CHALDEA

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CHAPTER VIII. HISTORY / CHRONOLOGY.

"The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."--GEN. X. 10.

The establishment of a Cushite kingdom in Lower Babylonia dates probably from (at least) the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth century before our era. Greek traditions' assigned to the city of Babylon an antiquity nearly as remote; and the native historian, Berosus, spoke of a Chaldaean dynasty as bearing rule anterior to B.C. 2250. Unfortunately the works of this great authority have been lost; and even the general outline of his chronological scheme, whereof some writers have left us an account, is to a certain extent imperfect; so that, in order to obtain a definite chronology for the early times, we are forced to have recourse, in some degree, to conjecture. Berosus declared that six dynasties had reigned in Chaldaea since the great flood of Xisuthrus, or Noah. To the first, which consisted of 86 kings, he allowed the extravagant period of 34,080 years. Evechous, the founder of the dynasty, had enjoyed the royal dignity for 2400 years, and Chomasbelus, his son and successor, had reigned 300 years longer than his father. The other 84 monarchs had filled up the remaining space of 28,980 years--their reigns thus averaging 345 years apiece. It is clear that these numbers are unhistoric; and though it would be easy to reduce them within the limits of credibility by arbitrary suppositions--as for instance, that the years of the narrative represent months or days--yet it may reasonably be doubted whether we should in this way be doing any service to the cause of historic truth. The names Evechous and Chomasbelus seem mythic rather than real; they represent personages in the Babylonian Pantheon, and can scarcely have been borne by men. It is likely that the entire series of names partook of the same character, and that, if we possessed them, their bearing would be found to be, not historic, but mythological. We may parallel this dynasty of Berosus, where he reckons king's reigns by the cyclical periods of _sosses_ and _ners,_ with Manetho's dynasties of Gods and Demigods in Egypt, where the sum of the years is nearly as great.

It is necessary, then, to discard as unhistorical the names and numbers assigned to his first dynasty by Berosus, and to retain from this part of his scheme nothing but the fact which he lays down of an ancient Chaldaean dynasty having ruled in Babylonia, prior to a conquest, which led to the establishment of a second dynasty, termed by him Median.

It will be observed that this table contains certain defects and weaknesses, which greatly impair its value, and prevent us from constructing upon it, without further aid, an exact scheme of chronology. Not only does a doubt attach to one or two of the numbers--to the years, i.e., of the second and third dynasty--but in two cases we have no numbers at all set down for us, and must supply them from conjecture, or from extraneous sources, before we can make the scheme available. Fortunately in the more important case, that of the seventh dynasty, the number of years can be exactly supplied without any difficulty. The Canon of Ptolemy covers, in fact, the whole interval between the reign of Pul and the close of the Babylonian Empire, giving for the period of the seventh dynasty 13 reigns in 122 years, and for that of the eighth 5 reigns in 87 years. The length of

the reign of Pul can, however, only be supplied from conjecture. As it is not an unreasonable supposition that he may have reigned 28 years, and as this number harmonizes well with the chronological notices of the monuments, we shall venture to assume it, and thus complete the scheme which the fragments of Berosus imperfect.

This scheme, in which there is nothing conjectural except the length of the reign of Pul, receives very remarkable confirmation from the Assyrian monuments. These inform us, first, that there was a conquest of Babylon by a Susianian monarch 1635 yers before the capture of Susa by Asshurbanipal, the son of Esarhaddon; and, secondly, that there was a second conquest by an Assyrian monarch 600 years before the occupation of Babylon by Esarhaddon's father, Sennacherib. Now Sennacherib's occupation of Babylon was in B.C. 702; and 600 years before this brings us to B.C. 1302, within a year of the date which the scheme assigns to the accession of the seventh dynasty. Susa was taken by Asshur-bani-pal probably in B.C. 651; and 1635 years before this is B.C. 2286, or the exact year marked in the scheme for the accession of the second (Median) dynasty. This double coincidence can scarcely be accidental; and we may conclude, therefore, that we have in the above table at any rate a near approach to the scheme of Babylonian chronology as received among both the Babylonians and Assyrians in the seventh century before our era.

Whether the chronology is wholly trustworthy is another question. The evidence both of the classical writers and of the monuments is to the effect that exact chronology was a subject to which the Babylonians and Assyrians paid great attention. The "Canon of Ptolemy," which contained an exact Babylonian computation of time from B.C. 747 to B.C. 331, is generally allowed to be a most authentic document, and one on which we may place complete reliance. The "Assyrian Canon," which gives the years of the Assyrian monarchs from B.C. 911 to B.C. 660, appears to be equally trustworthy. How much further exact notation went back, it is impossible to say. All that we know is, first, that the later Assyrian monarchs believed they had means of fixing the exact date of events in their own history and in that of Babylon up to a time distant from their own as much as sixteen or seventeen hundred years; and secondly, that the chronology which result from their statements and those of Berosus is moderate, probably, and in harmony with all the knowledge which we obtain of the East from other sources. It is proposed therefore, in the present volumes, to accept the general scheme of Berosus as, in all probability, not seriously in error; and to arrange the Chaldaean, Assyrian, and Babylonian history on the framework which it furnishes.

