

THE HISTORICAL VALUE OF DANIEL v AND vi.

It is becoming customary to look upon the Book of Daniel as a religious novel, the work of a later age, rich indeed in didactic teaching, but still only a novel with a shadowy background of history, albeit embodying the traditions of a great saint and as such having his name attached to it. We are assured that the author of this book 'had a very inaccurate knowledge of the history of the Babylonian period', and that 'his knowledge of the Persian period appears to be scant if not also untrustworthy'.¹ Especial objection is taken to the statements made with respect to Darius the Mede, and it is laid down as indisputable that 'the interpolation of a Median Darius must be regarded as the most glaring historical inaccuracy of the author of Daniel': that 'in fact this error of the author alone is proof positive that he must have lived at a very late period, when the record of most of the earlier historical events had become hopelessly confused and perverted'.² I shall endeavour in the following paper to shew that the truth lies just the other way, that exactly the opposite is the case, and that the brief reign of Darius the Mede as a sub-king with the title 'King of Babylon', so far from proving fatal to the genuineness of this book, forms its strongest corroboration, inasmuch as it faithfully records a state of things at Babylon, which lasted for a very short time, and was therefore likely to be soon forgotten in after ages. With this object in view I propose to test the authenticity of this portion of the Book of Daniel by reference to contemporary documents. I shall appeal in the first place to the Babylonian contract-tablets, which bear the name of the reigning monarch and are dated according to the year, month, and day of the reign in which they were signed. The year in which a monarch begins to reign is called his accession-year, *rish sharruti*, the first year of his reign starting from the New Year following. The only exception to this is when his reign begins at the New Year, in which case he has no accession-year. It is found convenient in registering these tablets to distinguish them by the year, month, and day of the reign in which they were signed. Thus the tablet Cyr. 1. 3. 10 was signed in the first year of Cyrus, the third month, the tenth day of the month. The historical evidence of the contract-tablets is the strongest

¹ Century Bible *Daniel*, Introd. p. xxxvi.

² *Enc. Brit.* Article on 'Book of Daniel'.

possible, since they are plain matter-of-fact business documents, and cannot have been doctored either to please the monarch or to pander to the popular taste. Next to the contract-tablets comes the Annalistic Tablet, sometimes called the Nabonidus-Cyrus Chronicle, which gives a brief account year by year of the events that happened during the reign of Nabonidus, with a more expanded account of the events that preceded and accompanied the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in the seventeenth year of the reign. This, too, is an all-important source of information, though the emphatic statement as to the peaceful nature of Cyrus's capture of Babylon must be regarded with grave suspicion.¹ Appeal will also be made to other inscriptions of Nabonidus and Cyrus, to the inscription of Darius Hystaspes at Behistun, and to the Aramaic documents of the fifth century B. C. discovered at Elephantine in Egypt.

The fifth chapter of Daniel introduces us to Belshazzar, i. e. Belsharra-utsur, the eldest son of Nabonidus the last Chaldean king of Babylon. Belshazzar, whose historical existence was once denied, is now proved to be a very real person, in fact one of the foremost spirits of his age. Born some years before his father seized the crown, Belshazzar is found possessed of a house of his own in Babylon as early as the first year of Nabonidus. In the seventh year of that king's reign he appears at the head of the nobility and of the army taking the leading part in the defence of his country. In much the same light is he brought before us in the opening verse of Daniel ch. 5: 'Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords.' It is objected, however, that in the Book of Daniel Belshazzar is described as a king—the first and third years of his reign being expressly mentioned²—and also as the last king of Babylon before the capture of that city by Cyrus, whilst Nabonidus, the actual king, is not so much as named. On this score alone this book is pronounced unhistorical and hopelessly at variance with the contemporary cuneiform documents, in which Belshazzar is uniformly styled 'the king's son'.

The question, then, is, Was Belshazzar king of Babylon, or was he not? The plain answer to this question is to be found in a fact, presently to be demonstrated, viz. that when Cyrus appointed his own son Cambyses to succeed Belshazzar, he gave him this title 'king of Babylon'. But while the main issue would appear to be thus decided, another question very quickly arises: viz. if Belshazzar was king of Babylon, how are we to explain the fact that on the tablets he is always styled 'the king's son'? This second question demands a categorical answer. First, as regards the Annalistic Tablet on which he is not mentioned by name, it is a sufficient answer that Belshazzar is here

¹ See below.

² Dan. vii 1, viii 1.

called 'the king's son' in order to distinguish him from the king his father. The following statement, which on that tablet ushers in the events of successive years, furnishes a good example: 'The king was in Teva, the king's son, the nobles and the soldiers were in the country of Akkad.' When, however, we turn to the contract-tablets, the case is different. In tablets regarding business transactions in which Belshazzar himself was interested, the designation 'the king's son' is found preceded by the name 'Belshazzar'. Here, indeed, it is conceivable that we might expect to find the title 'king of Babylon' put after the proper name. But there are two considerations which render this unlikely. In the first place the tablets which record Belshazzar's business transactions only reach down to the twelfth year of Nabonidus. Now the reign of that king extended to his seventeenth year, while the Book of Daniel only mentions the first and third years of Belshazzar. It is therefore quite possible that in the twelfth year of his father's reign Belshazzar had not yet been appointed 'King of Babylon', and that he was still only 'the king's son'. But secondly, if we suppose Belshazzar to have received the royal title before the twelfth year of Nabonidus, it does not therefore follow that we shall find him so described in a business transaction of a private nature dated such and such a year, month, and day of the reign of 'Nabonidus king of Babylon'. For if the rendering 'the third ruler in the kingdom' (Dan. v 7, 16) be the correct rendering of the Aramaic word there employed,¹ then Belshazzar was not co-regent along with his father, but occupied a subordinate position, seeing that he could only offer to Daniel the third place, should he succeed in interpreting the handwriting on the wall. To describe him as 'king of Babylon' in a business document signed such and such a year of his father's reign might appear to the Babylonians equivalent to putting him on a level with his father.² One other difficulty, however, still remains. The question will be asked, How is it that in the dating of contract-tablets, which belong to the closing years of Nabonidus, no indication whatever is given that Belshazzar was associated with his father, either as co-regent or as sub-king? The answer to this question runs thus: In the dating of contract-tablets when the royal power is shared between two persons

