

SECT.
II

and with populous and peaceful cities, protected by the sanctity of temples rather than guarded by the strength of walls. Both productive and commercial industry had attained a high degree of improvement; and the mode of carrying on traffic by great caravans conducted by officers of their own choice, produced that experience in travelling and that accurate knowledge of remote countries, which had a tendency to facilitate the march and subsistence of armies. In this state of things well concerted schemes of ambition were formed; and the most aspiring and wildest usurpers found instruments excellently fitted to their ends, in the fierce Nomadic tribes amidst the sands of Arabia on one side and the deserts of Scythia on the other, who not yet sufficiently powerful or populous to conquer for themselves, and only solicitous for slaves and plunder⁶⁶, were easily tempted to fight for more politic allies aiming at permanent as well as extensive conquest⁶⁷. At the head of his native subjects, reinforced by many Arab tribes under a chief named in Greek Ariæus⁶⁸, the Assyrian Ninus thus overrun great part of Asia, and adopted measures for holding in subjection many cities and provinces east of the Euphrates⁶⁹, flourishing in arts and industry, and long connected in commercial intercourse with each other⁷⁰. Successful in all his undertakings, the conqueror built a city named from himself⁷¹, in the valuable isthmus between the Euphrates and the Tigris⁷², and which attained its utmost magnitude in the age of its founder⁷³. This report is not incredible, for Ninus was accompanied to the chosen site of his new capital, by a great oriental army with many women and many servants, like Nebuchadnezzar, who afterwards

⁶⁶ Δαίρους και λαφύρους. Diodor. l. ii. c. 3.
Conf. Herodot. l. iv. c. 17.

⁶⁷ Justin, l. i. c. 1. well marks the distinction. The Nomades contenti victoria, imperio abstinebant. Ninus the Assyrian, on the other hand, Magnitudinem quæsitæ dominationis continua possessione firmavit.

⁶⁸ Diodorus, l. ii. c. 1.

⁶⁹ Herodot. l. i. c. 95.

⁷⁰ Diodorus, *ibid.*

⁷¹ Diodorus, l. ii. c. 11. Strabo, l. xvi. p. 737.

⁷² Diodorus, l. ii. c. 3.

⁷³ Εὐρυτα πολὺν. *Ibid.* The words cannot apply to the enlargement of an old city.

enlarged Babylon to unrivalled greatness, and like the Tatar prince who in the thirteenth century erected a new city contiguous to Pekin, greatly exceeding London on its present extended scale²¹. The neighbouring strong-holds of Assyria²², not excepting ancient Babylon, were drained to supply Nineveh; habitations were granted to all foreigners in the service, who wished to repose from their military labours; in a word, none were excluded from the immunities of a place destined at two remote periods, to be the residence of the two longest dynasties that ever reigned in the East, I mean the kings of the House²³ of Ninus, and the Abassides, Caliphs of Bagdad.

The district to which those capitals appertained, owed its pre-eminence to the two rivers by which it is watered and enriched, not principally by spontaneous inundation like that of the Nile in Egypt, but by the more stubborn means of hydraulic engines, and unceasing manual labour²⁴. Both the Euphrates and Tigris take their rise in the Armenian mountains, the Euphrates being formed by two main streams of which the one holds its tortuous course from the lofty northern declivity pointing to the Euxine, and the other flows directly from mount Abas, the central and highest region in Armenia. The Tigris on the contrary collects its numerous rills from those southern descents whose smaller elevation and warmer aspect occasion a speedier melting of the snows, and render the periodical swellings of that river many weeks earlier than those of the Euphrates²⁵. Of the two flowing boundaries inclosing Babylonia, the Tigris is the more rapid, has the loftier banks as well as the deeper bed; and in winter rolls down the greater body of water. Its pre-eminence is still more visible after the first thaws

Greatness of his capital, and advantages of the surrounding territory.

²¹ *Stampon's Embassy to China*, vol. ii. p. 146 4to edit.

²² *Strabo de Babylonia* *capitulum* *quintum* *et* *sexagesimum*. *Diodor.* l. ii. c. i.

²³ The expression sounds modern, but is as ancient as Herodotus, l. i. c. 107.

²⁴ Herodotus, l. i. c. 193.

²⁵ The Tigris swells in March and April: the Euphrates in June and July. Conf. Arrian, *Exped. Alexand.* l. vii. c. 7 and Foster's *Geographical Dissert. on Xenophon's Expedition*.

SECT.
II.

of spring ; but as the season advances and the snow begins to melt among those northern and higher mountains which feed the Euphrates, this latter stream acquires a decided superiority⁹⁷. It overflows its level banks ; and its dominion over the adjacent country is confirmed by a circumstance, which, though little noticed by ancient historians, greatly contributed to that singular fertility, which, if any natural advantages could resist Tartar desolation, Persian anarchy, and Turkish tyranny, would in all ages have entitled Babylonia to boast the greatest cities in the world. For more than forty miles above the site of Bagdad, and throughout the whole territory southward to the sea, the plain between the two rivers slopes with so gradual a declivity, first from the Euphrates to the Tigris, and afterwards from the Tigris to the Euphrates, that it presents in the utmost perfection two vast hanging gardens ; with the inestimable advantage in that adust climate of being easily watered by canals drawn from the higher to the lower stream. The whole of Babylonia was immemorably intersected by those artificial channels⁹⁸, varying in magnitude from rivers fit to sustain heavy vessels down to such minute streamlets as the Greeks drew along their fields for the culture of millet⁹⁹. Not only in the intermediate peninsula, but in the bordering territory beyond both rivers, the industry of man had reclaimed vast tracts of contiguous desert¹⁰⁰. Ten leagues west of the Euphrates, there are still marks of the great ancient canal, which had flowed five hundred miles in the same direction with the parent river, again to rejoin it near its wide mouth¹⁰¹. This advantage on

⁹⁷ Strabo, c. xvi. p. 742. The Euphrates forces a passage through Taurus twelve miles in length at a place called Elegeia. The wonder-loving Pliny is on his own ground, when he describes the battle between the mountain and the river. Nat. Hist. l. v. c. 24.

⁹⁸ Strabo, l. ix. p. 502. Conf. Herodot. l. i. c. 193.

⁹⁹ Or rather pannick, a plant of the millet kind. Xenoph. Anab. l. ii. p. 283.

¹⁰⁰ Travellers from Aleppo to Bassora have long remarked ruins of cities, owing their existence to this artificial fertility. Della Valle, Ockley, Ives, &c.

¹⁰¹ Niebuhr. t. ii. p. 223. Other travellers make the canal begin at Anbar, half way between Hit and Babylon, while Edrissi, p. 197. carries it to Thapsacus, 200 miles above Hit, and 300 above Babylon.

the western side of the Euphrates, was balanced on the east of the Tigris, by Susis, or Susiana, a rich alluvial district like the Delta of Egypt, and nearly of the same magnitude. The capital, Susa, derived its name from the variety of beautiful lilies¹⁰² conspicuous among the alluring ornaments of its river, the flowery Eulæus. The antiquity of the city is lost amidst the clouds of fable; and as it stood within an hundred miles of the Persian gulph, and nearly at the equal distance of two hundred from Babylon and Ecbatana, its central situation helped to perpetuate its prosperity through a long succession of dynasties and empires. According to the Grecian mode of estimating fertility, the returns in Susiana amounted to an hundred and often two hundred fold¹⁰³. Grains of the finest sorts; dates, cotton, linen were enumerated among its products; and history despaired to reveal the immemorial establishment of those valuable manufactures in cloth of gold and damasked steel, for which it has continued famous to the latest and worst of times, when alternately a prey to Persians from Shiraz and Turks from Bassora¹⁰⁴. In a subsequent part of this work, we shall be brought back to Susis, and called to describe its rivers and geography, when it became the brilliant scene of operations between the dexterity of Eumenes and the energy of Antigonus; two of the ablest but least fortunate among Alexander's captains. It is enough at present to remark, that this flat alluvial district formed a continuation of the rich Babylonian plain, through which, in addition to other advantages, there was the utmost facility of communication by land and water. † 71

The proper Babylonia bore away the palm of fertility from Egypt and even from Susis¹⁰⁵. In the language of Herodotus and Strabo,

¹⁰² Stephanus de Urb. in Voc. Susa, and vol. ii. p. 50. & seq.

Athenæus Deipn. l. xii. p. 513.

¹⁰³ Herodot. l. i. c. 193. and Strabo,

¹⁰⁴ Strabo, l. xv. p. 731.

c. xvi. p. 742.

¹⁰⁵ Edrisi, p. 122. & seq. and Otter,

SECT
II.

it restored with an increase of an hundred and three hundred ¹⁰⁶ fold, all the finest kinds of grain with which it was sown, or, perhaps, planted. The leaves of wheat and barley were four fingers broad; and Herodotus is unwilling to describe the stalks of millet and sesame, lest he should incur the reproach of exaggeration. The whole country was adorned with palm trees, which presented the triple offerings of bread, honey, and wine ¹⁰⁷; fruits were in the same season succeeded by new flowers; and the soft warm soil, strongly impregnated with nitre, required only a sprinkling of water to be converted, in a few weeks, from an arid waste into a green paradise.

In materials for building, Babylonia surpassed all other countries ¹⁰⁸. It every where afforded a viscous clay, fit to be formed into the hardest bricks, either when they were baked in the furnace, or simply dried in the sun; and the naphtha or bitumen, the firmest of all cements, was found, at convenient intervals, from the eastern extremity of Susis to Hit on the Euphrates, eight days journey above Babylon ¹⁰⁹. For the timber usually employed in carpentry, the Babylonians often substituted their native cypress without neglecting the reeds and osiers growing profusely on the marshy banks of their rivers. But the currents of those rivers would bring them seasonable supplies of the most serviceable forest trees from the thick woods in Armenia.

With men and materials at command, Ninus raised a city, which is said to have been four hundred and eighty stadia, or forty-eight miles in compass ¹¹⁰. It was built after the fashion of the greatest

¹⁰⁶ Colonel Wilton says "a crop of corn in Egypt still yields on an average from twenty-five to thirty measures for one; in extraordinary years the land gives a produce of fifty for one: instances have occurred where one hundred and fifty times the seed sown has been reaped. British Expedition to Egypt, p. 225.

¹⁰⁷ Strabo mentions an Oriental poem celebrating 360 uses of the palm, l. xv. p. 741.

¹⁰⁸ Herodot. l. i. c. 179. and Xenoph. Anab., l. ii. p. 282.

¹⁰⁹ Strabo, l. xvi. p. 743. Conf. Herodot. ibid.

¹¹⁰ Diodorus, l. ii. c. 3.

Asiatic cities to the present day, with spacious gardens, large reservoirs of water, and as it should seem with several wide pastures for cattle¹¹¹. But of the magnitude of Assyrian cities, and of the means by which their numerous inhabitants were subsisted at once comfortably and cheaply, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, when I come to treat of Babylon, which, though of the same circuit with Nineveh, about forty-eight British miles¹¹², was the larger city of the two; since Babylon was a regular square of twelve miles, whereas Nineveh was an oblong, measuring fifteen miles in length, and only nine miles in breadth¹¹³. It is sufficient for my present purpose to remark, that the quadrangular form of those successive capitals of Asia, their precise agreement in circuit, their straight streets, and regular symmetry, plainly indicate their common origin in the encampments of vast armies, which, as we learn from respectable authority, not only formed their models in point of architectural arrangement, but supplied one of the chief sources of their populousness¹¹⁴.

In the fulness of years and glory Ninus was succeeded, or supplanted, by his queen Semiramis, a woman whose boldness of spirit had already entitled her to share the diadem. This martial princess endeavoured to extend her empire by the conquest of India, an enterprise unfortunate, according to Greek historians¹¹⁵, but which, were Indian testimony admissible¹¹⁶, should seem to have been crowned with signal success. The whole story of Semiramis, indeed, is blended with the extravagance of fable; yet the consenting voice of

His queen
Semiramis.

¹¹¹ Jonah.

¹¹² According to Major Rennell, 10 stadia are nearly equal to a British mile. Geography of Herodotus, p. 31.

¹¹³ Conf. Diodorus, l. ii. c. 3 and Herodotus, l. i. c. 178.

¹¹⁴ Diodot. *ibid.*

¹¹⁵ Strabo, l. xv. p. 687. speaks as if she had died before carrying her designs against

India into execution. Arrian says that she died before the object of the expedition was effected. Arrian Indica.

¹¹⁶ The poetry of the Indians, for they have no history, is said to specify on a variety of occasions the attention of their ancient princes to pay a stipulated tribute to the great kings of Assyria. See Vincent's Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, p. 60.

PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF

SECT.
II.

antiquity long celebrated her renown, confirmed, it was said, and perpetuated by everlasting monuments, extending at wide intervals over the finest regions of the East; vast mounds, lofty obelisks, stupendous mausoleums and palaces; more useful roads, canals, bridges, and emporiums.

And son
Ninyas.

Ninyas, the son of Ninus and Semiramis, strangely degenerated from both his parents in point of martial spirit. His empire, however, was held together by contrivances that indicate more refinement than is at any future time discernible in the great monarchies of the East. While the sovereign resided in his vast palace amidst beautiful gardens, or rather parks, which the Babylonians called paradises¹¹⁷, great bodies of soldiers encamped in the neighbouring districts. They were variously armed after the fashion of the respective provinces from which they came, and which all paid tribute to Nineveh; and they were commanded by generals in whom Ninyas or his ministers, who had bound them by good offices, could implicitly confide. When the soldiers, thus appointed and officered, had performed their annual service of guarding the court and capital, they were relieved by new levies belonging to the same provinces, which levies at the year's end, again made way for a third draught of military successors. By means of this rotation, the controuling army, though uniformly the same in its mass, as an instrument of authority, was changed too often in its parts, to become an engine of rebellion; and the security resulting from so judicious an establishment, is said to have been increased and confirmed by the minute partition of provincial power among satraps, generals, intendants, and judges¹¹⁸.

The policy and military arrangements of Ninyas were adopted, and faithfully adhered to, for the space of four centuries by a line

¹¹⁷ The great city Sitace; vast, populous, l. ii. p. 283.
with its beautiful paradises must have stood ¹¹⁸ Diodorus, l. ii. c. 21.
near the site of Nineveh. Xenoph. Anab.,

S E C T.
II.

Transactions
of the Assy-
rians to the
reign of Se-
nacherib,
B. C. 712.

of seventeen princes¹¹⁹, whose mild and pacific reigns leaving no traces of blood behind them, have escaped the notice of history. At the end of that period, Pull, king of Nineveh, and the-eighteenth successor of Ninyas, assumed the command of his own armies, and crossing the Euphrates, levied contributions on Syria. His son, Tiglath-Pileser, conquered Damascus, a Syrian city of great antiquity and opulence, slew its king Rezin, and carried the most distinguished portion of his subjects into captivity¹²⁰. During the same expedition, he treated with equal barbarity the Israelites beyond Jordan, consisting of the Rubenites, the Gaddites, and half tribe of Manasseh; tearing many of these unhappy men from their kindred and country, and forcibly transplanting them to the banks of the Gozan¹²¹, now Ozan a river which rising in the central parts of Media, forces its way through the mountains which divide the Medes and Caspians, descends in a full and foaming torrent to the plain of Ghilan, and through this level province flows majestically eastward in a navigable course to the great Caspian lake¹²². Nineteen years after Tiglath-Pileser's desolating expedition, his son, Shalmanezar, invaded the territory on this side Jordan, plundered its cities, and carried with him into captivity all such Israelites as were above the condition of mere peasants, that is, all such as were in anywise distinguished by their rank in life, their spirit, or their ingenuity. Hosea, who reigned over Israel in Samaria, followed the conqueror in chains to Nineveh, while the depopulated Samaritan cities¹²³ were planted with Assyrian

¹¹⁹ What follows in the text is, indeed, liable to objections. How can it be otherwise, when ancient testimonies are irreconcilable? The notices in Herodotus, Dionysius, and Appian; three most respectable historians, form the basis of my narrative; and Ctesias's accounts are adopted in as far as they are not inconsistent with this more respectable authority.

¹²⁰ 2 Kings, c. xvi. v. 9.

¹²¹ 1 Chronicles, c. v. v. 26. Conf. Jose-

phus Antiq. l. ix. c. 13.

¹²² Olearius and Hanway. Both travellers, passed the Gozan and its cataracts 180 miles from the Caspian.

¹²³ The cities chiefly were depopulated as containing the descriptions of persons above specified. Conf. 2 Kings, c. xvii. v. 24. and c. xxiv. v. 14. and c. xxxii. v. 11, 12. That the removal of the whole people did not take place appears from Ezra, c. iv. v. 7.

S E C T.
II.

His wars—
their import-
ant conse-
quences.

colonies, particularly from the imperial district of Babylonia²²⁴. Senacherib, who succeeded to Shalmanezzer, purposed to treat Judah, as his ancestors had done Israel, and grasped in his ambitious dreams, not only all Syria, but also Egypt and Ethiopia. In the prosecution of this bold design, he lost his great army, and thereby endangered his old hereditary dominion over the East, while he laboured to extend the recent usurpations of his family in the West. With the reign of Senacherib, we first attain the light of circumstantial and concordant history. He is the first king of Assyria mentioned in Scripture, whose name is also preserved in a Greek writer²²⁵; and his expeditions against Judæa and Egypt are highly interesting both for their incidents and for their consequences. But to explain these incidents and consequences in a manner perspicuous and satisfactory, it will be necessary for us, according to the method which I prescribed, to look back to remoter times, and to acquire, if possible, correct notions of the parties on both sides the Euphrates engaged in this memorable warfare. The commotions which began with Senacherib's disasters in Egypt and Palestine, terminated in the demolition of the great Nineveh, and the establishment of a new empire in the still greater Babylon, whose dominion, though confined by the Medes on the east, extended towards the south and west over what was destined to be the future region of Saracen or Arabian power. In effecting this revolution, scarcely less memorable than either the Macedonian or the Mahommedan conquest, many destructive invasions were made; many bloody battles were fought, and many obstinate sieges were patiently endured on one side, and perseveringly prosecuted on the other. But knowing by name only, the actors in those perturbed scenes, their exploits, however important in themselves, glide over the fancy like the shadow of a dull dream. To remedy this evil, too often experienced by

²²⁴ Josephus Antiq. x. 9.²²⁵ Conf. 2 Kings, c. xviii. and Herodotus, l. ii. p. 141.

SECT.
II.

students in ancient history, we must direct our attention to arts, manners, and institutions, and those concomitant labours of peace which furnished the materials of warfare, and which presented tempting objects of ambition, at an interval of six centuries, to the arms first of a Ninus, and then of a Nebuchadnezzar.

In the science of political œconomy, few questions can be safely examined apart, so intimately connected are even its minutest branches. But in attempting either to estimate the actual condition of nations, or to ascertain the means likeliest to promote their future improvement and security, there is not any one object more important than their ordinary commercial intercourse. Compared in efficacy with this, even their strenuous exertions in war which many good moralists¹²⁶ have deemed necessary for sharpening the faculties of man, and thereby exalting his character, greatly sink in our regard, and lose the credit of occasional or contingent benefits, which but ill compensate their inherent and inevitable mischief. From war, that harsh mother of arts, much doubtless has been learned, and a judicious narrative of wars cannot fail to unite many scattered rays of information, not more gratifying to a liberal curiosity, than essential to the just apprehension, and therefore to the right management of national concerns. Yet commerce opens a source of instruction still more fruitful, especially when distant countries, instead of communicating feebly by their shores, were deeply penetrated by caravans from each other; and when their transactions, being thus carried on in common, by vast crowds¹²⁷, lay more obvious to notice, and offered materials for history equally important and circumstantial. In this discussion, we shall see the foundations of Asiatic opulence

Transition to
the history of
the arts of
peace

¹²⁶ ἡ θείον περιποίησιν ἐστὶ τῆς πόλεως ἐν ἀνθρώποις γαργαλίζουσα. Xenoph. Hellen. l. vi. p. 591. The military philosopher, Xenophon, thus thought war fated by the gods: under the lower Greek empire, the philosophical emperor Leo An. Dom. 900 upbraids the Saracens for holding a similar doctrine. Vid.

