

throw of the dominion of the Akkad Chaldeans, the Assyrian king Sardanapalus, in his tablets of historical memoirs, boasts of his erudition in Akkad literature; while the grammars and vocabularies of that ancient tongue, found in his library, with other works on science and general knowledge, evidently designed for educational purposes, and stated by him to be for the use of his people, attest the importance that was attached to the study of Akkad literature and science by the Assyrians, during the thousand years that elapsed from the establishment of their dominion, in Mesopotamia, till the final catastrophe of its extinction, when it had just risen to its greatest grandeur of extent and magnificence.

It is to the science of these Akkad Chaldeans, therefore, or their professional successors, when to be a Chaldean was synonymous with being a professor of astronomical science and astrology, that the origin of the astrolabe is to be attributed, as far as the light of archaeology before the public enables us to see, and with it the necessary prior origin of the division of the circle, for the purposes of science, into 360 degrees, and their sexagesimal subdivision into minutes and seconds, which still is, and probably ever will be, used in mathematics and the graduation of scientific instruments.

And as all myths may be taken as legendary records, however uncouth and distorted, of actual facts and phenomena on which they are based, the tradition given in the fragment of the writings of the Babylonian priest Berosus, quoted by the learned from Alexander Polyhistor, of the great mysterious being, with the body of a fish, but the head, hands, and feet of a man, that ascended the Euphrates from the Erythrean Sea and taught the abori-