¹ The form of the Aramaic word rendered 'third' is unique. According to Baer 'Pro 𐤁𐤓𐤏𐤃 reperitur Dan. v 7 𐤁𐤓𐤏𐤃 (*trítos*) cum definito 𐤎𐤏𐤁𐤏𐤃 (*ð trítos*) v 16, quod tertium dignitate significat'. In verse 16 the R.V. reads, 'Thou shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom', thus agreeing with the Greek version of Theodotion *τρίτος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ μου ἄρξεις*. The R.V.M. reads, 'Thou shalt rule as one of three', which approaches more nearly to the Septuagint rendering *ἕξεις ἑξουσίαν τοῦ τρίτου μέρους τῆς βασιλείας μου*. Compare also verse 7.

² For fresh light on this question see Note 3 at the end of this paper.

—as for instance father and son—even when the son is co-regent with his father, we must only expect to find one royal name, viz. that of the father; seeing that if both names were introduced, it would necessitate the introduction of a new era, i. e. the tablets would have to be dated such and such a year of the joint reign. The only exception to this would be when the two kings were able to date their reign from the same New Year, and of this, as we shall see presently, there is one notable instance.

With regard to the fact that in Daniel v Nabonidus is not even mentioned, it deserves to be pointed out that according to the Annalistic Tablet at the time of Belshazzar's feast Nabonidus was already a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, having been captured at Babylon after the Persians had made themselves masters of a part of that city.¹

The next objection made by the critics is that in Dan. v 2 Nebuchadnezzar is called the father of Belshazzar, while the cuneiform records shew that Belshazzar was the son, not of Nebuchadnezzar, but of Nabonidus. A simple answer to this would be that the term 'father' is here used in the sense of royal predecessor; but the words of the queen in verse 11—'The king, Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father'—seem to argue some closer connexion between Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar. What was this connexion?

Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar, like his predecessor Nergalsharezer, was a usurper, of high rank though not of royal birth. Both of these men were sons of high officials, who held the office or title of *rubu emgu*, 'wise prince'. Nergalsharezer was a son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, having according to Berosus married a sister of Evil-Merodach, and it is probable that Nabonidus either before or after his usurpation formed a similar alliance. The proof lies thus: It appears from the Behistun Inscription of Darius Hystaspes that Nabonidus had a younger son called Nebuchadnezzar, and that during the earlier years of Darius two impostors arose and tried to seize the throne of Babylon by putting forward the claim 'I am Nebuchadnezzar the son of Nabonidus'. The words are very suggestive: for mere descent from Nabonidus—who was not only a usurper but a most unpopular king—would hardly be likely to ingratiate a man in the affections of the Babylonians or make him appear as their lawful king. But if Nabonidus had allied himself by marriage with the family of Nebuchadnezzar, then the case would be altogether different. To be sprung from Nabonidus would then mean to be the representative of the great Nebuchadnezzar, either legally or by actual descent. In this case Belshazzar was either the actual descendant of Nebuchadnezzar, or was viewed as such in the

¹ Babylon was not all taken at one time. See below.

eye of the law. The fact that Nabonidus called his younger son Nebuchadnezzar makes the latter alternative the more probable of the two.¹ Additional support for the view just advanced will be found in the account given us by this king of his own coronation.² After telling how the conspirators, who assassinated Labashi-Marduk, unanimously elected him from amongst their number to be their king, he adds these words, 'Of Nebuchadnezzar and Nergalsharezer, the kings my predecessors, their delegate am I: their hosts to my hands they entrusted'. Then, a little later on in the same inscription, he represents Nebuchadnezzar as conversing with him concerning an auspicious dream that he has had, doubtless a dream betokening his coming exaltation; thus betraying his extreme anxiety to be looked upon as the approved and duly commissioned successor of the great departed monarch. Clearly such a state of mind would lead naturally and inevitably to a matrimonial alliance with the family of Nebuchadnezzar, so that the queen's words in Dan. v 11—'the king Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, *I say*, thy father'—harmonize admirably with what may be inferred from the inscriptions.

The circumstances connected with the capture of Babylon by Cyrus have been very ably dealt with by Mr Andrew Craig Robinson in his Donnellan Lectures for 1912-1913. Mr Robinson shews conclusively that Babylon was not all taken at one time, and that it was not taken without some fighting.³ According to the Annalistic Tablet Gobryas, the general of Cyrus, entered Babylon on the 16th of Tammuz (June-July). But on the contract-tablets Nabonidus appears as king for some four months longer, viz. as late as the 10th of Marchesvan (October-November). This is the date of the latest tablet bearing the name of Nabonidus; and it is noticeable that according to the Annalistic Tablet on the very next day, the 11th of Marchesvan—just eight days after Cyrus had entered the main city—an attack was made by night under the leadership of Gobryas, in which, according to the tablet as now read, 'the son⁴ of the king was slain'. This is in exact agreement

¹ This younger son was probably an actual grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, born after his father's usurpation.