Leon. *Tactica*, p. 809.

¹²⁷ The troops of Tema and Sheba, or Saba, are renowned in that sacred poetry coeval with, or preceding the most ancient history. Job, c. vi. v. 19. Conf. Strabo, l. xvi. p. 781.

S E C T.

II.

at the æra of the first great monarchy ; we shall discover the causes of that abundance, not only of necessaries, but of precious and far fetched luxuries, which Ninus is said to have met with in many of his eastern conquests ; we shall discern how the keen desire of foreign commodities occasioned wonderful assiduity in the manufacture of domestic produce ; and we shall perceive that those countries, which, through the effect of good management, operating on a soil naturally fertile, were best provided with food, and most enriched with objects of real conveniency and use, found no difficulty in procuring the spice of India, the perfumes of Arabia, the amber of Prussia, the gold of Ethiopia, the silver of Spain, and the tin of Britain. These six great articles, which either the general consent of mankind or the wants peculiar to particular times and places rendered objects of general demand, were, according to the uniform testimony of antiquity, produced most perfectly and most abundantly at the farthest extremities of the commercial world¹²⁸ ; they were stored up, however, in greatest plenty in places near to its centre, and employed or consumed with most profusion in Egypt and Babylonia¹²⁹.

Commercial
communication
through
Alia - its
high anti-
quity proved.

That some kinds of spice, which grow only in the East Indies, were used in Egypt fifteen centuries before Christ, appears from the cinnamon and cassia¹³⁰ mixed in the holy oil, that was prepared by the Israelites soon after their delivery from Egyptian bondage. It is also well known that Adel and Yemen, two parallel districts on the western and eastern sides of the Arabian gulph, early availed themselves of the precious metals procured for their drugs, dyes, above all for their frankincense, to purchase such quantities of Indian spices, that the cities near the entrance of the Red Sea were deemed principal emporia¹³¹ of articles indispensable as antiseptics wherever the earth is deluged by periodic rains, inundated by great rivers,

¹²⁸ Herodot. l. iii. c. 106. and 114.

¹²⁹ Id. l. i. and ii. passim.

¹³⁰ Exodus, c. xxx. v. 23. and 24.

¹³¹ Strabo, l. xvi. p. 778.

and

and even wherever the work of agriculture must be accompanied with irrigation. It is impossible to determine when this maritime traffic began, but easier to conjecture by whom it was carried on. From the earliest accounts of Hindostan, its natives appear to have religiously abhorred even a temporary removal from their country; neither curiosity nor interest could tempt them on remote voyages. But very different maxims prevailed among the Sabæans¹²², a people inhabiting both sides of the Red Sea, and from whom, as we have above shewn, the enterprising Phœnicians were descended. It may be presumed, therefore, that the Sabæans were the chief agents in a trade peculiarly lucrative to themselves, because the spices which they imported were essentially necessary to many nations around them. But does the first transient notice of spice as an article of commerce, warrant the opinion that it was obtained solely or chiefly by sea seventeen centuries before the Christian æra? At this early date, Joseph's brethren, as is well known, were decided as to the mode of exercising their unnatural barbarity, by the appearance of an Arabian caravan, "with their camels from Gilead, bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, and going to carry them down into Egypt¹²³." The balm, as well as the myrrh or ladanum, were productions from the neighbourhood of Gilead, a mountainous region inclosing the north-western districts of Palestine, since branches of Gilead extended to the Anti-Libanus¹²⁴. But the spicery named first, as the main article, was never supposed to grow in Palestine, or in Syria, or in any part of Asia on this side the Indus. By what means then had it come to Gilead, so as to be brought down from thence into Egypt? The slightest attention to geography will shew that it could not have been transported from the above-mentioned districts of Adel or Yemen, since, on that

¹²² These are Homer's well initiated Ethiopians inhabiting the extremities of the world. *Odyss.* l. i. v. 25. Conf. *Herodot.* l. i. c. 1. and *Strabo*, l. i. p. 35.

¹²³ *Genesis*, c. xxxvii. v. 21. 25.

¹²⁴ *Galaad Montibus Libani copulatus.* Hieronym. in *Ezekiel*, l. vii. c. 18.

supposition,

PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF

SECT.
II.

supposition, the Ishmaelites or travelling Arabs who conveyed it, must have pursued a route extravagantly circuitous¹³⁵. Had they come from Adel or Yemen, their direct road to Thebes or Memphis, and other great Egyptian cities, where the spices were to be consumed, lay on the west side of the Arabian gulph, and led through Axum, Meroe, and other Ethiopian stations or staples which will presently be described; not to mention that an article which had found its way to Adel or Yemen by shipping, would naturally have been forwarded to Egypt by the same cheap mode of conveyance. It should seem, therefore, that the spices transported thither from Gilead, seventeen centuries before the Christian æra, bear testimony to an extensive communication through Asia at that early period¹³⁶. The useful intercourse of nations had taken even a wider range: the Indo-Scythians extended it to many regions beyond the Indus¹³⁷; and the Phœnicians traded with their tempting trinkets to those coasts of Europe¹³⁸ where silver, tin, or amber could be obtained in exchange. But the operations of domestic industry and foreign traffic, appear never to have been carried on with more activity than during the four centuries and a half that elapsed from the warlike Ninus to the rapacious Pull. During that long period, a peaceful succession of eighteen kings of Nineveh allowed a free and uninterrupted intercourse through the Eastern world, so that the reigns of those princes

¹³⁵ Mr. Bruce seems aware of this difficulty when he says, "For reasons not known to us the Israelites went and completed their cargoes at Gilead." Bruce's Travels, vol. v. p. 19. He maintains, however, the opinion combated in the text, but on no solid grounds for his illusion concerning the vast extent of the maritime commerce between Ethiopia and India at this early period is dispelled by a decisive passage of Strabo, l. ii. p. 115. proving that even under the Ptolemies, when navigation had attained much comparative proficiency, the maritime traffic in spices bore a small proportion to the inland. Conf.

Strabo ubi supra, and Bruce's Travels to discover the source of the Nile, vol. i. p. 373. and vol. v. p. 19. Quarto Edit.

¹³⁶ In Africa and parts of America far ruder than Asia in the age of Joseph, necessity produces and maintains very extensive commercial communications. See Hearne's journey, undertaken by order of the Hudson's Bay Company 1769. Conf. African Researches, and Mungo Park's Travels.

¹³⁷ Ælian Hist. Anim. l. iv. c. 6. and Ptolem. Geograph. l. i. c. 11. Conf. Ege-stath. ad Dionys. Perceget. v. 1089.

¹³⁸ Herodot. l. i. c. 1.

whom

whom historians, too fond of war and bloodshed, have degraded into sluggards and voluptuaries, are precisely the worthiest of commendation in the whole endless series of Oriental dynasties¹³⁹.

SECT.
II.

Among the principal emporia or staples linked together in this commercial chain, we shall find a great uniformity of institutions and manners. The trading cities in Egypt appear to have been the first that were united under one government, and that many centuries before the reign of Ninus in Assyria. This antiquity of their monarchy the Egyptians owed not intirely to their superior civilization, but rather to the nature of their country, (the alluvions and valley of the Nile,) which, by its definite boundaries, had a tendency to fall under one sovereign power. To this state it appears to have been reduced when Abram, by command of the Almighty having removed from Ur of the Chaldees to Sichem in the district afterwards called Samaria, was driven by a famine in that neighbourhood with his household and wife Sarai into Misraim, or Egypt, a kingdom already noted for fertility in grain. The few circumstances revealed to us¹⁴⁰, are fraught with information. Egypt is governed by a sovereign of the common name of Pharoah, a title of pre-eminence like that of Cæsar or Sultan, distinguishing the master of a populous and central kingdom from the petty princes around him, his roving satellites in the Syrian and Libyan deserts. As essentials of grandeur, Pharoah had his palace and his haram with a splendid crowd of courtiers, eager to rise in place by anticipating his commands, and pampering his appetites. Abram being apprehensive that the fairness of Sarai, a native of northern Mesopotamia or Armenia, might provoke the licentious desires of the Egyptians, and expose himself to danger, concerted with his wife, that she should be described as his sister. But this device, contrived to save the life of Abram, had a tendency the more to expose the person of Sarai to

Egyptian
emporia, pre-
ceding Ab-
ram's jour-
ney thither.
B. C. 1921.

¹³⁹ This will appear hereafter in ex- and West.
amining the commerce of Tyre; a city ¹⁴⁰ Genesis, c. xii.
once concentrating the pursuits of the East

disgrace.

SECT.
II.

disgrace. The nobles of Pharaoh recommended her to their sovereign; she was received into the haram; and her supposed brother was, on her account, enriched with cattle and servants, if not magnificent gifts for a great king to bestow, yet most useful presents for a pastoral patriarch to receive. It would be to rob of just praise a prince discreet, even in his despotism, not to add that Pharaoh, when he discovered the beautiful Chaldæan to be Abram's wife, restored her, with a kind reproof to her husband⁴², and then dismissed both of them in safety with their attendants and effects.

Sacerdotal families in Egypt and Babylonia — their authority supported by specific localities.

The condition of Egypt, as united under one king in the time of Abram, throws back to a very remote antiquity the transactions of the Egyptians before this union, when, according to Greek historians, Elephantina, Thebes, Memphis, and other great cities were governed apart, and only connected with each other in commercial intercourse. According to the priests, indeed, in several of those cities, innumerable centuries were assigned to the dominion of the gods⁴³, for, in the name of the gods whom they respectively worshipped, various families of priests exercised a jurisdiction revered by their subjects as a real theocracy, analogous to the theocracies⁴⁴ of Greece copiously described in my history of that country. But specific localities gave to the sacerdotal families in Egypt and Babylonia a firmer hold of the mind, and an authority more extensive and more durable, than the same descriptions of men ever enjoyed in Greece, or in any other conspicuous country of antiquity. An important passage of Isocrates, hitherto unnoticed by writers on this subject, affords the best key for unlocking the concealments of Babylonian and Egyptian policy. In a discourse fraught with manly sense, flowing in a vein of the purest Atticism, it is the remark of Isocrates, that while the Athenians submitted to the natu-

⁴² "Why saidst thou she is my sister; so I might have taken her to me to wife," or better, "have brought it into my thoughts to take her." See Michaelis, *Genesis*, c. xii.

v. 18. and 19.

⁴³ Herodot. l. ii. Diodor. l. i. passim.

⁴⁴ Hist. of Ancient Greece, vol. i. c. 2. throughout.

ral and useful authority of the Areopagus, "their religious ceremonies were conducted with order and propriety, on which account the influences of the heavens operated without confusion and without terror, uniformly favourable to the labouring of the ground, and the reaping of its fruits ¹⁴⁴." In Egypt and Babylonia, the productions of the earth depended, as elsewhere, on the influences of the Heavens, but depended on them there, in a manner more visible and more striking, than in any other country that belongs to the subject of ancient history. When the hand of the Almighty operates slowly and with unvaried regularity, his actions are apt to pass unregarded, though then really the most sublime. But the sudden inundations of the Nile and Euphrates, dispensing alternately the greatest benefits and the greatest mischiefs, are phenomena which no indifference can overlook, and which no stupidity can disregard. Great, but without such greatness as is too vast for comprehension, with sufficient constancy to excite expectation, and yet with a degree of instability productive of anxiety and deep interest, those palpable and rapid changes on the face of nature could not fail to excite attention, even in the rudest minds, to the causes concerned in such extraordinary and momentous effects. But these important changes in the lower world are visibly connected with the vicissitudes of the seasons, and the revolutions of the heavenly luminaries, which luminaries were on this account early exalted into gods, with various families of priests for their vicegerents and ministers. In Ancient Egypt all professions were hereditary, as they still are in India; and in the former country, the sacerdotal cast had immemorially acquired such pre-eminence ¹⁴⁵ in knowledge above the other casts or races, whether shepherds, husbandmen, artificers, or soldiers, that attainments incapable of being measured, were therefore deemed boundless. The Egyptian priests had ascertained the sun's annual course ¹⁴⁶; their year

¹⁴⁴ Isocrates Areopagit. and my Translation of Lyfias and Isocrates, p. 4th 5. and seq.

¹⁴⁵ Strabo, l. xvii p. 787.

¹⁴⁶ Exodus, c. xii v. 2. xxxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22.

SECT. was sidereal, and regulated by Sirius ⁴⁷ the brightest star of heaven ;
II. and they were expert at calculating eclipses of the moon, which, from their power to foretel them, they were believed able to produce. The word in our Bibles rendered " Wizzard ⁴⁸ " literally and properly denotes a darkener of the moon. Can it then be matter of surprise, that those should be thought to hold much confidential intelligence with heavenly powers, who could not only predict but controul their operations, and at will heighten their splendour or deepen their obscurity ? Accordingly we find that sacerdotal families both in Egypt and Babylonia, had reared a fancied theocracy to be administered by themselves, on the foundations of real knowledge in astronomy, and of those imaginary supernatural sciences unalterably connected with it in the East ⁴⁹.

Egyptian
priests—their
attainments.

But the widening sphere of their activity ; I speak particularly of the priests of Egypt, extended itself to all those occupations and pursuits most conducive to the improvement of society. They were not only conversant with the celestial motions, regulating the rise and inundations of the Nile ; they were not only astronomers and seers, but geographers, engineers, architects, and physicians, directors of great undertakings in agriculture, and protectors through the sanctity of their temples, of that extended commerce which as the history of all ages attests, necessity will often produce and maintain among re-

⁴⁷ The theory of Sirius was particularly connected with their rural year, as will be shewn hereafter. Ptolemy has preserved an observation of the heliacal rising of Sirius on the 4th day after the summer solstice which makes the observation remount to the 2250th year before the Christian æra. Petavii Uranolog. Conf. Strabo, l. xvii. p. 806. and Aristot. Metaphys. l. i. c. 1. p. 806.

⁴⁸ Deuteronomy, c. xviii. v. 10.

⁴⁹ The text will be illustrated by the following incident. When Mr. Bruce arrived at Chendi, near the ancient Meroe, which will be spoken of pretently, he found the people " much alarmed at a phenomenon,

which though it occurs every four years, had by some strange inadvertency, never been observed even in this serene sky. The planet Venus appeared shining with an undiminished light all day. The people flocked to me from all quarters to know what it meant, and when they saw my telescopes and quadrant, could not be persuaded but that the star had become visible by some correspondence and intelligence with me, and for my use." Bruce's Travels, v. iv. p. 531. In China, where opinions are as unalterable as in Ethiopia, the prediction of eclipses still continues to be a powerful engine of government. Staunton's Embassy, v. ii. p. 95.

mote

mote and barbarous nations¹¹⁰. When in the language of antiquity, Egypt passed from the jurisdiction of Gods to that of men¹¹¹, her priests did not lose their prerogatives: they were amply endowed with lands¹¹²; they were perpetual and indispensable counsellors to the king¹¹³; even the extraordinary merit of Joseph must derive lustre from his marriage into the family of Potipherah¹¹⁴ priest of On or Heliopolis; they filled the places of governors and generals as well as those of ministers and judges; in one word, they continued to perform the same functions under earthly sovereigns chosen from their own body, which they had formerly exercised in the name of their heavenly protectors¹¹⁵.

Concerning the origin of the sacred families which acted this important part, there is so little historical information, that in the enquiry from whence they came, I shall neither entangle myself, nor have the presumption to detain my readers. The priests of Babylonia are traced with little show of reason to the Chaldeans or Chalybians, of whom we have above spoken; and the priests of Egypt have with small probability been derived from Abyssinian Troglodites; a people, as it should seem, that must have been unalterably condemned by the baneful qualities of their soil and climate, to the same condition of wandering barbarity, in which they are actually found¹¹⁶. But though the primitive stock of those venerated priests be unknown, history makes us acquainted with several of their branches or brethren, who preserved, as will be shewn, their hereditary characteristics, down to the bright age of Ptolemy Philadelphus. 2

¹¹⁰ Herodot. l. iv. c. 154 to c. 200. Comp. Mungo Park's Travels, African Researches, and Samuel Hearne's Journey with North American Indians, &c. to northern ocean, anno. 1769—1772, both inclusive.

¹¹¹ Herodot. l. ii. c. 143 & 145.

¹¹² Genesis, c. xlvii. v. 22.

¹¹³ Exodus, c. xix. v. 6. Conf. Diodorus, l. i. c. 29. iii. c. 6. and Strabo, l. i. p. 24.

¹¹⁴ Genesis, c. xli. v. 45.

¹¹⁵ Ως περὶ μὲν Αἰγυπτίους καὶ ἐξ ἑκαστοῦ χυρὸς ἱερατικῆς ἀρχῆς, &c. Plato in Politic. p. 550. Edit. Ficini. He adds, that a king not belonging to the sacerdotal cast, was a king by force only, not right: a strong proof of what is called in scripture, "the prerogatives of priests," Exodus, c. xix. v. 6.

¹¹⁶ Bruce's Travels, vol. iv. p. 388.

S E C T.

II.

Their brethren in
Ethiopia.

The sandy ocean of Africa, contained many ancient wonders in its vast bosom, of which the greatest was Meroe, a broad island, compared in form to a shield¹⁵⁷, between the thirteenth and eighteenth degrees of north latitude, washed on its eastern and western sides respectively, by the Astaboras and the Nile¹⁵⁸. Its capital, called also Meroe, stood near the site of the modern Chendi¹⁵⁹, was immemorably a great city¹⁶⁰, and so anciently connected with Thebes in Egypt, that the citizens of those places conjunctly¹⁶¹, each of which was then governed by its own magistrates, built the far famed temple of Jupiter Hammon, on a rich speck of the leopards skin¹⁶², ten days journey north west of Thebes, and now clearly proved to be the Oasis of Siwah¹⁶³. The Astaboras, now Takazzé, washing Meroe on the east is periodically joined by a still more eastern stream flowing from Tigré in Abyssinia, and called Mareb "the obscure," because it hides itself one part of the year in the sands, afterwards emerging in the rainy season to join the Takazzé¹⁶⁴. The Nile enclosing Meroe on the west, is in like manner joined fourscore miles south of Chendi by the Astapus, a more western river, which flows from remote and unknown sources far to the south west of Abyssinia, and which as it is very deep, and preserves during the whole year an undiminished stream, deserves to be regarded as surpassing the Abyssinian Nile, both in the mass of its waters, and the length of its course¹⁶⁵. Of this river Astapus¹⁶⁶, the main component part of the Egyptian Nile, none of the inquisitive antients were able to discover the source, and it has still concealed its head from the curiosity of the moderns¹⁶⁷.

¹⁵⁷ Diodorus, l. ii. c. 33.

¹⁵⁸ Bruce's Travels, v. iv. p. 539. Conf. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. v. c. 9.

¹⁵⁹ Bruce, *ibid.* Conf. Strabo, l. ii. p. 133, and l. xvii. p. 790.

¹⁶⁰ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 29.

¹⁶¹ Id. l. ii. c. 42.

¹⁶² Εὐκρινος σπερματί. Strabo, l. ii. p. 130.