Chaldaean history may therefore be regarded as opening upon us at a time anterior, at any rate by a century or two, to B.C. 2286. It was then that Nimrod, the son or descendant of Cush, set up a kingdom in Lower Mesopotamia, which attracted the attention of surrounding nations. The people, whom he led, came probably by sea; at any rate, their earliest settlements were on the coast; and Ur or Hur, on the right bank of the Euphrates, at a very short distance from its embouchure, was the primitive capital. The "mighty hunter" rapidly spread his dominion inland, subduing or expelling the various tribes by which the country was previously occupied. His kingdom extended northwards, at least as far as Babylon,--which (as well as Erech or Huruk, Accad, and Calneh) was first founded by this monarch. Further historical details of his reign are wanting; but the strength of his character and the greatness of his achievements are remarkably indicated by a variety of testimonies, which place him among the foremost men of the Old World, and guarantee him a never-ending remembrance. At least as early as the time of Moses his name had passed into a proverb. He was known as "the mighty hunter before

the Lord"--an expression which had probably a double meaning, implying at once skill and bravery in the pursuit and destruction of wild beasts, and also a genius for war and success in his aggressions upon men. In his own nation he seems to have been deified, and to have continued down to the latest times one of the leading objects of worship, under the title of Bilu-Nipru or Bel-Nimrod, which may be translated "the god of the chase," or "the great hunter."

One of his capitals, Calneh, which was regarded as his special city, appears afterwards to have been known by his name (probably as being the chief seat of his worship in the early times); and this name it still retains, slightly corrupted. In the modern Niffer we may recognize the Talmudical Nopher, and the Assyrian Nipur which is Nipru, with a mere metathesis of the two final letters. The fame of Nimrod has always been rife in the country of his domination. Arab writers record a number of remarkable traditions, in which he plays a conspicuous part; and there is little doubt but that it is in honor of his apotheosis that the constellation Orion bears in Arabian astronomy the title of El Jabbar, or "the giant." Even at the present day his name lives in the mouth of the people inhabiting Chaldaea and the adjacent regions, whose memory of ancient heroes is almost confined to three--Nimrod, Solomon, and Alexander. Wherever a mound of ashes is to be seen in Babylonia or the adjoining countries, the local traditions attach to it the name of Niinrud or Nimrod; and the most striking ruins now existing in the Mesopotamian valley, whether in its upper or its lower portion, are made in this way monuments of his glory.

Of the immediate successors of Nimrod we have no account that even the most lenient criticism can view as historical. It appears that his conquest was followed rapidly by a Semitic emigration from the country--an emigration which took a northerly direction. The Assyrians withdrew from Babylonia, which they still always regarded as their parent land, and, occupying the upper or non-alluvial portion of the Mesopotamian plain, commenced the building of great cities in a tract upon the middle Tigris. The Phoenicians removed from the shores of the Persian Gulf, and, journeying towards the northwest, formed settlements upon the coast of Canaan, where they became a rich and prosperous people. The family of Abraham, and probably other Aramaean families, ascended the Euphrates, withdrawing from a yoke which was oppressive, or at any rate unpleasant. Abundant room was thus made for the Cushite immigrants, who rapidly established their preponderance over the whole of the southern region. As war ceased to be the necessary daily occupation of the newcomers, civilization and the arts of life began to appear. The reign of the "Hunter" was followed, after no long time, by that of the "Builder." A monumental king, whose name is read doubtfully as Urkham or Urukh, belongs almost certainly to this early dynasty, and may be placed next in succession, though at what interval we cannot say, to Nimrod. He is beyond question the earliest Chaldaean monarch of whom any remains have been obtained in the country. Not only are his bricks found in a lower position than any others, at the very foundations of buildings, but they are of a rude and coarse make, and the inscriptions upon them contrast most remarkably, in the simplicity of the style of writing used and in their general archaic type, with the elaborate and often complicated symbols of the later monarchs. The style of Urukh's buildings is also primitive and simple in the extreme; his bricks are of many sizes, and ill fitted together; he belongs to a time when even the baking of bricks seems to have been comparatively rare, for sometimes he employs only the sun-dried material; and he is altogether unacquainted with the use of lime mortar, for which his substitute is moist mud, or else bitumen. There can be little doubt that he stands at the head of the present series of monumental kings, another

of whom probably reigned as early as B.C. 2286. As he was succeeded by a son, whose reign seems to have been of the average length, we must place his accession at least as early as B.C. 2326. Possibly it may have fallen a century earlier.

It is as a builder of gigantic works that Urukh is chiefly known to us. The basement platforms of his temples are of an enormous size; and though they cannot seriously be compared with the Egyptian pyramids, yet indicate the employment for many years of a vast amount of human labor in a very unproductive sort of industry. The Bowariyeh mound at Warka is 200 feet square, and about 100 feet high. Its cubic contents, as originally built, can have been little, if at all, under 3,000,000 feet; and above 30,000,000 of bricks must have been used in its construction. Constructions of a similar character, and not very different in their dimensions, are proved by the bricks composing them to have been raised by the same monarch at Ur, Calneh or Nipur, and Larancha or Larsa, which is perhaps Ellasar. It is evident, from the size and number of these works, that their erector had the command of a vast amount of "naked human strength," and did not scruple to employ that strength in constructions from which no material benefit was derivable, but which were probably designed chiefly to extend his own fame and perpetuate his glory. We may gather from this that he was either an oppressor of his people, like some of the Pyramid Kings in Egypt, or else a conqueror, who thus employed the numerous captives carried off in his expeditions. Perhaps the latter is the more probable supposition; for the builders of the great fabrics in Babylonia and Chaldaea do not seem to have left behind them any character of oppressiveness, such as attaches commonly to those monarchs who have ground down their own people by servile labor.