² See the 'Coronation Decree' of Nabonidus discovered by Dr Scheil, *Babylonian and Oriental Record*, vol. viii no. 6.

³ The part of the city first taken by the army of Cyrus was the suburb on the right bank of the Euphrates. The main city on the left bank, containing the royal palace—the site of which is marked by the mound El Kasr—still remained for a time in the hands of Nabonidus. This is evident from the fact that two contracts of the 17th year of Nabonidus, dated the 21st of Ab and the 5th of Elul respectively, were drawn up and signed in 'the city of the king's palace, Babylon'.

⁴ Formerly read 'the wife'. Dr Pinches, the eminent Assyriologist and discoverer of the tablet, observes that 'where the tablet is damaged there is not room

with Dan. v 30, 'In that night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was slain'. It is also in agreement with Xenophon, who represents Babylon as taken on a night of feasting by Gobryas and Gadatas, the generals of Cyrus, the king being slain in an attack on his palace.¹ Indeed, the very emphasis laid on the peaceful occupation of Babylon by the troops of Cyrus, coupled with the fact that all is represented as done by the determinate council of Merodach, is sufficient to awaken our suspicions that both on the Annalistic Tablet and on the Cylinder of Cyrus we are reading the accounts of Babylonian priests, jealous alike for the honour of their god and for that of their renowned city, and no less anxious to curry favour with the powerful conqueror.²

Passing on now to what happened after the capture of Babylon, the Book of Daniel records that Belshazzar was succeeded by Darius the Mede. For immediately after the statement as to the death of Belshazzar follow the words, 'And Darius the Mede received the kingdom'. To this the critics reply that there is no room for a Median ruler between Nabonidus and Cyrus. Quite so: that Nabonidus was succeeded by Cyrus is proved indisputably by the contract-tablets. The last tablet of Nabonidus—as stated above—is dated the 10th of Marchesvan, while the first tablet of Cyrus bears date the 24th of the same month. But the question is, *not* who succeeded Nabonidus, but *who succeeded Belshazzar*: and the answer to that question is given on the Annalistic Tablet. On that tablet, immediately after the passage describing the death of 'the king's son', follows the account of his funeral ceremonies, which were held more than four months later at the close of the year. It runs thus: 'From the 27th day of Adar to the 3rd day of Nisan a lamentation was made in the country of Akkad. All the people smote their heads. On the 4th day'—i. e. as soon as the funeral was over—'Cambyses the son of Cyrus went into "The Temple of Him, who Gives the Sceptre of the Land".³ The official of the temple of the

enough for the character for "wife", and the verb to all appearance is not in the feminine'. He adds that Dr C. J. Ball and Dr Hagen, who examined the original along with him, arrived at the same conclusion. See *Victoria Institute Transactions*, Dec. 9, 1913.

¹ *Cyropoedeia* vii 5. 15-31.

² The language used on the Cylinder of Cyrus bears such a remarkable resemblance, in thought, tone, and expression, to certain passages in the latter part of the Book of Isaiah that one is tempted to think that the Babylonian priests must have had that book in their hands, unless—as has been maintained—the author of the Cyrus passages in Isaiah was acquainted with the Cylinder of Cyrus.

³ This is a translation of the words E-KHAD-KALAM-MA-SIM-MA, the Sumerian name of the temple. Compare the India House Inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, Col. iv 18, 'For Nebo, the exalted messenger, who has given me a righteous sceptre to govern all men, E-KHAD-KALAM-MA-SIM-MA, his temple in Babylon, with asphalt and brick I built its structure'.

sceptre of Nebo brought a message in his hand'—at this point the inscription becomes partly illegible. But enough has been already told us to enable us to divine the rest. The temple referred to is the temple of Nebo at Babylon. Into this temple kings entered to have their sovereignty confirmed, as thus related in the Coronation Decree of Nabonidus: 'To "The Temple of Him who Gives the Sceptre of the Land", into the presence of Nebo, who prolongs my reign, I entered. A righteous sceptre, a legitimate rod of authority enlarging the land, he entrusted to my hands.' Cambyses by entering into this temple immediately after the funeral obsequies of Belshazzar shewed that he was about to take Belshazzar's place. Such is the natural inference, and it is confirmed in a remarkable way by the contract-tablets. Cyrus took Babylon in the autumn of 538 B.C. For the next four months—his accession year—he is styled on the contract tablets 'King of Babylon and of the Countries', sometimes merely 'King of the Countries'. On the 4th day of the opening month of the New Year—the very day on which Cambyses went into 'The Temple of Him who Gives the Sceptre of the Land'—Cyrus is styled on the tablets 'King of Babylon' for the last time for some ten months.¹ Not till we come to a tablet dated 1. 10. 0² does he again bear that title. Meanwhile during this interval we find ten tablets on which Cambyses is styled 'King of Babylon' and Cyrus 'King of the Countries'.³ The earliest is the tablet 1. 2. 5 which reads 'Cambyses, king of Babylon: Cyrus, king of the Countries'; and the latest the tablet 1. 9. 25 inscribed thus: 'Cambyses, king of Babylon. At that time his father Cyrus was king of the Countries'.

We gather, then, that on the 4th day of the New Year, immediately after the public mourning for Belshazzar, Cyrus appointed his son Cambyses to succeed that monarch, giving him the same title 'King of Babylon', which in Dan. vii 1 is found given to Belshazzar. It thus appears, first, that Cyrus regarded Belshazzar as a king; secondly, that the king who succeeded Belshazzar was Cambyses, called in the Book

¹ For four tablets, the dates of which, as set down by Strassmaier, seem to impugn this statement, see Note 1 at the end of this paper.