¹⁶³ Rennel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 577 & seq.

¹⁶⁴ Bruce, v. iv. p. 539.

¹⁶⁵ Conf. Bruce, v. iv. p. 516, and Ren-

nel's Geography of Herodotus, p. 437.

¹⁶⁶ The Astapus is called the White river; the Abyssinian Nile is called the blue river from the comparative clearness of its waters. Bruce, vol. iv. p. 516 & 539.

¹⁶⁷ The Abyssinian sources of the Nile, which Mr. Bruce boasts of as his discovery, have been described by modern missionaries: they were known to the Greeks as will be seen hereafter, in the age of the Ptolemies: and even in that of Herodotus. Vid. l. ii. c. 30, 31.

SECT.
II.

Meroë, its
theocracy
and ancient
splendour.

Encompassed by watery boundaries so interesting in history, Meroë was celebrated for its profusion of precious metals, and of gems still more precious¹⁶⁸. It abounded beyond all countries in ebony; and with this valuable wood, it abounds to the present day¹⁶⁹. In the flourishing age of the Ethiopians, it is said to have been defended by upwards of two hundred thousand soldiers, and enriched by double that number of industrious artizans¹⁷⁰. But the circumstance especially deserving regard is, that it remained a theocracy or sacerdotal government down to the learned age of Ptolemy Philadelphus, when king Ergamenes of Meroë, who had imbibed enough of Greek philosophy to liberate him from cowardly superstition, but too little to teach him either humanity or good policy, massacred¹⁷¹ the collective body of priests, ministers of the golden temple, who had long and wisely governed both prince and people. Having committed this enormity, the usurper coerced by the arm of power a nation that had been immemorially governed by the mere force of opinion¹⁷². Before a melancholy revolution eternally fatal to the prosperity of Meroë, that island may be considered as the subsisting model of a government, anciently very prevalent, and which without arms, and with few corporal punishments¹⁷³, overawed the minds of men, and concentrated their exertions, taught them to rear temples, and form sacred enclosures, haunts indeed of superstition, but seats also of industry and commerce, and which by the labours of peace adorned many parts of the ancient continent with great cities before the iron age of

¹⁶⁸ Strabo, l. xvii. p. 821.

¹⁶⁹ Bruce, v. iii. p. 651.

¹⁷⁰ Plin. Nat. Hist. l. iv. c. 129.

¹⁷¹ Diodorus, l. iii. c. 6.

¹⁷² Diodor. *ibid.* The kings of Meroë, like the Lamas of Thibet, should seem to have been mere puppets in the hands of the priests. According to Diodorus, they were so completely dependent on them, that at the command of the priests, they were always ready

to end their lives.

¹⁷³ Οὐτε ὅπλοις οὐτε βία: When a Meroite had committed any great crime, the magistrate sent to him the symbol of death; and the guilty person retired to a private apartment, and became his own executioner. Diodorus. The Jesuits in Paraguay never exercised over their votaries such unbounded dominion.

SECT.
II.

Abyssinian
traditions
confirmed by
history and
monuments.

conquerors and destroyers. In a subsequent part of this work, we shall see other models of sacerdotal governments, subsisting in Lesser Asia down to the reign of Augustus.

The traditions of the Abyssinians, often of little value in themselves, are corroborated by history and monuments, when they affirm that their capital Axum, and to the south of Axum, Azab or Saba were anciently renowned for religion and traffick. Both these cities were intimately connected with Meroe, and Meroe itself stood in a similar connection with Thebes in Egypt, since the Thebans and Meroites established conjunctly the colony of Ammonium in Libya¹⁷⁴. The historical account of this establishment, as well as the near relationship¹⁷⁵ among all those remote cities, not to mention Elephantina, This, and Memphis, is strongly attested in the uniformity of their still subsisting remains; every where that massive Egyptian style, unrivalled in solidity and durability: huge pillars of stone, roofed with long parallel beams of the same unperishing material; and these either traversed by shorter ones, or lying contiguous to each other, and thus forming stupendous blocks thirty and sometimes forty feet long¹⁷⁶. The same relationship is attested in the agreement of Ethiopian and Egyptian hieroglyphics. That mode of writing, which after the invention of alphabetic characters, came to be confined in Egypt to sacred purposes, still continued to be employed for all ordinary transactions in Ethiopia¹⁷⁷. This latter country, having pre-

¹⁷⁴ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 49.

¹⁷⁵ This relationship asserted in the Abyssinian traditions, (Bruce's Travels, v. i. p. 408, &c.) is often alluded to in Scripture, "Great pain shall be in Ethiopia when the slain shall fall in Egypt." Ezekiel, c. xxx. v. 4. Again "when a fire is set in Egypt, in that day shall messengers go forth through the dry waste, to make the careless (better the secure) Ethiopians afraid." Ezekiel, c. xxx. v. 9, in Michaelis translation. Again, "the labour of Egypt, the merchandise of Ethiopia, &c." Isaiah, c. xlv.

v. 14. In describing the armour of the Ethiopians above Egypt, Herodotus says, that their arrows were pointed with a stone, instead of iron, and so hard that they employed it in carving their seals, l. vii. c. 67. Could this stone have been made use of for gravings not only the Ethiopian but Egyptian obelisks?

¹⁷⁶ Conf. Pococke, p. 86 & 92. Browne's Travels, p. 19 and seq. and Bruce's Travels, v. i. p. 121 & seq.

* ¹⁷⁷ Diodorus, l. iii. c. 4.

served its ancient theocratic government, also retained the ancient picture writing or symbols, which the priests of Thebes and Meroe had found highly useful, not in the affairs only of religion, but in those of common life, particularly in commerce. By casting an eye on the map of Africa, the reader will perceive that the various cities above named, form two distinct chains of staples or stations on opposite sides of the Nubian desert; one northward in the line of Elephantina, Thebes, This, and Memphis; another southward in the line of Meroe, Axum, Affab or Saba. Carriers were not wanting to connect the remotest emporia on opposite sides of the sandy ocean: the troops from Tema and Sheba, Arabian and Ethiopian nomades, whose commercial expeditions are conspicuous in the earliest records of the East ¹⁷⁸.

According to a justly celebrated Abyssinian traveller, whose information derives peculiar importance, from its agreement with that of books which had never happened to fall into his hands ¹⁷⁹, the Abyssinians immemorially traded by caravans through their southern provinces, with countries abounding in gold; and it is worthy of remark, that this commerce on the eastern coast of Africa, was transacted in the same singular manner ¹⁸⁰, afterwards adopted by the Carthaginians in dealing for the same metal on the coasts of the Atlantic. The arrivals of the Abyssinian caravans, and of the Carthaginian ships were equally announced by great fires; their cargoes were stowed in places which experience suggested to be the fittest for this purpose; the negroes came with their gold dust and deposited

¹⁷⁸ Job, c. vi. v. 19.

¹⁷⁹ This observation was formerly made by me in 1790, in a criticism on Mr. Bruce's Travels, which, though anonymous, excited some attention both at home and abroad. The Abyssinian notices concerning their golden commerce, I found confirmed by Agatharchides of Cnidus apud Photium Biblioth. Cod. ccl. This made me search for confirmations in antiquity of other reports prevalent among that people: and the fruit

of my researches led into the train of thought which runs through this survey, with regard to the vast extent and high importance of commerce by caravans. The same subject has been since treated at much length, and with great ability in Mr. Heeren's work intitled, *Ideen über die Politik den Verkehr und den Handel*, &c. above cited. ¹⁸⁰ Herodot. l. iv. c. 196. Conf. Cosm. Indicopleust. apud Montfaucon. Nov. Collect. tom. ii.

SECT.

II.

such a quantity as appeared to be a fair price: if the foreign traders approved that price, the gold was carried away and the merchandise left in exchange: if they thought the valuation too low, the negroes brought more gold; but never carried away the goods, until the price of them had been accepted by their foreign visitants¹⁸¹. This dumb traffic subsists between the Libyans and Ethiopians to the present day¹⁸².

Sabæa.

The countries just spoken of, Egypt, and Ethiopia above Egypt, are separated by the Red sea from Arabia, a vast triangle whose sides are formed by that sea and the Persian gulph, and whose basis is the Indian ocean. The desert regions towards its centre, might be not improperly classed with the sandy Sakara in correspondent latitudes of Africa. But in many parts nearer to the coast, and particularly at Sabæa¹⁸³ on the Red sea, and Omanum¹⁸⁴ on the Persian gulph, Arabia admits the culture of vines and of palm trees; and from participating in those ordinary benefits was naturally viewed by men, as they emerged from the gloom of the neighbouring wilderness, with a delight heightened by contrast, and described with transports stronger and more glowing than the greatest insulated beauty is able to inspire¹⁸⁵. It was called the "Happy Arabia," a name which Sabæa more particularly deserved, as the land of frankincense, an article of inestimable value among nations with whom perfumes were favourite and habitual luxuries, and which being highly prized, and extravagantly indulged in by themselves, were superstitiously consumed in vast profusion on the altars of their gods. But the culture of frankincense was not confined to Sabæa, the modern Yemen: it extended to the opposite side of the Arabian gulph, over a territory in Ethiopia now called Adel, five hundred miles in length. Adel and Yemen

¹⁸¹ Herodot. l. iv. c. 796.

¹⁸² Histoire de Voyages, tom. ii. p. 294, and Shaw's Travels, vol. i. p. 392.

¹⁸³ Sabæa, on the eastern side of the Red sea nearly corresponds to Yemen.

¹⁸⁴ The ancient name is still retained in modern Oman.

¹⁸⁵ Ἡ δὲ Σαβαῖα ἀδύποιστος, &c. Strabo, l. xvi. p. 778.

respective capitals known to strangers by the common appellation of Saba; which name as it prevailed in other parts¹⁸⁶, may be conjectured to signify any great staple of frankincense. This main object of antient commerce occupied the stationary peasant in its culture, and the travelling shepherd in its transport; and so much abounded on both sides of the Red sea, that it was sometimes used by the natives for firewood¹⁸⁷.

SECT.
II.

But another article equally recommended by luxury, and demanded by imperious necessity, was wanting in both Ethiopias, as Adel and Yemen were sometimes called¹⁸⁸. This article is spice in all its different kinds, essential as a preservative against putrid maladies in all warm countries, especially those frequently laid under water, either by the natural floods of rivers, or by artificial irrigations for the purposes of tillage. Pepper was conveyed, as we have seen, from India to Egypt by caravans, as early as the age of Joseph. To obtain the same commodity by sea, the Sabæans gradually explored the coasts between the Arabian and Persian gulph; became the first navigators on the Erythræan sea, and thus rendered the two Sabas emporia for the aromatics of the coast of Malabar as well as for the spices of Taprobana or Ceylon; so that the happy Arabia in addition to its native perfumes, early breathed foreign odours of a still superior quality. The traditions of the Abyssinians concerning the high antiquity of this extensive maritime traffic, receive countenance from important notices in sacred and profane history. When Abram according to the injunction of the Almighty, migrated from northern Mesopotamia or Armenia to the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean sea, he found "the Canaanite already in the land," of whom in Scriptural language, Sidon is called "the first born;" in other words, the first colony planted by Canaanites on the Mediterranean coast. Who those Canaanites, the builders of Sidon, were, we know distinctly

Syrian and
Phœnician
staples.

¹⁸⁶ Josephus Antiq. Judaic. l. ii. c. 5.

¹⁸⁷ Strabo, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Vid. Michaelis ad Isaiam, c. xlv. v. 24.

SECT.
II.

from Herodotus. They were the tribe of Sabæans called Homerites; an ingenious people, conversant with astronomy and medicine¹⁹⁰, above all devoted to the culture of their language and of poetry, for which they had competitions and assemblies resembling the four sacred games of Greece¹⁹¹. Their name Homerites denotes in Arabic either the palm tree or the purple colour, and the name Phœnicians, it is well known, has the same double signification in Greek. These Homerites or Phœnicians transported themselves gradually from the happy Arabia or Sabæa, stopping occasionally at various harbours in the Red Sea, from the last of which halting places, called afterwards Phœnicum Oppidum, they travelled northwards to the Mediterranean, and established themselves on that part of the coast which became so famous under the name of Phœnicia, which it derived from its new inhabitants. The incidents attending this colonization are unknown, but the purpose for which it was effected speedily and visibly declared itself in the commercial exertions of the Phœnicians, whose shores seventeen centuries before Christ are said to have been covered with ships as with a garment¹⁹²; and who shortly after that period appear from profane writers, to have exchanged in their markets the metals of Spain and Britain for all the most coveted productions of the East and South¹⁹³. Even before that early date the migration of Abram above-mentioned, points to a subsisting commercial communication between the countries around the Mediterranean sea and those of Upper Asia. In the age of that patriarch, Damascus was already a well known city¹⁹⁴. Emessa or Hems, Epiphania or Hamath, and Hieropolis the temple of the Syrian goddess on the right

¹⁹⁰ Pococke Specileg. Hist. Arab.

¹⁹¹ Schultens Præfat. ad Monument. Vetust. Arab.

¹⁹² Genesis, c. xlix. v. 13. which Michaelis translates, "mit schiffen bekleidet." Herodotus, l. i. c. 1. says of the Homerites or Phœnicians, that at their first settlement on the coast of the Mediterranean

αὐτοὶ καὶ ναυτίλωνται μακροὶ ἐπὶ θάλασσαν, &c.

¹⁹³ Herodot. l. ii. c. 163. l. iii. c. 3. Strabo, l. iii. p. 224. Diodorus, l. iv. c. 17. and Aristot. Opera, vol. i. p. 1163. Compare Gesner de navigationibus extra columnas Herculis, annexed to his edition of Orpheus, and Heeren in his Ideen, &c. above cited.

¹⁹⁴ Genesis, c. xiv. v. 15.

S E C T.

II.

bank of the Euphrates, were stations or emporia which all of them remounted to immemorial antiquity. It should seem, therefore, that travelling traders between Upper and Lower Asia already explored the routes which they were destined thenceforwards to pursue, and perhaps had discovered those hidden secrets of the wilderness, which enabled them boldly to plunge through the sandy ocean of Palmyra or Tadmor, a station not established, but enlarged and strengthened by Solomon¹⁰⁴, and adorned under the first successors of Alexander, with those prodigies of architectural magnificence, which, though totally unnoticed by ancient authors, clearly tell even in ruins their own story; ruins still attesting the magnitude of commerce carried on by caravans, since to that solely, Palmyra owed its opulence and splendour.

Having given a general account of the cities round the Red Sea, "works of the wonderful strength of Egypt and Ethiopia"¹⁰⁵, and having surveyed also those in Assyria which in process of time became still more wonderful, it remains to speak of the marts of traffic and superstition in Ariana and the peninsula of Lesser Asia. In each of those great regions, in the midst of savage ferocity and rude barbarism, the routes of commerce were marked with opulence and elegance: great cities subsisted and flourished, protected through the influence of superstition rather than the strength of arms; under priestly magistrates "whose eye was their law and whose tongue was their oracle"¹⁰⁶, war-like Nomades mixed in salutary intercourse with peaceful artizans¹⁰⁷; and on the shores of the Euxine and Caspian, as well as in the central route before described through Asia, there were many bold and useful undertakings and many indubitable proofs of very high civili-

Babylon, Bactra, and Persinus, in reference to the three great divisions of Asia.

¹⁰⁴ 1 Kings, c. xix. v. 18.

¹⁰⁵ Nahum. c. iij, v. 8. and 9.

¹⁰⁶ On him their second providence they hung,

Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue,

He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,

Taught to command the fire, controul the flood.

Essay on Man, Epist. ii.

¹⁰⁷ Stephanus de urb. Artic. Asia.

SECT.
II.

zation¹⁹⁶. But as in history general description, how well soever it may be authenticated, never supercedes the necessity of particular and precise facts, I shall, in reference to the threefold division above given of Asia, having already spoken of Babylon in Assyria, now give some account of Bactra in Ariana, and of Pessinus in Lesser Asia.

Some account of
Bactra,

Bactra is renowned in the middle ages under the name of Balch, as the capital of the warlike kingdom of Khorosm, east of the Caspian, and the seat of such sullen magnificence as was then not unfrequently displayed by Saracens and Tartars. It enjoyed earlier and fairer fame as the head¹⁹⁷ of a province dismembered from the empire of the Seleucidae, Syrian successors of Alexander, sixty-nine years after the death of that conqueror, and two hundred and fifty-five years before the Christian æra. In the preceding chapter of this work, we have seen the importance annexed by the politic not less than valiant Macedonian to the intermediate territory between Scythia and India, and the comparatively powerful garrisons which he stationed there. The Greek Theodotus, who commanded in Bactria under Antiochus Theus, threw off his allegiance to that prince, and asserted independant sovereignty. From this time forward, Bactria, in the rank of a kingdom, subsisted an hundred and twenty-nine years until the Grecian dynasty was swept away by a resistless torrent of Scythians, flowing from the confines of China into the countries on this side the Iaxartes¹⁹⁸. Before this sad catastrophe,

¹⁹⁶ The enterprize, ascribed by Greek mythologists to the Argonauts, of opening a passage for the stagnant waters of the Araxes and thereby gaining a fine plain and a free navigation to the Caspian, indicates intelligence as well as boldness. Strabo, l. xi. p. 53. The immemorial linen manufactory of the Colchians was considered as a proof of their Egyptian descent. Herodot. l. ii. c. 105. Conf. Strabo, l. xi. p. 498. They were a commercial colony established by the

Egyptians on the Euxine.

¹⁹⁷ Justin, l. xli. c. 4. and Strabo, l. xi. p. 516. and l. xv. p. 686.

¹⁹⁸ Strabo, l. xi. p. 511. De Guignes Mem. sur la Bactriane in Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscript. vol. xlii. 8vo. edit. The French academician who derived his notice of the subversion of the Greek kingdom of Bactria from Chinese history, did not know that Strabo's account of that matter perfectly coincided with the annals of China. *

Bactra acquired under Theodotus, and enjoyed under his five Grecian successors a high degree of splendour as the capital of Ariana, and the commercial rendezvous of nations. Its enterprising traders made themselves masters of various strong-holds in India, and particularly of Pattala, an emporium built, as we have seen, by Alexander at the apex of the Indian Delta; they carried on an extensive and advantageous intercourse with what was then called the kingdom of the Greeks, comprehending Assyria, Syria, and many provinces in Lesser Asia; while their own crowded markets were frequented by powerful caravans from Scythia and India²⁰¹.

By the brighter lines of comparatively modern history, it seemed fit to restore the dim features of Bactra as it appears on the remote eastern horizon twelve hundred and thirty years before the Christian æra. At that early period, this city long flourishing as it is represented in arts and industry, formed one of the most important²⁰² conquests of Ninus and his Assyrians, when with the assistance of Arabian Nomades, they established the first great monarchy. Before this æra of war and desolation, Bactra is celebrated in the uniform traditions of Asia²⁰³ and Europe as the seat of science as well as of commerce, governed by Zoroaster, whom some writers call a king, others a high priest; doubtless because he united both characters; and to whom all authors of any credit ascribe pre-eminent power, while they concur in assigning to him the most venerable antiquity²⁰⁴.

²⁰¹ Strabo ubi supra, and Bayer de Hist. Reg. Græc. Bactrian.

²⁰² Diodorus, l. ii. c. 6. and Justin, l. i. c. 1.

²⁰³ The historians of Persia make the foundation of Balk, the city of Zoroaster, remount to the year 3209 before Christ. Conf. D'Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. Article Balk, and Bailli Astronomie Ancienne, p. 354. This is the oldest astronomical æra of any, since that of the Indian monarchy corresponds with the year 3101 before Christ; that of China with the year 2952; and that of

both Egypt and Chaldæa with the year 2800. I have no faith in history founded solely on astronomy, whose phenomena may by calculation be extended indefinitely backward as well as forward. My purpose is answered by showing that with regard to the antiquity of Bactra, the traditions of the Orientals concur with better sources of information.

