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Edited by Archibald Henry Sayce Herodotus

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Ancient Empires of the East

Archibald Henry Sayce (1845–1933) was an influential orientalist and philologist. He was a pioneering Assyriologist and published widely on the history, religion, and literature of the Babylonian and Assyrian peoples. In 1891 he became Professor of Assyriology at Oxford University. *The Ancient Empires of the East* (1883) is Sayce's edition, 'with Notes, Introductions and Appendices', of the first three books of *The Histories* by the fifth-century Greek historian Herodotos, which focus on Egypt and Persia. In his preface Sayce states that since the field of oriental studies is 'growing day by day' it is the aim of his edition to 'take stock of our existing knowledge' and 'see exactly what is the point to which our researches have brought us'. Although his translation of Herodotos was criticised on publication on account of inaccuracies, Sayce's reputation as a great populariser of oriental philology, history and culture remained intact.

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HERODOTUS



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THE
ANCIENT EMPIRES
OF THE EAST

HERODOTOS I.-III.

WITH NOTES, INTRODUCTIONS, AND APPENDICES

BY

A. H. SAYCE

DEPUTY-PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY, OXFORD ;

HONORARY LL.D., DUBLIN

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ERRATA.

Page 207, note 8. For *not* read *rot*.

„ 331, line 20. For *Sestesura* read *Sestura*. Also written *Sesetsu*.

„ 337, „ 27. For *in* read *into*.

„ 361. An inscription lately brought from Abu-Habba shows that Agadé, Semitised into Accad, is the true reading.

„ 369-71. A recently discovered cylinder of Nabonidos asserts the date of Naram-Sin, the son of Sargon of Agadé, to have been 3200 years before the time of Nabonidos (see Pinches in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, Nov. 7th, 1882). It is more than doubtful whether Eri-Acu, the son of Cudur-Mabug, is to be identified with Rim-Agu, who was conquered by Khammuragas, and recent discoveries show that the conquest of Babylonia by Khammuragas did not follow very closely upon the reign of Naram-Sin. There seem, however, to have been two princes of the name of Khammuragas.

„ 438. The cylinder of Nabonidos just mentioned calls Astyages “the king of the *tsab manda*” or “barbarians.” It must have been through a confusion between the words Madâ or Medes—the term by which the heterogeneous tribes east of Kurdistan were known to the Assyrians—and *manda*, “a barbarian,” that the name of Media came to be applied by Greek and probably Persian writers to the kingdom of Ekbatana. Nabonidos states that the temple of the Moon-god at Harran, which had been destroyed by the “Manda,” was restored by himself, with the help of the soldiers he had summoned from Gaza and elsewhere, after the overthrow of Istuvegu or Astyages by Kyros in B.C. 553. He goes on to say: “And Merodach spake with me: ‘The barbarians of whom thou hast spoken, themselves, their country, and the kings that are their allies, exist not.’ In the third year when it came, he bade Kuras, king of Anzan, his young servant, to march with his army; he overthrew the wide-spreading barbarians; he captured Astyages, king of the barbarians, and took his treasures to his own land.”

N.B.—In the following pages an attempt has been made to give a correct transliteration of Greek and oriental proper names. But as long as English spelling remains a national disgrace, and no reformed alphabet is in current use, rigid consistency is unfortunately impossible. Nor can the printer be expected to be always attentive to the clumsy devices by which alone we are able at present to mark the differences between a long and short *e* or *o*. As in the case of Greek accents, the most careful corrector for the press will sometimes overlook a misuse of diacritical marks. Any endeavour, however, to approximate to the right reproduction of Greek proper names is better than none at all, and may possibly help to contribute to that most desirable of objects, the reform of English spelling.

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PREFACE.

THE main object of the present work is to show what light has been thrown upon the earlier books of "the Father of History" by recent discoveries in Greece and the Levant, and, at the same time, to emphasize the fact, which Herodotos perceived, that Greek history and civilisation are but a continuation of the history and civilisation of the ancient East. The rapid progress that has been made of late years in the decipherment of the Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions, the active exploration and unexpected discoveries that have been made in Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Syria, and Asia Minor, the excavations on the site of Carchemish, and the recognition of the important part once played by the Hittites, have revolutionised our conception of early history, and given us a knowledge of the religion and culture, the languages and inner life, of the old nations of the Orient which Herodotos and his contemporaries did not and could not possess. In studies which are growing day by day, and continually revealing some new fact or correcting some previous misconception, it is well to take stock of our existing knowledge every now and then, and see exactly what is the point to which our researches have brought us. The present volume, accordingly, deals with the history rather than with the language of Herodotos, and with that history only in so far as it bears upon the East. I have not touched upon philology except where the meaning of a word or name has been cleared up by the science of language, or where I have myself found a difficulty in the grammatical construction or exact signification of a passage.

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Those who would be saved the trouble of reference to a grammar and dictionary, or who desire to learn what difficulties commentators have discovered in simple texts, and what avalanches of learning they have poured down upon them, must turn to other editions of Herodotos. It is with Herodotos as the historian, rather than as the subject for the dissecting-knife of the grammarian, that I have had to do.

The edition of the first three books of his history now presented to the reader does not profess to enter into competition with the standard work of Prof. Rawlinson. Its existence is justified on three grounds. First of all, as I have already said, it tries to place before the public the results of the researches made up to the present time in the monumental records of the ancient civilised world. Dislocated and hidden away as most of the materials are in numerous learned periodicals, some of which are scarcely known even by name beyond a very small and select circle of subscribers, the task of bringing them together is one which the ordinary classical student would have neither the leisure nor the desire to attempt, and it therefore becomes the duty of those who have specially devoted themselves to Oriental matters to undertake it for him. In the second place, I can speak at first hand about a good deal of the material worked up in the present volume, and can claim to have contributed some portion of it myself to science; while both in the notes and appendices new facts will be found which have not hitherto made their way into print elsewhere. Then, thirdly, I have travelled over a considerable part of the ground on which the history described by Herodotos was enacted. Indeed, with the exception of Babylonia and Persia, there is hardly a country or site mentioned by him in these first three books which I have not visited. And the more I have travelled, the more impressed I have been with the conviction how impossible it is to write accurately of an event, or discuss with any advantage a historical or topographical question, without having studied it personally on the spot. I much doubt if the great antiquity of Egyptian

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civilisation can be really brought home to the mind of anyone who has not actually sailed up the Nile and examined one by one the groups of monuments he passes on the way, and the successive stages of culture they imply.