² In registering the tablets when any uncertainty exists as to a number it is usual to put a cypher.

³ These ten tablets are dated thus:—

1. 2. 5	1. 5. 21
1. 2. 9	1. 8. 9
1. 3. 10	1. 9. 25
1. 4. 7	1. 0. 8
1. 4. 25	0. 9. 25

The tablet 1. 5. 21 is given by Peiser in *Babylonische Verträge des Berliner Museums*. The tablet 1. 3. 10 will be found in Strassmaier's *Inschriften von Cyrus*. The remaining eight are in his *Inschriften von Cambyses*.

of Daniel 'Darius the Mede'; thirdly, that this first reign of Cambyses as king of Babylon lasted for only part of a year, which agrees with the Book of Daniel, where only the first year of Darius the Mede is mentioned,¹ and where he is spoken of as succeeded by Cyrus the Persian. But this is not all. These tablets which bear the names of Cyrus and his son Cambyses are unique. In no other instance do we find two royal names on the contract-tablets. Strictly speaking the reign of Cambyses began on the 4th of Nisan. But it began while the New Year feast was still going on,² and was thus regarded as dating from the New Year, to wit the first New Year after Cyrus's capture of Babylon, so that in this single instance, as regards the tablets, father and son were able to date their reigns from the same epoch, viz. the 1st of Nisan 537 B. C.

The title which Cyrus retained for himself as well as that which he bestowed on his son Cambyses are deserving of our close attention. The title 'King of Babylon', which had contented former Babylonian monarchs in whose eyes Babylon was the centre of the universe, would bear a different meaning in the eyes of Persian kings and would seem to them far too narrow to describe the vast Persian empire. Accordingly in his accession year we find Cyrus describing himself on the contract-tablets as 'King of the Countries', occasionally along with the older title 'King of Babylon'. The meaning of this new title is well brought out in a tablet of the 1st year of Cyrus, which reads thus: 'Cyrus, king of the Countries, king of all their kingdoms.'³ Compare Ezra i 2 'Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD, the God of heaven, given me'. At the New Year, as we have seen, Cyrus decided to confer the title 'King of Babylon' on his son, reserving to himself the title 'King of the Countries'. The full meaning of this decision may be gathered from the Book of Daniel. We learn from that Book that the Persian monarch was attempting afresh what had been vainly attempted by Assyrian kings, viz. to form Babylon into a sub-kingdom.⁴ To do this it was necessary to divide the Babylonian

¹ The Book of Daniel implies that the reign of Darius the Mede was short. In the 1st year of Darius the seventy years captivity, which ended in the first year of Cyrus, is spoken of as fast hastening to its close. See Dan. ix 1, 2. In Dan. xi 1 for 'the first year of Darius the Mede', both the LXX and Theodotion read 'the first year of Cyrus'. This equation is correct, since Cyrus and Cambyses began their reigns in the same year.

² According to Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria* p. 679, the New Year festival extended over at least the first eleven days of Nisan.

³ See *Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, vol. viii, Pt. 1. Text 58.

⁴ Senacherib appointed his eldest son Ashur-nadin-shumu king of Babylon in subordination to himself. Esarhaddon appointed his younger son Shamash-shum-

empire into two parts, assigning the home province, Babylonia, to a sub-king under the suzerainty of the Persian king, and including the rest of the empire—Elam on the one hand and the Palestinian states on the other—among the many conquered countries now under Persian rule. It is this impending change which is brought before the mind of the prophet Daniel when he interprets the last of the four mystic words traced on the wall of Belshazzar's palace: 'PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.' If PERES had only meant 'divided' in the sense of 'broken to pieces', or 'broken away from thee', then the prophet would not have mentioned the Medes, for the play being on the word 'Persians', there was no need whatever to mention the Medes, but rather the reverse. But since the Medes are thus expressly mentioned as well as the Persians, we see that PERES has here its primary meaning, 'divided into two parts', and that the sense is, 'Thy kingdom will be divided between the two nations the Medes and the Persians'. Thus the contract-tablets record the fulfilment of Daniel's prediction, whilst that prediction explains the full significance of the two royal names found on the tablets.

The fifth chapter of Daniel ends with the announcement that 'Darius the Mede received the kingdom'. From whom did he receive it? From God, answers Dr Charles,¹ and he points back to the words just quoted, 'Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians'. In the light of those words such an interpretation might seem possible, but in the light of Dan. ix 1, where we are told that Darius 'was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans', it is seen to be impossible. For are not all kings made kings by God? When then we are told in plain matter-of-fact prose that a man 'was made king', what we understand is, that he did not make himself king, but was set on the throne by another; and this was certainly the case with the successor of Belshazzar, the Cambyses of the tablets, the Darius of the Book of Daniel, who was clearly placed on the throne by his father Cyrus.

We now come to the most obscure part of our subject: the question as to why Cambyses is called Darius, and also why he is described as a Mede. As we have just been studying the significance of the prediction contained in the word PERES, it may be best to take this last question first. According to Dan. ix 1 the new king was 'of the seed of the Medes', a Median by descent. In Cambyses's case this could only have been on his mother's side. Now Ctesias tells us in his *Persica* that after the defeat of Astyages king of the Medes and the capture of Ecbatana, Cyrus married Amytis, the daughter of Astyages,

ukin king of Babylon, under the suzerainty of his brother, Ashur-bani-pal, king of Assyria. In both cases the result was most disastrous.