²⁰⁴ See the authorities collected by Stanley Oriental Philosophy; by Fabricius Bibliothec. Græc. l. i. c. 36. p. 243. and in Moyle's Works, vol. ii. p. 19.

SECT.
II.

His name might be assumed at various times by different teachers among the fire worshippers, or magi, for this kind of superstition spread from Bactria to Media, and from thence to Persia; it might in particular be usurped by an imposter in the time of Darius Hytaspis, who is said in the wild romances of modern Persia to have reformed the religion of his country, and to have first taught the Persians to worship in temples. But such fables are totally unworthy of regard, since we have the decisive authority of Xenophon, who had viewed the Persians, not merely with the eye of a soldier, that their religion remained the same and unaltered²⁰⁵ from the age of Cyrus, founder of their dynasty: a cloud of witnesses also attest that the Persians neither worshipped in temples nor ever erected such edifices during the existence of their empire²⁰⁶; and the practice of temple worship they should seem to have adopted slowly and reluctantly in their humiliated state through the persuasion or authority of their Grecian conquerors. With the Persian Zerdusht we are not in this early part of history in any manner concerned: but in the Bactrian Zoroaster, whose name bears a reference²⁰⁷ to his proficiency in astronomy, we recognize a faithful agreement with the picture above given of the Babylonian and Egyptian priesthood: the same attainments in knowledge, and the same application of them; for the maintenance, indeed, of his own authority, but also to the conspicuous benefit of those over whom it was exercised²⁰⁸.

and of Pessinus.

The same rank which Bactra held in Ariana, Pessinus appears to have early acquired in Lesser Asia²⁰⁹. Pessinus stood in the finest plain of Phrygia, which was anciently the most important as well as largest province in that peninsula. It was washed by the river San-

²⁰⁵ Xenoph. Cyropæd. l. viii. p. 104. and p. 138. & seq.

²⁰⁶ Herodot. l. i. c. 134. Cicero de Leg. l. ii. c. 10. Dion. apud Clemen. Alexand. in Protrept. p. 56.

²⁰⁷ Diogen. Laert. in Proem. and Suidas ad Voc.

²⁰⁸ Hennipp. apud Arnob. advers. Gent. Conf. Strabo, l. i. p. 24.

²⁰⁹ Pessinuntem ipsam, sedem domicilii-
umque matris Deorum: quam reges omnes
qui Asiam Europamque transierunt, semper
summæ religionis coluerunt. Cicero pro
Sextio.

garius, and in the near vicinity of the castle and palace of Gordium, revered for its mysterious knot involving the fate of Asia, and which had remained for upwards of a thousand years untied, when it was finally cut by the sword of Alexander ²¹⁰. Pessinus was thus situate in a district of high celebrity, and on the great caravan road which we formerly traced through the smooth and central division of the Asiatic peninsula. This road in approaching the sea-coast split into three branches, leading into Mysia, Lydia, and Caria; small but important provinces, which shone in arts and industry many ages before their winding shores were occupied by Grecian colonies. From Lydia, then called Mæonia, Pelops carried into Greece his golden treasures, the source of power ²¹¹ to his family in the peninsula to which he communicated the name of Peloponnesus. To the Lydians and Carians; many inventions are ascribed bespeaking much ingenuity and early civilization ²¹². The coast of Mysia was embraced by the venerable kingdom of Priam, the Hellespontian Phrygia; and the more inland Phrygians who were said to have colonized that maritime district, pretended on grounds, some of them solid, and others extremely frivolous ²¹³, to vie in antiquity with the Egyptians themselves. The three nations of Phrygians, Lydians, and Carians were intimately connected with each other by the community of religious rites as well as by the ties of blood and language. They accordingly exhibited a striking uniformity in manners and pursuits, which, to a reader conversant with Roman history, may be described most briefly by observing that the principal features of their character are faithfully delineated in the effeminacy, ingenuity, and pompous vanity of the Tuscans, a kindred people, and their reputed descendants ²¹⁴.

²¹⁰ Arrian, *Exped. Alexand.* l. i. c. 59.

²¹¹ Thucydides, l. i. p. 6.

²¹² Herodotus, l. i. c. 94. and 171.

²¹³ Herodot. *ibid.* Conf. Timotheus apud

Arnob. *advers. Gent.* l. v. and Lucretius *de Natur. Deor.* l. iii. v. 612. & seq.

²¹⁴ Herodot. l. i.

S E C T.

II.

These industrious and polished but unwarlike inhabitants on the coast of the *Ægean* were connected by many links with Upper Asia, but particularly by Pessinus, the ancient capital of the Phrygian kings²¹⁶, and at the same time the first and principal sanctuary in those parts of the mother of the gods, thence called the Pessinuntian²¹⁶ Goddess, and more frequently the *Idæan Mother*, Cybele, Berecynthia, Dindymenê, names all of them derived from her long established worship on neighbouring mountains. The festivals of Cyl ele are selected in poetical description²¹⁷ as among the most showy and magnificent in paganism : and both the commerce and the superstition of Pessinus continued to flourish in vigour even down to the reign of Augustus²¹⁸. But in his age the ministers of the divinity, though they still continued magistrates of the city, had exceedingly declined in opulence and power²¹⁹; and instead of being independant sovereigns with considerable revenues, might be described in modern language in a work less grave than history, as a sort of prince bishops, vassals and mere creatures of Rome. To the west of Pessinus, the city Morena in Mysia, and to the east of it, Morimena, Zela, and Comana in the great central province of Cappadocia, exhibited institutions exactly similar²²⁰ to each other, and all nearly resembling those of the Phrygian capital. In the Augustan age, all those cities still continued to be governed by sacerdotal families, to which they had been subject from *immemorial*²²¹ antiquity: they all stood on the great caravan road through Lesser Asia; and in all of them the terms marked by festivals and processions, were also distinguished by great

²¹⁶ Diodor. l. iii. c. 59. Amm. Marcellin. l. xxi.

²¹⁶ Εκ τῆς πρῆστης ἀγάλματος. Herodian, l. i. c. 25. Of that statue, or rather symbol, which descended from heaven, Livy speaks, l. xxix. c. 10, 11. B. C. 205. It was to the Romans then hovering over Asia, what the Gordian knot had been to Alexander : and a religious piece of machinery as easily overthrown by them.

²¹⁷ Qualis Berecynthia mater
Invehitur curru Phrygiæ turrata per urbes.
Eneid. vi. 785.

and Lucretius, l. ii. v. 623.
Horrificæ fertur divinæ matris imago, &c.

²¹⁸ Strabo, l. xii. p. 574.

²¹⁹ Id. ibid.

²²⁰ Strabo, l. xi. p. 537. and l. xii. p. 559.

²²¹ Strabo loc. citat. & l. xiv. p. 672.

fairs, not only frequented by neighbouring nations, but also numerously attended by traders from Upper Asia, and even by distant²²¹ Nomades. Conformably with these circumstances in their favour, the routes of commerce traced a clear and distinct line of civilization and wealth, thus visibly contrasted with the rudeness and poverty of many remote parts of the peninsula, with the savageness of the Isaurians and Pisidians; with the half-barbarous Bithynians and Paphlagonians²²²; in a word, with all those divisions of the country, which lay beyond the genial influence of commerce introduced and upheld by superstition, and superstition enriched, embellished, and confirmed by the traffic, which it protected and extended.

²²¹ Strabo loc. cit. and Stephanus de Urb. Lesser Asia, barbarous as well as civilized, are related in the following work in connection with the general history of the empire.

²²² The transactions of all the nations in

PRELIMINARY SURVEY

OF

ALEXANDER'S CONQUESTS.

SECTION III.

Reasons for entering into a more particular Account of the Arts.—These best exemplified among the Egyptians and Phœnicians:—I. With regard to the Augmentation and Improvement of the Articles of Food.—II. The Composition and Embellishment of the Articles of Raiment.—III. The Means of procuring solid and secure Habitations. — Egyptian Architecture: — I. Temples. — II. Mausolea.—The Labyrinth and Tomb of Osymandyas.—III. Obelisks.—IV. Pyramids.—Reign of Sesostris.—Different Races in Egypt.—Senacherib's Invasion.—State of Judæa and Egypt at that Period.—Greatness of Tarako, the Ethiopian.—Destruction of the Assyrian Army.—Revolt of the Assyrian Provinces.—Nineveh demolished by Cyaxares and Nebopolassar.—Babylon the new Capital of Assyria.—Jealousy of Necos King of Egypt.—He gains the Battle of Megiddo.—Invades Mesopotamia, and garrisons Circesium.—Nebuchadnezzar associated in Government with his Father Nebopolassar.—He forms an Engine of Defence and glorious Victory.—Battle of Circesium.

SECT. III.

Reasons for entering into a more particular account of the arts.

THE operations of commerce described in the preceding section, being carried on by crowded caravans, are more open to observation, than the highest efforts of industry and ingenuity in such useful or agreeable arts as are commonly exercised in the privacy of domestic retirement. When the productions, indeed, of these arts remain in a tolerably perfect state, they recount impressively their own history; and turn our attention with delight to the energies of those noble minds by which they were contrived and created.

But when the destructive hand of time has reduced the works to ruins, their authors will be robbed of due praise; and the nations which nursed and cherished them, will be divested of those characteristic pre-eminences, independently of which, their wars, victories or defeats, can never become a matter of serious and deep interest with posterity. But here it is the duty of the historian to interpose his utmost diligence, in collecting all the scattered notices on record, with regard to whatever forms the object of ingenious contrivance or commendable pursuit. From this more intimate acquaintance with remote nations, attention will be awakened to their concerns: we shall take part in their prosperity and in their glory; real sympathy will be excited for their sufferings; and our fancies being thus prepared for the scenes exhibited to view, will invest with form, and adorn with colouring, the meagre and shapeless skeletons that in the page of ancient history, too often rattle their dry bones in harmless conflicts of unheeded warfare. The discussions into which it will be necessary for this purpose to enter, are essential also to my main design of surveying distinctly the various countries, which, after submitting to the valour of Alexander, were to become the objects of his enlightened policy; and with regard to some of which, his plans were partially adopted by his immediate successors.

In connection with the rise of Nineveh, and the magnificence of that first great capital of Asia, I had occasion to speak of the high-minded Ninus and Semiramis, with their mixed army of Assyrians and Arabians. But in the revolution which undermined the power of Nineveh, and caused it to be finally supplanted by Babylon, the city chosen by Alexander for the head of his empire, all those eastern nations appear with conspicuous effect, that deserve celebrity either by their prowess or their wisdom. It will be necessary in particular to make known Senacherib the Assyrian, and Tarako the Ethiopian; Belshys the Babylonian, and Arbaces the Mede; (whose

Nations concerned in the revolution by which Babylon supplanted Nineveh.

† Strabo, l. xv. p. 731.

S^EL^EC^T.
III.

supposed transactions will be shewn exactly to accord with those ascribed on better authority to Nebopolassar and Cyaxares;) in fine I shall have to introduce Necos the enterprising king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar the more powerful and more renowned king of Babylon. In opposition to the erroneous notions concerning the extent of the antient Assyrian empire, this king of Babylon will appear to have been the first prince beyond the Euphrates, who consolidated his dominion over Aram on this side the river; that is the Proper Syria. The same conqueror, as is well known, gained Jerusalem after a siege of eighteen months, and dragged its inhabitants into captivity; he also overcame after a siege of thirteen years, and totally demolished the great commercial city of Tyre on the continent, a place infinitely surpassing in magnitude and importance insular Tyre, which succeeded to its name, and which, in the page of history, commonly usurps its renown.

Arts cultivated by those nations best exemplified among the Egyptians and Phœnicians.

In prosecuting the vast subject before me, I shall begin with the Egyptians and Phœnicians, concerning whose institutions and inventions, there are details equally respectable for their authenticity, and interesting by their copiousness. Both nations were dreadful sufferers in the conflict that established a new empire, and raised up a new capital in Asia: both survived their disasters, and became in the hands of Alexander, principal agents in effecting his noblest and most useful purposes. Egypt, besides, under the brother of that conqueror, the first Ptolemy, acquired and long maintained a decided pre-eminence among all the new Greek kingdoms erected in the East. The regular and connected annals of Egypt, will be embodied in subsequent parts of the present work: the observations which immediately follow are of a preparatory nature, affording a succinct view of the antiquities of a country, of which, as a Greek kingdom, I shall endeavour to present a clear and complete history.

Intimate connection formed be-

When the transactions of Egypt first connect themselves with those of Greece, the inheritance of the Pharaohs had fallen into the hands

of

of twelve petty princes, who like the Beys of modern times, combated each other, and distracted their common country. About the middle of the seventh century before Christ, Psammetichus, one of the twelve, was enabled through the assistance of Greek pirates, Ionians and Carians, to crush his competitors, and to assume undivided sovereignty¹. Having conquered Egypt by Greeks, the gratitude of Psammetichus conspired with good policy, towards establishing his benefactors in camps endowed with lands, on the Pelusiæ or eastern branch of the Nile; from which settlement their descendants removed about a century afterwards to the capital Memphis, that they might serve as body² guards to king Amasis, another illustrious usurper. From the time of Psammetichus, but especially in the forty four years of Amasis's reign, the Greeks and Egyptians maintained a closer intimacy with each other, than ever prevailed between any two nations of antiquity, that stood not decidedly in the endearing relations of metropolis and colony. The youths of Egypt were taught the Greek tongue³; commerce was industriously cultivated between the two countries; and in perpetual succession of time, the philosophers Pythagoras and Plato⁴, the historians Hecataeus⁵ and Herodotus⁶, with many intervening travellers as studious of knowledge⁷ as their trading fellow citizens were greedy after gain, visited the venerable mother of inventions and of arts, and endeavoured to disrobe the concealed majesty of religious and civil wisdom, for which the Egyptians had been renowned from the first dawn of tradition. Before entering however under such guides, the palaces and temples and factories of Thebes and Memphis, and from connections that will afterwards appear more clearly, those of Axum, Saba, Nineveh, Basra, and many other remote cities, it will be prudent to carry

S E C T.
III.
between Egypt
and Greece.
Olymp.
xxx. i. B.C.
665.

¹ Herodot. l. ii. c. 151, 152.

² Ibid. l. ii. c. 178 & seq.

³ Id. ibid.

⁴ Diogen. Lært. in Pythagor. and Platon, and Strabo, l. xviii. p. 806.

⁵ Hecataeus was a great traveller, and had

probably collected the fruits of his travels in the *περὶ τῆς Ἀσίας* mentioned by Stephanus Byzant. de Urb. Voc. Ἀσάγος.

⁶ Herodot. l. ii. c. 43.

⁷ Diodorus, l. i. f. 96.

with

S E C T.
III.

State of
Egypt as il-
lustrated in
the story of
Joseph. B.C.
1728—1635.

with us lights from a more hallowed shrine, to dispel the dark vapour of illusion with which we might otherwise be surrounded.

Two centuries after the journey of Abram into Egypt, of which we have already spoken, the simple story of Joseph exhibits an impressive model of true virtue, beyond any that ever was created by all the richness of fancy. The lovely frankness, it is well known, of the young shepherd, instead of conciliating and rivetting, as it ought to have done, the affections of his brethren, provoked their jealousy and hatred, and subjected him to the misery of being sold to an Arabian caravan, carrying spices into Egypt⁹. Through extraordinary endowments bestowed on him by the Almighty, the unhappy slave who had been purchased for twenty shekels of silver¹⁰, was raised to offices and honours that clearly characterise the authority of grand vizier, already introduced it should seem, into this eastern monarchy. Pharaoh surrounded his neck with a golden chain as a badge of dignity, arrayed his body with vestures of fine linen, adorned his hand with his own ring or signet, and made him ride in a chariot appropriate to the man next in place to the king, and who in effect exercised the whole kingly power¹¹. In the officers also of the royal household, particularly the captain of the royal guards, entrusted at the same time with the criminal jurisdiction, we perceive the still prevalent and unalterable customs of the East; though the slow punishment of a slave for the imputed enormity of insulting his master's wife, indicates a degree of forbearance and caution, a faint ray of civilization, long extinct in all those unhappy countries. Through the whole narrative, there are not any indications of the profusion of precious metals ascribed by profane writers to Egypt at a somewhat later period¹². The small price paid for the person of Joseph, his

⁹ Genesis, c. xxxvii.

¹⁰ The ordinary shekel is valued at half a crown; that in the time of Joseph is thought to have been of less weight. Michaelis Anmerk. Genesis, c. xlv. v. 22.

¹¹ The man who is the Lord of the land spoke roughly to us. Genesis, c. xlii. v. 30. In 1 Maccab. c. ii. v. 53, Joseph is called *κυριος της Αιγυπτου*.

¹² Diodorus Siculus, l. i. sect. 49 & seq.

single cup of silver, and the three hundred pieces of that metal, which the dispenser of royal munificence bestowed on his beloved Benjamin, affords reason to infer, that the golden treasures of Ethiopia had not yet been ransacked with very successful diligence¹³, and that the Phœnicians had not yet diffused in great abundance the silver of Tarshish or Tartessus over the eastern world¹⁴.

S E C T.

III.

The transactions of Abram and Joseph afford a glimpse of Egypt as united at very early periods, under one great monarchy; but the third and most important view of that country in scripture, is given at the æra of Hebrew deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The children of Israel had been reduced into that wretched condition under the dynasty of shepherds, accumulated hordes of Ethiopian Nomades, who had invaded and conquered Egypt at a period¹⁵ between the age of Joseph and that of Moses. In this revolution we find every thing conformable with the ordinary current of oriental transactions. It was, and has always continued the perpetual misfortune of civilized communities in that division of the world, never to have attained a proficiency in arms, or adopted a style of warfare qualifying men resident in cities, and cultivating sedentary arts, steadily and successfully to resist the occasional irruptions of neighbouring nomades; whose uneducated chiefs could never distinguish between the proper use, and the grossest abuse of wealth, and to whom therefore the conquest of flourishing cities, only supplied the means of exasperating, by the irritations of voluptuousness, their precipitate forwardness and native ferocity. Under a prince of this character, known by the common appellation of Pharaoh or Sultan, the Hebrews were subject to the cruellest and most capricious vexations. In the fertile triangle stretching from Heliopolis, its summit

Revolution in the interval between Joseph and Moses—and state of Egypt at the æra of Jewish emigration. B. C. 1421.

¹³ Agatharchides de Muri Rubro apud Phot. Biblioth. p. 1339 & seq.

¹⁴ Aristot. de Muabil. Opera, tom. i. p. 1163. Conf. 1 Maccab. c. viii. v. 3. and Diodorus, l. v. f. 35.

¹⁵ Conf. Exodus, c. i. v. 8. and Herodotus,

l. ii. c. 100. The new king "who knew not Joseph," nor his merits towards the Egyptian nation, well accords with the notices in profane history, concerning the king of a new dynasty.