For recent monographs on the relation of monumental discovery to Herodotos I would refer to Maspero's interesting "Fragment d'un Commentaire sur le seconde Livre d'Hérodote" in the *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'Encouragement des Études grecques en France*, 1875 (pp. 15-21), 1876 (pp. 185-193), 1877 (pp. 124-137), and 1878 (pp. 124-174); Eugène Reville's "Premier Extrait de la Chronique démotique de Paris: Le Roi Amasis et les Mercenaires" in the *Revue égyptologique*, II. and III., 1880 (pp. 49-82); and, above all, Wiedemann's "Geschichte Ägyptens von Psammetich I. bis auf Alexander den Grossen," Leipzig, 1880 (more especially pp. 81-100), in which, for the first time, the methods of scientific criticism are applied to the records of ancient Egypt. Brüll's "Herodot's babylonische Nachrichten" (1878), though convincingly disproving Oppert's topographical restoration of Babylon, is little more than a re-statement of the arguments in Rawlinson's *Herodotus*. For Persia the student may be referred to Hovelacque's "Observations sur un Passage (I. 131-141) d'Hérodote concernant certaines Institutions perses" in the *Revue de Linguistique et de Philologie comparée*, VII., 1875 (pp. 243-68), and my own letter on the "Rise of the Persian Empire" in the *Academy*, Oct. 16, 1880, pp. 276-7; while for the Hittites and their extension as far as Lydia my article on "The Monuments of the Hittites," in the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, VII. 2, 1881 (pp. 248-308), may be consulted. The natural history of Herodotos is treated by B. Beneke in the *Wissenschaftliche Monatsblätter* for 1879, Nos. 4-8, 10-12, under the titles of "Die Säugethiere in Herodot's Geschichte," "Die botanischen Bemerkungen," and "Die mineralogischen Bemerkungen."

The net result of Oriental research in its bearing upon Herodotos is to show that the greater part of what he professes

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to tell us of the history of Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia, is really a collection of "märchen," or popular stories, current among the Greek loungers and half-caste dragomen on the skirts of the Persian empire. For the student of folklore they are invaluable, as they constitute almost the only record we have of the folklore of the Mediterranean in the fifth century before our era; and its examination and comparative treatment by a Felix Liebrecht or a Ralston would be a work of the highest interest and importance. After all, it is these old stories that lend as great a charm to the pages of Herodotus as they do to those of mediæval travellers like Maundeville or Marco Polo; and it may be questioned whether they are not of higher value for the history of the human mind than the most accurate descriptions of kings and generals, of wars and treaties and revolutions.¹

A. H. SAYCE.

QUEEN'S COLL., OXFORD,

April 1883.

¹ There is no commentary on Herodotus more instructive or interesting than Maspero's admirable *Contes égyptiens* (Paris 1882), which forms the fourth volume of *Les Littératures populaires*. The author says justly (p. xxxiii.) of Herodotus: "Il n'écrivait pas une histoire d'Égypte. Même bien instruit, il n'aurait pas donné au livre de son histoire universelle qui traitait de l'Égypte plus de développements qu'il ne lui en a donnés. Toutes les dynasties auraient dû tenir en quelques pages, et il ne nous

eût rien appris que ne nous apprennent aujourd'hui les textes originaux. En revanche, nous y aurions perdu la plupart de ces récits étranges, et souvent bouffons, qu'il nous a si joliment racontés, sur la foi de ses guides. Phéron ne nous serait pas connu, ni Protée, ni Rhampsinite. Je crois que ç'aurait été grand dommage. Les monuments nous disent, ou nous diront un jour, ce que firent les Khéops, les Ramsès, les Thoutmès du monde réel. Hérodote nous apprend ce qu'on disait d'eux dans les rues de Memphis."

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THE HISTORICAL CREDIBILITY OF HÊRODOTOS.

WHETHER it was that the work of Hêrodotos fell upon an age which had imbibed the sceptical teaching of the philosophers and sophists, and, like the wits at the court of the Restoration, was ready to laugh down a writer who made demands upon its credulity,—or whether his residence in the West lost him the literary friends and advocates he would otherwise have had in Greece,—or whether, again, his partiality for Athens aroused the prejudices of the younger generation which gathered like vultures round the carcase of Athenian greatness, and neither cared nor desired to remember the history of the Persian wars,—certain it is that from the first Herodotos met with hostile criticism and accusations of historical dishonesty. Hardly had the generation for whom he wrote passed away before Thukydidês tacitly accused him of errors which the Attic historian corrected without even naming the author to whom they were due. While his statements on matters of Greek history were thus called in question by a writer of that very nationality whose deeds he had done so much to exalt, his history of the East was categorically declared to be false by Ktêsias, the physician of the Persian king Artaxerxes Mnêmon. Born at Knidos, almost within sight of Halikarnassos, the birthplace of Herodotos, the position of Ktêsias gave him exceptional opportunities for ascertaining the true facts of Persian history, and his contemporaries naturally concluded that a critic who had lived long at the Persian Court, and had there consulted the parchment archives of Persia, was better informed than a mere tourist whose travels had never extended so far as the Persian capital, and who was obliged to depend upon ignorant dragomen for the information he retailed. The very fact, however, that Ktêsias considered Herodotos worthy of attack shows that the latter held a high rank in the Greek literary world, whatever opinion there might be as to the character and credibility of his writings. But the attack

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of Ktésias produced its desired result; the work of Herodotos fell more and more into contempt or neglect; the florid rhetoric of Ephoros superseded it among the readers of a later day, and, Bauer notwithstanding, even the antiquarian philologists of Alexandria paid it no special attention. Manetho and Harpokration wrote books to disprove the statements of Herodotos;¹ Theopompos,² Strabo,³ Cicero,⁴ and Lucian,⁵ challenged his veracity; and Josephos⁶ declares that "all" Greek authors acknowledged him to have "lied in most of his assertions;" while the Pseudo-Plutarch went yet further, and composed a treatise on the Malignity of Herodotos, in which he sought to prove that the misstatements of the "father of history" were intentional distortions of fact. It is only wonderful that with all this Herodotos continued to be read, and perhaps yet more wonderful that his work has escaped the wreck from which but a few excerpts of his critic Ktésias have been preserved.