¹ Century Bible *in loco*.

and that Cambyses was the fruit of that marriage.¹ It was, then, as the child of a Median mother that Cambyses received the title 'Darius the Mede'. Such a title would be likely to conciliate the Medes; for it not only honoured them, but assured them of their share in the government of the empire. It might also conciliate the Babylonians, for their great Nebuchadnezzar, according to Alydenus, had married another Amytis of the same royal Median line. But it would be especially welcome to captive Judah. For Media, according to Isaiah's prophecy, had taken the chief part in putting down Assyria some seventy years before,² and just now in accordance with Jeremiah's prediction³ had helped to subjugate Babylon; so that the title of the young king of Babylon sounded in the ears of the Jews like a fulfilment of prophecy; to them Persia was but a new friend, while Media had long been the champion of freedom. At the same time it is impossible to charge the writer of this Book of Daniel with any the least ignorance as to the pre-eminence of the Persians at this crisis. Not only does he inform us that Darius after the capture of Babylon 'received' the kingdom; but in a vision of a slightly earlier date—viz. the third year of Belshazzar—he sees the Medo-Persian kingdom as a ram with two horns. Both horns are high, but the one which came up last is the higher; i. e. Media is still a great power, but Persia is seen over-topping her.

It has been shewn in what sense Cambyses could be called a Mede, but what are we to say of the name Darius? Professor Sayce insists that 'the kings of Persia were contented with but one name', and that 'by that name alone they were known in all parts of their dominions'. He affirms that 'the son and successor of Cyrus is Cambyses in Babylon and the other provinces as well as in Persia and Egypt'.⁴ It is quite true that in the few monuments of the Old Persian Empire which still remain to us, as well as on the Babylonian contract-tablets, Cambyses is always Cambyses. But this is insufficient ground on which to base

¹ See *The Persia*, excerpts 2 and 10. It is only incidentally that Ctesias informs us that Cambyses was the son of Amytis. Of the different stories told us by Greek historians of the connexion of Cyrus with the Median royal family that of Herodotus is the most legendary. If Cyrus was Astyages's heir, his own daughter's son, it was a most unnatural thing for the old king to seek to make away with his grandson. Far more likely is the version of Ctesias. By marrying Amytis, as this writer shews, Cyrus came to be looked upon as the legitimate successor of Astyages, so that when the news of the marriage reached the Bactrians, with whom he was then at war, they at once gave in their allegiance to Amytis and Cyrus. Excerpt. 2. It may be noted that the name 'Ἀστυάγης, as written by Ctesias corresponds more closely with the cuneiform *Ishtumvegu* than the 'Ἀστυάγης of Herodotus. Ctesias himself was a prisoner in Persia from 417 to 398 B.C., and became court physician to Artaxerxes II.

² See *J.T.S.* for July 1913, p. 501.

³ Jer. li 11, 28.

⁴ *Higher Criticism* p. 543.

the statement that the Persian kings had only one name. The testimony of Herodotus and of Josephus points the other way. Josephus, speaking of Darius the Mede, says that 'he was the son of Astyages and *had another name among the Greeks*'.¹ Both of these statements are deserving of notice. The first statement, viz. that Darius the Mede was the son of Astyages, approaches very nearly the statement of Ctesias that Darius was the son of the daughter of Astyages. But it is Josephus's second statement with which we are now most concerned, and I shall endeavour to shew from the pages of this historian that the other name of Darius by which he was known among the Greeks, and which appears at the moment to have slipped the writer's memory, was the name Cambyses. The proof lies thus:—when introducing Artaxerxes I, Josephus makes the following remark: 'After the death of Xerxes the kingdom came to be transferred to his son Cyrus, *whom the Greeks called Artaxerxes*'.² Here is an incidental proof that the Persian kings sometimes had two names, and it will be observed that in this instance the name Artaxerxes, by which the monarch was known to the Greeks, is the same name that we find alike on the Persian monuments and on the contract-tablets.³ Hence it may be inferred in the case of 'Darius the Mede' that the other name, by which he was known among the Greeks, must have been the name Cambyses, since that is the name on the contract-tablets of the young king set up at Babylon by Cyrus in the place of Belshazzar; the name, too, of Cyrus's successor as found both on the tablets and on the Persian monuments. But Herodotus throws still further light on the matter. According to the father of history the names of some of the Persian kings—Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes—were appellatives rather than proper names. Moreover, the fact that Herodotus attaches a wrong meaning to these names does not altogether invalidate his testimony.⁴ There is doubtless a residuum of truth in his statement. If then, in the case before us, the name Darius be an appellative, the bearer, as stated by Josephus, would have another name, his own proper name, which, as has just been shewn, was probably the name Cambyses.

¹ *Ant.* x II. 4.

² *Ibid.* xi 6. 1.

³ See the inscription of Artaxerxes III found at Persepolis, in which he traces his descent from Artaxerxes I.

⁴ Compare his statement that Persian proper names 'all end with the same letter—the letter which is called San by the Dorians and Sigma by the Ionians' (Bk. i 139). This is true except when they end in a vowel. According to Herodotus, Darius = 'Worker'; Xerxes = 'Warrior'; Artaxerxes = 'Great Warrior' (Bk. vi 98). Modern scholars have attached to these names the following meanings:—Darius, 'possessing wealth'; Xerxes, 'a royal person'; Artaxerxes, 'law of the kingdom', or 'he whose kingdom is lifted up'.