SECT.
III.

near the site of the modern Cairo, towards the Mediterranean on one side, and the Red Sea on the other, the small tribe of Hebrews containing in it only sixty eight males, had grown to a nation of two millions and a half of souls¹⁶; since the fighting men alone amounted to six hundred thousand, or according to a nicer computation, to six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty persons¹⁷. To prevent or reduce this dangerous and growing population, for the Hebrews were shepherds and soldiers, Pharaoh tasked them with hard labour; he condemned them to provide materials for his vast buildings; and many of them were employed in rearing new and stronger walls round Pithom and Raamses¹⁸, antient fortresses containing the royal magazines. Another still viler expedient of which the tyrant made use to intercept the formidable populousness of the Israelites, was, his cruel order to the midwives to destroy their infant males¹⁹; a transaction as usually understood, wearing an air of improbability, yet on a nearer examination, entirely consistent with the customs and institutions of the Egyptians, represented with much uniformity by authors who differ perpetually and widely about their chronology and history. In ancient Egypt, medicine in general, and several of its branches were distinct and hereditary professions, exercised under precise and severe regulations, for the observance of which by their substitutes, the heads of its different departments were amenable to the magistrates²⁰. This explanation will remove our surprise that Pharaoh should have addressed only two midwives, as if these could have sufficed for so great a nation; and it gives a natural turn to their excuse for not executing the king's atrocious orders, namely, that the Hebrew women being livelier than the Egyptian,

¹⁶ The Israelites inhabited the "best of the land." Genesis, c. xlvii. v. 6, that is the fittest for pasturage: in which district the Consul Maillet (*Descript. de L'Egypte*) says, "the grass grows to the height of a man, and so thick that an ox may feed a whole day lying on the ground."

¹⁷ Conf. Exodus, c. xii. v. 37, and Numbers. c. i. v. 46.

¹⁸ Exodus, c. i. v. 11.

¹⁹ Id. c. i. v. 15. & seq.

²⁰ Aristot. *Politie.* l. iii. c. 2. Conf. Herodot. l. i. c. 65,

SECT.
III.

were delivered without the usual intervention of public functionaries²¹. The extraordinary interpositions of the Almighty, which blasted all the designs of this detestable tyrant, are recorded in that history, with which from our youth we are most familiar. But it is worthy of remark, that of the wonderful phenomenon which enabled the Israelites to pass the Red Sea in safety, the memory is preserved in a pagan historian, who authenticates it by reference to a different source of information, even that of the actual inhabitants of the district²². It must also be observed that Pharaoh's army which perished in that sea in his furious pursuit, consisted of chariots and horsemen; because horsemen in the sense of cavalry, were not used by the Greeks till eight centuries after this period, that is five centuries after the war of Troy; and both cavalry and chariots ceased in process of time to be employed by the Egyptians, in consequence of the perpetual interfections of their country by canals, which rendered such sorts of troops altogether unserviceable²³.

The minute interfections of the Delta, doubtless contributed in Egypt towards agricultural and commercial prosperity. Yet at the era of the Jewish emigration, wonderful exertions had already been made, both for multiplying the necessaries of life at home, and for procuring its accommodations from abroad. In treating of the attainments and enjoyments of the Egyptians, I shall consider the three main articles of food, clothing, and habitation. The last of these will lead me to their ornamental architecture; and this, again, will be found intimately connected with all their noblest discoveries in the arts and sciences. I begin, as necessity requires, with a brief survey of the country.

Division of
the subject.

From the mouths of the Nile and the Mediterranean, Egypt extended in length five hundred and thirty miles to Syenè and the tropic of Cancer, comprehending in its breadth the mountains on

Egypt
described.

²¹ *Ἀναμύρητοι*.

Exodus, c. xix.

²² Conf. Diodorus, l. iii. sect. 40. and

²³ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 108.

S E C T.

III.

both sides the river, as far as the Red Sea on the right, and the sands of Libya on the left. In its utmost dimensions the country falls far short of Great Britain; yet, before it was ravaged successively by the kings of Nineveh and Babylon, and permanently oppressed by the civil and religious persecution of Cambyfes and his Persian successors, its populousness may be fairly estimated at eight millions of industrious inhabitants²⁴. To the ancient Cercaforum, a place situate somewhat below the modern Cairo, the Nile flowed in an unbroken stream, then dividing itself into three principal branches, the two outermost of which infold the triangle of Lower Egypt, the fertile Delta. The apex of the triangle at Cercaforum²⁵, is distant a hundred miles from its base, the waving coast of the Mediterranean; and the sides are the Pelusiatic and Canopic branches of the Nile, whose mouths are two hundred miles asunder. Anciently the whole of the Delta was richly cultivated; but tillage is now confined to the inmost district, and to the valley of the Nile, a long strip of land reaching to Syenè, generally about twenty miles broad, overflowed yearly by the river, and enriched by its fattening slime²⁶. Homer is thought to have pointed to the cause of this annual inundation, when he characterizes the Nile as a river fed by the showers of heaven²⁷. Under the Sixth Ptolemy, surnamed Philometor, Agatharchides of Cnidus surveyed Ethiopia above Egypt with the eye of a philosopher, and confirmed the authority of Homer, by describing the incessant rains in Ethiopia from the summer solstice to the autumnal equinox²⁸. As early as May, torrents often descend from the Abyssinian mountains, swelling all the rivers of which the Nile is the common receptacle. Their influence reaches Egypt

²⁴ Josephus de Bell. Judaic, l. ii. c. 26. Conf. Diodor. l. i.

²⁵ Herodot. l. ii. c. 15. and 17.

²⁶ Strabo is never more graphical than in his description of Egypt, l. xvii. p. 786. Compare the moderns, Maillet, Petocke, Browne. The last named traveller seems

inclined to limit too much the extent of the annual floods. Browne's Travels, p. 352.

²⁷ Odyss. l. iv. v. 581. as explained by Aristotle in Strabo, l. xvii. p. 790. Conf. Aristot. Meteorol. l. i. c. 14. and Apollonius Lexicon Homer. voc. βροχες.

²⁸ Agatharchides apud Diodor. l. i. f. 97.

in the middle of June, when the waters visibly accumulate, and towards the beginning of August overflow their banks. From the middle of August to the end of October, the Delta wears the appearance of a great lake, its numerous cities peering at intervals above the watery surface, like the Cyclades and Sporades in the broad Ægean.

The depositions from this temporary lake form so rich a mould, that the husbandman is exempted from all the more laborious operations of agriculture. Instead of ploughing and harrowing the ground, his industry needs only be exerted on the softer element of water; which being diverted by canals, or scooped by machines, is equally and easily distributed over the adjacent country²⁰. In Egypt the grain sown in the beginning of November ripens in less than five months, and is generally cut down and deposited in granaries before the first of April²¹. During the same season pulse follows grains, and fruits are succeeded by new flowers. In seconding the liberality of nature, man was industrious; and the duty of agricultural industry was enforced by various maxims of religion, particularly the sacred execration denounced against shepherds²², those tigers as we have seen in war, but drones and sluggards in peace. Tillage as well as other momentous concerns continued immemorially under the priestly families, who had of old taught their subjects to drain the marshy Delta, since the smaller mouths of the Nile long bore evident marks of the patient labour which had been necessary to open and defend them²³. The building of Memphis is ascribed to Menes, the first individual who, himself a priest, concentrated²⁴ in his own

Agriculture
of the Egypt-
tains B. C.
1490.

²⁰ Herodot. l. ii. c. 97.

²¹ D'Anville in his *Egypte Ancienne et Moderne*, p. 23, &c. computes the cultivable land of Egypt at 2,100 square leagues. The land really in tillage does not now exceed twice that number of square miles: yet the Delta alone contains about 10,000 square miles, and was anciently in a state of the highest cultivation. So dreadfully has

Egypt been afflicted by tyranny and anarchy.

²² Plin. N. H. l. xviii. c. 37. Conf. Maillet Description de l'Egypte, et Relation de Paul Lucas.

²³ Genesis, c. xlii. v. 2. and c. xli. v. 34.

²⁴ Aristotle Meteorol. l. i. c. 14. All the smaller branches of the Nile, he says, were *superfluous*.

²⁵ Herodot. l. ii. c. 4. and 99.

SECT.
III.

hands the whole priestly authority, which he should seem, however, to have exercised in conformity to the will of his former equals and brethren. From the time of Menes, Memphis continued to be the seat of the Pharaohs; and from the site of that city, near the top of the Delta, its foundation must have been accompanied with contrivances for regulating the Nile's inundation, though the lake Mæris, formed, it is said, for this important use³⁵, owes its name to a prince who reigned only four generations, that is a hundred and thirty-two years before the taking of Troy.

Arts relative
to the im-
provement.
I. Of food.

Upwards of three centuries before that æra, the Egyptians in the time of Moses raised great varieties of grain; wheat, barley, and rye³⁶. Their gardens produced a profusion of legumes, cucumbers, and melons³⁷; and though the soil is unfavourable to trees, figs and pomegranates abounded in the days of Moses³⁸, and grapes even in those of Joseph³⁹. At that early period, however, wine was not an usual beverage. Pharaoh's butler took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup; clearly indicating that the natural juice was drank simply with water, and preferred to fermented liquor in a warm climate, and by a people peculiarly attentive to rules of health⁴⁰. Of beer, which appears soon afterwards to have become the common drink of the working classes, I find not any mention in the books of Moses: though the invention of beer, a preparation far more complicated than wine, is assigned⁴¹ to the reign of Osiris, the most venerable of those idols in whose name the Egyptians were long governed by priests, the gods' earthly vicegerents.

As an article of food, the Egyptians should seem to have paid particular attention to fishes. The lake Mæris above-mentioned, about fifty miles south of Memphis, and two hundred miles in circuit,

³⁵ Diodorus, l. i. f. 51. and Herodot. l. ii. c. 101. and 149. But see Major Rennell's note, Geography of Herodotus, p. 504.

³⁶ Exodus, c. ix. v. 31, 32.

³⁷ Numbers, c. xi. v. 5.

³⁸ Numbers, c. xx. v. 5.

³⁹ Genesis, c. xl. v. 11.

⁴⁰ Herodotus, Aristotle, and Diodorus Siculus.

⁴¹ Diodorus, l. i. f. 15.

produced

produced twenty-two different kinds, the catching and curing of which employed innumerable hands. From the profits accruing on this branch of industry, a queen of Egypt is said to have received daily the value of two hundred pounds sterling for the expence of her toilet and perfumes⁴¹. This queen, whose luxury was supplied by the sale of other luxuries, some historians make anterior to Mæris who gave his name to the lake. Let us suppose that the curing of fishes in Egypt was a lucrative traffic fifteen centuries before the Christian æra; at the same time, calling to mind the order of Charles V. emperor of Germany, an equal number of centuries after that period, for erecting a statue to George Bukel, for his valuable discovery of curing herrings, and we shall be ready to conclude with the philosopher that many inventions, even of vulgar use, have been often lost and often recovered⁴².

In procuring materials for clothing, the Egyptians discovered not less ingenuity. The fine vesture in which Joseph was arrayed⁴³ may be supposed to have consisted of byssus or cotton, since this substance is extracted from a nut, immemorially growing in Egypt, and there formed into raiment⁴⁴. But at the æra of the Jewish emigration, Egypt abounded also with yarn from flax⁴⁵; a manufacture of greater intricacy than that of cotton, since instead of a soft down easily separable from its covering, the tough filaments of flax must be disengaged from the friable and useless wood which they inclose, by maceration in water, and successive manual operations of considerable difficulty. Of the decorations which different stuffs received from dying and embroidery, conspicuous proofs appear in the sacerdotal vestments of the Hebrews and the inner hangings of the tabernacle, in which we find not only the simpler employments of those arts, but ingenious complications of them into pieces of exquisite work-

II. Of
cloathing.

⁴¹ Diodorus, l. i. f. 52. Conf. Herodot. l. iii. c. 92.

⁴² Aristotle, *passim*.

⁴³ Genesis, c. xli. v. 42.

⁴⁴ Pollux Onemastic, vii. 13.

⁴⁵ And the flax was *bolled*, that is, had risen in stalks. Exodus, c. ix. v. 32.

manship.

SECT.
III.

manship. Among a profusion of brilliant colours may be discovered the coccus⁴⁷ of the Greeks, or kermes of the Arabs, the deeper scarlet tint obtained from cochineal⁴⁸, and the still richer Tyrian dye from the neck of the Palagea⁴⁹, as the colour translated blue or violet⁵⁰, proceeds from the blacker blood of the Sepia or Cuttle-fish. The cochineal mentioned in this list, was brought by the Indo Scythians, of whom we have already spoken, to the great staple of Bactra; there it was purchased by the Assyrian caravans; and by the routes formerly described⁵¹, brought down from Syria into Egypt. The greater part of this shining dye slept short, however, in Assyria, to supply the vast manufactories of cloth established successively, as will be seen hereafter, at Babylon and Borsippa.

III. With regard to solid and magnificent dwellings.

But of the three necessities of life; food, clothing, and habitation, the last was most magnificently provided for amongst a people who, in the chain of mountains bordering on the Red Sea, enjoyed invaluable materials for building. In this endless range, for it extends far beyond the straits of Babelmandeb, to the unexplored regions of Southern Africa, fine granite and marble were ordinary and little regarded productions: the mountains teem with porphyry, alabaster, and the hardest basalts; and on their sides towards the Nile, many natural declivities facilitate the conveyance of those rich productions to the water's edge⁵². Of this advantage the Egyptians availed themselves to rear public monuments unparalleled in solidity and grandeur; among the ruins of which, though no private dwelling appear, it has been rashly concluded that none of great value were ever to be found, and that the habitations of the ancient Egyptians, like those of the present wretched tenants of the soil, consisted of

⁴⁷ Κοκκινος διπλως. Exodus, c. xxv.

⁴⁸ Michaelis, from the root of the word, infers that the Hebrews knew cochineal to be the production of an insect. Anmerk. Exodus, cv. xxv. v. 4. He might have cited the θηρία τριβρα ὡς τὰς κιννάβαρις of Otesias, Indic. c. xxi.

⁴⁹ Plin. N. H. l. ix. c. 36. and Amati de Reffitut. Purpurarum, p. 30.

⁵⁰ Ταχυθον, Septuagint.

⁵¹ See above, p. 24.

⁵² Bruce's Travels to discover the source of the Nile, vol. i. p. 176. and seq.

earthen

earthen huts, slightly covered with palm trees". We know, on the contrary, from good authority, that even in Thebes, the first capital of Egypt, many private houses were worthy of that magnificence which shone in public edifices". In early ages, indeed, magnificence like knowledge was confined to the few; but exertions in laborious undertakings are never more vigorous or more successful, than when the artful few direct the patient industry of thoughtless and submissive millions".

SECT.
III.

The subject of Egyptian architecture naturally divides itself into temples, mausolea, obelisks, and pyramids; matters too familiar to the reader to be easy to the writer. The three first mentioned remount to immemorial antiquity: pyramids, as will be seen presently, have a far later origin. I begin with temples, which, as above proved, were destined not solely to sacred, but to many important civil purposes. It has been conjectured with some probability, that the tabernacle of the Jews in the wilderness, might give the general outline of Egyptian temples". This venerable sanctuary of worship to the living God, in opposition to the vilest, but from its associations, the most bewitching idolatry, was merely a portable temple for as yet, a Nomadic nation". It is described in all its parts with a circumstantial minuteness, which those will most approve, who can best estimate the importance of definite weights and measures to a people just emerging into civil and settled life. According to the sacred penman", the tabernacle consisted of an inner structure, which he calls the house; and an outer, which he calls the tent or court. The house was covered with curtains of fine linen, with blue and purple and scarlet. It was ten cubits high and as many broad, supported on acacia pillars, and divided by a veil into two apartments;

Egyptian
architecture.
I. Temple.

" Bruce, *ibid.*

" Diodorus, l. i. f. 45.

" The period at which this most perfectly took place is the true age of Anakim; the age not so much of giants as of gigantic

undertakings.

" Spencer in *Dissertat. de Tabernac.* Origin. p. 660: first edit.

" Josephus *Antiq. Judaic.* l. iii. c. 5.

" Exodus, c. xvi. throughout.

the

SECT.
III.

the one looking towards the east, called the holy place, twenty cubits in length; the other looking towards the west, called the most holy, only ten cubits in length. Both divisions were overhung with fine linen, and this linen was covered externally with camlet or hair cloth, and this hair cloth again shielded by two layers of leather, the one of rams' skins dyed red, the other of badgers' skins. The rams' skins dyed red had already travelled, it should seem, to Egypt from Morocco, and the pillars of Hercules, where they were manufactured in the remotest antiquity⁵⁹. The badgers' skins formed the outermost covering of all, and were judiciously chosen for completing the whole work, since the Arabs, who make shields and shoes of this substance, boast of the former as musket proof, and are said to under-value the latter if they do not last them fifteen years⁶⁰. The holy house, itself a rectangle, was surrounded by a larger rectangle, called by Moses the court or tent; whose two larger sides were hung with curtains of fine linen, an hundred cubits long, and the two shorter sides hung with curtains extending respectively the length of fifty cubits⁶¹.

The temples of Egypt had three distinct parts, corresponding to the divisions of the tabernacle: that is, the tent, the holy place, and the most holy⁶². The tent of the Hebrews answered to the sacred and solid inclosure of the Egyptians, always distinguished by a marble pavement, about one hundred feet broad, and three or four hundred in length. This magnificent avenue, which the Greeks called Dromos "the course," was ornamented on each side by a row of sphinxes, reposing at the distance of commonly thirty feet asunder⁶³. The course led directly to the body of the temple, whose approaches were rendered awful by a long series of lofty and sounding porticoes. The body of the temple consisted of two parts, the

⁵⁹ Herodotus, l. iv. c. 185. with Rennell's Commentary, p. 669.

⁶⁰ Michaelis ad Exod. c. xvi.

⁶¹ Exodus, c. xxvii.

⁶² The two parts collectively are called

naos; the outer corresponding to the holy place is called *προναος*; the inner corresponding to the most holy is called *συνναος*. Strab. Ibid.

⁶³ Strabo, l. xvii. n. 806.

larger corresponding to the holy place, and the smaller to the most holy. Both these apartments were embraced by walls of the same altitude with the temple, and called wings, because they hovered around that august building, expanding from it on both sides towards the sacred inclosure. These walls or wings were carved with large idols in the hard Tuscan stile, or earliest sculpture of Greece⁶⁴.

The Grecian traveller who thus delineates the general form of Egyptian temples, was astonished to find their sanctuaries or shrines altogether destitute of gods in the human form. Notwithstanding their high attainments in arts and sciences, the Egyptians, indeed, appear to have for ever wallowed in the vilest superstitions, even the grossest of all, that of brute worship. Though they were formed into a nation, as we have seen, from a coalition among the trading towns on the north of the Nubian desert, and from a variety of tribes living by different pursuits, and with a wide diversity of customs and rites, yet this strange mode of idolatry was the grand characteristic of the whole. Such wonderful concurrence in a matter seemingly so extravagant, points to a colonization flowing with the Nile from the inland mountains of Africa, where brute worship commonly prevailed, and still continues to prevail⁶⁵; and this suspi-

Their idols.

⁶⁴ Id. *ibid*.

⁶⁵ It is an ingenious conjecture of Warburton's (*Divine Legation*, B. iv. sect. 4. p. 168), that brute worship originated in hieroglyphics; in which the figures of animals were employed as representatives of the gods. Yet this conjecture is rather disproved by a wider acquaintance with savage nations. Many Negro tribes destitute of hieroglyphics, and writing and carving, of any kind, worship animals, nay, reptiles; punishing with death those who hurt them even casually. See Brian Edwards's *Hist. of the West Indies*, 4to. edit. vol. ii. p. 77. With a view to confirm his system, Warburton observes that, "the Egyptians also worshipped plants; for plants too were made use of for explaining the history of their gods," p. 167. he

cites Juvenal Satyr. xv.

