

**AN INQUIRY INTO
THE TRUTH OF
HISTORY. PART II**

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An Inquiry Into the Truth of History. Part II by Anonymous

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BY THE

AUTHOR OF "REMARKS UPON THE SUPPOSED
DIONYSIUS LONGINUS."

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AN
INQUIRY,
ETC.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

HERODOTUS.

“ ‘ Have patience,’ soft Morley in anger replied;
‘ To find out our way, let us catch off our guide.’ ”

PARON.

WE have accustomed ourselves to correct Scripture by profane history, but in the present inquiry a different plan will be adopted, and profane history will be corrected by Scripture.

Nebuchadnezzar was monarch of the civilized world : “ all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him.

Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down." A system, therefore, whether of chronology, or history, in which the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar are not recognized, is incorrect. Babylon was taken and destroyed by the Medes and Persians. Darius, the Mede, took the kingdom; Cyrus, the Persian, succeeded him, restored the Jews, and put down idolatry. It is evident, therefore, that the Cyrus of Scripture is not the Cyrus of profane history.

So far, however, we shall not have much difficulty in doing as Plutarch wished to do; for we may give consistency and an historical form to fable, by considering the tales of Troy divine, as the harlot songs of Tyre; and we may make the romance of Herodotus take the form of history, by allowing Cambysea "to disfigure, or present the person" of Nebuchadnezzar. Nabopolassar will then be the Cyrus of Herodotus, and the strange story of Smerdis, the Magian, and the imaginary king-

dom of Lydia ^a, may serve to shew, that although the strolling players acted Hamlet with the omission of the principal character, Herodotus, with all his ingenuity, and all his zeal for idolatry, could not altogether omit the history of the Jews! For Smerdis and the Magi, are meant for Daniel and his companions; the kingdom of Lydia is the kingdom of Judah; the story of Croesus is the history of Hezekiah, mixed up with that of his son Manasses; and the story of Candaules is taken from the history of David, mixed up with that of Hezekiah ^b.

^a I will not trouble the reader with a long note. Let him carefully compare Homer and Herodotus, and he will more than doubt the antiquity of this Lydian kingdom. Let him consider the bustle and debate which our petty emigrations have caused, and ask himself whether the natives of so small and insignificant a territory, as that of Proper Greece, were likely to have established the Æolian, Ionian, and Dorian colonies.

^b Hezekiah conquered the Ionim, or idolaters, of Palestine, and Croesus conquered the Ionian colonies; we find here fresh proof of the confusion which has so often arisen from similarity of names. The Latins distinguished between *Jōnius*, and *Iōnicus*, but we confound the Ionim, the worshippers of Io, or Juno, or Jonah, or of Day, (ἰοῦ) with the Iones,

But if Cyrus is Nabopolassar, and Cambyses is Nebuchadnezzar, Xerxes, who destroyed so many of the temples of the idolaters, will be the Cyrus of Scripture; and the reader may ask, with surprise, whether he is to discredit the famous in-

who sprung from Javan, the Hebrew Iun. The remarkable history of Jonah was not likely to be forgotten. It may be traced in that of Io, and Derceto and the fish Oannes, for spirits "can either sex assume." The Ionian sea took its name from him probably, and we may thus understand why Homer called Lacedæmon *κρηόσσα*, if we bear in mind that Jonah was swallowed by a great fish. The savage Centaurs, i. e. the wild mountaineers of Taurus, on their little nags, have been confounded with the learned and polished Centaur Chiron, who may be referred to Hiram, Khan of Tyre. The Cyclops of Homer is very different from the Cyclopes, who worked for Vulcan; but if the name means red faced (and *Kuzzil* still means *red* in Persian) we may account for the sameness of name and difference of character. Pyrrhus is said to have been so called from the redness of his hair; and the monster, Typhon, is said to have been of a red colour. The savage and red-faced shepherd of Homer will be Nebuchadnezzar, the original Pyrrhus, and Typhon: the slaves of Vulcan will be the Edomites or Messenians, who were the slaves of the Spartan ironmongers. The reader need not be told that Edom signifies *red*, nor that the modern Pelaagi, or gipsies, are given to tinkering. In the ninth century, Dionysius, of Athens, was identified with Dionysius of Paris. See Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*. Vol. v. p. 489.

vasion of Greece? An invasion so celebrated; vouched for by so much Greek verse, and so much Greek prose, and acknowledged, as we are told, by Scripture.

We will proceed cautiously. Thucydides is allowed to be a better historian than Herodotus. Even in Larcher's life of Herodotus, the truth peeps out, and we may surmise that Herodotus was the laughing-stock of his cotemporaries; but Thucydides, notwithstanding the difficulties under which he laboured, as the historian of his own times, has always borne a high character for veracity. Had Thucydides, however, spoken the whole truth with regard to the Persian invasion, Grecian vanity would have been sorely wounded, and the Greeks might have been inclined to make short work with the historian and his history.

When we find, therefore, that Thucydides never mentions Herodotus; that he sets out with affirming that the Peloponnesian war was the greatest of the Grecian wars; that the Persian war was the great-

est of former wars, and yet that it was quickly decided in two sea-fights, and two land-fights^a: and that even in the time of Themistocles the Athenian ships were not whole-decked. When we find from the speech, which he puts into the mouth of Pericles, how necessary experience and constant practice were in naval matters, and we bear in mind that before the Persian war the Athenians had little or no commerce, and were unable to cope with the merchant-pirates of the barren rock of Ægina; when we find that Æschylus says nothing about the sea-fights of Artemisium, and that Isocrates^b carried the license of panegyric no farther than to give the Athenians a fleet of sixty ships; when we read what Livy says about the Euripus^c,

^a Δουὶν ναυμαχίαν καὶ πηζομαχίαν. Lib. I. c. 23. We cannot possibly make more than four engagements altogether.

^b — ἕξοντα τρήρεις πληρώσαντες πρὸς ἅπαν τὸ τῶν πολυμένων ναυτικόν. Paneg. p. 74, of the late Oxford edition.

^c "Aristotle as the story goes, drowned himself here, out of chagrin for not being able to account for so unusual a motion." (The flux and reflux of the Euripus.) Livy was