The great buildings of Urukh appear to have been all designed for temples. They are carefully placed with their angles facing the cardinal points, and are dedicated to the Sun, the Moon, to Belus (Bel-Nimrod), or to Beltis. The temple at Mugheir was built in honor of the Moon-god, Sin or Hiuki, who was the tutelary deity of the city. The Warka temple was dedicated to Beltis. At Calneh or Nipur, Urukh erected two temples, one to Beltis and one to Belus. At Larsa or Ellasar the object of his worship was the Sun-god, San or Sansi. He would thus seem to have been no special devotee of a single god, but to have divided out his favors very fairly among the chief personages of the Pantheon.

It has been observed that both the inscriptions of this king, and his architecture, are of a rude and primitive type. Still in neither case do we seem to be brought to the earliest dawn of civilization or of art. The writing of Urukh has passed out of the first or hieroglyphic stage, and entered the second or transition one, when pictures are no longer attempted, but the lines or wedges follow roughly the old outline of the objects in his architecture, again, though there is much that is rude and simple, there is also a good deal which indicates knowledge and experience. The use of the buttress is understood; and the buttress is varied according to the material. The importance of sloping the walls of buildings inwards to resist interior pressure is thoroughly recognized. Drains are introduced to carry off moisture, which must otherwise have been very destructive to buildings composed mainly, or entirely, of crude brick. It is evident that the builders whom the king employs, though they do not possess much genius, have still such a knowledge of the most important principles of their art as is only obtained gradually by a good deal of practice. Indeed, the very fact of the continued existence of their works at the distance of forty centuries is sufficient evidence that they possessed a considerable amount of architectural skill and knowledge. We are further, perhaps, justified in concluding, from the careful emplacement of Urukh's temples, that the science of

astronomy was already cultivated in his reign, and was regarded as having a certain connection with religion. We have seen that the early worship of the Chaldaeans was to a great extent astral--a fact which naturally made the heavenly bodies special objects of attention. If the series of observations which Callisthenes sent to Aristotle, dating from B.C. 2234, was in reality a record, and not a mere calculation backwards of the dates at which certain celestial phenomena must have taken place, astronomical studies must have been pretty well advanced at a period not long subsequent to Urukh.

Nor must we omit to notice, if we would estimate aright the condition of Chaldaean art under this king, the indications furnished by his signet-cylinder. So far as we can judge from the representation, which is all that we possess of this relic, the drawing on the cylinder was as good and the engraving as well executed as any work of the kind, either of the Assyrian or of the later Babylonian period. Apart from the inscription this work of art has nothing about it that is rude or primitive. The elaboration of the dresses and headgear of the figures has been already noticed. It is also worthy of remark, that the principal figure sits on an ornamental throne or chair, of particularly tasteful construction, two legs of which appear to have been modelled after those of the bull or ox. We may conclude, without much danger of mistake, that in the time of the monarch who owned this seal, dresses of delicate fabric and elaborate pattern, and furniture of a recherche and elegant shape, were in use among the people over whom he exercised dominion.

The chief capital city of Urukh appears to have been Ur. He calls himself "King of Ur and Kingi Accad;" and it is at Ur that he raises his principal buildings. Ur, too, has furnished the great bulk of his inscriptions. Babylon was not yet a place of much importance, though it was probably built by Nimrod. The second city of the Empire was Huruk or Erech: other places of importance were Larsa (Ellasar?) and Nipur or Calneh.

Urukh appears to have been succeeded in the kingdom by a son, whose name it is proposed to read as Elgi or Ilgi. Of this prince our knowledge is somewhat scanty. Bricks bearing his name have been found at Ur (Mugheir) and at Tel Eid, near Erech, or Warka; and his signet-cylinder has been recovered, and is now in the British Museum. We learn from inscriptions of Nabonidus that he completed some of the buildings at Ur, which had been left unfinished by his father; while his own bricks inform us that he built or repaired two of the principal temples at Erech. On his signet-cylinder he takes the title of "King of Ur."

After the death of Ilgi, Chaldaean history is for a time a blank. It would seem, however, that while the Cushites were establishing themselves in the alluvial plain towards the mouths of the two great rivers, there was growing up a rival power, Turanian, or Ario-Turanian, in the neighboring tract at the foot of the Zagros mountain-chain. One of the most ancient, perhaps the most ancient, of all the Asiatic cities was Susa, the Elamitic capital, which formed the centre of a nationality that endured from the twenty-third century B.C. to the time of Darius Hystaspis (B.C. 520) when it sank finally under the Persians. A king of Elam, whose court was held at Susa, led, in the year B.C. 2286 (or a little earlier), an expedition against the cities of Chaldaea, succeeded in carrying all before him, ravaged the country, took the towns, plundered the temples, and bore off into his own country, as the most striking evidence of victory, the images of the deities which the Babylonians especially reverenced. This king's name, which was Kudur-Nakhunta, is thought to be the exact equivalent of one which has a world-wide celebrity, to wit, Zoroaster. Now, according to Polyhistor (who here certainly repeats Berosus), Zoroaster was the first of those eight Median kings who composed the second

dynasty in Chaldaea, and occupied the throne from about B. C. 2286 to 2052. The Medes are represented by him as capturing Babylon at this time, and imposing themselves as rulers upon the country. Eight kings reigned in space of 234 (or 224) years, after which we hear no more of Medes, the sovereignty being (as it would seem) recovered by the natives. The coincidences of the conquest the date, the foreign sovereignty and the name Zoroaster, tend to identify the Median dynasty of Berosus with a period of Susianian supremacy, which the monuments show to have been established it Chaldaea at a date not long subsequent to the reigns of Urukh and Ilgi, and to have lasted for a considerable period.