*Felices populi,
Quorum nascuntur in hortis numina,*
and as far as I can discover, no other authority can be cited besides this hally ebullition of an angry satirist. That the Egyptians derived their animal worship from the interior of Africa is indicated in Scripture. The Hebrews are forbidden in Leviticus, c. xvii. v. 7. "to offer sacrifices to devils." Michaelis translates *satyr*, the largest kind of Apes; and I believe rightly, for I find the superstition of satyr-worship prevailing to an extraordinary degree, in a part of Africa pervaded by exploring detachments of Agathocles, tyrant of Sicily, during his memorable invasion of Africa that will be circumstantially related in a subsequent part of this work.

S E C T.

III.

cion is corroborated by history, which places the first great settlement or city at Elephantina, the southern extremity of Egypt; the second at Thebes or Diospolis; and then northwards⁶⁶ in succession, at This, or Abydos, Heracleopolis, and Memphis, which last, situate only twenty miles above the apex of the Delta, contained the palace of the Pharaohs, though Thebes continued many centuries after Moses to surpass the new capital in opulence and magnitude⁶⁷. The building of Memphis and Heliopolis, places near the top of the Delta, was accompanied with the draining of Lower Egypt, after which useful labour, cities of great note arose in that rich alluvial district: Tanis, Bubastus, Mendes, Sebennetus, Sais, Canopus, the last of which was nearly contiguous to Aboukir, a name ever glorious to Britain, and was a considerable emporium, distinguished by a great annual fair⁶⁸, before Alexandria arose in its neighbourhood, the general rendezvous of nations, and sovereign of the commercial world.

Varieties
thereof.

In the principal temples which adorned and protected the innumerable cities of Egypt, there seems to have been a rivalry of hereditary priesthoods; strange diversities of worship, and unaccountable collisions of superstition. Some cities sacrificed sheep, but abstained religiously from goats; others reversed this practice⁶⁹. Some hunted crocodiles, others held that monster in veneration⁷⁰. All of them however worshipped the bull, after that emblem of creative power became the god of Memphis, the supreme capital of the kingdom; and all abominated the hog⁷¹, excluding swineherds from social communion; doubtless in compliance with the great maxims of the

⁶⁶ The sites of three successive capitals; Thebes, Memphis, and Alexandria, point to the same general conclusion. As we descend in the order of time, Egypt becomes less connected with Ethiopia, and more connected with the Mediterranean. The line of commercial and political connection flowed from south to north.

⁶⁷ Aristot. Meteor. l. i. c. 14, Conf. Ma-

nethon apud Syncell. Chronic.

⁶⁸ Aristot. Œconom. Opera, l. ii. p. 509. Edit. du Val.

⁶⁹ Herodot. l. ii. c. 42 & 46.

⁷⁰ Aristot. Œconom. ubi supra. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 69.

⁷¹ Genesis, c. xvi. v. 34. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 47, & l. iv. c. 186.

priestly governors of Egypt, to draw their subjects from the idleness of pastoral, to the industry of agricultural, life. Amidst much capricious variety, the genius of polytheism delineated formerly in reference to ancient Greece⁷², remained however unalterable, modelled in Egypt by local circumstances, and extended by the zeal of priests, consisting of distinct races or casts, and actuated by family as well as personal considerations in extending their credit with the multitude. Although all the Egyptian idols were represented either in the general form, or at least with some prominent characteristic of inferior animals, yet the Greeks easily discovered their own Jupiter at Thebes; their Apollo at Heliopolis or On; their Vulcan at Memphis; their Diana at Bubastus; and at Sais, the blue-eyed goddess their favourite Minerva⁷³. All these fanciful images bore a reference to the beneficent powers of nature⁷⁴, or rather of its Great Author: they most of them admitted of interpretations, agricultural, or astronomical; some of a general kind, others applicable only to the meridian and soil of Egypt. Thus the hawk-headed Osiris, denoted either the sun or the Nile⁷⁵, two sources of fertility entitled in that country to equal honours; and the barking Anubis, for which no parallel was found in the mythology of Greece, signified Sirius⁷⁶ or the dog-star, whose heliacal rising warned the Egyptians of the Nile's approaching inundation.

That great periodical event which suspended useful labours, was the favourite season for religious festivity. The festival of Diana's temple at Bubastus, continued even in later times, after Egypt had long smarted under Persian oppression, to be celebrated by seven hundred thousand persons⁷⁷, whose boats in long order crowded the

Festival at
Bubastus.

⁷² History of Ancient Greece, chapter ii. throughout. *geret. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. ii. c. 7.*

⁷³ Herodot. l. ii. passim.

⁷⁴ *Fragilis et laboriosa mortalitas in partes ista digessit, infirmitatis sue memor, ut portionibus quisque coleret, quo maxime indi-*

⁷⁵ Plutarch de Isid. & Osirid.

⁷⁶ In the language of the inhabitants in the Isle of Meroe, Seir still signifies a dog. Bruce's Travels.

⁷⁷ Herodot. l. ii. c. 60.

S E C T. Nile, and whose licentious merriment at every city on their way,
III. dissipated all perception of actual inconveniences in the gladdening prospect of promised abundance.

II. Mausolea. Near to all the Egyptian cities, the solidity and magnificence of mausolea excited the veneration of natives, and the wonder of strangers. The peculiar pains bestowed in adorning those sepulchral monuments, originated in the belief that the soul still continued after death to be deeply interested in the treatment of its earthly companion⁷⁸; on which account dead bodies were carefully embalmed, that they might be preserved from corruption and deformity. In the neighbourhood of Memphis, the burying ground was viewed with particular attention by Greek travellers. The numerous sepulchres belonging to that capital, were approached only by one passage, which led to hollow caverns and flowery meadows, to scenes of loathsome desolation and fields of verdant pleasure; and the arrival at such contrarieties of habitation by the same common avenue, the dreary lake of death, is supposed to have given birth to the Greek fables concerning Charon, Acheron, Elysium and Tartarus⁷⁹. Even the Pyramids in the same neighbourhood, of which we shall speak presently, may be regarded under a certain aspect as mausolea to the dead; since among the Egyptians who spoke and wrote by metaphors and images, no symbols could be better chosen than those unperishing edifices to express the unalterable stability of the grave⁸⁰. But among all the buildings in Egypt, the labyrinth or sepulchre of the kings, and the tomb of Osymandyas were regarded by the Greeks, as the greatest prodigies both of labour and of skill.

The Labyrinth.

The labyrinth, a few miles south of the lake Moeris, at the city of Crocodiles, afterwards called Arsinoe, is erroneously ascribed to the

⁷⁸ Diodorus, l. i. f. 51. Conf. Servius ad Eneid, iii. 7.

⁷⁹ Diodorus, l. i. f. 96. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 123.

⁸⁰ Diodorus, l. i. f. 51. says, καὶ τὰς μὲν τῶν ζῶντων οἰκίας κατασκευαίσι νομοῦσι, &c." "The

Egyptians called the habitations of the living caravanfaries, because they are useful but for a short time; whereas the tombs of the dead they called eternal mansions, because they are to serve us for ever."

twelve kings immediately preceding the reign of Psammetichus. This prince began to reign six hundred and sixty years before the Christian æra; but the labyrinth near Arsinœ was imitated by Dædalus of Crete, above twelve centuries before Christ, in an intricate edifice, which he erected in that island, at the expence of the elder Minos¹. This Egyptian monument is referred therefore with some probability to Mendes, the contemporary of Minos; though our authority for this fact is weakened by the inconsistency of Diodorus, who also assigns for the author of this stupendous piece of architecture, Marus, a prince more ancient than Mendes; and in another passage, even Menes the supposed founder of the Egyptian monarchy². The work therefore belongs to that early antiquity which produced the boldest exertions of the Egyptians; the subjugation of the Nile's overflowing tide, the formation of the lake Mœris, the building of Memphis, and the draining by fit channels the marshy Delta. The labyrinth which rivalled those labours, and which Herodotus prizes far beyond the Pyramids, consisted of twelve nearly contiguous courts, roofed with solid marble, and surrounded with white marble peristyles. Of these twelve courts, six faced the north; and other six the south: the gates of the corresponding courts were opposite to each other, and the whole number was comprehended within one wall of massy stone. This quadrangular inclosure of courts and galleries, whose shortest sides extended a stadium in length, comprehended fifteen hundred dwellings or houses, roofed with different kinds of valuable stones, and as many subterranean apartments into which strangers were not allowed to enter, because they were the sepulchres of kings and sacred crocodiles³. But all above ground was shewn without scruple, and appeared to surpass the productions of human art; occasioning in the beholder a pleasing astonishment by the intricacy of the passages from the houses.

¹ Diodorus, l. i. c. 47. & seq.² Herodotus, l. ii. c. 148.³ Ibid. c. 96.

SECT.
III.

to the courts, and from one court or one house to another, and then to elevated porticoes, each of which was ascended by ninety steps⁸⁴, affording from their open summits a wide prospect of surrounding fields of marble.

Astronomi-
cally ex-
plained.

From hints afforded by Strabo⁸⁵ and Pliny it seems improbable that the labyrinth was originally destined for sepulchres. It should appear rather to have been a temple dedicated to the sun, and the seat of political superstition, founded, as we have seen, chiefly on astronomy. In conformity with this notion, the twelve courts bore a reference to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the houses above and below ground denoted the two hemispheres above and below the horizon: the ninety steps by which each portico was ascended, represented the quadrant of a great circle; the winding passages might express the intricate revolutions of the planets; and even the number of three thousand apartments, (fifteen hundred above and as many below ground), should seem clearly connected with a conclusion of the Egyptian astronomers, adopted, it is said⁸⁶ by the Greeks, that the precession of the equinoxes advanced a degree of a great circle in the space of one hundred years, and therefore required precisely three thousand years to advance thirty degrees, that is a whole sign of the zodiac.

That the labyrinth was sometimes employed for interments we

⁸⁴ Plin. Nat. Hist. l. xxxvi. c. 13. The importance of this notice will be seen presently.

⁸⁵ Strabo, l. xxvii. p. 811.

⁸⁶ Conf. Ficin. in Platon. de Republic. l. x. p. 744, and de Legib. l. iii. p. 803. According to the principles in the text, the *Annus Magnus* or Platonic year, will be obtained by multiplying three thousand, expressing the time in which the equinoxes advance one sign, by the number twelve, denoting the twelve signs of the zodiac: the Platonic year will therefore contain thirty six thousand solar years, which number is

precisely what it did contain. It is well known that the ancients assigned too little velocity to the precession of the equinoxes, their real movement being about fifty seconds yearly. Vid. L'Encycloped. Article Precession. The astronomical explanations of the Labyrinth are here given as conjectures; for the history of Egyptian astronomy becomes certain only in the age of the Ptolemies. We shall see in a subsequent part of this work, the great improvements of astronomy, geography, &c. under this learned dynasty.

have

SECT.
III.

This confirmed by the tomb of Osymandyas.

have the authority of antient writers. This destination of it was indicated also by a pyramid two hundred and forty feet high in its neighbourhood⁸⁷. But its connection with astronomy is confirmed by another monument of the same kind, and not less stupendous, in the nome or district of Thebes; and called the tomb of Osymandyas. This structure contained also, besides a sepulchre, courts and porticoes, some of them instead of pillars supported by animals twenty four feet high, and formed from single blocks. The tomb itself presented images of equal durability, being constructed with stones eight cubits long; the roof was azure, bespangled with stars; but the colossal figures of Osymandyas and of the females of his family, surpassed every thing most admirable. The statue of the king, in a sitting posture, was formed of the stone called pyropæcilos⁸⁸ from the flaming colours with which it blazed. A block of peculiar beauty, without the smallest crack or blemish, had been carefully selected for this colossus, whose foot exceeded in length seven cubits. It deserved to be an emblem of the sun, and that it really was such, appeared from the golden circle with which it was encompassed, divided into three hundred and sixty five cubits, each cubit denoting a corresponding day of the year, and describing in its sculpture the current aspect of the heavens, and the accompanying events on earth, according to the fanciful predictions of Egyptian astrology⁸⁹.

The trite subject of obelisks and pyramids I shall consider under one view, because the specific distinctions between them have been greatly mistaken by popular writers⁹⁰. They agree in being quadrilateral figures, whose sides point to the four quarters of heaven.

III. & IV.
Pyramids
and Obelisks.

⁸⁷ Herodot. *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Diodorus, l. i. c. 47, with Wesseling's note. *Com. Plin.* l. xxxvi. c. 8.

⁸⁹ Diodorus, l. i. c. 49. Of all our travellers, Paul Lucas alone was believed to have seen this monument, *Voyage*, vol. ii.

p. 119. But Mr. Gibert, *Mem. de L'Acad.* vol. xxx. p. 241, denies also to him that honour.

⁹⁰ Among others by Diderot. See *L'Encyclop.* Article "Egyptiens."

But

SECT.
III.

But the obelisks are pillars of granite of a single piece, from fifty to one hundred and eighty feet high; and their perpendicular height commonly nine times the length of one side of their base. The pyramids, on the other hand, are enormous edifices of free stone, (one only is mentioned of brick⁹¹), whose breadth commonly equals the length of their sloping sides⁹², and always exceeds their perpendicular altitude. The obelisks remount to immemorial antiquity, and are found in every part of Egypt. The builders of all the principal pyramids are mentioned as living a little before or after the Trojan war⁹³: and these monuments are confined to a particular district, namely that of Memphis or Memf; to the north west of which you see the three greater pyramids; and to the south about threescore smaller ones⁹⁴. The greatest of all the pyramids according to Herodotus reached eight hundred feet in height, and contained precisely as many in each side of its quadrangular base. Our most accurate measurements make the base 693 English feet broad, and the sloping sides the same number of feet long, but differences in the account are unavoidable from the perpetually shifting mounds of sand, by which the pyramids are surrounded. These huge masses still bear evident marks of the simple contrivance by which they were raised. They consisted of distinct courses of stone, gradually diminishing as they rose in elevation. Light machines of wood easily manageable, placed on the first or largest course, served to raise the materials necessary for constructing the second, and thus successively until the whole was completed⁹⁵. In several of the pyramids our travellers have discovered chambers, galleries, and subterraneous cells⁹⁶; such varieties might naturally be expected in sepulchres. The three more enormous masses were raised after the war of Troy⁹⁷; and the first

⁹¹ Herodotus, l. ii. p. 136.

⁹² Ibid. l. ii. p. 125.

⁹³ Ibid. l. ii. passim.

⁹⁴ Conf. Pococke, Perry, Greaves, Bruce, Maillet, &c.

⁹⁵ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 125.

⁹⁶ Bruce's Travels, vol. i. p. 41. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 124.

⁹⁷ That is, B. C. 1184, and Cheop's reign commenced 1178, B. C.

and

and greatest of the three by Cheops, whose tyrannical reign of forty years commenced shortly after that event. This unworthy prince was the first native of Egypt, who, in quitting due reverence for the gods and their ministers, at the same time fearlessly relinquished the maxims of humanity and justice⁹⁸. Through his oppressive government the public prosperity, which had long appeared unalterable, received a fatal shock; his unhappy subjects were impoverished and exhausted by incessant and useless toils, and particularly in raising this gigantic prodigy of architecture, which was completed in twenty years by the uninterrupted exertions of 400,000 men tasked in succession to the odious work⁹⁹. The value of their consumption in radishes, onions, and garlic was engraved in Egyptian characters on the pyramid, and amounted to sixteen hundred talents of silver¹⁰⁰. How vast then, adds the historian, must have been their expenditure during the same space of time, in food, cloathing, and particularly in iron implements of labour¹⁰¹?

The obelisks are productions not less wonderful by their difficulty than the pyramids, and far more respectable in their use. When we consider that the obelisks consisted of single blocks of granite, some of them an hundred and fifty, and even an hundred and eighty feet high, the successive operations of hewing them unbroken from the quarry, of transporting them safely to the most distant parts of the country, of adorning the hard stone with sculpture, often two inches deep, and rearing such huge pillars into the sky with a precise adjustment of their sides to the four winds of heaven¹⁰², we shall feel a new interest in favour of the Egyptians, as a people who illustrated the utmost extent of the human powers in works unrivalled in their own kind, and whose grandeur is scarcely surpassed in any other¹⁰³.

Various purposes served by the obelisks.

⁹⁸ Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 124. and Aristot. Politic. l. i. c. 11.

may be estimated at 413,000l.

¹⁰¹ Herodot. *ibid.*

⁹⁹ Id. *ibid.* and Plin. l. xxxvi. c. 12.

¹⁰² See Memoir de l'Acad. des Sciences pour 1710, Artic. Eloge de Chazelles.

¹⁰⁰ The Egyptian talent exceeding the Babylonian by twenty minæ, the sum

¹⁰³ Plin. N. H. l. xxxvi. c. 9.

SECT.
III.

The first obelisks remount to immemorial antiquity, and might serve for gnomons far more perfect than the natural shadows of trees and mountains¹⁰⁴. They were unfortunately, as we have seen, very early prostituted to the purposes of superstition. They frequently served as ornaments to palaces and temples. They might sometimes be employed to convey instruction to the multitude on moral¹⁰⁵ as well as physical subjects; and they contained in their hieroglyphics a history ambiguous from the nature of the character in which it was written; perhaps hyperbolical in itself, and certainly full of exaggeration, as it was usually interpreted¹⁰⁶.

Reign of Sesostris, B. C.
1430.

The most celebrated of those exaggerations is the Egyptian account of the reign of Sesostris, which commenced above fourteen centuries before Christ, and is said to have lasted forty years¹⁰⁷. This great prince appears to have repaired the disasters in Egypt, accompanying the emigration of the Israelites. At the head of a few of his countrymen, enterprizing like himself, and of numerous hordes of Arabian and Ethiopian Nomades¹⁰⁸, whom his valour and generosity attracted to his service, he overran and plundered Lesser Asia and Syria¹⁰⁹, in which territories monuments of his victories were shewn after the lapse of a thousand years¹¹⁰. Ambitious of every kind of

¹⁰⁴ Plin. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ This use of obelisks or pillars was adopted in Greece. See *History of Ancient Greece*, vol. ii. c. 13. Mr. Bruce's notion that the gravings on obelisks contained astronomical observations is well founded: but he contradicts history in confining the use of these gravings to astronomy only. Comp. Bruce's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 414, &c. and Diodorus, l. i. c. 56. and Tacitus *Annal.* l. iv. c. 60.

¹⁰⁶ Every thing said by the ancients or moderns on the subject of obelisks is collected in a folio volume, *De Origine et Usu Obeliscorum auctore Georgio Zoega Dano. Romæ 1747.*

¹⁰⁷ Aristotle places Sesostris many years before Minos. See *History of Ancient*

Greece, vol. i. c. 1. Herodotus makes him precede by a century the foundation of the Assyrian empire, 1230 years B. C. Conf. Herodot. l. i. c. 95. l. ii. c. 106. and Aristot. *Politic.* l. vii. c. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Diodor. l. i. c. 53. Conf. Herodotus, l. ii. c. 110.

¹⁰⁹ Herodotus speaks positively as to his statues in a district of Syria, l. ii. c. 102. and 106.

