

the Holy One, because of His indulgent dealing with a rebellious world; but that now—His righteousness having been thus vindicated—He can pour forth on all who trust in Christ the riches of His grace? That is sufficient. The Atonement was a necessity, not only to show the love of God, but to demonstrate sin's desert and Divine righteousness, and to remove an otherwise insuperable barrier to the full outflow of His mercy on sinful man.

One concluding thought of considerable importance borrowed from Dr. Dale. We have in Holy Scripture the words "ransom," "propitiation," "sacrifice," and "offering," applied to Christ's death, as well as the very strong verb, in passages quoted above, to "purchase." Let us bear in mind two cautions. On the one hand, no one of these expressions must be isolated from the others, and made the basis of a theory of the Atonement; neither can the idea of each be fully followed out without landing us in confusion and contradiction—a common danger in the application of human analogies to Divine truths. But, on the other hand, no theory can be true and adequate which does not account for the employment of all these various terms. All must be felt to be apt and suggestive, though partial, expressions of this great truth. This great truth—which, as it has been endeavoured above to show, (1) Holy Scripture distinctly commends to our faith, (2) which seems to follow of necessity from the true Deity of Him who died, (3) and which, tried by the test of experience in practical religion, works a sense of sin which nothing else has been found able to produce, gives peace, comfort, and strength to the humble and contrite, together with a prevailing motive and desire for holiness of heart and life.

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ART. III.—"DARIUS, SON OF AHASUERUS OF THE SEED OF THE MEDES" (DAN. IX. 1).

BEING AN OLD HYPOTHESIS REHABILITATED.

INTRODUCTORY.

BY a truthful paradox we may say of Darius that he is celebrated chiefly for his obscurity. So very hard is he to find in the field of history that everyone is on his trail. Yet in view of the hundred-and-one contradictory legends which constitute our entire knowledge of the Median and early Persian Empires—as seen nowhere more glaringly than

in the discordant stories about the world-renowned Cyrus himself—would it be really surprising if such an one as Darius the Mede had left “not a wrack behind”? (On this point, see the final section of this article). Nevertheless, it is a fact that many Biblical critics look askance at the Book of Daniel, and that chiefly by reason of this poor Darius. For I strongly feel that if once his historicity is made clear, the other objections urged against the book would shrink into exceeding small compass.

I take for certain that some of the points I shall treat of have been ably handled already by others; for I do not profess acquaintance with all that has been written about the book in general, or even about Darius in particular. But I hope to have succeeded, at least here and there, in weaving together some old but neglected facts into new and pertinent arguments.

SECTION I.—THE CUNEIFORM DISCOVERIES.

Any new light suddenly let in is apt at first to dazzle the eyes. Thus it is that certain scholars are now declaring that, in view of the silence of the new-found inscriptions, positively no place in history can be found for our Darius. Let us consider this. At the period in question Cyrus was, by all indications, very largely dependent upon Median goodwill. He probably had the majority on his side when he vanquished their King Astyages and took some of his cities. But it seems that after Cyrus's power was well consolidated, those friendly relations gave place to Medo-Persian jealousies and feuds. (The point is excellently handled in “Speaker's Commentary,” vol. vi, pp. 313, 314.) Now it was most likely towards the end of his reign that court annalists engraved his achievements on tablet and cylinder. It was far from his wish, or theirs, to extol his insignificant predecessor. And can he even be conceived of as handing down to memory that for two years he had even *nominally* acknowledged a Median suzerain? It is significant of the pervading *animus* that both the inscriptions coolly ignore the Medes *in toto*, from the fall of Ekbatana onwards. It behoves us to remember that if Daniel be the author of his eponymous book, we there have contemporary testimony equal to that of the cuneiforms, and, indeed, superior to them in so far as the word of an impartial witness is more trustworthy than that of a king “blowing his own trumpet.” Well might Dr. Johnson say: “Writers of inscriptions are not on their oath.” But now, turning to the *Behistun* Inscriptions, we detect what is remarkably like a direct mention of our Darius (=Cyxares II.).

Among the dangerous revolts quelled by Darius Hystaspes appears that of Khshatrita, claiming the Median throne by right of inheritance from Cyaxares (Uwakshatara). Now, according to Xenophon, Cyaxares admits to Cyrus that he leaves no *legitimate* male issue, which, of course, no wise means that he left no male issue at all, but the contrary. It seems that in Media Khshatrita passed as a son of his. This is a far easier supposition than to consider him as harking back for his title so far as to Cyaxares I. A little farther on we meet with a second claimant asserting himself as "of Cyaxares' family."