The last half-century has placed materials at our disposal for testing the historical veracity of Herodotos which the majority of his Greek critics ignored and despised. Year by year exploration in the East and patient research at home have been gradually adding to our knowledge of the ancient world, and enabling us to reconstruct the history of oriental civilisation. Assyria and Babylonia, Egypt and Nubia, Asia Minor and prehistoric Greece itself, have yielded up their monuments to the scrutiny of a generation which has been trained in the principles of a scientific criticism and desires to discover only the truth. The contemporaneous records of princes and statesmen who were but names a few years ago now lie before us, and we know more of the inner and outer life of ancient Babylonia or ancient Egypt than Herodotos could have done even though he had spoken the languages of these countries and travelled more widely over them than he did.

The question of the trustworthiness of Herodotos can now be judged on better grounds than internal evidence or the testimony of classical writers. We have means for deciding how far the statements of Herodotos in regard to events which happened before his time and in the foreign countries he visited are correct. Unfortunately, as we shall see, the decision is on the whole against our author, and we shall therefore have to enquire why this is,—whether the mistakes of

¹ *Etym. Mag.*, s.v. *Λεοντοκρίμους*; and Suidas, s.v. *Ἀρποκρατίων*.

² *Fr.* 29.

³ xi. pp. 740, 771, etc.

⁴ *De Leg.* i. 1; *De Div.* ii. 56.

⁵ *Ver. H.* ii. 42.

⁶ *Con. Ap.* i. 3.

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Herodotos are due to the circumstances under which he wrote and travelled, or whether, as the Pseudo-Plutarch was persuaded, he was not only fallible but dishonest.

For the sake of briefness it will be best, first, to see how and with what object the history was written ; secondly, how far the honesty of Herodotos can be trusted ; and thirdly, how far his statements bear the test of facts.

(1.) Herodotos tells us himself that his object in writing was to record the famous events of the past, more especially the struggle between the Greek and the barbarian. In other words, he wished to write a history of the Persian War, and of the causes which led up to it. What else he tells us is episodical, taking the place of the foot-notes and excursions of a modern book. The history of Lydia is connected with the first beginning of the contest between Europe and Asia as well as with the rise of the Persian empire ; the account of Babylonia necessarily finds a place in a work dealing with a power of which it formed so important an element ; and the long episodes upon Egypt and Skythia are justified by their bearing upon the Persian War, which could not fitly come about until the conquest of Egypt had swept away the last civilised kingdom which stood between Persia and Greece, and the chastisement of the Skythians had made the Persian frontier safe on the north, and allowed it to prosecute its designs against Hellas without hindrance or fear. Egypt, too, exercised a most important bearing on the course of the war. Had it not been for its opportune revolt in B.C. 486, the whole strength of Persia would have been flung upon Greece under the direction of the skilful and energetic Dareios, not of the weak and cowardly Xerxês. We are only surprised that Herodotos has introduced no digression upon Phœnicia into his work, since the Phœnician fleet was a prime factor in the war, and Phœnician traders were held by him to have been the first causes of the quarrel between East and West.

But the ingenuity of commentators has of course not been satisfied with the simple account Herodotos gives of the object of his work. They have divined other objects as well, and it cannot be denied that in the choice of his subject, and especially in his treatment of it, Herodotos must have been influenced by motives which appear more or less plainly on the face of his book. Herodotos had travelled and taken many notes, and, like travellers of our own day, was anxious to let other people know that he had done so. As it happened, his travels had taken him over the scene of the great war. Then, again,

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he had that common failing of literary men—jealousy of others who had done what he thought he could himself do better. Hekataëos, as we shall see, seems to have been the special object of his dislike, and he succeeded only too well in effacing him. But, above all, Herodotos had a philosophical, or, if the term is preferred, a theological theory, which was a combination of the old Greek belief in the doom that awaits hereditary guilt, and the artistic Greek conception of “the golden mean.” Whatever exceeded a just proportion aroused the envy and *νέμεσις* of heaven; the overweening power and pride of Xerxes brought upon him the destined disaster, just as it brought destruction upon Kroesos at the moment when he considered himself most secure. Hence it is that the Athenian legislator and gnomic poet has to be introduced into the Lydian court in spite of chronological difficulties, in order to preach that doctrine of moderation which was soon to be verified by facts; hence it is that the murder of Polykrates or the expedition of Xerxês has to be preceded by dreams—the shadows of the events that were to follow.

Kirchhoff¹ has made it plain that Herodotos left his work unfinished. He could not have intended to break off his history of the Persian War while it was not yet ended without commemorating “the great and wonderful deeds”² enacted on the Eurymedôn and at Salamis in Kypros, or the compact known as the peace of Kimôn, which brought to a close the long hostilities between Greece and Persia. At the same time it is equally clear that the work, as we have it, is carefully arranged according to a definite plan. And not only so, but it bears evident marks of having been revised by its author after its first publication, or at any rate its first composition. Canon Rawlinson points out that in iv. 30 *προσθήκαι* must be rendered “additions” or “supplements,” not “digressions,” and that the phrase there used, “additions are what my work always from the very first affected,” implies that the book had already been published. It is otherwise difficult to understand why this protest against a carping criticism should have been made. It is also possible that when Herodotos twice declares (iii. 80, vi. 43) that Otanês had really recommended a republic in spite of the incredulity of “certain Greeks,” he is alluding to objections that had been raised on the first publication of his work, and not to the criticism passed on the authority from which he is quoting. The most natural explanation of

¹ *Ueber die Entstehungszeit des herodotischen Geschichtswerkes*, 2d edition, 1878.

² i. 1.

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the fact that whereas some passages in the book were clearly composed or revised in Southern Italy, others appear to have been written in Asia Minor or Attica, is, that it underwent two editions. The passages which imply a residence in Southern Italy are always, as Professor Rawlinson says, parenthetical (except, perhaps, vi. 127), and can be omitted without injury to the sense;¹ while it is difficult to conceive that the vanity of a Greek could have been satisfied with writing a book and not publishing it for years.