¹¹⁰ Herodot. *ibid.* Strabo makes the duration of his statues in Ethiopia four centuries longer, since he says, "they were shewn there in the age of Augustus," l. xvii. p. 790. Both Strabo and Arrian reject his fabulous expedition into India. Conf. *Arriani Indica*, c. v. and Strabo, l. xv. p. 686.

glory, Sesostris overcame the deep-rooted aversion of the Egyptians to a sea-faring life. He encouraged all the arts, erected many temples, strengthened the fortifications of his kingdom; and after a long and splendid reign, withdrew himself by a voluntary death from blindness and old age, which appeared intolerable calamities to a mind softened by a long and smooth course of unvaried prosperity¹¹¹. On the basis of these facts several of which are well attested, the Egyptian priests raised a fabulous superstructure, which magnified the actions of Sesostris above the poetical exploits of Hercules and Bacchus. His imaginary trophies were diffused over India and Scythia; the Arabian gulph was navigated with four hundred ships of war; another great fleet commanded the Mediterranean¹¹²; and his obelisks told, according to the priests, of the hundred myriads¹¹³ of warriors whom he commanded, of the kings whom he had dragged in triumph, and of the annual tributes which he levied from the vanquished and enslaved¹¹⁴ nations of the ancient world. That Egyptian vanity might be flattered in every part of the narrative, the fierce Nomades, whom the same testimony had assigned as the instruments of his victories, were thrown as it were into the back ground of the fable, and the whole honour is ascribed solely to Sesostris and his Egyptian companions; all born on the same day with himself, carefully trained with him to martial exercises, and of whom seventeen hundred accompanied him in the fortieth year of his age, on his great Indian expedition¹¹⁵. But this number, it has justly been observed, implies at least ten thousand births in Egypt on one day; three million six hundred and fifty thousand in one year; and therefore raises the

¹¹¹ Diodor. l. i. f. 54. & seq. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 107. & seq.

¹¹² Diodor. *ibid.*

¹¹³ *ἑκατὸν μυριάδας*. Strabo.

¹¹⁴ Tacitus Annal. l. ii. c. 60. In Tacitus, the king's name is Rhamfes; but Valerius observes *Iste Sesothis (Sesostris) trionimnis fuit, teste Manethone*. The Egyptian

kings, like the Assyrian, had often different names at different periods of their reign. Scaliger ad Euseb. Num. 530.

¹¹⁵ Diodor. *ibid.* He reports this, but cannot well be supposed to have believed it; especially after what he had said of the vain lies of the Egyptian priests, l. i. c. 29.

S E.C T.
III.

populousness of that kingdom to upwards of sixty millions of souls: a populousness altogether impossible in such a country, and not only unwarranted, but contradicted by all ancient authority¹¹⁶. After this remark, it would be trifling with the reader to animadvert on Sesostris's wonderful ship of cedar, four hundred and ninety feet in length, covered externally with gold, and on the inside with silver¹¹⁷. His nautical improvements left at least no traces behind them. We hear nothing for many following centuries of Egyptians in the Mediterranean: the navigation of the Arabian gulph was thenceforth left to the nation from whom its name was borrowed; and until the dynasty of Psammetichus raised up, as we have seen, by Greeks, Egypt is never mentioned as possessed of any naval power, or carrying on, by its own ships, any maritime commerce.

Different
races of men
in Egypt.

Having endeavoured as briefly as possible to describe the antiquities of a country, whose more authentic history will be related in following parts of this work, I shall conclude the present subject by examining whether the ancient Egyptians, of whose ingenuity and intelligence so much has been said, were in reality woolly headed Negroes. Such an inference has been drawn from an extraordinary passage of Herodotus, in which he alleges their black colour and crisp hair as reasons for believing that the Colchians inhabiting the eastern shore of the Black sea, were a colony from Egypt¹¹⁸. It is remarkable that the historian himself makes light of these arguments, and considers as much stronger points the practice of circumcision common to the two nations, and their agreement in the same peculiar mode of weaving linen¹¹⁹. The fact appears to be, that the Egyptians

¹¹⁶ Conf. Diodor. l. i. f. 19. and Josephus de Bell. Judaic. l. ii. c. 16.

¹¹⁷ Diodor. l. i. c. 57.

¹¹⁸ Herodot. l. ii. c. 104. The same conclusion has been drawn from monuments, particularly from the Ethiopian features of the celebrated Sphinx. Bruce, Denon, and other travellers.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. and c. 105. Their peculiar mode of weaving alludes to what the author says, l. ii. c. 35, that other nations pushed the woof upwards, the Egyptians downward: from which Junius de *Pictura Veterum*, l. i. c. 4, concludes that the Egyptians were the first people who wove sitting.

were a mixed people, that had coalesced into a nation from different casts or families, as their country had grown into a kingdom, from different nomes or districts. Historians, indeed, have sometimes considered these divisions as nice arrangements of legislative wisdom; yet no two authors are agreed as to the number of casts¹²⁰ or nomes¹²¹, or as to the different trades or professions respectively exercised in them. Authority, indeed, was not necessary to induce the hardy mountaineers on either side the valley of the Nile, or even the feebleness of races inhabiting the marshes which bordered on the Delta, both which districts are unfit for tillage, to betake themselves to a pastoral life. In several less fruitful parts on either bank of the river, as well as on the lake Mœris, fishing was the hereditary trade, because it was the most profitable. The cast of sailors was introduced and maintained through the commercial intercourse on the Nile, easily navigable for upwards of five hundred miles from Syenè to the Mediterranean, and in the navigation of which the Egyptian mariners were accustomed to avail themselves of a north wind to surmount the force of the stream in returning to Syenè. The trading vessels were called *Baris*, carrying fifty tons and upwards; they were made of a thorny shrub, and the only ships that from its native materials could be constructed in a country equally destitute of wood and iron¹²². Herodotus says that the cast of interpreters descended from Ionians and Carians first settled in Egypt in the reign of Psammetichus¹²³. Yet the patriarch Joseph a thousand years before the reign of Psammetichus, already spoke by an interpreter to his brethren¹²⁴; and men conversant with different languages could not fail to turn to account this attainment, in a country which at that early period,

¹²⁰ The great authorities, Herodotus and Diodorus differ materially. The former, l. i. c. 164, makes seven casts: priests, soldiers, graziers, swine-herds, artificers, interpreters, sailors; meaning watermen on the Nile.

¹²¹ Diodorus says, "Sesostris divided Egypt into thirty-six nomes," l. i. c. 54.

¹²² Herodot. l. ii. c. 96.

¹²³ Ibid. c. 154.

¹²⁴ Genesis, c. xlii. v. 23.

SECT.

III

was the centre of the great caravan commerce, between Asia and Africa, and the principal subdivisions of the latter between Libya and Ethiopia¹¹⁵. As the Egyptians subsisting by agriculture, by far the most numerous and respectable¹¹⁶ portion of the community did not willingly quit their native country, this extended intercourse was carried on chiefly through Arabian and Ethiopian Nomades¹¹⁷. With regard to the inhabitants of Egypt, it was in some measure a passive commerce, that people producing indeed many of the articles exchanged in it, but patiently waiting till other nations purchased and transported them. Through the excellence of its husbandry, Egypt speedily became the granary of surrounding countries; and from the earliest times, the varied labours of its looms¹¹⁸, found their way to the markets of Greece, and even to the coasts of the Atlantic. In a country originally peopled by different tribes, and which afterwards long continued to be the conflux of nations from Asia and Africa, with regard to both of which continents it is so peculiarly situate, that ancient historians and geographers hesitated to which of the two it ought in propriety to be assigned, we might naturally expect to meet with a wide diversity of inhabitants, too variously combined for distinct classification. The extremes, however, may be fixed on one hand, in the stout, stubborn, and woolly headed Ethiopian; and on the other, in the delicate, flexible, and ingenious inhabitant of the Delta: a weak, dark race, with long lank hair, resembling nearly the natives of kindred alluvions formed

¹¹⁵ Genesis, c. xxxvii. v. 25. Isaiah, c. xlv.

¹¹⁶ Ezekiel, c. xxx. v. 4. and 9.

¹¹⁷ Herodotus, 2. c. 160.

¹¹⁸ Genesis, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, ubi supra.

¹¹⁸ Conf. Scylax Peripf. p. 129. and Thucyd. l. i. p. 5 edit. Francofort. Conf. Herodot. l. ii. c. 35. and Isaiah, c. xix. v. 10. The "weberstühle" in Michaelis' translation, agrees with the conjecture from

the words of Herodotus, that the Egyptians wove sitting. How could Mr. Bruce in opposition to all authority say, "Solomon decked his bed with coverings of tapestry of Egypt! Egypt had neither silk, nor cotton manufactory, nor even wool; Solomon's coverings, therefore, though he had them from Egypt, were an article of barter with India." Travel, vol. i. p. 118.

by the Indus and the Ganges¹²². Between these limits the great intermediate body of the nation, appears to have fluctuated; a nation, that with much to recommend it to the attention of posterity, might have deservedly excited a yet deeper interest, had not its improvement been thenceforward rendered stationary, not merely through external causes that will be explained in the following work, but through the difficulties of its hieroglyphical writing and its superstitious abhorrence of innovation. It has the glory, however, of emerging above the ocean of time, as the first regular monarchy described in authentic history; and should the polished kingdoms of Europe ever experience the sad fate that has befallen the far greater eastern continent, when all their noblest monuments were fast mouldering to decay, the matchless works of the Egyptians would even then survive, and still bear testimony that civilization had once existed in an ancient world.

Under the successors of Alexander, Syria in its general acceptance, became a kingdom more powerful than Egypt, and the proper Syria contained in it the Hebrews and Phœnicians, the two most interesting nations of Asia. According to my proposed method, I should proceed, therefore, to the description and history of Syria, under which head the arts and commerce of Phœnicia would deserve particular attention, as illustrating the state, not only of that small district, but of many great countries around it, during the six centuries which elapsed from the reign of Ninus to that of Nebuchadnezzar. But as the Phœnicians had not any share in the transactions which immediately follow in the course of my narrative, and as the Jewish history is too well known to be repeated in a work of this nature, I shall delay my particular survey of Syria, until the inva-

Connection
of this sur-
vey.

¹²² Juvenal describes them graphically, but ill-naturedly. —

Imbellis et inutile vulgus
Parvula scissilibus solidum dant vela phaselis,
Et brevibus pictæ remis incumbere testæ.

Satyr. l. xv. v. 126.

And before

Terra malos homines nunc educat atque
pufillos

Ergo Deus quicumque aspexit, ridet et odit.

v. 70.

S I C T.
III.

fions and sieges of Nebuchadnezzar naturally direct the reader's curiosity to that country, particularly to the ancient greatness of Tyre; the strenuous industry, bold enterprize, and wonderful attainments of the Phœnicians.

Senacherib's
expedition
against Ju-
dah and
Egypt. B.C.
70

In deducing the revolutions of the Assyrian empire, we reached firm historic ground with the reign of Senacherib, whose expedition against Judæa and Egypt is highly memorable both in its circumstances and consequences. Egypt was then governed by Sabacus, an Ethiopian¹³⁰, who had granted his alliance to Israel shortly before the remainder of that nation had been transplanted by Shalmanezar into Media¹³¹. Judah, however, still confiding in Egyptian aid, refused to surrender its freedom; in consequence of which refusal, Senacherib invaded that district with a vast army. Having overrun the country and taken several fenced cities, he sent his lieutenants to chastise king Hezekiah in Jerusalem, while in person he advanced southward and laid siege to Pelusium, the key to Egypt. No moment could have been chosen with a better prospect of conquering both kingdoms; Judah was then afflicted with epidemic sickness¹³², and the once prosperous Egypt had become "the staff of a broken reed piercing the hand that leaned on it"¹³³. The Nile, which is the source of health as well as wealth to that country, having failed in the former year to bring its watery tribute from Ethiopia, the canals had degenerated into pestilent ditches, and the territory adjacent to the sea had been converted into a marine marsh¹³⁴. The labour of the husbandman perished for want of refreshing moisture: famine and despair assailed the fishermen of the Nile, and of the lake Mœris, and the numerous classes of artizans¹³⁵ crowding the industrious cities of Thebes and Memphis. The warlike Sabacus,

¹³⁰ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 137.

¹³¹ See above, p. 65.

¹³² 2 Kings, c. xviii. v. 24, and c. xx. v. 7, 8.

¹³³ 2 Kings, c. xviii. v. 26.

¹³⁴ Isaiah, c. xix.

¹³⁵ Isaiah, c. xix. In the translation of Michaelis before me the "Weberstühle" as conformable to the circumstance which I above-mentioned, that the Greeks were in a standing posture, whereas the Egyptians sat at their work.

alarmed

alarmed by religious terrors¹⁰, abdicated the government; and Sethos, high priest of the Memphian god Phthas, stepped into the vacant throne, with just cunning enough to attain power, but without wisdom to exercise it honourably or usefully. His unseasonable rapacity resumed many lands held by military service, about ten acres by each family, and thereby offended the martial casts or clans, at a time when the zeal of this militia was essentially requisite to the public safety¹¹. He was obliged, therefore, to throw himself into his frontier strong-hold of Pelusium, with a motley rabble raised on the spur of the occasion, and consisting chiefly of tradesmen and mechanics.

Before besieging that key to Egypt, Senacherib had spent a short time in taking Lachis, or Lachish, on the southern frontier of Judæa. While employed in the war there, a detachment was sent to Jerusalem. Its commanders proceeded to the walls of the place, under which they were met by Hezekiah's ministers. The Jews were exhorted to send presents in token of submission to the great king, the master of nations, against whose hostility no power on earth or in heaven would avail them. The deputies, consisting of the high steward, the chief judge, and the public secretary, intreated the Assyrian generals to cease from speaking in Hebrew, and to employ their own Syrian dialect, lest their discourse might be understood by the Jewish soldiers on the walls. But Rabshekeh, replied in a loud voice, and in the Jews' language, that he had not been sent to the king only, or his minister, but rather to the people at large, to destroy their vain trust in a contemptible prince and his perfidious counsellors¹².

Jerusalem
summoned.

The Jews according to Hezekiah's command, kept silence; and the Assyrians hastened to give an account of their reception to Sena-

The rumour
of Tarako's
march raises
the siege of
Pelusium.
B. C. 710.

¹⁰ Herodot. i. li. c. 139.

¹¹ Id. i. li. c. 141.

¹² 2 Kings, c. xviii.

SECT.
III.

Tatako's
greatness.

cherib, who having left the neighbourhood of Lachish, had proceeded to attack Libnah or Pelusium¹³⁹. Into this place Sethos had thrown himself, as we have said, with an inconsiderable and ill composed army; but was encouraged, as he afterwards gave out, to expect deliverance by a vision from Phthas, whom the Memphians exalted above all gods, and whom the Greeks sadly degraded by transferring to him the name of their own Vulcan, an able artist indeed, but a very contemptible and even ridiculous divinity. We are not informed of any human or divine means used by the priest Sethos, for removing the Assyrian assailants. But Senacherib, we know from Scripture, had not lain long before Pelusium, when a rumour reached his camp¹⁴⁰, that totally disconcerted all his measures. A prince called Tirhakoh in Scripture, Tearcho and Taracho by the Greeks¹⁴¹, had during the disasters of Egypt, been making great conquests in Ethiopia on both sides of the Red Sea. Availing himself of the caravan roads, through the broad continent of Africa, he had pursued his victorious career to the shores of the Atlantic, and northwards to the pillars of Hercules¹⁴². Many Nomadic nations of Ethiopia and Arabia had united under his wide spreading dominion; and he had already performed more extensive and more difficult journies, than the march which report now ascribed to him, of penetrating through the desert which joins the two cultivated regions of Arabia, Sabæa and Omanum¹⁴³, and then proceeding from the latter, along the western shore of the Persian gulph, into the rich Babylonian plain¹⁴⁴, and to its capital Nineveh, the proud centre of Assyrian power. Upon learning this alarming piece of intelligence, Senacherib determined to return with all possible expedition to the de-

¹³⁹ Conf. Isaiah, c. xxxvii. v. 8. Herodot. l. ii. c. 141. Joseph. Antiq. l. x. c. 1.

¹⁴⁰ Isaiah, c. xxxvii. v. 7.

¹⁴¹ Conf. Isaiah, *ibid.* and Strabo, l. i. p. 61. & l. xv. p. 686.

¹⁴² Strabo, *ibid.*

¹⁴³ See above.

¹⁴⁴ See 2 Kings, c. xix. v. 7. Isaiah, c. xxxvii. v. 9. with Michaelis notes.

fence

fence of possessions that formed the strength, the ornament, the rich kernel of his empire ¹⁴⁵.

SECT.
III.

Agreement
of sacred and
profane ac-
counts of the
destruction of
the Assy-
rians
B. C. 710.

In his way homeward, he once more sent Rabshakeh with a letter to Hezekiah, expressing in that boastful pride which is often a cloak to cowardice, "what the kings of Assyria had done to all lands, by destroying them utterly ¹⁴⁶;" and as if he had been apprized of the promises made to the Jews by the prophet Isaiah ¹⁴⁷, asking in a tone of contemptuous menace, "Did the gods of the nations deliver those whom my fathers destroyed; Gozan, Karan, Rezeph, and the children of Eden who were in Telassar?" Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sephervaim, Henah and Ivah ¹⁴⁸? The event which terminated Senacherib's expedition is related in the following words, "The angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand;" the morning shewed to the terrified king and his attendants, only a hideous heap of carcases ¹⁴⁹. Of the sudden destruction of the Assyrians, prophane history gives such an account, as taken in a literal sense, wears the appearance of a childish fable. Herodotus relates, that vast swarms of field rats gnawed to pieces in one night their bow-strings, quivers and shield straps, and thereby leaving his men defenceless, subjected Senacherib to a disgraceful rout ¹⁵⁰. The disastrous fate of their enemies, the Egyptians ascribed to the prayers of king Sethos, of which they alledged as a convincing proof, the statue of that prince in the Memphian temple of Vulcan, holding a rat in his hand, and with the following memorable inscription, "Let him who beholds me, learn piety to the gods ¹⁵¹." In the childishness however of this story, we shall perceive

¹⁴⁵ This part of history is intelligible only on the supposition that Nineveh had the site, which for reasons above given, I have ventured to assign for it.

¹⁴⁶ Isaiah, c. xxxvii. v. 2.

¹⁴⁷ 2 Kings, c. xix. v. 7.

¹⁴⁸ Isaiah, c. xxxvii. v. 12, 13, 14.

¹⁴⁹ Id. *ibid.* v. 36.

¹⁵⁰ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 141.

¹⁵¹ Herodot. *ibid.* Conf. Isaiah, c. xix. v. 20, 21, 22.

S E C T.

III.

the strongest confirmation of the relater's veracity, if we reflect that among the Egyptians, the rat was the hieroglyphic for destruction¹³³; and that Herodotus, according to the prevalent fashion of his times in relating the history of Egypt, ascribed to the sign, the power of the thing signified¹³⁴. By a far more sublime metaphor, the Jews referred this signal catastrophe of their enemies to divine agency; by which they were accustomed to explain the havoc made by warring elements, the hot pestilential simoom, the swift destroying blast which, in the Asiatic as well as African deserts, often proves fatal, in a single night, to vast multitudes of the human species¹³⁵.

Baladan's
letter to
Hezekiah.

That the plague was on this occasion the instrument employed by the Almighty for punishing a blood-thirsty king, derives some probability from the prevalence of the malady at that time in Jerusalem. Hezekiah himself appears to have been attacked by its worst¹³⁶ symptoms, and was saved from death by the particular interposition of providence, for which he returned his acknowledgements in the temple on the third day. Of his sudden recovery a circumstance also agreeing with the well known nature of the plague, a sign had been given by bringing back the shadow ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz; concerning which astronomical wonder, Baladan, general of the troops belonging to Babylon, and also hereditary chief of the Chaldean priests¹³⁷, the earliest cultivators of astronomy, and comparatively great proficient in that science, might naturally be expected to desire accurate information. To gain this end, he sent a congratulatory letter to Hezekiah on his recovery. The letter was accompanied with presents; and in its superscription, a clear intimation is afforded of the troubles¹³⁸ that assailed Assyria in consequence

He assumes
the title of
king of
Babylon.
Revolt of the
Medes.

