least as early as the seventh century before Christ, to the neighbouring nations; and thence gradually spread to the shores of the

Spread of Indian Idolatry in Scythia.

Scythians. northern Pacific ocean on the one side, and on the other to those of the Baltic, though tinged, at every stage of its progress, by the remains of more ancient and barbarous superstitions.

CELTS. 105. In conformity with general custom, we distinguish the Celtic nations from the Scythian. The languages called Celtic, in modern times, are usually distinguished into two main dialects, as spoken respectively by the Cymry and the Gael. To the former belong the Welsh, the Armorican, and the now extinct Cornish; to the latter the Erse or Irish, and the Gaelic or Highland Scotch. It is supposed that the Celtic tribes were among the first that spread from Asia to the West of Europe, preceded, if at all, by the Basque tribes only; that they were followed by the Goths; and that the Sarmatian or Sclavonic Tribes formed a later stream of population diverging more to the North-east; but these are at best only probable conjectures, and relate to periods long anterior to any contemporaneous history. The appellation of the *Cymry* no doubt resembles that of the *Cimmerians* and *Cimbri;* but the identity of the people bearing these different names is by no means proved. We first hear of Cimmerians from Homer; but they are a fabulous people, whose country lies beyond the bounds of the Ocean; covered with perpetual night; and (as it should seem) the abode of departed spirits.[1] The earliest historical notice of them is by Herodotus, from whom it is to be collected that they originally dwelt on the North of the Euxine near the Don; from whence, being driven by the Scythians about B.C. 650, they invaded Asia Minor;[2] but about B. C. 520, were expelled by Alyattes king of Lydia.[3]

Their Origin and Migrations.

[1] Homer, Odyss., xi., 14. [2] Herod., i., 15. [3] Ibid., 16.

Diodorus Siculus suggests that they may be the same people as the Cimbri, who, in conjunction with the Teutons, carried on the *Cimbric* War, B. C. 109;[1] but this is merely inferred from the similarity of name, and seems by no means probable from the local distance of the different tribes; more especially as Pliny, about a century later, mentions Cimmerians near their original situation,[2] and speaks of the *Cimbri* as a German people living to the north of the Rhine.[3] Be this as it may, we have no written records either of Cimbri or Cimmerians, both of whom appear to have been illiterate barbarians. The name of *Celt* appears first under the form of Κελται, a nation or tribe said by Herodotus to dwell in the westernmost parts of Europe, near the sources of the Danube.[4] In the time of Tarquinius Priscus, the Celtæ occupied a third part of Gaul;[5] and Diodorus Siculus confines the term Κελτικη to Gaul.[6] From his account of Britain, however, there is little doubt but that the inhabitants of that island agreed with the Celts of the neighbouring continent in race, and probably also in language, with partial differences of dialect. These authorities are far from confirming the speculation of one class of antiquaries, who would persuade us that all Europe was originally Celtic; and that the Celtic language is the groundwork of all tongues, not excepting even the Hebrew. They are equally inconsistent with the theories of those who hold that the Celts were a race alike inferior in body and mind to the brave and enlightened Goths, before whom they always retreated, until they were shut up in the mountainous districts where the Celtic dialects are still spoken. History teaches us that they fought as resolutely

Celts.

Derivation of the Name.

[1] Diod., l. v., p. 214. [2] Plin., N. H., vi., 6. [3] Ibid., iv., 28.
[4] Herod., iv., 49. [5] Liv., Hist., v., 34. [6] Diod., iv., p. 214.

Celts. — Their Priesthood and Idolatry.

as other barbarous nations against their Roman invaders. They had priests, called Druids, and poets or traditionary historians, called Bards; but their religious ceremonies were bloody and horrible, offering up to their imaginary deities human victims, together with their other sacrifices. Such was the state of these nations about, or very shortly before, the birth of Christ: prior to which period it is vain to seek for any distinct traces of their history. Yet, that the British idolatry had a connection with that of Egypt and Greece, is clear from various statements: and hence we are led to conclude, that it was immediately derived from the Phœnicians, who in very early ages traded to Cornwall for tin; and whose idolatry was a cognate branch of the same superstition which first worshipped the great lights of heaven, as visible types of the Deity; and afterwards, by an imperceptible transition, came to consider them as ruling intelligencies themselves, and as gods, differing in character, rank, and power. Hence the monuments called druidical, which yet remain in various parts of Europe, and particularly the stupendous one, called by the Saxons Stonehenge, are of a circular form, and the entrance, and what is supposed to be the grand altar, lie reciprocally east and west. The Druids, or Priests, who formed here, as in the countries which we have before noticed, an hereditary class, probably introduced agriculture and metallurgy; both of which were practised in Britain prior to the Roman invasion. In fine, we trace the Celts, or Gauls, mixing with other nations in distant parts of Europe; as the Celto-Scythians, on the borders of Asia; the Celt-Iberians, in the north of Spain; and the Gallo-Grecians in Greece: but the slight notices that we have of them throw little light on any points of History really important.

106. As we began our historical survey with Egypt, because the Sacred Scriptures furnish us with the earliest accounts of its ancient state as a kingdom; so we now revert, and for a similar reason, to the BABYLONIAN and ASSYRIAN Empires, which in all historical records are much blended together. These empires, whether distinct or united, possessed in very early times two vast cities—Babylon on the Euphrates, and Nineveh on the Tigris. The first is usually considered to be the same with Babel, mentioned in the 10th and 11th chapters of Genesis, and indeed is so translated by the Septuagint. This is not the place to enter into any argument on the personal identity of Nimrod, or Nebrod, whether intended by the sacred writer to mean an individual or a tribe; nor shall we dispute on the different expositions which have been given of the confusion of lip or of language. Suffice it to observe, that in the days of Moses, both Babylon and Nineveh existed, and were referred to as well-known cities. It appears that Amraphel, king of Shinar (the Babylonian territory), was, in the time of Abraham, a sort of tributary or vassal to the king of Elam, or Persia: after which we hear no more of the Babylonians or Assyrians in Jewish history, till the year B.C. 771; when *Pul*, king of Assyria, invaded Samaria, and exacted from Menahem a tribute of 1,000 talents of silver. It is to be observed, that the early date here given to a political establishment in the land of Shinar, is rendered probable by the nature of the soil and climate, and by the facilities which these afforded for building; the one supplying brick and cement, and the other hardening them by mere exposure to the air. With respect to the fertility of the soil, it is remarkable that Herodotus compares it to that

BABYLONIAN and ASSYRIAN Empires.

Antiquity of Babylon and Nineveh.

Assyria.

of Egypt, the seat, as we have seen, of another of the most ancient monarchies in the world.

Localities of Babylon and Nineveh.

107. When we turn from the Mosaic accounts to those drawn from Babylonian or Assyrian sources we are at once encountered by the most extravagant fables. Before examining these, it may be proper to take a short survey of the localities to which they relate. Beyond the south-eastern coast of the Euxine, or Black Sea, lie the vast mountain ranges of Armenia, from which, besides numerous other streams, proceed two great rivers the Tigris and Euphrates. These after a long devious course, unite, and fall together into the Persian Gulf. On the former, which is the eastern stream, about 400 miles from the sea, stood the ancient city of Nineveh; on the latter, or western stream, 200 miles nearer the coast, stood the no-less celebrated city of Babylon. The country on the Tigris was called Assyria—that on the Euphrates Babylonia; and the large intervening space was commonly termed Mesopotamia, or "between the Rivers:" and this, together with Babylonia, seems to be meant in Scripture by the Land of Shinar. To the north-east of Assyria were the Medes, and to the west of Babylonia the Arabians. It seems that the classical writers in general had no very accurate information on this subject; which indeed is not to be wondered at, when we consider how very inadequate were the means which Geography then possessed, to understand the relative position of different countries. According to the best modern maps, the Euphrates rises in Mount Baris not far from Ararat, and the Tigris, at a considerable distance, in Mount Niphates; but it was anciently a prevalent opinion that they sprang from the same fountain; and to this Lucan alludes:—

Assyria.

" Quaque caput rapido tollit, cum Tigride, magnus
Euphrates, quos non diversis fontibus edit
Persis, et incertum, tellus si misceat amnes,
Quod potiùs sit nomen æquis ; sed sparsus in agros,
Fertilis Euphrates Phariæ vice fungitur undæ :
At Tigrim subito tellus absorbet hiatu ;
Occultosque tegit cursus, rursusque renatum
Fonte novo flumen pelagi non abnegat undis." [1]

" Where, with swift Tigris, great Euphrates rears
His head, both sprung from the same Persian fount,
And as the waters mix, 'tis hard to say
Which name each stream should bear ; but widely spreads
Euphrates, fertile as Egyptian Nile ;
Whilst Tigris sinks, in sudden caverns lost,
And hides his secret course, but springs again
To light, and yields his waters to the sea."

The most extraordinary error, however, is that of Diodorus Siculus (usually a careful and able writer), who states Nineveh to be on the Euphrates ; an assertion contrary to the whole course of ancient history, and conclusively refuted by the late curious and interesting discoveries of Messrs. Layard and Botta.

Babylon anterior to Nineveh.

108. According to the scriptural account, it would seem that Babylon was the first great city built after the Deluge ; and that it was founded by Nimrod, a great-grandson of Noah, or at all events by a tribe of his descendants bearing his name. Berosus agrees in the fact that there was a general Deluge ; but he assumes that Babylon existed previously as an empire under ten successive monarchs, whose reigns amounted all together to 120 *Saroi*. What measure of time a *Saros* was is very uncertain. According to Eusebius, it was intended by Berosus for a period of 3,600 years, which would give an antediluvian monarchy of 432,000 years ; whilst other writers reduce the Saros to 223 lunar

[1] Lucan, Phars., iii., 256.

