

cy by his maternal grandfather in consequence of portentous dreams, real or invented; should each have been saved by the remorse of his destined murderer, and should each, after a similar education among herdsmen as the son of a herdsman, have found means to revisit his paternal kingdom, and having delivered it, after a long and triumphant war, from the tyrant, who had invaded it, should have restored it to the summit of power and magnificence. Whether so romantick a story, which is the subject of an Epick Poem, as majestick and entire as the *Iliad*, be historically true, we may feel perhaps an inclination to doubt; but it cannot with reason be denied, that the outline of it related to a single Hero, whom the *Asiatics*, conversing with the father of *European* history, described according to their popular traditions by his true name, which the *Greek* alphabet could not express: nor will a difference of names affect the question; since the *Greeks* had little regard for truth, which they sacrificed willingly to the *Graces* of their language, and the nicety of their ears; and, if they could render foreign words melodious, they were never solicitous to make them exact; hence they probably formed CAMBYSES from CA'MBAKSH, or *Granting desires*, a title rather than a name, and XERXES from SHI'RU'YI, a Prince and warrior in the *Shâhnâmâh*; or from SHI'RSHA'II, which might also have been a title; for the *Asiatick* Princes have constantly assumed new titles or epithets at different periods of their lives, or on different occasions; a custom, which we have seen prevalent in our own times both in *Irân* and *Hendustân*, and which has been a source of great confusion even in the scriptural accounts of *Babylonian* occurrences: both *Greeks* and *Jews* have in fact accommodated *Persian* names to their own articulation; and both seem to have disregarded the native literature of *Irân*, without which they could at most attain a general imperfect knowledge of the country. As to the *Persians* themselves, who were contemporary with the *Jews* and *Greeks*, they must have been acquainted with the history of their own times, and with the traditional accounts of past ages; but for a reason, which will presently appear, they chose to consider CAYU'MERS as the founder of their empire; and, in the numerous distractions, which followed the overthrow of DARRA', especially in the great revolution on the defeat of YEZDEGIRD, their civil histories were lost, as those of *India* have unhappily been, from the solicitude of the priests, the only repositories of their learning, to preserve their books of law and religion at the expence of all others: hence it has happened, that nothing remains of genuine *Persian* history before the dynasty SA'SA'N, except a few rustick traditions and fables, which furnished materials for the *Shâhnâmâh*, and which are still supposed to exist in the *Pahlavi* language. The annals of the *Pishdâdi*, or *Assyrian* race, must be considered as dark and fabulous; and those of the *Cayâni* family, or the *Medes and Persians*, as heroick and poetical; though the lunar eclipses, said to be mentioned by PTOLEMY, fix the time of GUSHTASP, the prince, by whom ZERA'TUSHT was protected: of the *Parthian* kings descended from ARSHAC or ARSACES, we know little more than the names; but the *Sasâni's* had so long an intercourse with the Emperors of *Rome* and *Byzantium*, that the period of their dominion may be called an historical age. In attempting to ascertain the beginning of the *Assyrian* empire, we are deluded, as in a thousand instances, by names arbitrarily imposed: it had been settled by chronologers, that the first monarchy established in *Persia*