

is not only probable, but that it is demonstrated by fact.

Neither Moses nor Homer makes any mention of a great kingdom in Upper Asia. Herodotus(1) only assigns to the supremacy of the Assyrians five hundred and twenty years of duration, and makes its origin about eight centuries before his own time. After visiting Babylon, and having consulted the priests, he did not even learn the name of Ninus, as king of the Assyrians, and only mentions him as the father of Asron,(2) first Lydian King of the race of the Heraclidæ. Nevertheless, he makes him son of Belus, so much confusion had then occurred in the oral traditions. If he speaks of Semiramis as one of the queens who has left great monuments in Babylon, he only places her seven generations before Cyrus.

Hellanicus, contemporary with Herodotus, far from allowing that Semiramis built any thing at Babylon, attributes the founding of that city to(3) Chaldæus, fourteenth in order from Ninus.

Berosus, a Babylonian and a priest, who wrote scarcely one hundred and twenty years after Herodotus, gives an alarming antiquity to Babylon; but it is to Nebuchadnezzar, a prince of comparatively recent date, that he attributes the principal monuments.(4)

As far as regards Cyrus, that remarkable prince, and whose history should be so well known, so common, Herodotus, who only lived a century after him, confesses that there were three different opinions; and, in fact, sixty years later, Xenophon gives us a

(1) Clio, cap. xcv.

(2) Clio, cap. vii.

(3) Stephen of Byzantium, at the word Chaldæi.

(4) Josephus (contra App.) lib. 1, cap. xix.