Kirchhoff, indeed, has argued ably to prove that the work was brought out piecemeal. As the promise of a digression on Assyrian history in i. 106, 184, is not fulfilled in the third book (ch. 150), where we should expect it, he concludes that a considerable interval of time elapsed between the composition and publication of the two passages, and that Herodotos had meanwhile forgotten his promise. As Bachof,² however, remarks, the Assyrian power had been destroyed by the Medes, not by the Persians, and therefore the history of it could not well enter into the plan of his work. Moreover, in iv. 1 Herodotos actually refers to one of the very passages in which the "Assyrian History" is mentioned, so that his memory could not have been so short as Kirchhoff imagines. Kirchhoff places the composition of this first part of the work at Athens before B.C. 442, when Sophoklēs brought out his *Antigonē*, in which a reminiscence appears of the history of the wife of Intaphernēs (see iii. 119, note 6), and when Herodotos received the gift of 10 talents for his work from the Athenian people.³ Bachof reasonably wonders how an author who intended to write the history of the Persian War could have published a fragment which did not reach even as far as the occasion of its beginning. Kirchhoff brings Herodotos to Athens for the second time after the commencement of the Peloponnesian War on

¹ For those written in Southern Italy see iii. 160 (*end*); iv. 99; v. 77 (*end*); vi. 127 (where the list begins with Italy); vii. 114 (*end*); ix. 73 (*end*). For the others see i. 142, where the Ionian cities are enumerated from south to north, iii. 90, ii. 7. Stein suggests that iv. 81 was written before the visit of Herodotos to Delphi, as otherwise he would have compared the great bowl presented by Kroesos (i. 51) with the Skythian cauldron.

² *Die 'Aσσύριοι Λόγοι des Hērodotos*

b

(Fleckeisen's *Jahrb.* 1877). But it must be remembered that Herodotos understands Babylonia as well as the kingdom of Nineveh under the name of Assyria so that he must have regarded the Babylonian empire as merely a continuance of the Assyrian.

³ The vote was moved by Anytos, according to Dylllos, an Athenian historian of the fourth century B.C., quoted by the Pseudo Plutarch (*De Malig. Herod.* ii. p. 862 A; see Euseb. *Chron. Can.* ii. p. 339.)

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the strength of a comparison between the funeral oration of Periklês and the metaphor of the spring put into the mouth of Gelon (vii. 162), and makes him remain there till B.C. 428. During this second visit he supposes bks. v. 77–ix. to have been written.

Kirchhoff's dates are accepted by Bauer,¹ who, however, believes that what Kirchhoff calls the composition of the second part of the History was really its final redaction. He assumes that Herodotos had by him a number of individual histories—the Lydian, the Egyptian, the Skythian, the Libyan, and the Persian—which he had written at various times. These were pieced together into a connected whole, the first part (to the middle of the 5th book) in Thurii, the second part in Athens. It was the history of the expedition of Xerxês which was read to the Athenian people in B.C. 445, soon after the composition of the Egyptian history.²

Bauer's theory no doubt contains an element of fact. Herodotos must have written his history in parts. The existence of such episodes as that on Egypt goes far to prove it; but the references to the Assyrian history, which was never incorporated into the work, make it almost a certainty.³ The Assyrian history cannot well have been expunged by Herodotos when he revised (or redacted) his book, and there is no satisfactory evidence that it formed a separate volume. Nevertheless the Assyrian portion of the history of Ktêsias seems to have been composed with the view of confuting the statements on Assyrian matters which had been current under the name of Herodotos. We must, therefore, assume that Herodotos had actually written a work on Assyria similar to that on Egypt, and that while he embodied the whole of his Egyptian volume into his great work, he introduced from his Assyrian volume only that portion which related to the Babylonian empire, together with a passage or two which bore on the earlier chronology of Assyria. The whole volume, perhaps, fell after his death into the hands of friends, who, without publishing it, let it be known what its author had said about Assyrian history. It is even possible that Herodotos may have read this and other fragments which went to form his general history to private circles of friends. Hence the reply of Ktêsias in the form of a counter Assyrian history.

¹ *Die Entstehungszeit des herodotischen Geschichtswerkes*, 1878.

² Bauer's hypothesis, so far as it assumes that the history of the campaign of Xerxês (bks. vii.–ix.) was written

before bks. i.–vi., is successfully overthrown by Bachof, *Quæstiuncula Herodotea* (Eisenach, 1880).

³ See i. 106, note 1.

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The detached parts, which we thus suppose were woven into a harmonious whole, must themselves have been based in great measure upon notes. Herodotos must have gone about, pencil and measuring-tape in hand, examining the relics preserved in temples, noting down the replies he received to his questions from dragomen, Greek priests, and the descendants of great men to whom he was introduced, or measuring the size of the buildings he visited, and the large blocks of stone which excited his wonder. He appeals to the testimony of his own eyesight and observation; to the offerings and famous relics preserved in temples, like the fetters of the Spartans at Tegea, or the monuments to the Greeks who fell at Thermopylæ; to Greek inscriptions like the forged Kadmeian ones at Thebes; to oracles like those delivered to Kroesos; to tradition; to eyewitnesses¹ and personal intercourse with those who had taken part in the events described, or were related to those who had done so, like Thersander² and Arkhias³; to Egyptian priests, or rather half-caste dragomen; to Persian and Phœnician writers⁴; to Greek poets—Arkhilokhos (i. 12), Solôn (v. 113), Sapphô (ii. 135), Alkæos (v. 95), Simonides of Keos (v. 102, vii. 228), Anakreôn (iii. 121), Pindar (iii. 38), Lysistratos (viii. 96), Æskhylos (ii. 156), Phrynikhos (vi. 21), Aristæas (iv. 13), Homer and Hesiod (ii. 117, iv. 32, v. 67, ii. 53), Olen (iv. 35), Musæos and Bakis (vii. 6, viii. 20, 77, 96, ix. 43)—and to earlier Greek historians and geographers. Among the monuments he saw were many inscribed ones, such as the stem of twisted serpents on which stood the tripod dedicated to Apollo by the Greek victors at Plateæa, and which is now in the Hippodrome at Constantinople; or the tablet of Mandroklês in the temple of Hêrê at Samos;⁵ or the two columns erected by Dareios and engraved with Greek and Assyrian (*i. e.* Persian) characters.⁶ The example of the Kadmeian inscriptions at Thebes, however, shows that Herodotos could not distinguish between forgeries and genuine texts even where he had to deal with Greek inscriptions; and we must be therefore careful in accepting his statements on the strength of supposed epigraphic evidence where we do not exactly know what it was. Besides monuments of this kind it is probable that he used official registers preserved in temples, like the *ἀναγραφὰι* of Sparta.⁷ If the latter gave

