

ally confirmatory, but they sometimes raise new difficulties, chiefly chronological; and occasionally on some unimportant matter they seem to contradict a scriptural statement. Perhaps as positive a case as any is that of Darius the Mede, who is said to have taken the rule of Babylon on its capture by Cyrus. It was a Mede, Gaburu (Gobryas), and not Darius, who became governor of Babylon, according to the monuments, while Darius was a later king. It is possible that there may be a copyist's error—that easy device for escaping a difficulty—but quite as likely the confusion was in the mind of the original writer. It is a small matter, and it is quite unimportant how the error arose, as the statement that it was Darius is not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or for instruction.

I might multiply examples of confirmation and illustration indefinitely, but my purpose now is rather to warn against putting too much weight upon them. They can answer many objections against the correctness of Bible history, but they can add no positive argument for inspiration, much less revelation. They can illustrate history, but they cannot confirm miracle. They are of value within a historical period, but they cannot go back of the succession of kings into the realm of the origin of human history without carrying us into a cycle of myths, instructive and interesting, but without historical value. The Babylonian story of the flood or of the creation of the world is extremely interesting, and valuable for comparison with the Genesis story, but their form is completely mythological, and they are of no worth for historical purposes. They are valuable chiefly by way of contrast with Genesis, their crude, coarse polytheism being the very contradiction of the unsurpassed religious lessons of the Hebrew story, which tells us of one only God who alone created the heavens and the earth, who destroyed the race of man for their sins, saved Noah and his family, and gave him the merciful promise—such a God as the civilization of the nineteenth or twentieth century need not be ashamed to worship. Still it is the religious teaching, not the statements of history or chronology or science or philosophy, which is the essential and valuable instruction of the Bible, in which we hear the voice of divine inspiration.

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#### THE VALPARAISO BIBLE SOCIETY.

There was a goodly number of young and old at the Union hall, on the 23rd of March, to hear what had been done during the past year, and what word of cheer or progress for the current one. The secretary read the directors' report, adding a few words about the outlook for the current year, which is very encouraging. Attention was called to Mr. Muller's recent trip to Concepcion and the frontier, during which he sold, in two months' time, 671 Bibles and Testaments, and 584 religious books, receiving for the same nearly \$800. He had visited 1,046 families and given away more than 2,000 tracts. Mention was made of Mr. Olssen, colporteur of the American Bible Society, who had traversed Patagonia coming over to Chili by the Villa Rica Pass. While awaiting the arrival of expected books, prior to returning to the Argentine, he accompanied the writer to Quillota, La Calera and Los Nogales, where in two days 180 Bibles and Testaments were sold. Such success in a field hitherto notably unfruitful, is considered as an omen of better days for Bible work in Chili.—*The Record*.