In Dan. ix 1 it is said of Darius the Mede that he was the 'son', i. e. the descendant of Ahasuerus. The critics, who take Darius the Mede to be a reflexion into the past of Darius Hystaspes, see in this verse the confusion of a later age, since Darius Hystaspes was the father of Ahasuerus, i. e. Xerxes, and not his son. The answer is that Dan. ix 1 speaks distinctly of a Median, not a Persian, Ahasuerus, the distinction between the Medes and Persians being very clearly recognized in this Book, as well as their mutual relationship at the time of the capture of Babylon. In Tobit xiv 15, the writer of that romance identifies 'Assuerus' with the destroyer of Nineveh, i. e. with Cyaxares. It has been asserted that his object was to make his book harmonize with the Book of Daniel, in which case the closing verse of the Book of Tobit would form an early comment on Dan. ix 1. But, however that may be, the identification is a likely one for the two following reasons. In the first place the writer of this Book of Daniel, looking on the Median Darius as a deliverer, would like to note his descent from an earlier deliverer of the Chosen People, viz. the king who put down Assyria. Secondly, Cyaxares, as witnessed by the Behistun Inscription, was the pride of the Median monarchy just as Nebuchadnezzar was of the Babylonian, so that it would be natural to describe a king of the royal Median line as sprung from Cyaxares.¹

We have now to examine the age assigned to Darius the Mede, viz. 'threescore and two years'. According to the Sippara Inscription of Nabonidus,² Cyrus defeated Astyages king of the Medes and captured Ecbatana in the third year of the reign of Nabonidus. It is also clear from the Annalistic Tablet that Babylon was taken by Cyrus in the seventeenth year of the reign of Nabonidus. If, then, Cyrus married Amytis the daughter of Astyages shortly after the conquest of Ecbatana, Cambyses would be quite young when he was appointed by his father to succeed Belshazzar. He might very well be 12 years old, and I shall now give some reason for thinking that 12, and not 62, was the original reading in Dan. v 31.

It is well known that inaccuracy in numbers is a common thing in the Old Testament; and the reason given is, that numbers were anciently indicated by letters of the alphabet, and that some of these letters being very much alike were often mistaken one for the other. The question then is, Were the letters of the alphabet so used by the Jews in copying their Sacred Writings in the age succeeding that of Daniel? We cannot say for certain, but there is a very strong proba-

¹ In the early years of Darius Hystaspes two imposters claimed to be sprung from Cyaxares, just as two had called themselves Nebuchadnezzar the son of Nabonidus.

² Col. i 28.

bility that they were so used. The alphabetic psalms are an indication and almost an example of such a use. Another indication is that both in the Hebrew and in the Greek alphabet the letters down to the seventeenth letter inclusive have the same numerical values, as though such a system of numeration had prevailed before these alphabets parted company. The earliest example, however, of such a use in the case of the Greek alphabet dates from the reign of Ptolemy II, who died in 247 B. C. From Semitic sources the earliest example of the use of the letters for numerals occurs on the lion-weights from Nimrud, which belong to the latter part of the eighth century B. C. On these weights Beth, the second letter of the Semitic alphabet, appears to be used in the sense of 'double'.¹ Amongst the Jews the earliest, or almost the earliest, instance of such a use is found on the ancient silver shekels and half-shekels, which have been variously assigned to the age of Ezra, to that of the Maccabees, and to the time of the first revolt. The value, however, of the evidence afforded by these shekels depends, not so much on their age, as on their markedly conservative and religious character. The type of the alphabet employed on them is archaic, as compared with that used on the coins of the Asmonæan princes or on the coins of the second revolt. The letters, if not of the date of Ezra, are at least imitations of the older forms²; whilst both the symbols stamped on them and the superscriptions give them a distinctly sacred character. When then we find on these coins the number of the year given alphabetically, the strong presumption is that the letters of the alphabet were so used by the Jews, more especially in copying their Sacred Writings, at least as early as the fifth century B. C., to which the type of alphabet used on the shekels points back; and further, that in this fact we have the key to some of the numerical discrepancies of Holy Scripture.³

Now let us apply this to the case before us. The age of Darius the Mede, viz. 62, is expressed alphabetically by the letters Samekh Beth. We need not quarrel with the Beth, but Samekh, which stands for 60, must clearly be corrupt, if Darius is the same person as Cambyses. We turn then to the ancient Semitic alphabet, and study the various phases through which it passed in the sixth and fifth centuries B. C., to find what letter could most easily be confused with Samekh. It then becomes apparent that during the last quarter of the sixth century B. C.

¹ *Corp. Insc. Semiticarum*, vol. i, part 2, nos. 2, 3, 4.

² Most of the letters exhibit forms identical with, or only differing slightly from, those found in the Siloam Inscription.

³ If the shekels belong to the era of the first revolt, A. D. 66-70, then the earliest use among the Jews of letters for numbers is found on a coin of Antigonus Mattathias 40-37 B. C., where **NS** is used to indicate 'year 1'.

and the first quarter of the following century there was a remarkable resemblance between the letters Samekh and Yod, so that a carelessly written Yod might easily be mistaken for a Samekh.¹ This is best seen in the inscription on the Teima stone. In line 13 of this inscription Yod appears as the second letter, and in the following line Yod is the first letter and Samekh the third, so that we have the two characters in convenient juxta-position.² Now, if for Samekh Beth we read Yod Beth, the age of Darius is reduced from 62 to 12, and as we have seen 12 would be a very likely age for Cambyses at the time of the taking of Babylon, supposing him to be the son of a Median princess born about a year after the capture of Ecbatana. It deserves also to be pointed out that this is not the only place in the Old Testament where such a mistake has been made. In Isa. vii 8 occurs a prophecy that has sorely perplexed the commentators: 'Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken in pieces, that it be not a people.' Duhm pronounces this an ancient gloss, on the ground that 'a late annotator would almost certainly have dated the extermination of Ephraim from the destruction of Samaria in 721, about fifteen years after Isaiah spoke'.³ But if Yod has been mistaken for Samekh, then the difficulty at once vanishes; the words are no gloss, and 15—not 65—is the true reading.