There are five monarchs known to us who may be assigned to this dynasty. The first is the Kudur-Nakhunta above named, who conquered Babylonia and established his influence there, but continued to hold his court at Susa, governing his conquest probably by means of a viceroy or tributary king. Next to him, at no great interval, may be placed Kudur-Lagamer, the Chedor-laomer of Scripture, who held a similar position to Kudur-Nakhunta, reigning himself in Elam, while his vassals, Amraphel, Arioch, and Tidal (or Turgal) held the governments respectfully of Shinar (or Upper Babylonia), Ellasar (Lower Babylonia or Chaldaea), and the Goim or the nomadic races. Possessing thus an authority over the whole of the alluvial plain, and being able to collect together a formidable army, Kudur-Lagamer resolved on a expedition up the Euphrates, with the object of extending his dominion to the Mediterranean Sea and to the borders of Egypt. At first his endeavors were successful. Together with his confederate kings, he marched as far as Palestine, where he was opposed by the native princes, Bera, king of Sodom, Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinab, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela or Zoar. A great battle was fought between the two confederated armies in the vale of Siddim towards the lower end of the Dead Sea. The invaders were victorious; and for twelve years Bera and his allies were content to own themselves subjects of the Elamitic king, whom they "served" for that period. In the thirteenth year they rebelled: a general rising of the western nations seems to have taken place; and in order to maintain his conquest it was necessary for the conqueror to make a fresh effort. Once more the four eastern kings entered Syria, and, after various successes against minor powers, engaged a second time in the valley of Siddim with their old antagonists, whom they defeated with great slaughter; after which they plundered the chief cities belonging to them. It was on this occasion that Lot, the nephew of Abraham, was taken prisoner. Laden with booty of various kinds, and encumbered with a number of captives, male and female, the conquering army set out upon its march home, and had reached the neighborhood of Damascus, when it was attacked and defeated by Abraham, who with a small band ventured under cover of night to fall upon the retreating host, which he routed and pursued to some distance. The actual slaughter can scarcely have been great; but the prisoners and the booty taken had to be surrendered; the prestige of victory was lost; and the result appears to have been that the Mesopotamian monarch relinquished his projects, and, contenting himself with the fame acquired by such distant expeditions, made no further attempt to carry his empire beyond the Euphrates.

The other three kings who may be assigned to the Elamitic dynasty are a father, son, and grandson, whose names appear upon the native monuments of Chaldaea in a position which is thought to imply that they were posterior to the kings Urukh and Ilgi, but of greater antiquity than any other monarchs who have left memorials in the country. Their names are read as Sinti-shil-khak, Kudur-Mabuk, and Arid-Sin. Of Sinti-shil khak nothing is known beyond the name. Kudur-Mabuk is said in the inscriptions of his

son to have "enlarged the dominions of the city of Ur;" and on his own bricks he bears the title of Apda Martu, which probably means "Conqueror of the West." We may presume therefore that he was a warlike prince, like Kudur-Nakhunta and Kudur-Lagamer; and that, like the latter of these two kings, he made war in the direction of Syria, though he may not have carried his arms so far as his great predecessor. He and his son both held their court at Ur, and, though of foreign origin, maintained the Chaldaean religion unchanged, making additions to the ancient temples, and worshipping the Chaldaean gods under the old titles.

The circumstances which brought the Elamitic dynasty to a close, and restored the Chaldaean throne to a line of native princes, and unrecorded by any historian; nor have the monuments hitherto thrown any light upon them. If we may trust the numbers of the Armenian Eusebius, the dynasty which succeeded, ab. B.C. 2052, to the Susianian (or Median), though it counted eleven kings, bore rule for the short space of forty-eight years only. This would seem to imply either a state of great internal disturbance, or a time during which viceroys, removable at pleasure and often removed, governed the country under some foreign suzerain. In either case, the third dynasty of Berosus may be said to mark a transition period between the time of foreign subjection and that of the recovery by the native Chaldaeans of complete independence.

To the fourth Berosian dynasty, which held the throne for 458 years, from about B. C. 2004 to B. C. 1546, the monuments enable us to assign some eight or ten monarchs, whose inscriptions are characterized by a general resemblance, and by a character intermediate between the extreme rudeness of the more ancient and the comparative elegance and neatness of the later legends. Of these kings one of the earliest was a certain Ismidagon, the date of whose reign we are able to fix with a near approach to exactness. Sennacherib, in a rock inscription at Bavian, relates that in his tenth year (which was B. C. 692) he recovered from Babylon certain images of the gods which had been carried thither by Merodach-iddin-akhi, King of Babylon, after his defeat of Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, 418 years previously. And the same Tiglath-Pileser relates that he rebuilt a temple in Assyria, which had been taken down 60 years before, after it had lasted 641 years from its foundation by Shamas-Vul, sun of Ismi-dagon. It results from these numbers that Ismi-dagon was king as early as B.C. 1850, or, probably a little earlier.