And now for a last glance at the *Cyrus* tablet. Does it not help us to determine the relative positions of Darius and the Conqueror? We learn that Cyrus left Gobryas (Gubaru), the commander of the forces, in charge of the city of Babylon, where, by Xenophon's account, Cyrus provided Cyaxares a splendid palace. Now, if Cyrus kept the main army under his own command, as doubtless he did, for the prosecution of his Northern conquests, and also left his victorious general with a strong detachment at the seat of government, we may judge with what absolute safety he might concede to the weak son of the conquered Astyages all the "pomp and circumstance" of royalty! He is not the only king-maker who has taken care to retain a firm grasp of the sovereignty, as Niebuhr ("Geschichte Assurs," p. 93) very plainly shows. Even at this present, the native sovereigns of India are firmly held in leading-strings by the ever-vigilant British Resident—as witness the recent deposition of a Gaikwar of Baroda. Remark, too, that under this regime the relation of Cyrus to Darius would closely resemble that previously subsisting between the energetic Nabunahid and his *fainéant* son Bilsaruzur (Belshazzar), if, as seems likely, the latter was Nebuchadnezzar's maternal grandson. He, though but a phantom king, satisfied the claims of legitimacy, the real dominion resting with his father. In the case of Cyrus, it was the uncle who represented the legitimate line, and held the phantom sceptre under the potent sway of his nephew (and, by most accounts, son-in-law as well).

SECTION II.—THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

In strict accord with the view now propounded, Daniel informs us, not that, upon Belshazzar's murder, Darius *seized* the kingdom, but "received" it (precisely as, chap. vii. 18, the saints "receive" the kingdom assigned them by the Most High). Again he states, not that he made himself king, but "was made king." (His age is stated as sixty-two, which also

well accords with our view.) And, to my thinking, in chap. vi. he is depicted as little better than a puppet in the hands of his entourage—Gubaru possibly amongst the number. For only hear them: "Know, O king, that" (whatever you might have done at Ekbatana) "our *Medo-Persic* law is that no statute that the king decrees may be changed."¹ Note well that the appeal is not to old *Medic* precedents—now obsolete—but to modern *Medo-Persic* law. Pray, from whence came this constitutional canon imported into the *new-born* empire? Came it not in with the conqueror, from Elam or Persia? And may we not descry the same master spirit organizing the empire under 120 commandants, whom "it pleased Darius" accordingly to ordain? Just so does Cyaxares II. in Xenophon's story take his cue upon all vital issues from his nephew's prompting; and Xenophon says that a commandant was appointed to every principal city. The usual assumption, though not as yet fully confirmed, is probable enough: that after a brief reign, say of two years, the feeble king passed away, leaving Cyrus, alike by conquest and by heirship, the paramount lord of the East. As far as my knowledge goes, there is nothing whatever in the new-found inscriptions to forbid our dating "the first year of Cyrus and release of the Jews from captivity" from B.C. 536—not from the occupation of Babylon in 538—no determining dates having come to light.

To the stock objection that "Darius" is not "Cyaxares," the obvious reply is that "Cyaxares" was also the name of the *Medish* hero, his warlike and victorious grandfather, and would in Persian ears savour strong of *Medish* ascendancy. By exchanging it for a name so thoroughly Persian as "Darius," he signalized his frank acceptance of the new regime. Similar cases will occur to the reader, as, *e.g.*, that in 2 Kings xxiv. 17.

I now feel bound to challenge our "higher critics," who reject the story of Darius, to explain whence it could have originated, especially as a twin-story of a Cyaxares II. assuredly had vogue in Greece (see next section, also the last). Even at the late date assigned by them to this book, the Rabbis, by the light of their copious records, canonical and other—nay, even from mere world-wide hearsay—must have still been vividly conscious that Cyrus, not Darius, had been conqueror of Babylon and the Eastern world. However, we are asked to assume that an idle tale of a *Medish* predecessor to Cyrus had obtained currency among them—unless, indeed, the story of

¹ So, too, they *demand* rather than *advise* signature to a decree concocted in *his absence*; much as our Queen signs whatever the Legislature chooses to enact, be it ever so foolish.