Assyria. Babylon.

synodical months, which would afford for that monarchy little more that 2,160 years, that is to say, nearly the same as recent chronologists allow for the whole antediluvian period. Whether the long or the short period was intended is of little import to real history. The Saros of both kinds was probably used by the Chaldean priests merely as an astronomical cycle for the calculation of eclipses, past or future; and Berosus may have adopted the longer measure as most suitable to the "speciosa miracula" which he had to narrate; for he goes on to state, that during the period in question several monsters, partly human, and partly beasts or fishes, appeared, particularly one named *Oan* or *Oannes*, half-man and half-fish, who taught mankind arts and letters.[1] Possibly this notion of sea-monsters may have suggested itself to the Chaldean priests, by the discovery of some such fossil remains as have thrown light on geology in our own day. Diodorus ascribes the foundation of Babylon to Semiramis, the widow of Ninus, king of Nineveh,[2] and consequently supposes it to be of high antiquity, though subsequent in date to the last-mentioned city. Herodotus does not speak of its origin; but mentions Semiramis as its queen, who lived only six generations (say 198 years) before its capture by Cyrus (B.C. 538).[3] Both authors, however, agree in the vast magnitude and splendor of that superb city, which the Prophet designates as "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency."[4] The early history of the Babylonian empire is a mere blank. Alexander Polyhistor, indeed, cites from Berosus an extravagant enumeration of 86 kings, who he says occupied 33,091 years from the

[1] Euseb., Chron., i., 21.
[2] Diod., ii., 68.
[3] Herod., i., 184.
[4] Isaiah, xiii., 19.

deluge to the first subversion of the Babylonian monarchy by the Medes. The Medes (he adds) held the dominion for 224 years, and were succeeded by 11 kings for a period defective in the manuscripts; these by Chaldeans for 458 years, then by Arabians for 245 years, and then by Chaldeans again for 526 years, to *Pul*, mentioned in Scripture as reigning in Nineveh, B.C. 771. The greater part of this statement is manifestly false, and the rest seems to be without any solid foundation: nor do we learn anything positive of Babylonia till B.C. 747, when Belesis, the Chaldean, called in Scripture Baladan, and elsewhere Nabonassar, appears to have been a tributary of Sardanapalus, king of Assyria, and to have successfully conspired against him with Arbaces, the Mede, another tributary.[1] In consequence Sardanapalus was destroyed, Babylon became once more independent, Arbaces ruled in Nineveh, and these events formed an era in history, called the Era of Nabonassar.

Assyria. — Babylon.

109. The origin of Nineveh is involved in much uncertainty, whether we consult sacred or profane history. The scriptural text relating to it is susceptible of two interpretations, according as the word "Asshur" is taken for the name of a person or a place. On the first hypothesis, it would seem that *Asshur* went out of the land of Shinar, and built Nineveh;[2] on the second, that Nimrod went out of that land *into Assyria*, and built Nineveh,[3] and in either case, the order of the verses seems to imply that Nineveh was built after Babel. Most modern commentators, too, understand that the names Nimrod and Asshur, when used as signifying persons, mean tribes or families, rather than individuals, just as Israel is often put for the Israelites, the de-

Nineveh.

[1] Diod., ii., 78. [2] Genesis, x., 11, text. [3] Ibid., margin.

Assyria. Nineveh.

scendants of Israel—*ex. gr.*, "Then came Amalek and fought with *Israel.*"[1] To the supposition that the word Asshur is here used to signify a person rather than a country, it may fairly be objected, that no such person had been previously named. The chapter in question takes the descendants of the three sons of Noah in regular order; first, those of Japhet, from verse 2 to 5; then those of Ham, from verse 6 to 20; and, lastly, those of Shem, from verse 21 to 31. Among these last, indeed, there is a son of Shem called Asshur; but he is one generation earlier than Nimrod, and it would be extraordinary that he should be mentioned in the 11th verse among the descendants of Ham, and after Nimrod; more especially as in the 20th verse, it is expressly said, with reference to all the persons named in the fourteen preceding verses, "*these* are the sons of Ham." Upon the whole, therefore, the other interpretation seems more probable; according to which it may be understood, that Nimrod, or some of his descendants, went from the land of Shinar, in which they had previously laid the foundations of Babylon, and entered the land of Assyria, and there founded Nineveh. Nor would it be extraordinary that *Asshur* should be a name given to a country as well as to a person, since it is said to be equivalent to the Latin *felix*, "fortunate," which we know was applied to the governor before whom St. Paul was accused, and also to the country called Arabia Felix.

Classical names of Nineveh.

110. Nineveh is called, both by Herodotus and Diodorus, Νῖνος; and the latter says, that it was founded by Ninus, king of Assyria, who gave it his own name.[2] According to Diodorus, there were before this monarch several other Assyrian kings, whose names and acts are not recorded in

[1] Exod., xvii. 8.

[2] Diod., ii. 65.

history;[1] after him there was a regular succession of monarchs for thirty reigns, occupying 1400 years, or more, to the time of Sardanapalus:[2] and as we have seen that that king was destroyed, B.C. 747, it follows that, according to Diodorus, the reign of Ninus began about B.C. 2147, that is, about 2100 years before this historian recorded the event. The date of his composition, therefore, would detract much from its weight as historical evidence, even if the narrative were far more distinct and consistent than it really is. But of the whole 1400 years, we learn nothing from him except a wild romance of the first two reigns. When Ninus ascended the throne, neither Nineveh nor Babylon, according to this account, was built; and his dominions did not extend to the territory afterwards styled Babylonia. He soon, however, made himself master of it; then he compelled the king of Bactria to become his feudatory; and next conquered *and crucified* the king of the Medes. "Hereupon (says the historian), a vehement desire seized him" to conquer all Asia from the Don to the Nile. In pursuance of this noble motive (if we can believe Ctesias, the author vouched by Diodorus), he overran Egypt, Phœnicia, Cœlesyria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia, Caria, Phrygia, Mysia, Lydia, the Troad, and coasts of the Hellespont and Propontis, Bithynia, Cappadocia, the barbarous nations bordering on Pontus, those on the Tanais, the Cadusians, Hyrcanians, Drancians, Derbicians, Carmanians, Romnians, Borcanians, Parthians, Persians, Susianans, Caspianans, and many nations of inferior note; and his army consisted of 170,000 foot, 210,000 cavalry, and nearly 600,000 scythed chariots. This statement presents a curious contrast to the scriptural history of Abraham, who

Assyria.

Exploits of Ninus.

Abraham.

[1] Diod., ii., 63.

[2] Ibid., ii., 81.

Assyria.

Conflicting accounts respecting Ninus.

was born, according to Eusebius, in the 43rd year of Ninus's reign; for it may be remembered, that the Patriarch with only "*three hundred and eighteen* armed servants" utterly defeated five Kings (or petty chieftains called in that age Kings), among whom was the King of Shinar, a country said to have been so lately conquered by Ninus. That there was once a prince called *Nin*, or with the Greek or Latin termination Νῖνος, or Ninus, seems not improbable; and he may perhaps have given name to Nineveh, but who he was, of what race, or descent, is altogether uncertain. Some suppose him to be identical with Asshur, others with Nimrod, and others that he was a son of Nimrod; but the Grecian writers who never heard of Nimrod, will have him to be the son of Belus; and of Belus, Diodorus Siculus gives two different accounts: first, that he was a son of Neptune and Libya, and led a colony from Egypt to Babylon; and, secondly, that he was the Babylonian Jupiter, to whom the celebrated tower in

The Tower of Babel.

Babylon was dedicated. Now Belus is a Greek termination added to Bel, or Baal, which, among the Syrians and Assyrians, simply signified *The Lord*, and must have originally meant the one true God, the Lord of all things. The tower, according to Herodotus, consisted of eight stories, in the highest of which no image was placed; and, therefore, in the mysteries known only to the Chaldeans, or sacerdotal order, it was probably dedicated to the spiritual Creator, whilst the seven lower stories were respectively dedicated to the seven great visible objects of his power, the sun and moon, and five planets. The tower itself, we are told by Diodorus, was used by the Chaldeans for astronomical purposes, to which they soon joined astrology, and thus confounded true with false science, as they had before

confounded true with false religion. As Belus, therefore, in a great degree, was an imaginary being, so was his son Ninus, whose traditionary exploits are to be set down to the account partly of the national vanity of the Assyrians, and partly of the shameless exaggeration of their historians. Assyria

111. We may no less confidently pass a like judgment on the history of Semiramis, the queen who is stated to have succeeded Ninus in the throne, and to have built Babylon, a city equal or superior to Nineveh in magnitude and extent; and as we find this lady worshipped as the celestial Venus, we may conclude that the outline of her story is purely mythological. This is the more easily to be believed, because there are no facts connecting her pretended exploits with anything else, either in the Babylonian or any other history. She is said, after spreading the bounds of her empire to an immense extent, to have marched against the king of India, with a force of three million infantry, half a million cavalry, a hundred thousand chariots, &c., &c.; yet her conquests resembled those of the Egyptian Sesostris—they vanished and were obliterated like a dream. The Indian chronicles do not even ascribe to any one of their kings the glory of repulsing this tremendous invasion; nor do we find any of the natural consequences of such a greatness as is attributed to Semiramis, occurring to her immediate successors. Of these, Eusebius gives the names of 34, concluding with Sardanapalus,[1] but records none of their deeds. On the other hand, if we take the date of Abraham's birth (according to Bishop Russell) at B.C. 2113, the defeat of Amraphel will have happened B.C. 2030, and it will follow that a period of 1283 years elapsed from that event to the overthrow of Sardanapalus, Semiramis.

[1] Euseb., Ancher., ii., 15.

Assyria.

Sardanapalus.

B.C. 747, a space of time which we cannot but deem amply sufficient for the growth of a petty chieftainship into a mighty empire, when we reflect that only one hundred years after Mahomet fled for his life from Mecca, with a single companion, "the arms and the reign of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean, over Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain;"[1] that in a century also the British dominions in India grew from a few small townships on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel to a compact empire, bounded only by the Brahmaputra and the Indus, the Himalayan mountains, and the Isle of Ceylon; and that within living memory, the United States of America, from a provincial dependency of the British Crown, have become a first-rate power of the civilized world, possessing a population of twenty millions, and stretching on the Atlantic from the Bay of Fundy to the Gulf of Florida, and on the Pacific from Oregon to California. It is clear that Sardanapalus was overthrown by the combined forces of Arbaces and Belesis; but the tales of his voluptuous debaucheries, and of his voluntarily burning himself with his wives, his concubines, and his treasures, may be the exaggeration of a hostile chronicler.