With regard to the personality and the age of Darius the Mede the LXX reading of the passage is remarkable and deserving of attention. It runs thus: 'The kingdom was taken away from the Chaldeans and was given to the Medes and to the Persians. And Artaxerxes, who was of the Medes, received the kingdom. And Darius was full of days and was honoured in his old age.' The LXX is the earliest interpreter of the Book of Daniel. The LXX translator interprets, accommodates, and alters, according to his own ideas, so as to make the Book square with history.⁴ The abrupt way in which he introduces Darius is proof that the original text has here been doctored by him, and clumsily doctored. What was his motive? Was he aware that Cyrus appointed Cambyses to the throne of Babylon and that Cambyses could not possibly have been 62 years old at his accession? As Josephus identifies the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv 8 with Cambyses,⁵ it is just possible that by Artaxerxes the LXX translator means Cambyses. The number 62 he evidently looks upon with distrust; yet, in view of the power

¹ Compare the forms of these letters in Pl. XIII, columns 4, 5, and 6, of G. A. Cooke's *North Semitic Inscriptions*.

² *Corp. Insc. Semiticarum*, Pl. IX, no. 113. See also the frontispiece to *The Biblical World*, June 1909.

³ See the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* on Isa. vii 8.

⁴ See *Daniel and his Prophecies* by the late Dr Wright, pp. 201, 203, 208, 212, 216.

⁵ *Ant.* xi 2. 1.

placed in the hands of Darius, he deems it advisable to describe him as an aged and honoured statesman.

But the best proof of the youthful age of Darius the Mede is to be found in that most touching story of the lion's den. For into whose presence did the presidents and satraps 'come tumultuously'?¹ Into the presence of a man of sixty-two years wielding the rod of empire? Hardly so: but they might break in thus on a boy of twelve. Again: who is it, whose whole heart goes out to the aged prophet in those sympathetic words, 'Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee'? Who is it, who passes the night fasting, cannot sleep, rises early, and goes in haste to the den? An oriental despot, whose heart is hardened by sixty-two years' contact with the world? Nay rather, such words, such actions, suit better a youthful, generous, impulsive nature, a nature as yet unspoiled. The story speaks for itself. No elderly man would be likely to act in the way Darius acted.

I have spoken of Darius as wielding the rod of empire, and such language is agreeable to the description of his administration given in Dan. vi 1, 2 and also to the terms of his royal decree at the close of that chapter. But how does this tally with his position as a sub-king, merely invested with the sovereignty of Babylon. The answer is that he was sub-king under his father, and might thus possess something of his father's authority. Such a supposition is confirmed and established by the tone and language of the Cylinder of Cyrus. The following passage shews that Cyrus had associated his son Cambyses with himself in the government of the empire: 'Merodach, the great lord . . . established a decree. Unto me, Cyrus the king, his worshipper, and Cambyses my son, the offspring of my heart, and to all my people, he graciously drew nigh, and in peace before them we duly marched',² i. e. the king and his son, as true shepherds, marched at the head of their people. Compare also the following: 'Let Cyrus the king thy worshipper and Cambyses his son accomplish the desire of their heart.'³ In view of such language I see nothing strange either in the administrative acts of Darius or in the terms of his decrees as recorded in Dan. vi.

One further evidence of the historical value of the narrative contained in that chapter comes to us from an unexpected quarter. The Aramaic papyri of the fifth century B. C., discovered at Elephantine in Egypt, exhibit a type of Aramaic which presents many points of resemblance to that found in the Book of Daniel. They also corroborate in a remarkable manner the story of Dan. vi. In the seventeenth year of Darius Nothus, 407 B. C., the Jews of Elephantine, complaining to

¹ Dan. vi 6, 11, 15 R.V.M. The same Aramaic word is used in the Targum on Ruth i 19.

² Cylinder of Cyrus Obv. lines 26-28.

³ *Ibid.* Obv. lines 35-36.

Bagoas, the Persian governor of Judaea, of the destruction of their temple by the priests of the Egyptian god Khnub, speak thus: 'When Cambyses came into Egypt he found this temple built. And though the temples of the gods of Egypt were then all thrown down, no one injured anything in this temple.' Now why did Cambyses spare the temple of Jehovah at Elephantine? Because the Jews were monotheists much like the Persians? Yes, possibly: but the Book of Daniel supplies a better answer. Cambyses had not forgotten Daniel the Jew, nor the wonderful deliverance wrought by the God of Daniel, nor the royal decree which he himself had put forth only some thirteen years before. To him Daniel's God—the Jahu of the temple at Elephantine—must have appeared one with the Persian Ormuzd—'He is the living God and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'

When the above arguments are duly considered and the matter has been yet more thoroughly searched into, the author of this paper ventures to hope that this Book of Daniel will no longer be regarded as a work of the second century B. C., but as the work of an author who was thoroughly conversant with the events which he describes.

CHARLES BOUTFLOWER.

NOTE I. Certain tablets in Strassmaier's Cyrus, on which Cyrus is styled 'King of Babylon', are wrongly dated, so that they appear to fall into the interval of ten months or so during which that title was held by his son Cambyses. These are as follows:—

(1) No. 13, dated Cyr. (?) 1. 1. 10. This tablet is much obliterated. The name 'Cyrus' is uncertain, as indicated by Strassmaier. Equally uncertain are the words 'King of Babylon'.

(2) No. 18, dated Cyr. 1. 5. 30. This tablet reads thus:—

'576 sheep from the month Tebet
the 1st year of Cyrus king of Babylon
to the 30th day of the month Ab' &c.