Darius were a deliberate figment from end to end. Well, that legend could not assuredly be due, like most others, to national vanity; for the great Cyrus himself would have "pointed the moral and adorned the tale" to far finer effect. As a fact, such tales always need to be fathered upon some well-known personage. A pure nonentity, as in this (assumed) case, would be quite out of place in a legend of the sort. Again, in order to take root, the legend need not, of course, be *true*; but it *must* possess some plausibility. And what could be less plausible than to interpose a Medish king between Cyrus' conquests and the first year of his reign? The inevitable conclusion would appear to be that the author wrote no legend at all, but *history* well within the horizon of those well-trained divines, who solemnly added it to the sacred canon. Assailants of the book's authenticity, after giving a very easy birth to some objections (with not a little cackling), invariably leave their callow offspring to take care of themselves, which is rough upon the poor chicks. So in the present case. Some probable origin for this so-called "legend" is still sadly to seek—when found, it shall be made a note of.

SECTION III.—THE "CYROPÆDIA."

I have more than once made reference to Xenophon's historical romance, thus entitled. Apparently, in some men's eyes any accord with statements there set forth is quite intolerable. To such a pitch is unreason carried that the bare fact of an author's showing some measure of agreement with Xenophon's account has been held to put him out of court *ipso facto*. Thus that astoundingly omnivorous student Aben Ezra states "from a Book of the Kings of Persia" that Cyrus was son-in-law to our Darius; but as Xenophon confirms this, even though Aben Ezra seems ignorant of his *further* statement of actual blood-relationship, of course what Aben Ezra says is to go for nothing. So with the Armenian Eusebius; so with Josephus. Critics jump to the conclusion that they both rest upon Xenophon, for no earthly reason, save that they take the same view. Now, this is babyish! To cite that novel in the light of grave history is, I own, worse than silly; but to conclude that Xenophon invariably states "the thing which is not" is not a whit more wise. There never was nor will be an historical novel which did not occasionally deviate into truth. At least two or three of the central figures have some sort of living prototype, and yet critics who ought to know better have laid it down that Xenophon's tale presents no similitude to the true Cyrus beyond his bare name; while as for the secondary hero, his uncle Cyaxares, why, he is the

veriest shadow of nothing—a myth alike in name and in nature!

Now look at the facts. Between Xenophon and the Cuneiforms we find resemblances which speak volumes. They both make Gubaru leader of the force which surprised Babylon, which fell without any need of fighting. They both make him an Assyrian by birth, for his name is simply the Assyrian adjective “Strong,” being a modification of “Gabbaru,” as I suppose. Both alike vaunt Cyrus’ extreme clemency towards the captured city. Last, but not least, both depict him a polytheist, and as sacrificing at the local shrines.

Now, even if *Daniel’s* veracity be held in as low repute as Xenophon’s, a judicial mind knows that when two suspected witnesses are found in agreement, with no suspicion of collusion, the fact needs must distinctly raise the credit of them both. Moreover, those who would banish all reference to the “Cyropædia” are willing, mostly, to admit it as a fair exponent of the Cyrus traditions current in Athenian society; and I must submit that a tradition of a Medish Darius or Cyaxares II., if devoid of historic basis, requires to be accounted for, no less than does the like tradition among the Jews, on which I have commented already, especially so when we recollect that from the days of Cyrus onward the Greeks had been brought into constant (mostly unfriendly) relations with Persia. Æschylus (“Persæ,” 771-774)¹ manifestly points to the same tradition at Athens. Let nobody, therefore, feel any misgiving at finding himself in the same boat with Xenophon.

SECTION IV.—WHO WAS DARIUS’ FATHER “AHASUERUS”?

All argument will avail but little which totally fails to identify “Ahasuerus” with “Astyages.” Doubtless *hoc opus, hic labor est*.

“Ahasuerus” is not “Astyages.” On this sole ground the “Speaker’s Commentary” rejects the whole theory which I espouse. *Prima facie*, every honest critic would do the same, just as, *e.g.*, he would stoutly reject as synonymous “*Sphandadates*,”² “Bardsiya,” “Oropasta,” “Bardes,” and “Smerdis.” Yet they are the same individual, and almost demonstrably they arise from a common form like “Svardavatsiya.” Or, again, take Ctesias’ line of eight apocryphal kings of Media

¹ Μῆδος γὰρ ἦν ὁ πρῶτος ἡγεμὼν στρατοῦ.
 Ἄλλος δ’ ἐκείνου παῖς τὸδ’ ἔργον ἤνυσε.
 Τρίτος δ’ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ Κῦρος.

Æschylus produced “The Persæ” within fifty-seven years of the death of Cyrus. Herodotus was his junior by forty-one years.