The monuments furnish little information concerning Ismidagon beyond the evidence which they afford of the extension of this king's dominion into the upper part of the Mesopotamian valley, and especially into the country known in later times as Assyria. The fact that Shamas-Vul, the son of Ismi-dagon, built a temple at Kileh-Sherghat, implies necessarily that the Chaldaans at this time bore sway in the upper region. Shamas-Vul appears to have been, not the eldest, but the second son of the monarch, and must be viewed as ruling over Assyria in the capacity of viceroy, either for his father or his brother. Such evidence as we possess of the condition of Assyria about this period seems to show that it was weak and insignificant, administered ordinarily by Babylonian satraps or governors, whose office was one of no great rank or dignity.

In Chaldaea, Ismi-dagon was succeeded by a son, whose name is read, somewhat doubtfully, as Gunguna or Gurguna. This prince is known to us especially as the builder of the great public cemeteries which now form the most conspicuous objects among the ruins of Mugheir, and the construction of which is so remarkable. Ismi-dagon and his son must have occupied the Chaldaean throne during most of the latter half of the nineteenth century before our era-from about B.C. 1850 to B.C. 1800.

Hitherto there has been no great difficulty in determining the order of the monumental kings, from the position of their bricks in the principal Chaldaean ruins and the general character of their inscriptions. But the relative place occupied in the series by the later monarchs is rendered very doubtful by their records being scattered and unconnected, while their styles of inscription vary but slightly. It is most unfortunate that no writer has left us a list corresponding in Babylonian history with that which Manetho put on record for Egyptian; since we are thus compelled to arrange our names in an order which rests on little more than conjecture.

The monumental king who is thought to have approached the nearest to Gurguna is Naram-Sin, of whom a record has been discovered at Babylon, and who is mentioned in a late inscription as the builder, in conjunction with his father, of a temple at the city of Agana. His date is probably about B.C. 1750. The seat of his court may be conjectured to have been Babylon, which had by this time risen into metropolitan conse quence. It is evident that, as time went on, the tendency was to remove the seat of government and empire to a greater distance from the sea. The early monarchs reign at Ur (Mugheir), and leave no traces of themselves further north than Niffer. Sin-Shada holds his court at Erech (Warka), twenty-five miles above Mugheir; while Naram-Sin is connected with the still more northern city of Babylon. We shall find a similar tendency in Assyria, as it rose into power. In both cases we may regard the fact as indicative of a gradual spread of empire towards the north, and of the advance of civilization and settled government in that direction.

A king, who disputes the palm of antiquity with Naram-Sin, has left various records at Erech or Warka, which appears to have been his capital city. It is proposed to call him Sin-Shada. He constructed, or rather re-built, the upper terrace of the Bowariyeh ruin, or great temple, which Urukh raised at Warka to Beltis; and his bricks are found in the doorway of another large ruin (the _Wuswas_) at the same place; it is believed, however, that in this latter building they are not in situ, but have been transferred from some earlier edifice. His reign fell probably in the latter part of the 18th, century B. C.

Several monarchs of the Sin series--i.e. monarchs into whose names the word Sin, the name of the Moon-god, enters as an element--now present themselves. The most important of them has been called Zur-Sin. This king erected some buildings at Mugheir; but he is best known as the founder of the very curious town whose ruins bear at the present day the name of Abu-Shahrein. A description of the principal buildings at this site has been already given. They exhibit certain improvements on the architecture of the earlier times, and appear to have been very richly ornamented, at least in parts. At the same time they contain among their debris remarkable proofs of the small advance which had as yet been made in some of the simplest arts. Flint knives and other implements, stone hatchets, chisels, and nails, are abundant in the ruins; and though the use of metal is not unknown, it seems to have been comparatively rare. When a metal is found, it is either gold or bronze, no trace of iron (except in ornaments of the person) appearing in any of the Chaldaean remains. Zur-Sin, Rim-Sin, and three or four other monarchs of the Sin series, whose names are imperfect or uncertain, may be assigned to the period included between B.C. 1700 and B.C. 1546.

Another monarch, and the only other monumental name that we can assign to Berosus's fourth dynasty, is a certain Nur-Vul, who appears by the Chaldaean sale-tablets to have been the immediate predecessor of Rim-Sin, the last king of the _Sin_ series. Nur-Vul has left no buildings or inscriptions; and we seem to see in the absence of all important monuments at this time a period of depression, such as commonly in the history

of nations precedes and prepares the way for a new dynasty or a conquest.

The remaining monumental kings belong almost certainly to the fifth, or Arabian, dynasty of Berosus, to which he assigns the period of 245 years --from about B.C. 1546 to B.C. 1300. That the list comprises as many as fifteen names, whereas Berosus speaks of nine Arabian kings only, need not surprise us, since it is not improbable that Berosus may have omitted kings who reigned for less than a year. To arrange the fifteen monarchs in chronological order is, unfortunately, impossible. Only three of them have left monuments. The names of the others are found on linguistic and other tablets, in a connection which rarely enables us to determine anything with respect to their relative priority or posteriority. We can, however, definitely place seven names, two at the beginning and five toward the end of the series, thus leaving only eight whose position in the list is undetermined.

