of many great ancient cities, and had as often mourned over their remains, but never did I feel the impreſſion of pity and regret ſo ſtrong as in wandering among the ruins of Syracuſe.”

SYRIA, a very ancient kingdom of Aſia, lying between the Mediterranean on the west, the Euphrates on the eaſt, and Arabia Deſerta, Phoenicia, and Paleſtine, on the ſouth.

In ancient times this country was called *Aram,* from Aram the youngeſt ſon of Shem, who ſettled here ; but in proceſs of time the name came to be changed into *Syria,* from one *Syrus,* according to ſome ; though others think it is only a contraction of the word *Assyria.* At first it was undoubtedly parcelled out into ſeveral petty ſtates ; all of which ſeem afterwards to have been reduced under ſubjection to the four principal ones, Zobah, Damaſcus, Hamath, and Geſhur. Afterwards the whole country was divided in­to two parts only, viz. Coeleſyria and Phoenicia; though the Phoenicians, Idumeans, Jews, Gazites, and Azotites, or the whole country of the Philiſtines, was included. Alter the death of Alexander, Syria, in the great extent of the word, was divided, according to Strabo, into Comagene, Seleucis of Syria, Coeleſyria, Phoenice on the ſea-coaſt, and Judea in the midland. Ptolemy, however, ſubdivides theſe ; and in the Proper Syria reckons only Comagene, Pieria, Cyrrhistica or Cyrrheſtica, Seleucis, Caſſiotis or Caſiotis, Chalybonitis, Chalcidice or Chalcidene, Apamene, Laodicene, Phoenicia Mediterranea, Coeleſyria and Palmyrene.

The hiſtory of the ancient Syrians, till the time of their being carried away by the kings of Aſſyria, is totally un­known, excepting a few particulars which may be gathered from Scripture, and which it is needleſs here to repeat. During the continuance of the Aſſyrian, Babylonian, and Perſian monarchies, the hiſtory of this country affords no­thing remarkable; but after the death of Alexander, it gave name to a very conſiderable empire, which makes a conſpicuous figure in ancient hiſtory. At this time, however, it was not confined to Syria properly ſo called, but compre­hended all thoſe vaſt provinces of the Upper Aſia which formed the Perſian empire ; being, in its full extent, bound­ed by the Mediterranean upon one side, and the river Indus on the other. The first king was Seleucus, one of the ge­nerals of Alexander the Great ; who, after the death of that conqueror, being made governor of Babylon, was tempted, by the example of Alexander’s other captains, to set up for himſelf. Eumenes, who had ſincerely at heart the intereſt of Alexander’s family, ſolicited his aſſiſtance againſt Antigonus, who had openly revolted ; but Seleucus not only refused this aſſiſtance, but attempted to deſtroy Eu­menes himſelf with his whole army, by cutting the ſluices of the Euphrates, and laying under water the whole plain where they were encamped. Eumenes, however, found means to eſcape the danger without the loſs of a man. Up­on this Seleucus endeavoured to gain over his troops : but finding that impoſſible, he made a truce with Eumenes, and granted him a safe paſſage through his province; but at the ſame time ſent an express to Antigonus, deſiring him to fall upon him before he was joined by the governors of Upper Aſia. Antigonus did not fail to follow his advice ; but having prevailed againſt Eumenes through treachery, he next thought of bringing Seleucus himſelf under ſubjection. On his return to Babylon, therefore, after having been feaſted with his whole army by Seleucus, he demanded of him an account oſ the revenues of his province. Receiving an unfavourable answer to this queſtion, Antigonus was ſo much exaſperated, that Seleucus, not thinking himſelf a match for him at that time, thought proper to fly into Egypt.

By the flight of Seleucus, Antigonus was left maſter of all his provinces ; but his ſon Demetrius being afterwards defeated by Ptolemy at Gaza, Seleucus began to think of recovering what he had loſt. Being furniſhed by Ptolemy with 1000 foot and 200 horſe, he ſet out with that ſlender force to attempt the recovery of Babylon. Nothing could have a more deſperate appearance than this undertaking ; yet Seleucus was not diſcouraged. On his arrival at Carrhæ in Meſopotamia, partly by force and partly by perſuaſion, he prevailed on the Macedonians who garriſoned that place to revolt from Antigonus and join him. Being thus rein­forced, he entered the territories of Babylon, where new ſupplies were continually added to his army ; his ancient ſubjects flocking to him from all parts, and declaring themſelves ready to ſtand by him with their lives and fortunes. This happened in conſequence of the lenity with which they had been treated by Seleucus; whereas Antigonus was universally deteſted on account of his ſeverity. — As he approached the city, those who favoured Antigonus retired into the citadel, but were soon obliged to ſurrender ; and in that fortreſs Seleucus found his children, friends, and domeſtics, whom Antigonus had kept priſoners ever ſince his flight into Egypt.

Seleucus having thus made himſelf maſter of Babylon, in the year 512 B. C. began to prepare for encountering An­tigonus, who he knew would soon attack him with all his force. Nicanor, governor of Media under Antigonus, first advanced againſt him at the head of 10,000 foot and 7000 horſe ; but Seleucus, with only 3000 foot and 400 horſe, having drawn him into an ambuſh, cut off almoſt the whole, of his army, and ſuch of the ſoldiers as had eſcaped the ſlaughter willingly enliſted under his banner.

The conſequence of this victory was the ſubmiſſion of all Media and Suſiana; which alarming Antigonus, he sent his ſon Demetrius with an army of 5000 Macedonian foot, 10,000 mercenaries, and 4000 horſe. Seleucus was then in Media ; and Patrocles, wisdom he had left to take care of Babylon, finding his force inadequate to that purpoſe, com­pelled the inhabitants to lcave the city and diſperſe themſelves in the adjacent countries, while he himſelf, with what troops he had, retired into two forts, which he thought could ealily be defended. When therefore Demetrius en­tered Babylon, he was ſurpriſed to find it deſerted, upon which he inſtantly attacked the forts. One was quickly reduced ; but as the other held out till the expiration of the time which had been allowed him by his father, he left 5000 toot and 1000 horſe under the command of Arche­laus to carry on the ſiege. With the reſt he marched away, buffering his ſoldiers to live at diſcretion as he went along; which so provoked the Babylonians, that they were ever af­ter attached to Seleucus as if he had been their natural prince.

On the return of Seleucus to Babylon, he eaſily drove out the troops left by Antigonus, recovered the caſtle which he had garriſoned, and ſettled his authority on ſuch a firm foundation, that it could never afterwards be moved. Having then marched again into Media, he defeated and killed with his own hand Nicanor or Nicator, whom Anti­gonus had ſent againſt him ; after which, having ſettled the affairs of Media, he reduced all Perſia, Bactria, and Hyrca­nia, ſubjecting to his new empire theſe and all the other provinces on this side the Indus which had been conquered.

Seleucus being now maſter of all the countries which lie between the Euphrates and the Indus, took the title of king of Babylon and Media. But, not ſatisfied with theſe possessions, ample as they were, he croſſed the Indus, in order to conquer thoſe regions which had ſubmitted to Alexander beyond that river. But, during the time that the generals of Alexander had been making war upon his family and up­