Astronomical Observations of the Chaldeans.

112. Shortly after this period, the light of history becomes tolerably clear. Ptolemy has handed down a series of astronomical observations made by the Chaldeans, beginning with the era of Nabonassar. It is pretended, that Callisthenes sent to Alexander the Great a series of similar observations, going back 1907 years; but either this story is altogether unfounded, or the pretended observations were themselves a fabrication; for even in the time of Nabonassar, the calculations were so incorrect as to occasion an error of

[1] Gibbon, c. li.

twenty-five days in the first century. Berosus, in order to support his fabulous chronology, pretends that Nabonassar burnt all the records prior to his reign. It will be remembered that a similar tale was invented in China, for a similar purpose. That the Assyrian kings, who about this time resided at Nineveh, were very powerful, there can be no doubt, since one of them, Sennacherib, B. C. 710, lost an immense army on occasion of his expedition against Jerusalem. About a century after this event, the famous Nebuchadnezzar became the greatest sovereign of his time; and enlarged and beautified Babylon, on a plan which, had it been fully executed, would have made that city the most magnificent ever seen on the face of the earth.

Assyria.

Sennacherib.

Nebuchadnezzar.

113. It may be hoped that the extraordinary discoveries which have been recently made, of the inscriptions and sculptures of these nations, will enable us to speak with more confidence, than has hitherto been possible, of their early history. The persevering researches of Messrs. Grotefend, Lassen, and Rawlinson, have gone far towards deciphering those remarkable characters, at first called arrow-headed and afterwards cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, which for many ages had been deemed utterly inexplicable. And the remarkable sculptures which Messrs. Layard and Botta have disinterred from the very site of ancient Nineveh, and brought to Europe, inscribed as many of them are with those characters, open a large field for historical speculation. The inscriptions hitherto made public do not go higher than the time of Darius Hystaspes; but Major Rawlinson has intimated, that some of those, in what has been called the palace of Nimrod, relate to a King whose name he reads *Assar-adan-Pal;* and considers to be a Sardanapalus of earlier date than the one of whom we have hitherto

Recent Researches at Nineveh.

Assyria.

Extent and Magnificence of Nineveh.

spoken.[1] And, indeed, Callisthenes, an ancient author on the Persian history, says, there were two sovereigns of that name, the one brave and active, the other luxurious and effeminate, whose monument he speaks of as existing at Nineveh, and whom he calls the son of Anakyndaraxes,[2] though Eusebius calls his predecessor Acrazanes.[3] The Major mentions several other names of Kings prior and subsequent to the first Sardanapalus, but none of those names agree with the list in Eusebius. Much of this must for the present be taken as conjectural; certain however it is, that, at the time of which we are speaking, the wealth and splendour of Nineveh were immense, and its advance in the arts considerable; but its idolatry was gross, and differed in the names, and probably in the attributes, of the Deities, from any of the systems to which we have hitherto adverted. Diodorus describes the city as a parallelogram, the boundary of which was in length 480 stadia,[4] perhaps Asiatic stadia, which would amount to above 38 English miles, an estimate fully borne out by the book of Jonah, where it is said to be "an exceeding great city of three days' journey"[5]— "wherein were more than fourscore thousand persons that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand."[6] The Prophet Nahum, too, says, that its merchants were multiplied above the stars of heaven; its crowned nobles were as numerous as the locusts, and its captains as the great grasshoppers.[7] The sculptures now deposited in the British Museum show a style of art far superior to the first attempts of the Grecians; but the

[1] Journ. R. Asiat. Soc., vol. xii., p. 2; 421.
[2] Suidas, voc. Σαρδαναπάλους. [3] Euseb., Ancher., ii., 16.
[4] Diod., ii., 65. [5] Jonah, iii., 3. [6] Ibid., iv., 11.
[7] Nahum, iii., 16, 17.

figures of the Deities, or Genii, are a mixture of the human and the imaginary, with inscriptions not yet deciphered, and symbolical devices, of mysterious and uncertain signification. Assyria.

114. Between Assyria and India arose another great empire, that of the MEDES and PERSIANS, of which the present kingdom of Persia is a comparatively feeble remnant. If we look to scriptural history for an account of these people, we find mention made of Chedorlaomer, whose defeat by Abraham we have before noticed. He is entitled in our translation "the King of Elam;"[1] and in the Vulgate "Rex Elamitarum;" but what was the exact locality or extent of his dominion is by no means clear. In passages relating to events long subsequent, we find Elam clearly signifying Persia. Thus Isaiah (B. C. 714) prophetically calling on the Persians and Medes to overturn the empire of Babylon, which was effected nearly two hundred years afterwards by Cyrus the Persian, says, "Go up, O *Elam!* besiege, O Media!"[2] But Chedorlaomer, who, with four allied or tributary Kings, was defeated by Abraham's small band of "trained servants," could have reigned over no very large territory. The extension and contraction of geographical names of places, in different ages, is one of the most disturbing circumstances to the mind, in forming historical notions and judgments. It is probable that the Elam of Chedorlaomer was no more than the country known in later times by the name of *Elymais*, which is watered by the Choaspes (a river falling into the Tigris and Euphrates near their junction), and forms a part of Susiana, the modern

The MEDES and PERSIANS.

Scripture Account.

[1] Genesis, xiv., 1.

[2] Isaiah, xxi., 2.

Media and Persia.

Kohistan. The name of this petty district may have been gradually applied to territories more and more extensive, until it served to designate the empire of the mighty Ahasuerus who "reigned from India to Ethiopia over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces;"[1] just as a few Angles from Sleswick (A. D. 527)[2] gave to a small portion of Britain the name of Angleland, now extended to all England. Be this as it may, the Jewish Scriptures make no mention of a powerful Persian or Median Monarchy till that of Cyrus, and, indeed (with the exception of Chedorlaomer's defeat), nothing applying to either of those nations, appears in the sacred volume from the time of Abraham to that of Isaiah, a space, according to the Septuagint, of above 1300 years.

Geography of these countries.

115. Nor do we collect much that can be relied on from the accounts given by Grecian writers, either of Medes or Persians, during the greater part of this long interval. We have mentioned the doubt as to the position of Persia; and the probability that this name was given at different times to territories varying greatly in extent. The same may be said of Media. According to Herodotus it was divided from the Lydian empire only by the Halys, a river of Asia Minor, rising in Cappadocia and falling into the Euxine Sea;[3] whilst Pliny and later writers place it to the eastward of the Tigris, and bordering on the Caspian.[4] The Medes, according to Herodotus were in ancient times called *Arii*,[5] which may possibly have some relation to the term *Iran*, hereafter to be explained; but the origin assigned both by Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus to the name of Medes is a mere fable, and the same may be said of the name of Persians. The Medes at the earliest

[1] Esther, i. 1. [2] Turner, i., 298. [3] Herod., i., 72.
[4] Plin., N. H., vi., 17. [5] Herod., vii., 72.

time of which we have any historical trace of them, appear to have been subjected to the Assyrian Empire: Ninus, as we have seen, is said by Diodorus to have conquered them; but as Ninus is the Greek name for Nineveh, this tradition may well be taken to mean that the Medes were, at a very early period, under the dominion of the Assyrian Monarchs who reigned in Nineveh. This agrees with another tradition preserved by Herodotus, that after the Assyrians had been in possession of Upper Asia for 520 years, the Medes revolted from their authority.[1] The revolt here intended is probably that of Arbaces the Mede, of which we have before spoken. Herodotus, however, nowhere mentions that prince, but says that *Deioces*, who owed his elevation to the free choice of his countrymen, first collected the different tribes of the Medes into one nation.[2] It is not easy to reconcile these different statements; but, upon the whole, it would seem that the Medes, having thrown off the Assyrian yoke, remained for some time under the guidance of Arbaces or his successors, but afterwards fell into disputes among themselves, until Deioces found means to unite them, to establish a government, and to found a Dynasty. Eusebius places Arbaces 113 years earlier than Deioces, the commencement of whose reign he fixes at B.C. 707. The first date is doubtless too early; but from the latter the Median succession is regularly traced through *Phraortes* (B.C. 653), and *Cyaxares* I. (B.C. 629), to *Astyages* (B.C. 597), after which, though the transition to the Persian line is differently related by different writers, the probability seems to be that Cyrus, being the son of Cambyses, a Persian Prince, and being, on his mother's side, grandson of Astyages, and nephew of Cyaxares II., and, moreover, having rendered

Media and Persia. — Arbaces.

Probable formation of the Median Empire.

Cyrus.

[1] Herod, i., 96. [2] Ibid., 101.

Media and Persia. —

essential services to his uncle in different wars, succeeded, by a sort of hereditary right to both thrones; whence we find that "the Medes and Persians" are spoken of in Scripture as one united people. The conquests of Cyrus and his successors, Cambyses and Darius the son of Hystaspes, raised this monarchy to a splendid height. The

Ahasuerus.

last-mentioned Sovereign is believed to be the Ahasuerus of Scripture; and the vast extent of dominion assigned to him in the book of Esther, is even inferior to that of his son Xerxes, as described by Herodotus. It must be owned, indeed, that the Grecian historian oversteps all bounds of

Xerxes.

probability, when he says, "that Xerxes led to Sepius and Thermopylæ an army of *five million two hundred and eighty-three thousand two hundred and twenty men.*[1] Doubtless the invader of Greece had collected from his subject, dependent, and allied states, an immense force; but it is physically impossible that they should have been more than five times as numerous as that vast host which in the early part of this century was collected from all parts of Europe, and led to perish in the snows of Russia. To provision and support five millions of men would be impracticable with the best-devised commissariat of modern times, much more so with the defective arrangements of that early age.

Persian Historical Authorities.

