

immense extent of time—one half of the age of the world? To the most ancient nations, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Phenicians? Alas, it is all wilderness there; a few fragments of pretended annals, which, like the gloomy remains upon the plains of Shinar, can neither be referred to the right place in chronology, nor interpreted so as to give them their right estimate in point of truth; mere continuation of the confusion of tongues at Babel. Do we inquire of Egyptian literature for an ancient book containing authentic details of far ancient times? We are referred only to Manetho. But he wrote so late as the third century before Christ. All his professed authority was certain sacred inscriptions on pillars, which probably never existed. And nothing is extant, of even such history, but a few inconsiderable fragments. We enquire next of Babylonian literature; and are told only of Berosus, a Priest of Belus. When did he write? No one knows, except that it was somewhere in the period of the Macedonian dynasties. What remains of his writing? A few fragments preserved by Josephus, Eusebius and Tatian; of value indeed, because confirming the history in the Bible, but almost useless, without that history. We inquire next of Phenician history and are referred only to the work of Sanchoniathon, famous for having been used by Porphyry, (the shrewdest antagonist Christianity ever had) in opposition to the writings of Moses. What remains of it now? One book only; and that upon the Phenician theology, and of course full of fable; and as a history, unaided by any better, useless. But does Greece, ancient, classic, learned Greece furnish nothing more valuable concerning the first three thousand years of the world? Alas, of Greek historians, the antiquity of the oldest, whose names have been preserved, does not much exceed the times of Cyrus and Cambyses. Of many of these, we have only their names; no knowledge even of their subject. Of the remainder, nothing extant is older than the Persian war. And of that nothing is to be depended on, connected with times prior to the Peloponesian war. Thucydides asserts, and proves this. "*The matter preceding that time, (about four hundred and four years, B. C.) cannot now, through the length of time, be accurately discovered by us.*" Plutarch, in writing of the earlier periods, has to "implore the candor of his readers, and their kind allowance for the tales of antiquity." "As geographers thrust into the extremities of their maps, those countries that are unknown to them, remarking, at the same time, that all beyond is hills of sand, and haunts of wild beasts, frozen seas, marshes, and mountains that are inaccessible to human courage, or industry; so, in comparing the lives of illustrious men, when I have passed through those periods of time which may be described with probability, and where history may find firm footing in facts, I may say of the remoter ages that all beyond is full of prodigy and fiction, the regions of poets, and fabulists, wrapt in clouds, and unworthy of belief."

So said that learned Bœotian, who knew not the Scriptures. So appeared to him the history of more than three thousand years of the world. Such also would it be to us, were we destitute of the Bible. Just as we now wander among the mysterious remains of the race which once possessed all this land, and pausing beneath some lofty mound, crested with sturdy oaks, which have stood for centuries and are now nourished with the decayed materials of a former generation; or, measuring the exact angles and regular outlines of some vast system of warlike defence, for which the traditions of no race now known among us have the least explanation, are deeply impressed with the evidence that we are