¹ iii. 115, iv. 16.² ix. 16. ³ iii. 55.⁴ See i. 1, i. 95, i. 214.⁵ iv. 88. ⁶ iv. 87.⁷ Plut. *Vit. Ages.* 19. Comp. also the*ἀρχαῖα γράμματα* of Elis (Paus. v. 4, 4); the list of Olympian victors (Paus. v. 8, 3); the list of Karnean victors at Sparta (Athen. xiv. p. 635 E); the registers of Argos and Sikyon (Plut. *De Mus.* p.

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the length of each king's reign as well as his name, they may explain the fact that Herodotos places 900 years between himself and Hēraklēs (ii. 145) instead of 630, which, according to his own mode of reckoning dates (ii. 142), would be the time required for the twenty-one generations from Hēraklēs to Leōnidas (vii. 204). The oracles probably formed part of the oral tradition from which he drew so largely, though, as the oracles ascribed to Musæos and Bakis were in writing, it is possible that a written compilation of the oracles of Delphi had been made before his time (see i. 47). We are no doubt indebted to tradition for a good deal of the folklore which lends to his pages so great a charm. That Herodotos borrowed from Persian and Phœnician writers he expressly states himself; and as the style as well as the doctrines of the early Ionic philosophers presuppose an acquaintance with Oriental literature, while Herodotos was born a Persian subject, it might be concluded that both he and his countrymen in Asia Minor were not so ignorant of Persian—the English of the day—or of Phœnician—the language of trade,—as is ordinarily supposed. It is quite clear, too, that the account of the Persian satrapies given in the third book is taken from an official list. But there is nothing else to show that Herodotos was acquainted with any other language than his own, and the mistakes he makes in his translations of Persian words prove that he could not have understood the Persian language. The same evidence is also borne by Ktēsias.¹ That persons must have been found in Asia Minor able to speak both Greek and Persian is of course evident—in no other way could the Persian government of the Greek states there have been carried on; but they were probably of no high station in life—mere clerks, in fact, who made a livelihood, like the dragomen in Egypt, out of their linguistic acquirements. To learn the language of their conquerors was unpatriotic, and if the trouble were undergone for the sake of gain “banausic.” Possibly Semitic settlers were found to perform the same office of interpreters between the Greeks and their masters that was undertaken by the Jews in Spain for the Arab students of Greek literature. In any case there must have been Greek translations of Persian and Phœnician books, as well as of official documents, from which Herodotos derived his statements; and the fact that they were translations may explain why he always speaks of his Oriental authorities in the plural. The Hellenic poets, on the other hand,

1134); and that of the Athenian archons (Polyb. xii. 12, 1). For the value to be assigned to the list of Olympian victors

see Mahaffy in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, ii. 1 (1881), pp. 164 sq.

¹ See i. 1, note 1.

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formed part of the Greek's education, and were the texts upon which the teaching of *γράμματα* was based. Herodotos had no doubt committed a good deal of their compositions to heart, and an apt quotation was not likely to be less esteemed in the ancient world than in the modern. Hence it is that while Hekataëos is the only Greek prose-writer quoted by name—and that only for the sake of disparagement—Herodotos makes a show of his acquaintance with the poets of his nation. A good knowledge of standard poetry was as much the mark of a cultivated gentleman as it was in the English society of the last century. It is therefore somewhat strange that Sophoklēs, the fashionable tragedian of the day, should not once be named, more especially as there are evidences of conscious allusions to Herodotos on the part of the poet, who is even said to have written a poem in his honour.¹ But it is precisely the fact that Sophoklēs was the fashionable poet of the day which explains the silence of Herodotos. His tragedies had not formed part of the school education of Herodotos; he had learned no passages from them, and was consequently unable to quote them. Nor did a knowledge of a poet about whom every one was talking bring with it the same reputation of learning as a knowledge of prehistoric worthies like Musæos and Bakis.

The relation of Herodotos towards his predecessors in prose literature was a very different one. They were his rivals whom he wished to supplant. There was no *éclat* to be gained by showing himself familiar with their names. His chief aim was to use their materials without letting the fact be known. He tries to impress upon the reader his own superiority to the older prose-writers; he boasts of accepting only what he has heard from eyewitnesses (iii. 115, iv. 16), and names Hekataëos only when he thinks he can confute him or make him appear ridiculous. And yet it is certain that he is largely indebted to Hekataëos for his information, and that in Egyptian matters more particularly he has drawn without scruple on the work of the writer

¹ Plut. *Op.* ii. p. 785 A, edit. Reiske. The poem began: Ὡδὴν Ἡροδότῳ τεύξεν Σοφοκλῆς ἐτέων ὧν Πέντ' ἐπὶ πενήκοντα. See iii. 119, note 6, and cf. Hanna, "Beziehungen des Sophokles zu Herodot" (Brünn, 1875), and Nieberding, "Sophokles und Herodot" (Neustadt, 1875). The lynx eyes of commentators have discovered plagiarisms from Sophoklēs in ii. 35 and iii. 119. On the other hand, Sophoklēs seems really to

allude to Herodotos not only in the passage above referred to, assuming it to be genuine, but also where the habits of the Egyptians are attacked and human misery is described in *Ced. Col.* 337 sq. and 1211 sq., as well as in *Fr.* 380, where mention is made of the invention of games to allay the pangs of hunger, and perhaps *Fr.* 967, where the inundation of the Nile is ascribed to the melting of the snow.