116. When we turn to the native authorities we find nothing that can be called historical for many ages. Sir John Malcolm says, that the Persians themselves possess no documents that merit the name of History, previous to the commencement of the Sassanide Dynasty, under *Ardeshir Babegan*, A. D. 223. The Persian language itself has undergone at least three great changes, besides idiomatic

[1] Herod., vii., 186.

varieties. The *Zend*, the most ancient form, is supposed to have prevailed till about the time of Arbaces, or perhaps later. This was succeeded by the *Pehlevi*, which reached down to the Mohammedan conquest A. D. 641, and is preserved more or less purely in the books of the Guebres or Parsees, and lastly the modern *Persian*, which contains a great mixture of Arabic. It is certain that the Persian monarchs kept archives at and before the time of Ahasuerus.[1] These were written in certain characters which Diodorus calls Syrian, meaning Assyrian,[2] and were probably those called of late cuneiform. They may possibly have furnished Ctesias with some of the exaggerated statements copied from him by Diodorus; and they may also have supplied Herodotus with his extravagant estimate of the forces of Xerxes. The original writings, however, being now lost, their contents can be only matter of conjecture. Sir W. Jones and others have assumed the existence, in very early ages, of a great empire called *Iran*, including both Persia and India; but this opinion is totally destitute of historical foundation. The name of *Iran* has indeed been given in modern times to Persia exclusively; but it seems to have originally signified only the East, the seat of light, physical and intellectual, opposed to *Turan* (probably the North), the seat of darkness, ignorance, and evil. If we divide the native accounts of the early state of Persia into the fabulous, historico-fabulous, and historical, we may place in the first class the incoherent fictions preceding the time of Arbaces. These cannot well be reduced to any orderly system; but it may be observed that they contain traces of successive religious doctrines. The first describe an age of innocence, occupied by the *Iyans*, o pure beings, and ex-

Media and Persia. —

Royal Archives.

[1] Esther, ii., 23.

[2] Diod., ii., 71.

Media and Persia.

Early Persian Dynasties.

tended over an *Aspar*, that is a thousand millions of years. At the end of this period (according to the *Dabistan*, a work of recent composition) appeared *Mahabad*, the first man, or first king and author of civilization. To him are attributed the distinctions (as in India) of four castes and the worship of a sole God, to which, however, *Mahabali*, one of his successors, added that of the stars, as a Heavenly Host attendant on the Almighty. The dynasty of Mahabad was succeeded by that of *Pishdad*, the legislator, a title given to *Kiumers* and his successors, who taught the worship of fire, as a symbol of the Divinity. The books still extant in the Zend language begin with accounts of the Pishdadian dynasty, as does the *Shah Nameh* or "Book of Kings," a work of the Mohamedan poet FERDOSI, composed in Persian about A. D. 1000, by order of the sultan Mahmoud, and said to be founded on Pehlevi documents. This poem opens with the reign of *Kiumers*, the first king of Persia, whose son *Seâmuck* being killed by the demon *Rhemen*, the Persian monarch sends his troops under the command of his grandson *Hoshung* to encounter the demons. *Hoshung*, being victorious, succeeds to the throne on the death of his grandfather, reigns for forty years over seven kingdoms, invents agriculture, metallurgy, and weaving, and introduces the fire worship. It has been questioned who Hoshung was; but as it is admitted that the most ancient Persian traditions represent Kiumers not only as the first king but the first man, so Hoshung, the inventor of so many arts, and the founder of a new religion, can be nothing but the personification of a body of men who in a long course of time succeeded in civilizing more barbarous tribes. The barbarians so civilized are in most early traditions described as demons, or monsters; hence nothing is to be inferred from

The Shah Nameh of Ferdosi.

the story of Hoshung but that the fire-worshippers, or Magi, taught arts as well as religion to the savages in their vicinity, and gradually extended the dominion of their own tribe over six others. As the Assyrian idolatry seems to have been less gross than the Egyptian, so the Persian fire worship was certainly more refined than the Assyrian devotion to idols. It more distinctly recognized the ONE GOD, whose existence, we have seen, was the recondite doctrine of all the learned polytheists; but it recognized the truth under a veil of falsehood; it degraded spirit to body, the immaterial and eternal to the perishable and material. This doctrine is popularly attributed to Zerduscht, or Zoroaster, as its first teacher; but who he was or when he lived it is quite impossible to discover, some making him contemporary with Darius Hystaspes, some identical with Moses, and others with Abraham. His religion and philosophy are supposed to be set forth in the Zend Avesta, which seems to agree with the most refined part of the doctrines of the ancient Magi, as held long prior to the time of Herodotus. That writer says, "I speak from my own knowledge, when I say that the Persians have among them neither statues, temples, nor altars; the use of which they censure as impious and as a gross violation of reason, probably because, in opposition to the Greeks, they do not believe that the gods partake of our human nature:"[1] and Cicero says, that, at the instigation of the Magi, Xerxes burnt the temples of the Greeks, because they confined, within walls, the Deities who ought to be free from every kind of restraint, and whose temple and residence is the universe itself.[2] The worship of fire, as an emblem of the Divinity, was, however, extended so as to comprehend the sun, and moon, and the firmament; to

Media and Persia.

Early Persian Theology.

Zerduscht.

The Zend Avesta.

[1] Herod., i., 131.

[2] Cicero, de Legib., ii., 10.

Media and Persia.

Introduction of Letters.

which Herodotus, perhaps incorrectly, adds earth, water, and the winds. A singular circumstance occurs in the fabulous history of *Tahmuraz*, the son of Hoshung. This prince conquered the demons, but spared them on condition of their teaching him letters. The explanation which we would offer of this fable is, that the art of alphabetic writing was introduced into Persia long subsequent to the fire worship, the original superstition of that country, and that it probably came from the frontier tribes of India, some of whom the Persians may have in earlier times subdued; nor was this the only custom derived from the same source. *Jemshid*, the fabulous son of Tahmuraz, is said to have reigned 700 years, to have attained great wealth and splendour by aid of the demons, and to have divided his people into four classes, answering to the four original *castes* of the Brahmins. In the latter part of his reign he oppressed the Magi, and, as a punishment for his impieties, he was dethroned by *Zohak*, or the dragon. Hence we may conclude that the dynasty, typified by Jemshid, was that which was overthrown by the Assyrian domination; and that prior to its fall it was weakened by intestine divisions between the followers of the pure Magian doctrines, and the sects which had been introduced, together with letters and the division of castes, from India; these circumstances, therefore, occurred prior to the year B.C. 1300, if Herodotus be near the truth, in assigning to the Assyrian dominion 520 years, ending with the revolt of Arbaces, which we consider to have happened B.C. 747. Here begins the historico-fabulous period. The hero, who first threw off the Assyrian yoke, cannot be mistaken. He is called by Diodorus, Arbaces; by Velleius Paterculus, Pharnaces; and is indisputably the Feridoun of Persian legends, whose

Conflicts of the Persians with the Assyrians.

exploits, his changing himself into a dragon, &c., &c., form the subject of the three books of the Shah Nameh. After this period it becomes easy even to identify individual princes, as *Cai-Cobad* with the Arsæus of Ctesias, and the Deioces of Herodotus; Cai Caus, with Cyaxares; and, finally, Khosrou, with Cyrus; with whom we enter on the period of pure History. Media and Persia.

117. Between Egypt and Assyria were situated several countries which partook of the idolatry of both. Diodorus observes, and his remark has been in a great measure applicable to the state of things from his time to the present period, that the ARABIANS were never wholly subjected to any foreign yoke. In the Persian and other histories, we sometimes hear of a king of Arabia; but there is no credible evidence that the inhabitants of that country were ever more united than they are at the present moment. Among the more ancient of these tribes were the Amalekites, whom some assert to have been the Shepherd Kings of Egypt. All the Arabians, however, agreed not only in the worship of the sun, moon, and five planets, but also of the fixed stars, above all which, however, they recognised the ONE GOD. They had images of inferior beings, which they considered to be angels or demigods; but as it does not appear that they ever personified any of these divinities as mortals, so their early history is devoid of those fabulous dynasties which, as we have seen in the pretended records of many other nations, were nothing more than astronomical facts allegorised. Adjoining to the Arabians were the SYRIANS, and beyond these, on the sea-coast, were the PHŒNICIANS. Both these nations very early entered into the idolatrous system, of which the foundation was

The ARABIANS.

Religion of the Arabians.

The SYRIANS and PHŒNICIANS.

Phœnicia.

common to the Egyptians and Assyrians, but the great number of their deities, and diversity of their rites, appear to have been derived principally from Egypt. Diodorus mentions a tradition that the Phœnicians, who first brought alphabetic writing into Greece, were not the inventors of it, but learnt the use of letters from the Syrians; and as the latter people were often confounded with the Israelites, it is possible that the Phœnician letters were really derived from Canaan, though the more common opinion among ancient writers is that they came from Egypt. Certain it is that, in a very early age, the Phœnicians had made great advances in all the arts, and distinguished themselves exceedingly in navigation and commerce. Tyre, which is supposed to have been less ancient than Sidon, was, nevertheless, a great and distinguished kingdom when Solomon ascended the throne of Israel, B.C. 1014. How long it had been growing up to that importance, cannot now be traced. The Phœnician records, no longer extant, gave it a duration of 30,000 years: but the fabulous histories of Greece represent it to have been built by Agenor, an Egyptian, whom some chronologers place B.C. 1497, and whose son Cadmus first introduced letters into Greece. Agenor, says Apollodorus, was a son of Neptune, by Libya, daughter of Epaphus, an Egyptian king; that is, he came by sea to Phœnicia, from that part of Egypt which bordered on Libya. Josephus, indeed, places the building of Tyre much later; viz., only 240 years before the building of Solomon's Temple, or B.C. 1245, being about the time which some assign to the expedition of Jason and the Argonauts to Colchis. However the fact may be as to the building of Tyre, it is tolerably certain that the arrival of the Egyptian settlers in Phœnicia, must have been much

Antiquity and Magnificence of Tyre.

earlier than the latter date, since, according to all history, the Phœnicians had long previously sent out colonies into many parts of Greece, and other coasts of the Mediterranean; and the Argonautic expedition itself was, no doubt, the origin of the Phœnician colony, which, in the time of Herodotus, existed at Colchis, in the Euxine Sea. Phœnicia.