¹³³ Horopoll. l. i. p. 50.

¹³⁴ See above, p. 47.

¹³⁵ 2 Samuel, c. xxiv. v. 15 and 16. Jeremiah, c. li. v. 1. For the Simoom wind see Thevenot, and Bruce's Travels, passim, particularly Thevenot, p. ii. b. i. c. 20. and b. ii. c. 16.

¹³⁶ 2 Kings, c. xx. v. 7, and seq. It had raged in Samaria a few years before Sennacherib's disaster. Josephus, l. ix. c. 14.

¹³⁷ 2 Kings, c. xx. v. 12. Conf. Diodor. l. ii. c. 24.

¹³⁸ "Sennacherib's estate was troubled," Tobit. c. i. v. 15.

of the disaster of Sennacherib. Baladan who in civil matters had hitherto held only a dependent jurisdiction¹⁵⁸, like many other priestly vassals of whom we have already spoken, assumed the title of king of the Babylonians, in defiance of an odious and disgraced tyrant, from whom, about the same time, the Medes, Armenians, and other great nations ventured also to revolt¹⁵⁹.

S E C T.
III.

At his return to Nineveh, Senacherib could not fail to be provoked at finding the vanity of the rumour which had deceived him. He was enraged to madness at the rebellion of his subjects: but a tyrant after the loss of his army is a serpent without its sting. He vented however his merciless rage against the smaller prey that he was still able to devour, particularly the Jews in Nineveh¹⁶⁰, whose brethren had occasioned his misfortunes. But in the short space of fifty five days, he was slain by the conspiracy of his two elder sons, in the temple of his god Nisroth¹⁶¹. Their parricide was only useful to the public; for the youngest brother, Esarhaddon, at the unanimous request of the court and country, mounted the vacant throne.

Senacherib
murdered.
B. C. 709.

The character of Esarhaddon fully justified the general predilection in his favour. His valour and generosity¹⁶² together with the vast treasures still contained within the palace of Nineveh, speedily supplied him with a new army. We are not informed of the means which he employed either by war or negotiation for reducing the rebellious provinces. But from the moment of his elevation we hear nothing more of an upstart monarchy in Babylon, under a priest who aspired to be the equal of his king.

Esarhaddon's
glorious
reign. B. C.
709—668.

The parricidal brothers of Esarhaddon had fled to Armenia; and as they are said to have received lands¹⁶³ from the king of that country,

His invasion
of Palestine.

¹⁵⁸ 2 Kings, c. xvii. v. 24. Sennacherib's predecessor appears there as king of Babylon, as well as of Nineveh.—Conf. Diodor. *ubi supra*.

¹⁵⁹ Herodotus, l. i. c. 95, & Moses Choronchus, l. i. p. 22.

¹⁶⁰ Tobit, c. i. v. 18, 19, 20.

¹⁶¹ 2 Kings, c. xix. v. 36. & 37, and Moses Choronchus, *ibid*.

¹⁶² "The great and noble Asnapper." his name in Ezra, c. iv. v. 10.

¹⁶³ Moses Choronchus, *ibid*.

S E C T.

III.

the rebellious satrap who had fortified himself amidst the mountainous sources of the Euphrates and Araxes ¹⁶⁴, must already have assumed the royal title. For recovering the allegiance of Armenia, and the incomparably finer province of Media, Esarhaddon trusted to the renown of his arms in prosecuting the war in which Assyria was already involved with Egypt and Syria. In the latter country, Assyrian garrisons still kept possession of many strong holds; and particularly of Azotus or Ashdod, which had been one of the five capital cities of the Philistines ¹⁶⁵, and was the principal key of Syria towards Egypt. Tarako the great Ethiopian whose name had been terrible in those western countries, was no more; and his restless Nomadic followers, with the loss of their general and paymaster, lost also their union and discipline, and fell asunder with a rapidity greater than that with which they had been assembled. Sethos reigned in Egypt through the interest of the priests and the favour of the multitude; for his unjust treatment of the soldiers was too provoking ever to be forgiven by them ¹⁶⁶. In this posture of affairs, Esarhaddon directed his arms westward. It should seem that he made a further and considerable transportation of mutinous Israelites ¹⁶⁷; which confirms what has been already observed, that the removal of the whole people from their country had never been intended by the kings of Assyria ¹⁶⁸. The principal *Citizens* had been transplanted, men who might prove dangerous at home by their intrigues, and useful abroad by their skill in arts and adroitness in affairs. But the fields had been still left to the vine dressers and husbandmen; many of whom now mutinying against a foreign yoke, were forcibly dragged in captivity to the East, and more submissive peasants from the Assyrian territories, particularly Babylon and Cutha substituted in

¹⁶⁴ See above.¹⁶⁵ 1 Samuel, c. vi. v. 17.¹⁶⁶ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 141.¹⁶⁷ Ezra, c. iv. v. 7.¹⁶⁸ See above p. 65.

S E C T.
III.

Defeats Manasseh and accepts him for his vassal.

their vacant fields ¹⁶⁹. Judah was next assailed by Esarhaddon with more decisive success, than had yet attended the Assyrian arms in that kingdom. The impious Manasseh, who had strangely degenerated from his father, Hezekiah, was defeated in battle, pursued, made captive among the thorns, and carried in fetters to Babylon ¹⁷⁰. But adversity so greatly improved the character of this Jewish king, that he became a new man; and the sincerity of his repentance under the just chastisement of the Almighty, was followed by the peculiar favour of Esarhaddon, who could not fail to discern the advantage that might accrue to his Egyptian expedition from placing a warlike and active prince, bound to him by the highest obligations, in the vassal throne of Palæstine. Manasseh was therefore reinstated in the kingdom of Judah, and received in addition that of Israel, holding both countries as homager to the great monarch of Assyria, and transmitting them in that form, after a reign of fifty-five years, to his son the generous and ill-fated Josiah ¹⁷¹.

Of Esarhaddon's Egyptian expedition, which, according to the vulgar estimation of merit, must have been the noblest exploit in his reign, we know only that he sacked the ancient city of Thebes, called in Scripture the populous No ¹⁷²; a capital built "by the infinite strength of Egypt and Ethiopia," and celebrated from remote ¹⁷³ ages for that magnificence which still shines in its ruins ¹⁷⁴. Such an event indicates the deep wounds ¹⁷⁵ inflicted on Egypt during the reign of Sethos, in consequence of which that kingdom remained a prey, for 20 years, to divisions and anarchy until the aristo-

His Egyptian expedition.

¹⁶⁹ Prideaux justly observes, that Esarhaddon could not have done this, if he had not been king of Babylon; but he forgets that he had denied Shalmaneser to be king of Babylon, though that prince also planted Samaria with Babylonians. 2 Kings, c. xvii. v. 24. Conf. Old and New Testament connected, B. i. p. 42.

¹⁷⁰ 2 Chronicles, c. xxxiii. v. 11.

¹⁷¹ Chronicles, *ibid.* and Josephus Antiq. x. 4.

¹⁷² Nahum. c. iii. v. 8. with Michaelis' notes.

¹⁷³ Homer. Iliad, l. ix. v. 382.

¹⁷⁴ Norden's Voyage and Plates, No. 102 — 113. inclusive.

¹⁷⁵ Isaiah, *ibid.*

SECT.
111.

cracy of twelve kings not less turbulent than that of the Beys in modern times devolved, as we have explained above, into the single hand of Psammetichus ¹⁷⁶.

His firm yet
mild govern-
ment.

The predatory conquest of Egypt only attests Esarhaddon's power; his goodness is illustrated in his behaviour towards the two branches of the Hebrews, whether remaining in their native country, or transplanted to Nineveh and other cities of the East. The atonement which he made to that nation for the cruelties of Senacherib affords no small proof that his general government united lenity with firmness ¹⁷⁷. It must have been conducted with great ability, since during his long reign we hear little of the troubles of the empire, which began under his father, and which revived with dreadful effect under the government of his son.

His son
Nebuchado-
nisor—war
with the
Medes. B.C.
667.

Nebuchadonisor, for this is the name or title of the son of Esarhaddon, was involved in an obstinate and bloody war with the Medes. This great nation had immemorially subsisted in many distinct and warlike clans, scattered over the finest province of Upper Asia, each patriarchal tribe inhabiting its populous village, and for the most part fertile valley ¹⁷⁸. The Medes had long sent their proportion of troops and tribute to Nineveh, although a people circumstanced as they were, would be easily tempted to withhold those contributions on every prospect of impunity. The misfortunes of Senacherib formed a crisis favourable for rebellion. The Medes expelled their Assyrian viceroy, and acknowledged no authority but that of their own judges, heads each of his respective tribe, of which that governed by Dejoces was distinguished by its valour and numbers, as was their judge himself by his pre-eminence in wisdom ¹⁷⁹. Through the equity and promptitude of his decisions, Dejoces drew the causes of neighbouring clans to his tribunal, and was chosen

Dejoces king
of Media.
700 B. C.

¹⁷⁶ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 151. & seq.

¹⁷⁸ Herodotus, l. i. c. 96. and Strabo,

¹⁷⁷ Tobit, c. i. v. 21, 22. Ezra, c. iv. c. xi. p. 520. & seq.

¹⁷⁹ Herodot. *ibid.*

SECT.

III.



Defeated
and slain.
B. C. 647

His son
Phraortes
slew him be-
sieging Nine-
veh. B. C.
620.

Cyaxares
renews the
war.

Sardanapa-
lus besieged
in Nineveh
—his history.

king of the Medes through his ability in exercising one of the most indispensable functions of royal power. We know not by what means he contrived to avoid hostilities with Esharhaddon; but we are informed that the successor of this great prince invaded Media, defeated and slew Dejoces, and sacked his upstart capital of Ecbatana. Phraortes, the son of Dejoces, assuming the command of the Medes, became in turn the aggressor; drove the Assyrians from Media, wrested from them Persia, the proper Persia; and perished in an expedition against Nineveh the bulwark of their empire¹⁰². But Cyaxares, the son of Phraortes, lived to revenge the death of his father and grandfather on the effeminate son of Nebuchodonosor, the last Assyrian king of the house of Ninus. Before the reign of Agradotus¹⁰³, who assumed the name of Cyrus, there was not any prince in Ariana, that is, in any of the countries east of mount Zagros, that equals the historic fame of this illustrious Mede. To Cyaxares his countrymen acknowledged themselves indebted for harmonizing their formerly ill appointed armies into regular bodies of pikemen, cavalry, and archers. With such improved instruments of victory, he extended his dominions northward to the Euxine and the river Halys, assailed the heart of Assyria now encompassed with his arms, from the eastern wall of Media, to the mountainous confines of Cilicia; and though long interrupted in his progress by the Scythian invasion above-mentioned, resumed his warfare against Nineveh with fresh ardour.

That city and empire was then governed by Sardanapalus, a name coupled in our fancies with the utmost extravagance of effeminacy and profligacy. Amidst the first transactions to which the indolence of this voluptuary gave occasion, we read of an attempt to rattle by means of a mine that should extend to the heart of his palace, the vast subterranean¹⁰⁴ treasures, which his ancestors had collected from the spoils of vanquished enemies¹⁰⁵. We next find the revolt of

¹⁰² Herodotus, l. i. c. 102.

¹⁰³ Strabo, l. xv. p. 729.

¹⁰⁴ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 150.

¹⁰⁵ Isaiah and Nahum, *passim*.

S E C T.

III.

The history
of Nebopo-
lassar and
Cyaxares,
the same
with that of
Belesys and
Arbaces.

Nebopolassar¹⁶⁴, the hereditary chief of the Chaldæan priests at Babylon, and as such also the hereditary satrap of that important district¹⁶⁵, who seems to have been encouraged by the careless foolishness of Sardanapalus to resume the royal title which his father Baladan had usurped, after the disgraceful defeat of Senacharib. To maintain this independance, the revolted priest, who is described as a person of much cunning and dexterity¹⁶⁶, courted the friendship of Cyaxares, and obtained an alliance with that prince, whose object, issue, and incidents, so perfectly coincide with those of the far famed conspiracy between Belesys the Babylonian and Arbaces the Mede¹⁶⁷, that it is impossible on a careful comparison not to regard it as one and the same transaction¹⁶⁸: a transaction ever memorable, since it fulfilled the prophecies against Nineveh, and demolished a great

¹⁶⁴ Euseb. Chronic. p. 46. and Syncell. Chronograph. p. 210.

¹⁶⁵ During the dominion of the house of Ninus over Assyria, the hereditary priests of Babylon maintained a subordinate royalty in that city, agreeing in nature, as we shall see, with the power of the sacerdotal *divasas* in Lesser Asia under the Macedonian and Roman empires. Conf. Strabo, l. xv. p. 557. Diodorus, l. ii. f. 23. and 2 Kings, c. xviii. v. 2.

¹⁶⁶ Diodorus, l. ii. f. 28.

¹⁶⁷ Diodorus, *ibid*.

¹⁶⁸ According to the received chronology, Arbaces and Belesys destroyed Sardanapalus and his capital 820 years before Christ. Strabo, l. xvi. p. 737. speaks positively as to the total and final destruction of Nineveh *εφανθη παρηχρημα*. His authority is supported by that of Diodorus. Yet a century after this supposed demolition, the prophet Nahum denounces against Nineveh the wrath of heaven. See Nahum, c. ii. and c. iii. throughout, and particularly c. iii. v. 8. which ascertains the Chronology. These prophecies, however, confirm Herodotus's report, (a report the more likely to

be true, because he wrote a particular history of Assyria,) according to which Nineveh was destroyed by Cyaxares and the Medes 606 years before Christ. Herodot. l. i. c. 106. Conf. Tobit, c. xiv. v. 15. and Judith, c. i. v. 16. Of Belesys, whose name usurps the place of Nebopolassar, we know nothing. Predeaux in his Old and New Testament connected, v. i. p. 2. supposes him to be Nabonassar the first king of Babylon in Ptolemy's canon: But of this first king of Babylon (a high priest most probably who affected kingly power), we have not a single particular in history, except the æra called by his name, agreeing with the year 747 before Christ. Instead of Cyaxares and Nebopolassar, independant princes, we find, indeed, in Ctesias (apud Diodor. l. ii. f. 28.) Arbaces and Belesys revolted satraps. But as such Ctesias would find them represented in the courtly annals of Persia which he copied, if the Persians, as is said, flattered their latter kings as the lineal and perpetual successors of the universal monarchs of Asia. Conf. Daniel, c. ix. and D'Herbelot Artic. Persia.

capital,

The seeming contradictions reconciled. Nineveh taken by the Medes. B C. 606.

capital, and the most durable empire that ever subsisted in the ancient world.

In completing the object of his Assyrian warfare, Cyaxares had great difficulties to encounter. The art of attacking fortified places was still extremely imperfect. Psammetichus, king of Egypt, had availed himself of the disorders in the Assyrian empire for gaining Azotus, the principal Assyrian bulwark on the Mediterranean, but had difficultly conquered the place after a blockade of twenty-nine years¹⁹⁹; and Sardanapalus, king of Nineveh, though a slave to beastly appetites, prepared with the fierceness also of a wild beast to defend his polluted den²⁰⁰. At the head of a great army he is said to have thrice repelled the invaders. But a single defeat reduced him to the cowardly resolution of shutting himself up within his walls; while his forces, still more numerous than those of the enemy, were committed to his general Salaman, for thus the Greeks wrote the Assyrian name of Shalman or Solyman²⁰¹. The canal joining the Euphrates and Tigris was dyed red²⁰² with the blood of this general and his army. But Sardanapalus still deemed himself secure in virtue of an ancient prophecy, that the city should not be taken "until it was hostilely assaulted by the river²⁰³." In the third year of the siege this ænigma was explained; for the Euphrates swollen to fury by an unusual contribution of melted snows from Armenia, destroyed a portion of the walls two miles in extent, and Nineveh was reduced "to a pool of water²⁰⁴." The despairing tyrant then knew all to be lost: set fire to his palace; and perished in the vast funeral pile of his empire, with his women and eunuchs, his trinkets and treasures²⁰⁵.

¹⁹⁹ Herodotus, l. ii. c. 157.

²⁰⁰ Diodorus, l. ii. f. 25.

²⁰¹ Id. c. 26. Conf. Nahum, c. i. v. 137. with Michaelis's notes.

²⁰² Diodor. *ibid.*

²⁰³ Εαν μη πρωτιον ο ποταμος τη πολει γεινηται πολιμοι. Diodorus, l. ii. f. 26. Conf. Nahum, c. ii. v. 6. "The gates of the rivers

shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved."

²⁰⁴ Nahum, c. ii. v. 8. in Michaelis's translation. Conf. Diodor. l. ii. f. 27.

²⁰⁵ Diodor. *ibid.* Conf. Nahum, c. iii. v. 15. "In thy strong-holds or palace shall the fire devour thee."

S E C T.
III.

Babylon becomes the capital of Assyria.
B. C. 605.

The Medes thus became more decidedly than before, the great dominant nation in the East. But Nebopolassar their useful ally, was confirmed in the usurped kingdoms of Babylonia; and as Cyaxares in resentment of his father's death before the walls of Nineveh, totally demolished that capital¹⁹⁶, Babylon from a seat of commerce, of science, and of superstition, grew into a place of arms, the main bulwark of Assyrian power¹⁹⁷. The near vicinity of the old and the new capital is clearly indicated in a proposal of the artful priest of Babylon, immediately after the taking of Nineveh. Desirous, it is said, of appropriating the precious metals which he well knew would be found in the ashes of the royal palace, he begged leave (on pretence of a vow made during the dangers of the siege,) to transport the huge ruins to the place of his own residence, and his request was immediately granted¹⁹⁸; a request which must have appeared altogether extravagant, had Nineveh, instead of being situate within fifty miles of Babylon, with a canal of communication between them, stood three hundred miles distant on the eastern side of the Tigris¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁶ Strabo, l. xvii. p. 717. Before this total demolition, Nineveh had subsisted six hundred and twenty four years under thirty two kings, from Ninus to Sardanapalus, both inclusively. This chronology leaves nearly twenty years for the reign of each king: the commonly received chronology on the other hand, makes the city and empire of Nineveh to have lasted 1312 years, which gives the monstrous average of forty one years, for the reign of each sovereign.

¹⁹⁷ Herodotus, l. i. c. 178. Conf. l. i. c. 106.

¹⁹⁸ Diodorus, l. ii. f. 28.

¹⁹⁹ It is said in Tobit, c. vi. v. i. "And when they set out on their journey" (that is to go from Nineveh eastward to Ecbatana and Rages) "they came in the evening to the river Tigris." By a bend in the river, the road indeed might rejoin the Tigris, but the expression in Tobit is quite natural, if "the city of three days journey," stood on the royal canal, the Nahrmalka, between the

Tigris and Euphrates. In this neighbourhood, Xenophon found, two centuries afterwards, the great city Sitacé, Anabasis, l. ii. p. 283; and Ives describes nearly in the same position, Nimrod's Tower, as it is called, one hundred and twenty six feet high, and one hundred in diameter. It stands nine miles west of Bagdad; consists of bricks mixed with reeds; and is on all sides surrounded with ruins; circumstances agreeing well with Diodorus's position of Nineveh in his account of the decisive battle, and also with the following words of Herodotus. "Babylonia is like Egypt, perpetually intersected by canals; the greatest, which is navigable for vessels of a large size, joins another river, the Tigris, on which was situate Nineveh," l. i. c. 95. The words naturally bring to mind the Nahrmalka and Bagdad. The expressiveness of Herodotus's style always suggests the notion which he wishes to convey.