The series commences with a great king, named Khammurabi, who was probably the founder of the dynasty, the "Arab" chief who, taking advantage of the weakness and depression of Chaldaea under the latter monarchs of the fourth dynasty, by intrigue or conquest established his dominion over the country, and left the crown to his descendants. Khammurabi is especially remarkable as having been the first (so far as appears) of the Babylonian monarchs to conceive the notion of carrying out a system of artificial irrigation in his dominions, by means of a canal derived from one of the great rivers. The _Nahar-Khammu-rabi_ ("River of Khabbu-rabi "),whereof he boasts in one of his inscriptions, was no doubt, as he states, "a blessing to the Babylonians"--it "changed desert plains into well-watered fields; it spread around fertility an abundance"--it brought a whole district, previously barren, into cultivation, and it set an example, which the best of the later monarchs followed, of a mode whereby the productiveness of the country might be increased to an almost inconceivable extent.

Khammu-rabi was also distinguished as a builder. He repaired the great temple of the Sun at Senkereh and constructed for himself a new palace at Kalwadha, or Chilmad, not far from the modern Baghdad. His inscriptions have been found at Babylon, at Zerghul, and at Tel-Sifr; and it is thought probable that he made Babylon his ordinary place of residence. His reign probably covered the space from about B.C. 1546 to B.C. 1520, when he left his crown to his son, Samsu-iluna. Of this monarch our notices are exceedingly scanty. We know him only from the Tel-Sifr clay tablets, several of which are dated by the years of his reign. He held the crown probably from about B.C. 1520 to B.C. 1500.

About sixty or seventy years after this we come upon a group of names, belonging almost certainly to this same dynasty, which possess a peculiar interest, inasmuch as they serve to connect the closing period of the First, or Chaldaean, with the opening portion of the Second, or Assyrian, Monarchy. A succession of five Babylonian monarchs is mentioned on an Assyrian tablet, the object of which is to record the synchronous history of the two countries. These monarchs are contemporary with independent Assyrian princes, and have relations toward them which are sometimes peaceful, sometimes warlike. Kara-in-das, the first of the five, is on terms of friendship with Asshur-bel-nisi-su, king of Assyria, and concludes with him a treaty of alliance. This treaty is renewed between his successor, Purna-puriyas, and Buzur-Asshur, the successor of Asshur-bel-nisi-su on the throne of Assyria. Not long afterwards a third Assyrian monarch, Asshur-upallit, obtains the crown, and Purna-puriyas not only continues on the old terms of amity with him, but draws the ties which unite the two royal families closer by marrying Asshur-upallit's daughter. The issue of this marriage is a prince named Kara-khar-das, who on the death of Purna-puriyas ascends the throne of

Babylon. But now a revolution occurs. A certain Nazi-bugas rises in revolt, puts Kara-khar-das to death, and succeeds in making himself king. Hereupon Asshur-upallit takes up arms, invades Babylonia, defeats and kills Nazi-bugas, and places upon the throne a brother of the murdered Kara-khar-das, a younger son of Purna-puriyas, by name Kurri-galzu, or Durri-galzu. These events may be assigned with much probability to the period between B.C. 1440 and B.C. 1380.

Of the five consecutive monarchs presented to our notice in this interesting document, two are known to us by their own inscriptions. Memorials of Purna-puriyas and Kurri-galzu, very similar in their general character, have been found in various parts of Chaldala. Those of Purna-puriyas come from Senkereh the ancient Larsa, and consist of bricks, showing that he repaired the great temple of the Sun at that city which was originally built by Urukh. Kurri-galzu's memorials comprise bricks from Mugheir (Ur) and Akkerkuf, together with his signet-seal, which was found at Baghdad in the year 1800. [PLATE XXI., Fig. 4.] It also appears by an inscription of Nabonidus that he repaired a temple at the city of Agana, and left an inscription there.

But the chief fame of Kurri-galzu arises from his having been the founder of an important city. The remarkable remains at Akkerkuf, of which an account has been given in a former chapter, mark the site of a town of his erection. It is conjectured with some reason that this place is the Dur-Kurri-galzu of the later Assyrian inscriptions--a place of so much consequence in the time of Sargon that he calls it "the key of the country."

The remaining monarchs, who are on strong grounds of probability, etymological and other, assigned to this dynasty are Saga-raktiyas, the founder of a Temple of the male and female Sun at Sippara, Ammidi-kaga, Simbar-sikhu, Kharbisikhu, Ulam-puriyas, Nazi-urdas, Mili-sikhu, and Kara-kharbi. Nothing is known at present of the position which any of these monarchs held in the dynasty, or of their relationship to the kings previously mentioned, or to each other. Most of them are known to us simply from their occurrence in a biliugual list of kings, together with Khammu-rabi, Kurri-galzu, and Purna-puriyas. The list in question appears not to be chronological.