118. This naturally leads us to the origin of those splendid states which have left behind them imperishable monuments of their taste and genius, the ancient Grecians. It is admitted by all their writers that the original inhabitants of Greece were mere savages, feeding on acorns, living in caves, and clothing themselves in skins of beasts. Of what race or descent these were it is impossible now to discover; and if we give them the name of Celts, it is rather in deference to the authors who have supposed the Celtic race to have once spread over the greater part of Europe, than from any distinct evidence that Celtic tribes ever occupied Greece. The first known races that appear to have made any advance towards civilization in that country were the *Pelasgi,* and next to these the *Hellenes;* but whether or not these two were descended from a common stock, or even spoke dialects of a common language, are questions much disputed among the learned. On the signification of the name Pelasgi, too, etymologists widely differ. Perhaps, as these tribes appear to have wandered from country to country *by sea,* the word Πέλαγος, the sea, which is at least as old as Homer, may afford a reasonable etymon of this designation; for the natives of any country seeing foreigners land from the sea, would naturally call them Sea-Men. Of the Pelasgi, at least under that name, all distinct

The Greeks. — Original Inhabitants of Greece.

The Pelasgi and Hellenes.

Greece.

trace was lost before the period of credible history, and the same fate awaited the tribes called *Caucones, Dryopes, Aones,* &c. The Hellenes were more successful; they became ancestors of the communities which rendered the Grecian name so famous. They seem to have received either directly from Egypt, or indirectly through Phœnicia, the rudiments of arts and science, and therewith of a general system of idolatry. The first colony of adventurers is said to have been commanded by Cecrops, and to have consisted of Saites from Egypt, who established themselves at Athens. This event is calculated to have taken place B.C. 1582, or, according to others, 1556. Even then the persecution of the Israelites in Egypt had begun, and it was still going on when Lelex is said to have brought another colony of Egyptians into the Peloponnesus. The introduction of the important art of alphabetic writing into Greece is universally attributed to Cadmus, who, though of Egyptian origin, came directly from Phœnicia. This circumstance is commonly placed two years before the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, but it may have been shortly after it; and if so, the Mosaic writings may be supposed to have laid the very foundations of Grecian literature. At all events, the near coincidence of time between the first appearance of letters in Greece, and the first known use of them in writing the Sacred Scriptures, is a fact no less curious than interesting. No sooner were letters introduced than there followed poets,—Linus, Orpheus, and Musæus,—if indeed these were truly historical persons, and not mere personifications of the power of verse over the most uncultivated minds. A very marked distinction appears between the process of civilization which took place in Greece, and that which was pursued in Egypt and in India. In both the

Immigration under Cecrops.

Cadmus brings Letters into Greece.

Early Greek Poets.

latter, the priests formed an hereditary and sacred caste; in the former they appear to have been mere individuals, or at most small fraternities. Another marked distinction was, that the civilizers and civilized, the colonists and natives in Greece, were all speedily amalgamated together, and formed one common nation, instead of constituting, as in India, a military and a labouring class for ever distinct. It is beyond a doubt that the foreign leaders brought with them their Jove, Apollo, Hercules, and all the train of the greater gods and goddesses, some of which, by their names, seem to have been imported from Egypt, and others from Phœnicia. Nevertheless they represented them all as having lived in Greece: they found there a high mountain for them to dwell on, and introduced them as persons of the drama into all their tales of the heroic times. The coincidence of many of these tales with those which are to this day current in India, seem to point to a common origin, wheresoever that may have been placed. The Grecians, no doubt, amplified and enriched the foreign fables with all the stores of taste and genius; but it was long before they could persuade themselves to "stoop to truth." Homer, who is supposed to have written nearly 700 years after the arrival of Cecrops in Greece, takes the liberty of introducing gods and goddesses into his tale, without any authority but his own imagination; and it was four or five centuries later before Hecatæus or Herodotus wrote. Hence we must not be surprised to find many Joves, Apollos, and Herculeses appearing throughout what is called the Heroic Age. It would be but a waste of time to endeavour to identify the different Deities of Greece according to the supposed times of their pretended exploits. We may only observe, that if the arrival of Ceres at Athens, to teach the culture

Greece.

Amalgamation of Colonists and Natives.

Incorporation of Colonial with Native Idolatry.

Greece.

of corn, be fixed at B.C. 1383, it is probably because the solemn worship of that goddess, in the Eleusinian mysteries, was then first established there. It will be needless, and indeed we might almost say it would be endless, to go through all the fables of the heroic age, which seem to have very early occasioned the expression of *Græcia mendax*. Suffice it to say, that the kingdoms of Argos and Attica are almost the only ones asserted, and that with very little probability, to have been founded before the arrival of the Egyptian colonies. Argos is said to have been a monarchy governed for no less than 543 years by the Inachidæ (who, of course, could neither read nor write, nor keep any account of time), before the arrival of Danaus, who, with his fifty daughters, set aside the descendants of Inachus without the least ceremony. The same improbability applies to the domination of Ogyges, the great Bœotian sovereign of Attica, in whose time happened a deluge, which laid that country waste for 200 years! The family of Lelex, it is stated, continued to reign in Lacedæmon for 400 years, when they were deposed by the Heraclidæ. Meanwhile we have the destruction of Argos by Perseus, of Thebes by the Seven famous Chiefs, and of Troy by the combined forces of all the Grecian kings, previously to which History is little better than conjecture.

Early kingdoms of Argos and Attica.

Early Legends.

Italy indebted to Greece for the Arts and Sciences.

119. As Greece received from Egypt and Phœnicia the first rudiments of art and science, so ITALY received its first humanising influence from foreign settlers, chiefly Grecian. The earliest known inhabitants are called by Cato, and other writers, *Aborigines*, a term which, as Micali observes, must not be understood to signify a distinct race, native or foreign, but to apply to the tribes of Italy who were in the

lowest state of civilization.[1] These are said to have been first instructed in the simpler arts of social life by Janus or Saturnus. Virgil ascribes the merit to the latter, and identifies him with the Greek Kronos, the father of Jove— Italy.

" Hæc nemora indigenæ Fauni Nymphæque tenebant,
Gensque virûm truncis et duro robore nata,
Queis neque mos neque cultus erat, nec jungere tauros,
Aut componere opes norant, aut parcere parto ;
Sed rami atque asper victu venatus alebat.
Primus ab æthereo venit Saturnus Olympo,
Arma Jovis fugiens, et regnis exul ademptis :
Is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
Composuit, legesque dedit."——[2]

" These woods the native Fauns and Nymphs possess'd,
And Men as stubborn as their parent oaks :
Manners or culture they had none, nor knew
To yoke the steer, or reap the fruits of earth,
Or store them up for use ; but their rough food
Was acorns, and the produce of the chase.
When Saturn, flying from the bolts of Jove,
An exile from Olympus, hither came ;
He from their mountain haunts th' indocile race
Collected, and arranged, and gave them laws."

Traditions respecting Janus.

Another account states that Janus arrived in Italy about, or shortly after the time, that Ceres arrived at Athens ; and a third tradition, as preserved by Macrobius, is, that Janus was a native sovereign of Italy, who received and hospitably entertained Saturn when the latter arrived on his shores *by sea*. Janus was, in turn, instructed by his guest in agriculture ; and in memory of that event, he impressed on the reverse of his coins a *Ship*. This (says Macrobius) is the reason why boys, when they toss up a

[1] Micali, L'Italia avanti i Romani, i., 7.
[2] Virgil, Æn., viii., 314.

Italy.

piece of money, cry "*heads or ships.*"[1] The truth, of which these various traditions present traces, may be reasonably conjectured to be this:—*Dianus*, the God of *Dies*, the Day, was the Sun, whom the Osci, or Ausonii, or other barbarous tribes, first worshipped, abbreviating his name to *Janus;* and, by his arrival in Italy, is meant the worship paid to him, at a period of obscure antiquity, on the hill called from that circumstance the Janiculum. At a subsequent period, certain foreigners arrived *by sea* (probably Pelasgi), who taught the barbarous natives agriculture, and instructed them to pay adoration to the God of the Earth, who was called *Saturnus* (from *sat, satur* implying in the Oscan language abundance), but was afterwards confounded with the Grecian *Kronos*, to whom Virgil alludes. The

The Siculi.

Siculi, who eventually gave name to Sicily, are said to have had their first seat on the banks of the Tiber, where they were sufficiently powerful (according to Dionysius of Halicarnassus), to carry on long wars against the *Umbri*.[2] The

The Sicani, Siculi, and other tribes.

latter, however, at last prevailed, and the Siculi passed over to Sicily, where they are represented to have expelled from their seats the Sicani, an Iberian tribe, who had previously arrived there from Spain. Such is the statement of Thucydides;[3] but it is more probable that the Sicani and Siculi were one people, the terminations *ani* and *uli* being quite equivalent. It is unnecessary here to enter into the various questions of identity or diversity between the different nations or tribes of the Opici, Osci, Ausonii, Aurunci, Volsci, Marsi, Latini, Lucani, &c ; but it may be proper to observe, that prior to the eminence obtained by the Romans, there were two main centres of that refine-

[1] Macrob., Sat., i., 7. [2] Dion. Hal., i., 22.
[3] Thucyd., vi., 1.

ment which gradually spread over the Peninsula. These were the countries called *Magna Græcia* in the south, and *Etruria* in the middle of Italy. Italy.