² Son of Cyrus, and joint-heir with Kambyses.

before Astyages (cited by Diodorus, Book II.). At least four of them are simple dialectic disguises of one name—for among the six Medic tribes there was abundant scope for dialects. So now we come down to Astyages. Ctesias, *more suo*, thrusts in as predecessor Astivaras (Ἀστιβαράς). Now, there could be no possible gap between the reign of Cyaxares and that of his son Astyages (=Astuvagas: obtained by comparison of Assyrian "Istuvigu"; in Ctesias, "Astvigas"). We are thus strongly induced to identify him with the aforesaid "Astivaras"; and I believe that the evidence I shall now adduce establishes this beyond reasonable doubt. Further, I shall show that in "Astivaras" we have the source of Heb. "Akhshverosh" (Ahasuerus), and that, in a word, these three names are found in actual use denoting the self-same king of Media.

In that foggy period of history which embraces (a) the Medo-Babylonian sack of Nineveh; (b) the Medo-Babylonian attack upon Judea and Egypt; (c) the Medo-Lyidian war, numerous accounts name Cyaxares as the then king of Media, but some name Astyages. It concerns us not to decide between the two accounts; it suffices that we can safely identify the Medish king connected with these events with one or other of the two, no matter how his name be distorted. As to event marked *a*, Berosus makes Astyages the ally of Nebuchadnezzar, which Eusebius (Chron. xlvi.) confirms. The author of Tobit (xlv. 15) varies the name to "Assweros" (Ἀσ[σ]ουήρος). As no process of twisting can deduce this from Cyaxares (of which the native form was "Kai-Wakshatara" (the "Kai" being the common prefix of the Median dynasty), we are led on to his son Astivaras (Astyages) as the only alternative. As to *b*, which probably followed quickly after *a*, Eupolemus (in Euseb., Praep., Ev. ix. 39) records that Nebuchadnezzar, in attacking Judea and Egypt, had for ally "Astivaras, king of Media." As to *c*, several authors named by Grote give the Mede's name as "Astyages." Therefore Astuvagas = Astivaras

= { Akhshverosh (Heb.)
Assweros (Gk.)

After all (as previously shown), much harder identifications have been made and substantiated. Again, in the later (*pacè* the critics) Books of Ezra and Esther, the same Hebrew word, as is by all admitted, came to be applied (*and with certainly less propriety*) to represent "Khsharsha" (Xerxes). We will compare them thus:

1. Ahasuerus is AKh (a)ShVEROSH.
2. Astyages } is AS TVARAS.
or
Astivaras }
3. Xerxes is Kh ShaYAR—ShA.

Even as they stand, 1 and 2 pair better than 1 and 3; but in Benfey (*Monatsnamen*, 189) I find that that Orientalist tries to prove that the initial syllable of the Grecized Persian word *ast-andes*, otherwise *askandes*, was originally "akhsb." All this is utterly out of my depth, but if he is right, then the identification of *Akhsbverosh* with *Astivaras* becomes practically perfect. (The important bearing of this upon the priority of the Book of Daniel compared to Ezra needs no pointing out.)

The full form of the name, possibly, would be "Aksvargas," then corrupted to "Astuva-gas, Astua-ges, Istuvi-gu," on the one hand, and to "Ahsuer-os, Asswer-os, Astivar-as," on the other.

SECTION V.—DARIUS ONCE MORE.

The preceding sections, I cannot help feeling, go a long way towards identifying Ahasuerus and Darius with Astyages and his son Cyaxares II. respectively.

Let me close this paper by adding one more to the several faint yet significant traces of our "hero" detected in Greek literature up to now (for others see "Speaker's Commentary").

Apollodorus (B.C. 143), in his once famed "Chronicles" (as cited in Clem. Alex. Strom., i. 14), records that Xenophanes the Eleatic lived so long that "*παρῆτακεν ἄχρι τῶν Δαρείου τε, καὶ Κύρου χρόνων*"—"He survived up to the days of Darius, and of Cyrus too." If he means Darius of Persia, this is even worse than to state: "Lord Eldon was born in 1751, and lived to see Victoria's reign, and George IV.'s as well." For Cyrus had subdued both Mede and Persian twenty-five or twenty-six years before the accession of Darius the Persian. Naturally, the statement has excited much remark. Thus, the learned Bayle wonders how *un auteur aussi bon* could have perpetrated it. Is it, I ask, such a wild guess that Apollodorus, amidst his historical researches, found records of the same king whom Xenophon, under another name, calls Cyaxares, whose legend, we have seen, was most undoubtedly current at Athens? If this were so, then his words are the exact counterpart of others more familiar to us: "So this (Xenophanes) prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Should these imperfect notes, compiled in the course of my reading, stimulate some scholar to probe more deeply into the matters here broached, I shall feel myself abundantly rewarded.

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