

dia, Persia, Bactria, Scythia, Asia-Minor, and Syria*.

Lastly, in the celebrated article of Pliny upon the obelisks †, we find names of kings which are not to be seen elsewhere; Sothies, Mnevis, Zmarreus, Eraphius, Mestires, a Semenpserteus, contemporary of Pythagoras, &c. A Ramises, who might be thought the same as Rhamses, is there made to live at the time of the siege of Troy.

I am not sure whether it has been attempted to reconcile these discordant lists by the supposition that the kings have borne several names. For my own part, when I consider not only the discrepancy of these various accounts, but, above all, the mixture of authentic facts, attested by vast monuments, and of puerile extravagancies, it appears to me much more natural to conclude, that the Egyptian priests possessed no real history whatever; that, inferior still to those of

* Tacit. Annal. lib. ii. cap. 60.

N. B.—According to the interpretation given by Ammianus, lib. xvii. cap. 4., of the hieroglyphics on the obelisk of Thebes, which is at present in Rome in the place of St John of Latran, it appears that a Rhamestes was styled, after the eastern manner, lord of the habitable earth; and that the history told to Germanicus was only a commentary on this inscription.

† Pliny, lib. xxxvi. cap. 8, 9, 10, 11.