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he desired to supersede.¹ Herodotos wrote for a young and growing society, not a decrepit and decaying one; and just as the surest mode of securing the circulation of a book in ancient Egypt, or in the earlier centuries of our own era, was to ascribe it to an older author, so the passport to fame among the Greek reading public in the age of Herodotos was the affectation of novelty and contemptuous criticism of older writers. The treatment Hekataeos has suffered at the hands of Herodotos—and which Herodotos himself was soon to suffer by a just retribution—prepares us to expect a similar treatment in the case of other authors whose works have been laid under contribution while their names have been suppressed. This expectation is verified by passages like ii. 15, 17, iv. 36, 42, where other writers on the same subject, supposed to be well known to his audience, are sneered at; or by the reference in vi. 55 to the genealogy-makers, who did not come into competition with Herodotos, and are therefore compassionately allowed to be still read.

Among the writers who had preceded Herodotos were Akusilaos of Argos, Eudemos of Paros, Eugaeon or Eugeon of Samos, Hekataeos and Dionysios of Milêtos, Kharon of Lampsakos, Xanthos of Sardes, Demoklês of Phygela, Biôn and Deïokhos of Prokonnêsos, Amelêsagoras or Melêsagoras of Khalkêdôn, Pherekydês of Leros, and Skylax of Karyanda.² Hekataeos we know he used; even in the ancient world it was notorious that he had “stolen” from that author the descriptions of the phœnix, the hippopotamus, and the crocodile.³ The “Persian History” of Dionysios, which extended from the reign of Kyros to that of Xerxes, may have suggested to Herodotos the original idea of his own,⁴ while Eugaeon was probably the source from which he

¹ See Wiedemann, “Geschichte Aegyptens von Psammetich I. bis auf Alexander den Grossen” (1880), pp. 82 sq.

² Hellanikos survived Herodotos and must have written after him, as he alluded to the battle of Arginussæ (B.C. 406) in his *Atthis*, and, according to the Schol. on Sophoklês (*Phil.* 201) and Porphyry (ap. Euseb. *Præp. Ev.* x. p. 466 B), read and copied Herodotos. J. Bass, in his monograph, “Ueber das Verhältniss Hêrodot's und Hellanikos” (*Wiener Studien*, i. 1879), decides that no use of the one by the other can be detected.

³ Porphy. ap. Euseb. *Præp. Ev.* x. 3. As Wiedemann remarks, the descriptions are so discordant with actual facts that no two writers could have hit upon them independently, and show that Herodotos did not make his statements from personal observation, as he professes to have done.

⁴ Dionysios is said to have stated that Danaos brought the alphabet to Greece. This seems to be the reason why Herodotos insists at such length and with an appeal to his own experience that it was brought by Kadmos (v. 58-61).

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derived his account of Polykratês. The digression on Æsop (ii. 134), which is dragged into the narrative much out of its place, seems to be directed against Eugæôn, who had made the fabulist a Thracian. Kharôn not only traversed the same ground as Herodotos, but also introduced into his history the same pieces of folklore, as, for example, the dream of Astyages¹ which Herodotos must either have borrowed from him or taken from a common source. His special work on Lampsakos, however, does not seem to have been known to the Halikarnassian historian, who would otherwise have seen the point of the threat of Kroesos to cut down Lampsakos "like a fir" (πίτυς); Pityusa, according to Kharôn, having been the original name of his native city.² On the other hand, Kharôn's list of the Spartan magistrates seems almost certainly alluded to in vi. 55, where he is included among other genealogers. The notes of Skylax, again, subsequently worked up with other materials into a *Periplus*, must have lain at the disposal of Herodotos, who mentions the explorer by name as well as his voyage (iv. 44), and from them he no doubt derived much of his information about the far East.³ Whether he laid Xanthos, the Lydian historian, under contribution is more doubtful. His Lydian history presupposes the use of documents which gave the succession and dates of the Lydian kings and dynasties; but it must be noted that it practically begins with the period when the kingdom of Sardes was first brought into close contact with the Greeks, and deals mostly with the wars between the Mermnadæ and the Ionians. On the other hand, the account of the colonisation of Etruria given by Herodotos seems an intentional contradiction of the narrative of Xanthos,⁴ and Ephoros expressly asserts that the latter writer "gave Herodotos the starting-point" of his history.⁵ We must not forget that although there were no publishers or printing-presses in the age of Herodotos, public libraries were not altogether unknown;⁶ Periklês at Athens was

¹ Tertull. *De Arian.* 46.

² Plut. *De Virt. Mul.* p. 255 A. Dêiokos of Kyzikos had made the same statement (*Frg.* 10, ed. Müll.)

³ See iii. 100, note 5.

⁴ See i. 94, note 2.

⁵ *Fr.* 102, ed. Professor Rawlinson thinks that if Herodotos had used Xanthos he would have noticed "the peculiar physical appearances in the interior of Lydia" described by the Lydian writer. But the Lydia of He-

rodotos did not extend so far, being confined to the plains of Sardes and Magnesia. The case is different with Dêmoklês, who wrote specially on the *Volcanic Phenomena in Asia Minor* (Strab. i. p. 85), a work which it is plain Herodotos did not use.

⁶ As the library of Peisistratos at Athens and that of Polykratês at Samos. In these libraries we may see an illustration of the Asiatising tendencies of the tyrants. Libraries had long existed in

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surrounded by literary men, and books were at any rate cheaper than travelling.

Such, then, were the sources from which Herodotos drew his materials, which must have taken their final shape not later than B.C. 426, the latest possible date for the desertion of Zôpyros to the Athenian side (iii. 160). No event subsequent to this is mentioned, since vi. 68 does not imply the death of Artaxerxes, and the last occurrence alluded to, the date of which is certain, is the betrayal of the Spartan and Korinthian ambassadors to the Athenians (vii. 133-137) in the autumn of B.C. 430.¹ Kirchhoff holds that the death of Herodotos took place two years after this at Athens, to which he returned shortly after the Delian earthquake at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War,² and where he saw the Propylæa (v. 77), which were not finished till B.C. 431. Professor Mahaffy remarks that the little said by Herodotos about the affairs of Magna Græcia, which had been treated by Hippias of Rhegium and Antiokhos of Syracuse, is "a strong argument against the composition of his work at Thurii in his later years;"³ but it must be remembered that the history of the West, scarcely affected as it was by the great war, did not come within the scope of his work.

