

of whom the priests told him as of a conqueror, but of Rhameses, who with an army of 700,000 men had invaded Lybia, Ethiopia, Media, Persia, Bactria, Scythia, Asia Minor, and Syria. (1)

Finally, in the famous article of Pliny on the Obelisks, (2) we find names of kings mentioned nowhere else: Sothies, Mnevis, Zmarreus, Eraphius, Mestires, or Semenpserteus, contemporary of Pythagoras, &c. A Ramises, who may be the same as Rhameses, is there made contemporary with the siege of Troy.

I am aware that it is attempted to reconcile these lists, by supposing that the kings have had other names. To me, considering not only the contradiction of these different accounts, but particularly the mixture of facts attested by vast monuments and childish extravagancies, it seems much more natural to conclude that the Egyptian priests had no history; that, inferior even to the Indians, they had not congruous and connected fables; that they only kept lists, more or less defective, of their kings, and some recollections of the chief amongst them, of those in particular who had taken care to inscribe their names on their temples and other large monuments which adorned the country; but these recollections were confused, and were only founded on the traditional explanations which they gave to the representations paint-

(1) Tacit. Annal. lib. 2. chap. lx.

N. B. According to the interpretation of Ammianus, lib. xvii. chap. vi., by the hieroglyphics of the Obelisk of Thebes now at Rome in the place of St. John Lateran, it appears that a Rhameses was styled in the eastern manner, "lord of the habitable world," and that the inscription given to Germanicus was only a commentary on this.

(2) Pliny, lib. xxxvi. c. 8, 9, 10, 11.