120. The Hellenic Grecians sent forth their first colonies to Asia Minor, and it was not till some centuries afterwards, probably about the time of the alleged foundation of Rome, that is, in the course of the eighth century before Christ, that other adventurers directed their course to Sicily, and the south-eastern part of Italy, thence called *Magna Græcia*, where they built, or seized from the natives, the towns of Metapontus, Corton, Sybaris, Tarentum, Locri, and others. The governments in all these were republican. They rapidly acquired great wealth and splendour. It is said, though no doubt with much exaggeration, that Sybaris alone had, at one time, 25 cities under its command, and was able to bring into the field an army of 300,000 men. Against such forces it was vain for the native Apuli, Lucani, Samnites, or Bruttii to contend. The new Greek cities, in a short time, sent out colonies themselves to neighbouring lands; and the whole coast, from Tarentum on the Adriatic, to Cumæ near Naples, was studded with Grecian cities. Hither, also, resorted eminent legislators and philosophers from the mother-country. Sybaris became famous for the laws of Charondas, and Locri for those of Zaleucus; but the chief glory of *Magna Græcia* was the school of Pythagoras at Corton, which would have contributed not only to the intellectual and moral elevation of individual man, but to the establishment of wise political institutions, had it not unfortunately been overthrown in conflicts, which, to this day, remain involved in much mystery, and are even uncertain in point of time, though

Magna Græcia.

Prosperity of Magna Græcia.

Italy.

commonly supposed to have occurred about B.C. 500. So slight was then the communication between countries, that *Magna Græcia*, though occupying nearly the whole Neapolitan territory, contributed but little to the instruction or improvement of the rest of Italy.

The Tyrrhenians.

121. "No nation" (says Niebuhr) "was so well known, or of so much importance to the Greeks, whether in war or commerce, as the Tyrrhenians, whose greatness and naval power, when the Greeks began to visit their seas, had already reached their bloom, and continued to flourish for centuries after."[1] Herodotus derives this nation from Lydia, and the objection of Niebuhr to this origin is by no means conclusive. He asserts that the Lydians and Tyrrhenians differed totally in language, customs, and religion.[2] But of this there is no very satisfactory proof. Certain it is (and this Niebuhr himself admits), that the Tyrrhenians spoke a language altogether different from those of the other Italian nations. This indeed has been questioned by a recent writer, who, with much ingenuity, endeavours to show that the inscriptions hitherto discovered are merely mutilated Italian; but the great work of Lanzi, and the concurrent expressions of all ancient authors, prove that the Tyrrhenian or Etruscan language was altogether different from the Latin or Greek, except in a few words avowedly adopted as foreign by those languages respectively. As to the customs and religion of the Tyrrhenians, recent discoveries evidently show traces of oriental origin in both. The different names given to the same people by various authors, no doubt contribute to produce great confusion and uncertainty in their history: they are called Raseni, Turseni, Tyrrheni, Tusci, Etrusci, &c.; but it seems highly probable

Language, Customs, and Religion of the Tyrrhenians.

[1] Niebuhr, vol. i., c. 5. [2] Ibid.

Italy.

that they brought with them from some eastern country arts and religious doctrines before unknown in the part of Italy where they settled; and that they very soon took the lead of all the neighbouring nations in civilization and power. They not only founded many cities, but united them all in one confederacy under a common head, which tended greatly to secure and perpetuate their power. "Sic fortis Etruria crevit" ("Thus mighty Etruria waxed great"), says Virgil.[1] On which Servius remarks, that in the heroic times nearly all Italy was possessed by the Tyrrhenians.[2] They founded cities as far to the south as Capua; and Polybius, speaking of their exploits in the neighbourhood of that city and of Nola, observes, "that whatever we read in history concerning the ancient dynasties and fortune of this people, must be all referred not to the country which they possessed in his time, but to the plains (which he had just before described as watered by the Po), and whose fertility and wide extent afforded them the means of becoming great and powerful."[3] They were no less remarkable for their power by sea than by land, and it is probable that their voyages brought them into communication with the Asiatic nations, and even with Egypt. They had evidently a strongly-constituted, if not hereditary priesthood, and as they seem to have copied some of the rudest and most ancient Greek characters, it is probable that they very early began to record their religious rites, which were afterwards believed (as in Egypt), to have been dictated by Divinities. The skill of these Priests in all the arts of divination was implicitly credited, not only by their own people, but by the surrounding nations, and

Extent of the Etruscan dominions.

The Etruscan Priesthood.

[1] Virg., Geor., ii., 533.

[2] Servius, *in loc.*

[3] Polyb., l. ii., c. 2.

Italy.

was no doubt founded on much physical knowledge, especially of the effects of electricity. Hence Cicero, in a very remarkable passage, says, "Etruria most skilfully observed the strokes of lightning, and explained what was indicated by the like prodigies and portents: wherefore, in the time of our ancestors, when that empire was still flourishing, our senate most wisely decreed that six sons of our chief families should be sent to each Etrurian city, to be there instructed, in order that so important a science might not be diverted, by the weakness of men, from the interests of religion, to a mere venal trade."[1] Among the more recondite doctrines of the Etruscans was that of the fated duration of this globe for 12,000 years, after which (as they thought), the planets would return to their former place—a notion evidently derived from some imperfect astronomical observation.

The Etruscan Priesthood.

The Romans.

122. The history of ROME, such as it has been popularly received down to our own times, opens with a fable, but without such a mixture of mythological fiction as abounds in the wild traditions of the East. No extant writer on Roman antiquities pretends to give the city an existence of thousands of years. Its foundation is pretty distinctly assigned to about the middle of the eighth century before the Christian era; but the meagreness and obscurity of the annals for more than three hundred years from that period are candidly confessed by Livy, the ablest, as well as the most elegant of Roman historians.[2] By the light of very vague traditions, and with an obvious view to gratify the Julian family, who pretended to be descended from Julus, the son of Æneas, a son of Venus, Livy briefly noticed the

[1] Cicero, de Divin., i., 41.

[2] Liv., Hist., vi., 1.

alleged arrival of Æneas from Troy, and a succession of twelve kings, his lineal descendants, until we come to Romulus, whose exposure when an infant by his royal grandfather, and preservation by a she-wolf, is a manifest copy of a like tale told long before by Herodotus of the infant Cyrus. Romulus, who is said to have founded and given name to Rome, was also said to be a son of Mars; but his divine origin was treated by Cicero as a politic fiction. Thus Scipio is introduced saying,—"Concedamus famæ hominum, præsertim non inveteratæ solùm, sed etiam sapienter a majoribus proditæ, ut benè meriti de rebus communibus genere etiam putarentur, non solùm esse ingenio divino."—"Let us pay deference to tradition, especially when it is not only of long standing, but wisely conceived by our ancestors, in order that they who have deserved well of the commonweal should be regarded as divine, not only in intellect, but in race."[1] That the city named *Roma*, was so called after a man named *Romulus*, is just as absurd a supposition as that the city named *London* was so called after a man named *Londoner;* for the Latin termination *ulus*, and the English termination *er*, have in these words an identical effect, and both agree with the Latin termination *anus*. *Romulus* or *Romanus* means simply a man of *Roma*, and consequently Roma must have existed before any person could be called either Romanus or Romulus. The traditionary Romulus, however, is a mere symbol, or representative of a tribe who occupied a fortified hill, which they (being perhaps of Pelasgic or Greek origin) called Ῥώμη, Roma, the "strength," or "stronghold." Another tribe (of Latin or Sabine origin) were called *Quirini* or *Quirites*, from the Sabine word *quiris*, a spear, they being

Rome.

Fabulous story of Romulus.

Romulus a symbolic name.

[1] Cicero, Repub., ii., 2.

Rome.

Union of the Romani and Quirites.

good spearmen, and worshipping *Mamers*, or *Mars*, their God of War, under the symbol of a Spear. After some contests, the Romans and Sabines are represented as having agreed that their respective chiefs should each have a certain portion of authority, which Livy calls "infidam societatem regni;"[1] but the whole soon devolved on Romulus, the son of Mars, that is to say, the Roman tribe having agreed to recognize as their patron Deity, and the originator of their race, the same God from whom the Sabines claimed descent, the two tribes entirely coalesced, and took indifferently the names of Romani and Quirites, by which latter name, as well as the former, the Romans designated themselves, even in the time of the empire. Thus Horace:—

> "Quis te redonavit *Quiritem*
> Diis patriis?"[2]

So Juvenal, later:—

> "———— Non possum ferre, *Quirites*,
> Græcam urbem."[3]

Numa.

Numa, the second traditionary king of Rome, is no less symbolical than his predecessor. He represents the Tuscan element in the ancient population of the city, at least so far as relates to the religious ceremonies, which were for the most part of Etruscan origin, until Grecian and other foreign Deities were at later periods introduced among the superstitions of Rome. At some obscure period it is probable that not only the religious institutions of Etruria, but also its civil authority, were predominant in Rome; but into that litigated question it is needless here to enter:

[1] Liv., Hist., i., 14.

[2] "Who has given thee back a Roman to thy native Gods?" Horat., Od., ii., 7.

[3] "I cannot, O Quirites, endure a Grecian city," Juv., Sat., iii., 60.

much less shall we attempt to investigate the palpably fabulous records of the Latin monarchy, which is said to have been established 614 years before the building of Rome, and claims as its founder the god Janus, of whom we have before spoken. Rome.

123. The great rival of Rome was CARTHAGE, in regard to whose history the Romans appear to have acted with a perfidy utterly disgraceful to them as a nation. All their own writers dealt in perpetual declamations against the *Punica fides;* but they took care to deprive posterity of all means of appreciating the justice or injustice of that complaint. It is now impossible to ascertain the time when Carthage was founded; but it was probably anterior to the destruction of Troy, as stated by Philistus the Syracusan, who wrote B.C. 350. The founders, according to him, were two Phœnicians, named Charchedon and Zorus, from the former of whom the city took its Greek name of Charchedon, This is the earliest and best account yet remaining, and is cited as credible by Eusebius; but we must remark, that Philistus himself lived near 900 years after the supposed event; and that, according to him, Carthage must have been almost 500 years more ancient than Rome. The arrival of Dido, a Tyrian princess, at this spot, and her enlarging the city, are believed to have taken place about 300 years after the destruction of Troy: Josephus considers her to be the founder of Carthage, and cites the Tyrian annals in proof of this event, as having occurred B.C. 873.[1] In either case, Virgil's account of her adventures with Æneas must be a gross anachronism. There is, perhaps, no people, the loss of whose records is so much to be regretted, CARTHAGE. Dido.

[1] Joseph., c. Apion, i., 17.