(2.) Classical scholars have long since determined to reverse the popular verdict of antiquity which found expression in the treatise of the Pseudo-Plutarch, and to acquit Herodotos of the charge of conscious dishonesty. Mr. Blakesley, indeed, has brought powerful arguments to show that Thukydides and others considered Herodotos one of the *λογόποιοι*, whose aim was not to instruct but to please, and has tried both to substantiate their judgment and to prove that Herodotos was in no way a more trustworthy writer than Marco Polo or even De Foe. Professor Mahaffy, too, while agreeing with the current opinion, nevertheless ventures to suggest that the attack made by the Pseudo-Plutarch has "perhaps not been sufficiently considered;"⁴ but it has been reserved for an Egyptologist, Dr. Wiedemann, to make it plain that the charge brought against Herodotos was not undeserved, and that the "blame" (*μῶμος*) which,

Babylonia, Assyria, Phœnicia, Jerusalem (Prov. xxv. i.), and, as we now know, Kappadokia, from which two clay tablets, one in the Louvre and the other in the British Museum, have been brought, while others have been procured at Kaisariyeh by Mr. Ramsay. For the

contrary view cf. Paley, *Bibliographia Græca* (1881).

¹ Thukyd. ii. 67.

² Thuk. ii. 8. as compared with Herodotus, vi. 98.

³ *History of Classical Greek Literature*, ii. p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 38.

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according to his epitaph, caused him to fly from Halikarnassos had been justly provoked.

The speeches put into the mouths of many of his characters bear the impress of his own ideas and have always been recognised as his own compositions. But it is usually assumed that they rest on a basis of fact, and are merely what Herodotos supposed might have been said on the occasion of a real event. Our confidence in this assumption is, however, shaken when we find, firstly, that they are generally intended to convey a moral lesson, and, secondly, that where we can test the event believed to underlie them it turns out to be imaginary. Thus the discussion of the seven conspirators after the murder of the Magian cannot be reconciled with the actual facts, and chronological considerations make it very doubtful, to say the least, whether Solón could ever have visited the court of Kroesos. There are many other passages in which Herodotos has introduced a legend or preferred one version of a tale, not because he heard it from an eyewitness, as, when he is trying to disparage his predecessors, he ostentatiously asserts was his invariable rule,¹—not, indeed, upon any critical grounds whatsoever,—but simply because it agreed with his philosophical creed, or struck his admiration of “smartness,” or, finally, because it threw a doubt on the statements of earlier historians. Out of the various stories told of the birth and rise of Kyros he selects one which is a pure myth, and the folklore he has substituted for Egyptian history, or the legends he tells of the way in which the precious gums of Arabia were collected, warn us against accepting a statement which *may* be true merely because it is in Herodotos. The tale of the phoenix which he plagiarised from Hekataeos is a convincing proof how little he really cared for first-hand evidence, and how ready he was to insert any legend which pleased his fancy, and to make himself responsible for its truth.

But the conclusions to be drawn from his descriptions of the crocodile and hippopotamus are yet more damaging to his veracity. Not only did he take them from Hekataeos without acknowledgment, but he repeats all the errors of his text while endeavouring all the time to leave the impression on the reader's mind that they are the result of his own observation. This teaches us to be careful about accepting his testimony in other cases where he seems to claim the credit due to personal experience, but where we cannot test his state-

¹ Sec iii. 115.

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ments. It prepares us also for an affectation of knowledge which leads him sometimes to make erroneous assertions, sometimes to conceal real ignorance, and is in every case misleading. Thus, to judge from the way in which he writes, Herodotos must have been a marvellous linguist, able to converse freely with Egyptians, Phoenicians (ii. 44), Arabians (iii. 108), Carthaginians (iv. 43), Babylonians (i. 181-183), Skythians (iv. 5, 24), Taurians (iv. 103), Kolkhians (ii. 104), Thrakians (v. 10), Karians and Kaunians (i. 171-172), and Persians. Yet when he ventures to explain words belonging to any of these languages he generally makes mistakes and simply displays his total ignorance of them (as, for example, when giving an interpretation of the names of the Persian kings, vi. 98). In ii. 104, 105, he assumes an acquaintance with the languages of both Egypt and Kolkhis, and pronounces them to be alike—a verdict which may be put by the side of his other assertion that Egyptian resembled the chirping of birds (ii. 57). When, however, we find him further calling the Kolkhians woolly-haired and black-skinned, we begin to doubt whether he could have visited the country at all, much less have made enquiries of its inhabitants. The doubt is confirmed if we look more closely into what we find elsewhere in his narrative. From time to time, when speaking of Egypt, he alludes to a god whose name he will not mention, he says, for religious reasons.¹ The god in question is shown by the context to be Osiris; and, as Wiedemann remarks, the only religious scruple the Greek traveller could have had against pronouncing the name of a deity which was constantly in every native's mouth, and was perpetually meeting his eyes on numberless monuments, and in fact is mentioned by Herodotos himself elsewhere, must have been ignorance. Herodotos or his authorities had not caught the name when taking notes, but instead of confessing the fact "the father of history" deliberately deceives his readers. It is no wonder, therefore, if after this we can further convict him of what, in these days, would be termed literary dishonesty of a most serious character, inasmuch as it affects the credit and veracity of a considerable portion of his work. Herodotos wishes his readers to believe that he had visited Upper as well as Lower Egypt. It is true that, except perhaps in one passage,² he never actually says that he did so

¹ See ii. 3, note 9.

² ii. 29. In ii. 3 I have bracketed the words *ἐς Θήβας τε καί*, which I believe to have been inserted by a copyist. Helio-

polis alone, and not Thebes, was near enough to Memphis for Herodotos to "turn into" in order to test what was told him at Memphis. His reason for

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in so many words, but he does his best to convey the impression, and in one place (ii. 142-143) resorts to a kind of verbal legerdemain in order to effect his object. Here he gives the reader to understand that the 345 statues Hekataeos had seen at Thebes two generations previously were the same as the 341 statues Herodotos saw—as the preceding chapters show—at Memphis, and at the same time contrasts his own superior modesty and wisdom with the ignorant vanity of the older historian whom he now names for the first time.¹ There is clear evidence that Herodotos never ascended the Nile higher than the Fayûm. Had he done so he would not have lavished such praise upon the labyrinth and been silent over the wonderful buildings of Thebes, nor would he have gravely repeated the story—due, probably, to the misunderstanding of his dragoman—which made the Nile rise at “the city” of Elephantinê.² But Hekataeos had visited Thebes, and if he were to be supplanted it was needful that Herodotos too should have been at least equally far. This is the only excuse for the deliberate falsehood in ii. 29, where he declares that he “came as an eyewitness as far as the city of Elephantinê.” In calling Elephantinê a city, however, instead of an island, he betrays the real facts of the case, and it may be hoped that the Angelican MS. (*prima manu*) [B], which omits the clause, represents the original text of Herodotos (see ii. 29, note 7).