Modern research has thus supplied us with memorials (or at any rate with the names) of some thirty kings, who ruled in the country properly termed Chaldaea at a very remote date. Their antiquity is evidenced by the character of their buildings and of their inscriptions, which are unmistakably rude and archaic. It is further indicated by the fact that they are the builders of certainly the most ancient edifices whereof the country contains any trace. The probable connection of two of them with the only king known previously from good authority to have reigned in the country during the primitive ages confirms the conclusion drawn from the appearance of the remains themselves; which is further strengthened by the monumental dates assigned to two of them, which place them respectively in the twenty-third and the nineteenth century before our era. That the kings belong to one series, and (speaking broadly) to one time, is evidenced by the similarity of the titles which they use, by their uninterrupted worship of the same gods, and by the general resemblance of the language and mode of writing which they employ. That the time to which they belong is anterior to the rise of Assyria to greatness appears from the synchronism of the later monarchs of the Chaldaean with the earliest of the Assyrian list, as well as from the fact that the names borne by the Babylonian kings after Assyria became the leading power in the country are not only different, but of a different type. If it be objected that the number of thirty kings is insufficient for the space over which they have in our scheme been spread, we may answer that it has never been, supposed by any one that the twenty-nine or thirty kings, of whom distinct mention has been made in

the foregoing account, are a complete list of all the Chaldaean sovereigns. On the contrary, it is plain that they are a very incomplete list, like that which Herodotus gives of the kings of Egypt, or that which the later Romans possessed of their early monarchs. The monuments themselves present indications of several other names of kings, belonging evidently to the same series, which are too obscure or too illegible for transliteration. And there may, of course, have been many others of whom no traces remain, or of whom none have been as yet found. On the other hand, it may be observed, that the number of the early Chaldaean kings reported by Polyhistor is preposterous. If sixty-eight consecutive monarchs held the Chaldaean throne between B.C. 2286 and B.C. 1546, they must have reigned on an average, less than eleven years apiece. Nay, if forty-nine ruled between B.C. 2004 and B.C. 1546, covering a space of little more than four centuries and a half--which is what Berosus is made to assert--these later monarchs cannot even have reigned so long as ten years each, an average which may be pronounced quite impossible in a settled monarchy such as the Chaldaean. The probability would seem to be that Berosus has been misreported, his numbers having suffered corruption during their passage through so many hands, and being in this instance quite untrustworthy. We may conjecture that the actual number of reigns which he intended to allow his fourth dynasty was nineteen, or at the utmost twenty-nine, the former of which numbers would give the common average of twenty-four years, while the latter would produce the less usual but still possible one of sixteen years.

The monarchy which we have had under review is one, no doubt, rather curious from its antiquity than illustrious from its great names, or admirable for the extent of its dominions. Less ancient than the Egyptian, it claims the advantage of priority over every empire or kingdom which has grown up upon the soil of Asia. The Arian, Turanian, and even the Semitic tribes, appear to have been in the nomadic condition, when the Cushite settlers in Lower Babylonia betook themselves to agriculture, erected temples, built cities, and established a strong and settled government. The leaven which was to spread by degrees through the Asiatic peoples was first deposited on the shores of the Persian Gulf at the mouth of the Great River; and hence civilization, science, letters, art, extended themselves northward, and eastward, and westward. Assyria, Media, Semitic Babylonia, Persia, as they derived from Chaldaea the character of their writing, so were they indebted to the same country for their general notions of government and administration, for their architecture, their decorative art, and still more for their science and literature. Each people no doubt modified in some measure the boon received, adding more or less of its own to the common inheritance. But Chaldaea stands forth as the great parent and original inventress of Asiatic civilization, without any rival that can reasonably dispute her claims. The great men of the Empire are Nimrod, Urukh, and Che-dor-laomer. Nimrod, the founder, has the testimony of Scripture that he was "a mighty one in the earth;" "a mighty hunter;" the establisher of a "kingdom," when kingdoms had scarcely begun to be known; the builder of four great and famous cities, "Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar," or Mesopotamia. To him belong the merit of selecting a site peculiarly fitted for the development of a great power in the early ages of the world, and of binding men together into a community which events proved to possess within it the elements of prosperity and permanence. Whether he had, indeed, the rebellious and apostate character which numerous traditions, Jewish, Arabian, and Armenian, assign to him; whether he was in reality concerned in the building of the tower related in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Genesis, we have no means of positively determining. The language of Scripture with regard to Nimrod is laudatory

rather than the contrary; and it would seem to have been from a misapprehension of the _nexus_ of the Mosaic narrative that the traditions above mentioned originated. Nimrod, "the mighty hunter _before the Lord_," had not in the days of Moses that ill reputation which attached to him in later ages, when he was regarded as the great Titan or Giant, who made war upon the gods, and who was at once the builder of the tower, and the persecutor who forced Abraham to quit his original country. It is at least doubtful whether we ought to allow any weight at all to the additions and embellishments with which later writers, so much wiser than Moses, have overlaid the simplicity of his narrative.

