

unknown in Hindostan at that period, the silver must have been in bars, which were cut, as in China, according to the value wanted.

It would seem that the Egyptians chiefly enjoyed the commerce of the East by the Red Sea; and the Phenicians that of the West, by the Mediterranean, although the latter were not wholly estranged from the commerce of the East, being in possession of a port at the extremity of the Red Sea; as the Egyptians often availed themselves of the mouths of the Nile, to trade to the ports of the West, so that one of the ports of Tyre was called the Egyptian haven. Strabo has observed, that the first kings of Egypt, contented with the opulence of their country, interdicted foreign commerce; but this observation seems to apply to the trade by the Mediterranean, which might have become dangerous to Egypt from the easy access to the whole kingdom, by the mouths of the Nile, and the navigable course of that river for the small vessels of that time; so that it became a matter of state policy, not to open this defect to the eyes of strangers. But the trade with Hindostan was very anciently known, both to the Egyptians and Phenicians; and Ptolemy Philadelphus only re-opened and improved this branch of commerce. Perhaps in the foundation of Alexandria, at a distance from the mouths of the Nile, one motive was to have a port which would not expose that sacred and pervading river to the eyes of foreigners. The enmity of Alexander to Tyre, and her daughter Carthage, might also induce him to select this situation between them; a situation which attracted a prodigious commerce for more than eighteen centuries, till the trade of the East was opened by the Cape of Good Hope, communicating by canals and the Red Sea, with the whole oriental world, and with eastern Africa; and, by the Mediterranean, with part of Asia, Europe, and Africa. But the early commerce of Egypt by the Red Sea was impeded by the Idumeans, who only permitted them to use one ship in the intercourse with Hindostan. The pretended conquests of the ancient kings of Egypt, Osiris and Sesostris, in Hindostan, only indicate, according to our learned author, the origins of a great trade with that country, establishing an influence similar to conquests, of which examples are not wanting in modern times.

The chronological plan, pursued by Huet, has many inconveniences, while it would have been a superior arrangement to have exhibited in one view the commercial history of each country. Under the article India, he resumes this Egyptian intercourse; and observes, that when Cambyfes conquered Egypt, many Egyptians sought refuge in Hindostan. As the Persians then had, and still retain, a most singular and rooted aversion to sea voyages, founded on the unconquerable ideas of their ancient religion, the Persian conquest super-induced the ruin of Egyptian commerce, till it was revived by Ptolemy Philadelphus. Much information on this subject may be derived from Arrian's Periplus of the Red Sea, who instructs us, at the same time, that the ancient route was chiefly along