So flagrant an example of dishonesty excites our distrust of the extended travels to which Herodotos implicitly lays claim. The suspicions aroused by his extraordinarily inappropriate description of the Kolkhians are confirmed, and we are inclined to doubt whether what Herodotos has to tell us of the eastern part of the Black Sea was not derived from others—from those “eyewitnesses” of whom he was so proud. At any rate, as Mr. Bunbury remarks,³ there is no evidence that Herodotos ever travelled as far as Susa, the expression used of the Eretrians at Arderikka—that they remained there up to his own time (vi. 119)—being the very same as that used of the Barkæans in Baktria (iv. 204), a country which few would be disposed to maintain was visited by him. Moreover, the difficulties connected with the description of the royal road from Sardes to Susa⁴ can only be explained on the supposition that it was borrowed from another

doing so was that “the people of Helio-
polis were considered the best authori-
ties.” There is no reference to the
Thebans.

¹ See notes 2, 5, and 7 on the passage.

² See ii. 29, note 7.

³ *History of Ancient Geography*, i. pp.
234-235.

⁴ v. 52.

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work. Not only are the numbers given for each day's journey inconsistent with the final summing up, "but if the Gyndes be taken as the frontier between Armenia and Matiene, the enormous extension thus given to Armenia is altogether at variance with the distance assigned to this part of the route; the march through Assyria, from the river Gyndes to the neighbourhood of Mosul—the lowest point at which the road could well have crossed the Tigris—being alone fully equal to the 56 parasangs allowed to Armenia, thus leaving the whole intermediate space, from the Euphrates to the Tigris, unaccounted for;" while the extension given to Armenia "is equally at variance with the extent assigned to it in the description of the Satrapies."¹ It may be added that no one who had actually crossed the Gyndes would have thought that its waters had been dissipated into 360 rivulets by Kyros, as Herodotos does in i. 189-190.²

As Herodotos does not describe any other road to the East, and it is pretty evident that he never travelled along this particular one, we must conclude that he never visited Assyria and Babylonia. This will explain his comparative silence about such important and interesting countries as Syria and Assyria Proper. Yet, just as much as in the case of Upper Egypt, he has endeavoured to produce the impression that he had visited Babylonia and conversed there with Khaldean priests, and his endeavour has been so successful as to deceive the majority of his commentators. One passage, in fact, i. 183, where he wishes it to be inferred that he did not see the golden statue of Bel at Babylon *because* it had been removed by Xerxes, is as flagrant a piece of prevarication as his statement about the 341 images he saw in Egypt. It is true he does not positively assert that he was in Babylonia, but it is the natural inference from his words. The prevarication would have more easily escaped detection if he had said he did not see the temple itself, as well as the image it contained, since it had been destroyed by Xerxes (Arrian, vii. 17) at the same time that the Persian king had carried away the statue. But unluckily Herodotos did not know this, and accordingly describes the temple at length, leaving it to be understood that he had carefully examined it himself. It is doubtful, however, whether he intended to mean by the words *ὡς ἔλεγον οἱ Χαλδαῖοι* in the same chapter, "as they told me when I was there," since they *might* signify "as they used to say;" and we can afford him the benefit of the doubt. But when he says in chapter 193

¹ Bunbury, i. p. 253.² See note 1 on the passage.

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INTRODUCTION.

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that he will not mention the size of the millet and sesamê plants, "knowing well that those who had not gone so far as Babylonia" would not believe what had been stated of the luxuriance of the vegetation there, he is again trying to convey a false impression, even though his words may be quoted from another author. We have not to read far to see that Herodotos could not himself have been in Khaldea. Apart from the historical misstatements—two of which, relating to the sieges undergone by Babylon, could hardly have been made by a visitor to the spot¹—a writer who speaks of "immense stones" in Babylonia,² who does not know the real site of Opis,³ and describes imaginary cuttings near Arderikka, a place probably quite as imaginary,⁴ who asserts that the walls of Babylon had been destroyed by Dareios,⁵ and fancies that rain falls but seldom in the country,⁶ stands self-convicted of never having visited the district he undertakes to describe. No one, indeed, who had done so would have called Babylonia Assyria,⁷ or have confused the Babylonian with the Assyrian empire. The name of Assyria was never used by the Babylonians of the age of Nebuchadrezzar and his successors, much less by those of the Persian period. It must have been derived by Herodotos from his antiquarian researches among older Greek writers when working up the materials for his Assyrian history, and have come down from a time when Gyges was a vassal of Assur-bani-pal or Sardanapalos, and the Assyrian power was influencing the fortunes of Lydia and Ionia.⁸ Ktésias had good reason for accusing Herodotos of errors in his Assyrian history; and if we may judge from the specimens of it incorporated in his work, its disappearance is no great loss.

(3.) The conclusion we are driven to, accordingly, is that Mr. Blakesley is right in considering Herodotos a mere *λόγποιος*. He pilfered freely and without acknowledgment; he assumed a knowledge he did not possess; he professed to derive information from personal experience and eyewitnesses which really came from the very sources

¹ See i. 192, note 4; iii. 159, note 7.

² i. 186, note 1. ³ i. 189, note 8.

⁴ i. 185, note 5. ⁵ iii. 159, note 7.

⁶ i. 193, note 8. ⁷ i. 178.

⁸ In ii. 150 Herodotos confesses that the legend he tells of Sardanapalos was derived from "a passage (*λόγῳ*) quoted from" an earlier *λόγος* or "proser" (see . 1, note 1). *Λόγος* is here used in the

sense in which Herodotos uses it of his own work (ii. 38, v. 36), and does not mean "tradition" or "report." Stein is clearly not justified in drawing from the passage the inference that Herodotos had visited Assyria before he travelled in Egypt. Nineveh was an uninhabited ruin in the time of Herodotos, so there could have been no dragoman there to fill his note-books with folklore.