Carthage.

as those of a nation which not only possessed a political constitution greatly admired by Aristotle, but was at the head of very large confederacies, and established colonies both in Africa and Europe; some of which, as Cadiz and Port Mahon, remain to this day. Much dispute prevails with respect to the great expedition undertaken by Hanno the Carthaginian, at the head of 30,000 men, with a view partly to colonization, and partly to discover new countries and modes of commerce. It is clear, that this large armament, consisting of 60 vessels, passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and founded several cities on the western shore; but whether they proceeded as far as Sierra Leone, or only reached the river of Nun on the Moorish coast, is matter of contest: whithersoever they went they carried with them the religious doctrines and rites of Phœnicia.

Expedition of Hanno.

Other AFRICAN NATIONS.

124. Besides the Carthaginians and their dependents, there was no great nation in AFRICA known to the ancients, except that of the Ethiopians; but of these, the early history is singularly confused. In Scripture, we hear of them only as connected with the Egyptians. Homer seems to have thought them a very different people, innocent, and therefore favourites of the gods; but probably his notion, that the divinities went to feast among them, arose merely from an astronomical allegory, of the sun's declining in winter towards the south. Herodotus considers them as civilized by the Egyptians; but Diodorus is of a contrary opinion. It must be observed, that the name Ethiopians was loosely given to all the dwellers beyond the desert, though Ethiopia Proper included only Nubia and part of Abyssinia.

125. The rest of Africa was so wholly unknown to the ancients, and is, to this day, so destitute of any history of

its own, that it is unnecessary to speak of it otherwise than as a land which fabling travellers had filled with monsters of all kinds; hence we find pigmies here, as in Scythia: and as there were supposed to be, in the northern regions, monstrous Arimaspians, so here were no less portentous human beings; the *Cynamolgi*, with dogs' heads; the *Blemmyes*, who had no heads at all; and many other such wild productions of the imagination. Africa.

126. That there was in the Western Ocean a rich and happy island, or large continent, was a vague tradition or superstition among ancient nations; but of its history no one pretended to have the slightest knowledge. We can hardly think that the notions which they entertained of it were anything more than the mere dreams which all rude people have of some happier clime and country than their own, at a distance beyond the limits of sea, or mountain, or desert, to them impassable. This traditionary belief, however, was generally prevalent, down to the time of the actual discovery of the Western Hemisphere. One of the most ancient poems now extant in the old English language, is founded entirely on it; beginning Traditions of a Western Land.

> " Far in sea by-west of Spain
> Is a land hight Cokaigne."

This land of Cokaigne, or Coquina, from whence our word Cockney is derived, was the supposed seat of idleness and sensual pleasure: the graver philosophical Poets placed in the same situation the abodes of spiritual purity and celestial happiness. Here, according to Hesiod, Jupiter had assigned an abode to the souls of the heroes who fell in the wars of Thebes and Troy,—

Traditions of a Western Land.

"Εν μακάρων νήσοισι, πάρ 'Ωκεανὸν βαθυδίνην."[1]

"Isles of the blest, amid deep Ocean's waves."

And to the virtuous in general Pindar declares a similar lot to be granted:—

"——— ἔνθα μακάρων
Νᾶσον ὠκεανίδες
Αὖραι περιπνέουσιν."[2]

"Where the ocean breezes breathe
Around the island of the blest."

Plato's Atlantis.

The tradition to which Plato refers was somewhat different. He says, that "there was anciently beyond the Columns of Hercules (that is, the Straits of Gibraltar) a large island, called Atlantis, exceeding in size both Libya and Asia together; in which were sovereigns who had spread their dominion over the Mediterranean coasts, as far as the Tyrrhenian sea on the one side, and the boundaries of Egypt on the other; but in one night this whole island was swallowed up by the sea, which, in consequence, became innavigable."[3] Suidas adds, that all innavigable seas are called Atlantic.[4]

Discoveries of Columbus.

127. Such were the fabulous and vague notions of a possible Island or Continent beyond the Western Sea, which prevailed previously to the bold and happy undertaking of the great Columbus, a hero in the truest sense of the word. On the 12th of October, 1492, his long struggle with almost insuperable difficulties, was rewarded by the discovery of what was energetically called the "New World." The land, which he first saw, proved to be an island; and he successively discovered several other islands. Whether he, or Amerigo Vesputio, first

[1] Hes., Op. and Di., 169.
[2] Pind., Ol. ii., 128.
[3] Plato, Timæus.
[4] Suidas, voc. Ἀτλαντικὰ.

beheld the Western Continent, has been disputed. He certainly saw it in 1498; but even if Amerigo saw it the year before, which is extremely doubtful, *that* circumstance can detract nothing from the honour due to the man, whose wisdom first conceived, and whose unshaken energy accomplished, the mighty project of making known to each other the dissevered portions of the globe. Yet this unrivalled benefactor of the human race was not only treated with indignity whilst living, but successive ages have refused to connect his great discovery with his name; and we still, with equal absurdity and injustice, call the lands of the Western Hemisphere not Columbia, but America.

Discoveries of Columbus

128. Since this vast portion of the globe has been better known, various theories have been proposed to explain the origin of its population. M. DE PAUW, the ingenious but fanciful author of the "*Récherches Philosophiques sur les Americains*," who wrote in the year 1768, maintained that the native Americans were of a race not only different from, but physically inferior to, those of the Continents before known; but his arguments were confuted by DOM PERNETY, in a "*Dissertation sur l'Amerique et les Americains*," in 1770; and more fully by Count CARLI, in his "*Lettere Americane*," in 1780. M. BAILLY, in his "*Lettre sur l'Atlantide de Platon*," in 1779, gave the reins to his imagination by taking the Platonic fable for simple facts, and suggesting that when the supposed Atlantic island was submerged in the ocean, a few of the inhabitants escaped as from a shipwreck, and were wafted to the land which we now call America. It was obvious, that if the first Americans could have been carried by the waves from

Theories respecting the peopling of America.

Theories respecting the peopling of America.

another country, the fiction of an Atlantic island added nothing to the probability of such a transportation, and a like result might have followed from a voluntary or involuntary removal by sea from either of the ancient Continents. Accordingly some writers have ascribed the peopling of America to the Carthaginians, others to the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Jews, the Welsh, &c. The more prevalent opinion is, that the American races are derived from the North-eastern regions of Asia; and to this theory, with various modifications, Pennant, Robertson, Carver, Barton, Stanhope-Smith, Humboldt, and most recent writers on this subject, assent. Still there are great difficulties surrounding the question, particularly in regard to the numerous dialects spoken from the Arctic Circle to Cape Horn, the greater part of which it seems scarcely possible to trace to an Asiatic origin: and where a similarity is apparent, it is in general so slight as to imply a separation of very many centuries between the races. A short sketch of what is known of America at and prior to its discovery in the fifteenth century, will almost inevitably lead to the conclusion that different portions of it were peopled from very distant regions of the old Continent.

Approximation of Northern Asia and America.

129. The American Continent, with its adjacent islands, may be divided into Northern, Central, and Southern; and North America includes Arctic and Temperate Regions. The Northern limit of the Continent is not yet fully known, but is supposed to be formed by the sea about the 71st or 72nd degree of latitude, and to correspond to the limit of Asia, at no great distance and in nearly a similar latitude. It follows from this, that the inhabitants of both Continents, near their northern boundary, must be placed

under very similar circumstances, and must have had from the earliest times many occasions of transporting themselves, or being involuntarily transported, from one Continent to the other. In both Continents the severity of the climate, and the sterility of the soil must have scattered the population over a wide extent of country. Not only could there be no cities with their concomitant civilization, but scarcely any two families could live in neighbourly proximity. Agriculture must be unknown or nearly so; and the pursuit of fish and seals must afford the natives the chief part of their food and clothing. For the greater part of the year they must live in a torpid seclusion, which, together with their other privations and hardships, must benumb both their bodily and mental faculties, rendering them a stunted race, indolent, helpless, and timid; and, as a natural consequence, superstitious, though without any of the imagination which, in other climates, gives birth to the extravagance of mythological fable. Of History, or even ancient tradition, they must soon have lost every trace; so that the philologist alone, by comparing their languages with those of other nations, can form even a plausible conjecture of the stock from which, in common with their Asiatic neighbours, they are descended.

Similar conditions of the people of Northern Asia and America.

130. As we pass from the contemplation of these melancholy tribes to those who inhabit more temperate climates, a very different picture of man presents itself. Here we find races distinguished by the red colour of the skin, generally tall, strong, and active, dexterous in hunting, bold in war, assembled together in villages, organized into small communities. "As the men hunt (says Ferguson),

The Red Indians of North America.

The Red Indians of North America.

so the women labour *together:* and after they have shared the toils of the seed-time, they enjoy the fruits of the harvest *in common.* The field in which they have planted, like the district over which they are accustomed to hunt, is claimed as a property by the nation, but is not parcelled in lots to its members. The harvest is gathered into the public granary, and from thence, at stated times, is divided into shares for the maintenance of separate families. Even the returns of the market, when they trade with foreigners, are brought home to the stock of the nation."[1] In these and the like particulars there must be great differences among the numerous independent tribes spread over so wide an extent of country; but one characteristic is very generally prevalent with them all, that is, "the tendency of the individual to attach himself strongly to the family, tribe, or little community of which he forms a part;" and hence is seen in all "the most intense ferocity towards the enemies of their tribe, accompanied with a great degree of union and attachment to each other."[2] Numerous and very minute accounts have been given of these people by Lafitau, Charlevoix, La Hontan, Hearne, Carver, and others, in the last century, and more particularly, by the Hon. W. Murray and Mr. Catlin, in the present; both of these writers having lived for many months in the society of Indian tribes exclusively. The various nations have different opinions of the origin of their race, some of them very absurd; but Mr. Catlin states that of all the tribes that he visited (and they were numerous), there was no one who did not, in some way or other, connect its origin with "a big canoe,"

Traditions of the North American Indians respecting their origin.

[1] Ferguson, Civil Society, p. 2, s. 2.