Urukh, whose fame may possibly have reached the Romans, was the great Chaldaean architect. To him belongs, apparently, the conception of the Babylonian temple, with its rectangular base, carefully placed so as to present its angles to the four cardinal points, its receding stages, its buttresses, its drains, its sloped walls, its external staircases for ascent, and its ornamental shrine crowning the whole. At any rate, if he was not the first to conceive and erect such structures, he set the example of building them on such a scale and with such solidity as to secure their long continuance, and render them well-nigh imperishable. There is no appearance in all Chaldaea, so far as it has been explored, of any building which can be even probably assigned to a date anterior to Urukh. The attempted tower was no doubt earlier; and it may have been a building of the same type, but there is no reason to believe that any remnant, or indeed any trace, of this primitive edifice, has continued to exist to our day. The structures of the most archaic character throughout Chaldaea are, one and all, the work of King Urukh, who was not content to adorn his metropolitan city only with one of the new edifices, but added a similar ornament to each of the great cities within his empire.

The great builder was followed shortly by the great conqueror. Kudur-Lagamer, the Elamitic prince, who, more than twenty centuries before our era, having extended his dominion over Babylonia and the adjoining regions, marched an army a distance of 1200 miles from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the Dead Sea, and held Palestine and Syria in subjection for twelve years, thus effecting conquests which were not again made from the same quarter till the time of Nebuchadnezzar, fifteen or sixteen hundred years afterward, has a good claim to be regarded as one of the most remarkable personages in the world's history-being, as he is, the forerunner and proto-type of all those great Oriental conquerors who from time to time have built up vast empires in Asia out of heterogeneous materials, which have in a longer or a shorter space successively crumbled to decay. At a time when the kings of Egypt had never ventured beyond their borders, unless it were for a foray in Ethiopia, and when in Asia no monarch had held dominion over more than a few petty tribes, and a few hundred miles of territory, he conceived the magnificent notion of binding into one the manifold nations inhabiting the vast tract which lies between the Zagros mountain-range and the Mediterranean. Lord by inheritance (as we may presume) of Eliun and Chaldaea or Babylonia, he was not content with these ample tracts, but, coveting more, proceeded boldly on a career of conquest up the Euphrates valley, and through Syria, into Palestine. Successful here, he governed for twelve years dominions extending near a thousand miles from east to west, and from north to south probably not much short of five hundred. It was true that he was not able to hold this large extent of territory; but the attempt and the success temporarily attending it are memorable circumstances, and were probably long held in remembrance through Western Asia, where they served as a stimulus and incentive to the ambition of later monarchs.

These, then, are the great men of the Chaldaean empire. Its extent, as we have seen, varied greatly at different periods. Under the kings of the first dynasty--to which Urukh and Ilgi belonged--it was probably confined to the alluvium, which seems then to have been not more than 300 miles in length along the course of the rivers, and which is about 70 or 80 miles in breadth from the Tigris to the Arabian desert. In the course of the second dynasty it received a vast increase, being carried in one direction to the Elamitic mountains, and in another to the Mediterranean, by the conquest of Kudur-Nakhunta and Chedor-laomer. On the defeat of the latter prince it again contracted, though to what extent we have no means of determining. It is probable that Elam or Susiana, and not unlikely that the Euphrates valley, for a considerable distance above Hit, formed parts of the Chaldaean Empire after the loss of Syria and Palestine. Assyria occupied a similar position, at any rate from the time of Ismi-dagon, whose son built a temple at Kileh-Sherghat or Asshur. There is reason to think that the subjection of Assyria continued to the very end of the dynasty, and that this region, whose capital was at Kileh-Sherghat, was administered by viceroys deriving their authority from Chaldaean monarchs. These monarchs, as has been observed, gradually removed their capital more and more northwards; by which it would appear as if their empire tended to progress in that direction.

The different dynasties which ruled in Chaldaea prior to the establishment of Assyrian influence, whether Chaldaean, Susianian, or Arabian, seem to have been of kindred race; and, whether they established themselves by conquest, or in a more peaceful manner, to have made little, if any, change in the language, religion, or customs of the Empire. The so-called Arab kings, if they are really (as we have supposed), Khammurabi and his successors, show themselves by their names and their inscriptions to be as thoroughly proto-Chaldaaan as Urukh or Ilgi.

But with the commencement of the Assyrian period the case is altered. From the time of Tiglathi-Nin (about B.C. 1300), the Assyrian conqueror who effected the subjugation of Babylon, a strong Semitizing influence made itself felt in the lower country--the monarchs cease to have Turanian or Cushite and bear instead thoroughly Assyrian names; inscriptions, when they occur, are in the Assyrian language and character. The entire people seems by degrees to have been Assyrianized, or at any rate Semitized-assimilated, that is, to the stock of nations to which the Jews, the northern Arabs, the Aramaeans or Syrians, the Phoenicians, and the Assyrians belong. Their language fell into disuse, and grew to be a learned tongue studied by the priests and the literati; their Cushite character was lost, and they became, as a people, scarcely distinguishable from the Assyrians. After six centuries and a half of submission and insignificance, the Chaldaeans, however, began to revive and recover themselves--they renewed the struggle for national independence, and in the year B.C. 625 succeeded in establishing a second kingdom, which will be treated of in a later volume as the fourth or Babylonian Monarchy. Even when this monarchy met its death at the hands of Cyrus the Great, the nationality of the Chaldaeans was not swept away. We find them recognized under the Persians, and even under the Parthians, as a distinct people. When at last they cease to have a separate national existence, their name remains; and it is in memory of the successful cultivation of their favorite science by the people of Nimrod from his time to that of Alexander, that the professors of astronomical and astrological learning under the Roman Emperors receive, from the poets and historians of the time, the appellation of "Chaldaeans."