The inscription shews that Cyrus was 'king of Babylon' in Tebet—the 10th month—of his first year. As the day of the month is not mentioned, the tablet should be dated 1. 10. 0.

(3) No. 19, dated Cyr. 1. 7. 16. On this tablet the number of the year is uncertain. It is indicated by a perpendicular wedge at the end of the fifth line. But the character used as a determinative after numerals, which ought therefore to follow this wedge, is wanting, i. e. the line is incomplete. Hence the number of the year itself may be incomplete. There may just as well have been two or three perpendicular wedges as one, i. e. the tablet may quite as possibly

belong to the second or third year of Cyrus as to his first year. It cannot, however, belong to a later year than the third, since only the numbers 1, 2, and 3 are indicated by perpendicular wedges.

(4) No. 20, dated Cyr. (?) 1. 8. 17. The name 'Cyrus' does not appear on this tablet.

NOTE 2. From the time of the earliest inscription extant, viz. the Calendar of Gezer, *circa* 1000 B. C., down to the end of the first quarter of the fifth century B. C., Yod maintained the same archaic form which we meet with on the ancient Hebrew shekels, i. e. exactly like our capital Z with the addition of a short central parallel bar on the left side of the transverse bar. After the first quarter of the fifth century B. C. this letter very rapidly drew in its horns, so that by the end of the fourth century B. C. the 'jot' (Matt. v 18) was already the smallest letter in the alphabet. With Samekh the case was different. This letter ran through a great variety of forms. In its most ancient form, as seen in the Gezer Calendar, it consists of three parallel horizontal bars, crossed by a perpendicular bar, which begins a little above the highest parallel and is bisected by the lowest. A little later, during the ninth and the first half of the eighth century B. C., the perpendicular bar began at the highest of the parallels. This is the form of the letter on the Moabite Stone, the stele of Zakir king of Hamath, and the earliest of the Zenjerli inscriptions. After the middle of the eighth century B. C. the perpendicular bar instead of crossing the parallels is merely drawn from the lowest, so that we have two horizontal parallels and beneath them a capital T. This form of the letter is found on the Zenjerli inscription of Bar-rekub, 745-727 B. C. Presently, in order to write the character more easily, the three horizontal parallels were exchanged for a zigzag, the perpendicular being added below. This is the form which the letter assumes on a contract-tablet dated the 1st year of Nabonidus, 554 B. C. But a further change was soon to follow. During the closing decades of the sixth century B. C. and throughout the fifth century Samekh was drawn like a capital Z, tilted somewhat to the left side and with two additional strokes added to it: first, as in the case of Yod, a short parallel bar on the left side of the transverse; secondly, a tail, drawn from the right hand extremity of the lowest bar parallel to the transverse. This form of the letter is found in use on a contract-tablet from Babylon dated the fourth year of Cambyses, 525 B. C., on an inscription from Memphis dated the fourth year of Xerxes, 482 B. C., and also on the lion-weight from Abydos; in all three instances along with the archaic form of Yod described above, from which it differs only by the addition of the aforementioned tail.¹ The Teima Stone, referred to above,

¹ See *Corp. Insc. Semiticarum*, vol. i, part 2. On Plate V, compare the Yod in 64 a with the Samekh in 64 b. Also on Plate VII, 108 a, compare the three Samekhs

belongs to the same period, viz. the end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth century B. C. It will be noted that the possibility of a Yod having been thus mistaken for a Samekh in Dan. v 31 presupposes that this Book must have been written not later than the first quarter of the fifth century B. C.

NOTE 3. Since writing this article my attention has been drawn to a most important paper by Dr Pinches in the *Expository Times* for April 1915, entitled 'Fresh Light on the Book of Daniel'.

Among a collection of contract-tablets from Erech Dr Pinches has deciphered one, dated the 22nd day of the additional month of Adar, the 12th year of Nabonidus, which commences thus: 'Ishi-Amurrū, son of Nurānu, has sworn by Bēl, Nebo, the Lady of Erech, and Nanā, the oath of Nabonidus king of Babylon, and Belshazzar, the king's son, that "on the 7th day of the month Adar of the 12th year of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, I will go to Erech"', &c., &c. On this tablet Dr Pinches makes the following observation: 'The importance of this inscription is that it places Belshazzar practically on the same plane as Nabonidus, his father, five years before the latter's deposition, and the bearing of this will not be overlooked. Officially Belshazzar had not been recognized as king, as this would have necessitated his father's abdication, but it seems clear that he was in some way associated with him on the throne, otherwise his name would hardly have been introduced into the oath with which the inscription begins. We now see that not only for the Hebrews, but also for the Babylonians, Belshazzar held a practically royal position. The conjecture as to Daniel's being made the third ruler in the kingdom because Nabonidus and Belshazzar were the first and second is thus confirmed, and the mention of Belshazzar's 3rd year in Dan. viii 1 is explained.'

THE READING IN 2 CORINTHIANS iii 17 (τὸ πνεῦμα Κυρίου).

THE passage (v. 15-v. 18) runs thus: ἕως σήμερον ἡνίκα ἂν ἀναγινώσκηται Μωυσῆς κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτῶν κείται ἡνίκα δὲ ἔαν ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς Κύριον, περιαιρεῖται τὸ κάλυμμα. ὁ δὲ Κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν· οὗ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα Κυρίου, ἐλευθερία. ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες ἀνακεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ τὴν δόξαν Κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν, καθάπερ ἀπὸ Κυρίου πνεύματος.

and two Yods in a short inscription of five words. Again on Plate XI, 122 a, compare the Yods and Samekhs in יָדוֹסִי and יָדוֹסִי.