[2] H. Murray, Character of Nations, b. iii., c. 2.

and sometimes with circumstances strikingly similar to those of Noah's preservation from the general deluge. Some of them stated, that their ancestors came across the great salt lake; and this tradition is strengthened by a certain degree of resemblance in bodily frame and features between some tribes of these Indians and the Asiatic races called Tartars, Scythians, or Mongols. But on this latter circumstance little sound reasoning can be built; for it is abundantly evident, from the researches of modern physiologists, and particularly of the late Dr. Prichard, that as on the one hand, certain traits of similitude may be found between inhabitants of the most distant parts of the world; so on the other hand, tribes and nations manifestly descended from a common stock have undergone, in the course of ages, very different changes of appearance and constitution. Of all the marks of relationship between nations, a similarity of language has hitherto been found to be the most satisfactory; but this exists in the slightest possible degree between the Tartar and the North American languages. The latter, and indeed most of the languages of the Western Continent, differ widely in structure, from those of the Old World; so that though we may confidently assume that the first inhabitants of the former Hemisphere proceeded thither from the latter, it must have been at a period long antecedent to any credible history or tradition of such an event. The languages or dialects spoken by the different North American tribes are very various; but the persevering researches of the philologists of the United States have shown them to be but modifications of a small number of mother-tongues; and even these agree in some common principles: so that we may reasonably conclude that in a very early age the Northern parts of America

Traditions of the North American Indians respecting their origin.

North American Indians.

immediately below the Arctic region were for the most part peopled by one common race, of which, it is said, there were three main branches, the *Algonquin*, the *Lenni-Lenápe*, and the *Iroquois* or *Huoron*, each spreading into numerous subdivisions. Toward the Alleghany mountains, and along the banks of the Mississippi, were other communities; and again different races on the North-Western coasts of the Pacific. All these were in a savage state, a few partially cultivating some small spots of ground; but most of them subsisting precariously on the produce of hunting or fishing.

Central America. — Mexico.

131. The nations, that we have just noticed, were destitute of letters, and but little advanced in the arts of social life; but as we carry our views southward to Central America, we find a large Empire constituted with much art, and containing populous towns, splendid edifices, and many other marks of comparative civilization. This is

"Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume."

The origin of this remarkable people, and the steps by which they advanced so much beyond their neighbours and contemporaries in arts and in political science, are partially veiled in obscurity. It is known, that there were three main races, the *Toltecs*, the *Chichimecs*, and the *Aztecs*, speaking different dialects of one original tongue, who successively descended from some northern region to the countries previously occupied by tribes widely differing from them in character and language, the *Othomis*, *Huaxtecs*, *Zapotecs*, *Mixtecs*, *Tarascas*, &c. These, in the course of time, were subdued or expelled by the invaders. The oldest epoch in American history begins with the issuing

of the *Toltecs*, A.D. 544, or as others calculate, A.D. 596, from a country called *Huehuetlapallan*, the situation of which is unknown. The *Chichimecs* came some centuries afterwards, and subsequently the *Nahautlaca*, or Seven Tribes, appeared, among whom the *Aztecs* obtained the supremacy, and built in 1325 the city of *Tenochtitlan* or Old Mexico, whence they have been commonly called Mexicans. The authorities for this history are to be found in certain writings of a kind altogether peculiar to this people, consisting of pictures and arbitrary signs, which seem to have formed a sort of artificial memory. The oldest known document of this sort was the *Teo-Amoxtli*, or "Divine Book," said to have been composed by an astrologer named *Huematzin*, A.D. 708, containing the History, Laws, Calendar, and Mythology of the *Toltecs*. Only a few of these picture-writings were known to Dr. Robertson, the learned historian of America; but several more, which exist in the Bodleian Library and other European collections, have been accurately copied and published in the splendid work of Lord Kingsborough. From these it is clear that the narratives which they are supposed to contain could only have been known to a studious class of the Mexicans, their Priests, Astrologers, and Lawyers; for they are made up of a mixture of portrait, symbol, and arbitrary hieroglyphic, which none but the initiated could possibly understand. Many of them, however, were explained by natives to the Spanish invaders, and from these the above-cited dates of events have been collected. Whatever degree of credit may be due to these interpretations, certain it is, that the *Aztec*, or Mexican race, had attained to a degree of civilization altogether surprising, when compared with that of the wandering tribes of the northern region.

Chronology of the Aztecs.

Central America. — Mexico.

They had large plantations of maize, made artificial roads, founded and inhabited great cities, built lofty palaces and temples, could cast and work metals, and cut the hardest stones; had brave, and to a certain degree, disciplined armies, a complex and well-established system of finance; such a knowledge of astronomy as enabled them to form the calendar of a year more accurate than that of the Romans in the time of Julius Cæsar, and a splendid Monarchy ruling over numerous and extensive provinces. This brilliant picture, however, had its dark side, which more than compensated for all its excellencies. The government was an absolute despotism; the vices of sensuality were carried to the most disgusting extreme; unbounded cruelty to prisoners and captives was crowned with open feasts of horrid cannibalism, and the whole was sanctioned by a system of the most gross and impious idolatry. However we may blush for the cruelties exercised on Montezuma and his subjects by men professing the mild religion of the Gospel, we cannot regret that so monstrous an alliance of refinement with hideous vice, as the Mexican Empire presented, was overwhelmed with utter and irretrievable ruin. Whether in their virtues, or in their vices, they differed more widely from the nations whom they expelled, it is now difficult to say. It was till of late supposed that the tribes driven out by the northern invaders were wholly barbarous, but doubts have been cast on this supposition by the discovery of ruined cities of large extent, which some believe to be of a date anterior to the Toltec invasion. Mr. Stephens, however, the latest and most intelligent explorer of these remains, is of opinion that those which he visited, and which he has accurately described, were constructed by the people who occupied the country at the time of the Spanish conquest;

and that none of them were built many centuries prior to that event. Philology has detected in the languages of one of the expelled tribes (the Huaxtecs), traces of a speech believed to have been once common to Cuba, Jamaica, and Hispaniola. Other tribes speak other dialects, but none connected with those of civilized nations, except perhaps the Othomi language, which is thought to resemble an Indo-Chinese dialect. Central America. — Mexico.

132. The Isthmus which divides Northern and Central America from the vast territories of South America, seems also to have divided the races, from which the inhabitants were descended, who first became known to Europe. A very large portion of those territories is still unexplored, and seems to be occupied by numerous tribes who remain in a savage state, and speak languages but little known to the Philologist. Many dialects, however, have been examined; and though they present numerous dissimilarities, it has been thought that they exhibit traces of a descent from three parent stocks designated by recent writers as the *Andian, Mediterranean,* and *Brazilian,* and consequently show a descent of the Indians speaking them from three ancestral races. At the head of the Indian race stand the Peruvians; and as Central America had to boast of "rich Mexico," so South America could claim— South America. — PERU.

——" Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa."

The same cupidity, cloaked under the specious garb of religion, which led the Spaniards to invade and overturn the empire of Mexico, animated them to the destruction of Peru: and the two conquests have recently found in a citizen of the United States, an impartial but powerful his-

South America. — Peru.

torian.[1] It was in 1519 that CORTEZ landed on the coast of Mexico; and in less than two years he had made himself master of the capital, and of its sovereign. In 1532, Pizarro, with equal boldness, seized the person of the Peruvian Emperor, and subjected his empire to the Spanish Crown. The Peruvians opposed to the Spaniards but a feeble resistance, and saw their king put to death almost with indifference. Yet as a people they nearly equalled, and in some respects excelled, the Mexicans, in civilization. They had not, it is true, the art of Picture-writing; but they in some degree supplied its place by their *quipos*, a method of arranging knots on cord so as to convey information. Their whole country was intersected by roads, which Humboldt does not hesitate to rank among "the most useful and gigantic works ever executed by human hands;" and which certainly excelled the memorable roads of the Romans. By these means they crossed lofty mountains; they cut galleries through rocks; and threw suspension-bridges over rivers: and all this without the use of iron, of which, though it existed in their country, they knew not the properties. They were not versed, like the Mexicans, in astronomy, so as to deduce from it an accurate measure of time; but for the purposes of trade they had a simple yet effective system of weights and measures. Of coined money they were entirely ignorant; nor does it seem that any metal passed among them, as a currency, by weight. To agriculture they had paid great attention, and practised it successfully, as well by the judicious use of manures, as by irrigation, which they carried on, upon an extensive scale: and for this latter purpose they had constructed numerous aqueducts, that of *Condeseyer* being above four hundred miles in length. Yet

[1] Prescott, Hist. Conq. Mexico. Hist. Conq. Peru.

their farming operations were of the simplest kind; for they had not even a plough, and none but wooden spades. Their religious notions were of a purer kind than those of the Mexicans, and far less stained with human sacrifices; but their chief Divinity being the Sun, and their Inca or Emperor being regarded as a descendant from that luminary, his wives and servants were offered up as victims at his death. With the exception of the Peruvian Empire, all the other South Americans were, at the time of their first discovery, as many of them continue still to be, in the lowest state of barbarism, nor does the difference of race appear to have produced among them a corresponding difference of civilization. It would be vain to seek in their own vague and absurd traditions for any rational account of their origin or early history. Having been totally ignorant of letters, they could possess no records; nor were any monuments of early time to be found throughout the Southern division of the American Continent..

South America. — Peru.

133. We may aptly conclude this brief survey of the history of races and nations with the just remark of a late admirable writer. "It is only by tracing the History of the diversified human races from ancient times, and by comparing the former with the present state of each, that we are made aware of the great changes which time and circumstances have effected in the condition of particular nations, and are brought to admit the probability of an opinion that Beings apparently so different in their whole manner of existence, can be in any way allied."[1] They have dissimilar, and as it might seem irreconcilable peculiarities; and yet all these may be traced up to their source in one common

Conclusion.

[1] Prichard, Nat. Hist. Man, 488.

Conclusion. human nature, which, as it completely separates Man from the Brute, so it clearly shows his capability of destination to a state of existence far higher and purer than any, to which either the majesty of empire or the beauty of virtue can attain, in this mortal life.

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