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HISTORICAL RESEARCHES
INTO THE
POLITICS, INTERCOURSE, AND TRADE
OF THE PRINCIPAL NATIONS
OF ANTIQUITY.

BY A. H. L. HEEREN.

PART I. ASIATIC NATIONS:

**CONTAINING THE PERSIANS, PHENICIANS, BABYLONIANS,
SCYTHIANS, INDIANS, AND VARIOUS GEOGRAPHICAL
AND PHILOLOGICAL APPENDIXES, SOME
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.**

VOL. I.

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INTO THE
POLITICS, INTERCOURSE, AND TRADE
OF THE PRINCIPAL NATIONS
OF ANTIQUITY.

BY A. H. L. HEEREN,

**KNIGHT OF THE NORTH STAR AND GUELPHIC ORDER; AULIC COUNSELLOR AND PROFESSOR OF
HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GOETTINGEN; AND MEMBER OF SEVERAL OTHER
LEARNED SOCIETIES.**

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

VOL. I.

**ASIATIC NATIONS. PERSIANS, PHŒNICIANS,
BABYLONIANS.**

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JOHN CHILDS AND SON, BUNGAY.

TO THE READER.

As a publisher, I feel great satisfaction in placing these volumes, which complete the great work of Professor Heeren on the Politics, Trade, and Intercourse of the principal states of antiquity, in the hands of the English reader. I trust I shall at least deserve his thanks for opening to him a new and interesting source of instruction and pleasure; and that he will bestow the same indulgence upon the translation of this portion of the work, which he has shown to the volumes on the nations of Africa.

I am emboldened to claim this indulgence with somewhat more confidence in the present instance, as I have not personally so much to dread from censure. Of the two volumes just referred to, it is now very generally known that I am the translator, and I cannot but feel grateful for the gentleness with which their defects have been passed over. As the greater part of the present portion of the work has been done by two gentlemen in every respect much better qualified for the task, the same degree of forbearance, I trust, will not be required; praise could scarcely be more liberally bestowed. My own sense of the imperfection of the performance, naturally induces me to ascribe this to the value of the original work; still there is some satisfaction in having given such a version as should cause that to be readily appreciated, and with that I am content.

Of the volumes now presented to the public, part of the first, containing the Persians, has been translated by a gentleman eminently qualified for the undertaking, and who has spared no pains to give the sense of the German with accuracy. He has besides referred to almost all the original authorities, and from his attainments in classical literature, I feel no doubt that the reader will find much of the spirit of Heeren's original work preserved in the English version. The same may be said of the

gentleman into whose hands the remainder of the work, containing the Babylonians, the Scythians, the Indians, and Appendixes, has fallen. But, in addition to his other attainments, an intimacy with the languages and learning of the East have peculiarly qualified him to do justice to this portion of the work, as will be apparent from the notes with which he has enriched it. For the portion of the work devoted to the Phœnicians, and the first chapter of the Babylonians, I have to solicit for myself the indulgence of the reader. I feel it proper to mention this, lest others should be censured for what I may have done amiss.

In this portion of his work Professor Heeren has thrown considerable light upon the commercial relations of the ancient Jews, as well as upon the writings of the prophets in general. Many of his views being based upon the conjectures and laborious researches of the learned Michaelis and Gesenius, two men who have attained the highest rank as biblical critics, it has been necessary to follow their translation and interpretations, which in many places differ from the generally received versions both of Germany and England. As, however, the Divine authority of the inspired writers is left wholly unimpaired, and no point of doctrine is at all involved in these investigations, they have been given as found in the German; and must be considered, in their true character, as illustrations of those highly interesting parts of sacred history which have reference to the life and manners of the early Asiatic nations.*

With regard to the present translation it remains to be added, that it has been made from the last and best edition of the original German, and from a copy supplied for that purpose by the author himself, who has likewise favoured the publisher with the following papers, never before published, expressly for this edition.

1. A paper on the Navigation of the Phœnicians and Carthaginians to Britain, and their Settlements on the Coast, forming Appendix VIII.

* It seems to me, from a casual glance at the interpretations and commentaries of Michaelis and Gesenius, that by a judicious selection from them, a highly interesting volume might be formed, full of instruction and novelty for the English biblical reader.

PREFACE

TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

IF the practical direction, which in modern times has been given to knowledge and science, is a general advantage, it is more especially so in the study of antiquity. During a long period this was confined merely to ancient languages, or to such trifling investigations as degraded the pursuit. But the spirit of the age, which has reformed so much, has also prevailed here, and given a new direction to this branch of learning.

Besides *words, things* have been found worthy of attention; and it is only by an application to these that the study of antiquity has preserved and augmented its credit.

The present work, it is hoped, will further contribute to raise the character of this pursuit. The subjects on which it treats, as set forth in the title, are, “The Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the States of Antiquity;” and as I can have no apprehensions respecting their lack of importance, I have only to hope that my labours may be found worthy of them.

It has not, however, been my design to write a history of the nations of the ancient world; for I have no desire to repeat what has already been, in some instances, very ably related by others. Neither have I attempted, as the title page might seem to suggest, a general history of politics and commerce; nor do I even in any way pledge myself to discuss all that relates to these interesting topics. The way has been too little travelled for any single man to enter fully upon it. A clearer light must also be first thrown on the natural history of the ancients, and more accurate information be collected respecting their wares and merchandise, than we yet possess.

My plan has no greater scope, if I except the general preliminary views, than the delineation of particular nations, principally with reference to the two express objects which I have already men-

tioned. But the choice of these nations,—as I have limited myself to no quarter of the world, to no particular climate, but selected such as appeared most remarkable for their government, or trade, or both,—not only extends our horizon to the most distant boundaries of history and geography, but affords such a variety of objects, as must necessarily give a high degree of interest to these researches.

All here, however, depends upon the principles according to which, and the spirit in which, these delineations are drawn. Pure love of truth, the first virtue of the historian, will not I trust be found wanting. In no part of my work have I any hypothesis to establish, any darling proposition to support, or any opponent to refute. Upon every occasion I have stated that which I have found, and stated it just as I have found it; the certain as certain, the probable as merely probable. To do this, however, a judicious selection and critical examination of the sources whence materials were to be drawn was necessary. I have, therefore, made it my first rule to take, not merely credible, but, as far as possible, contemporary writers for my authority; and have only made use of later writers, in cases where it appeared that their information was drawn from the times under consideration. The sources from which these drew I have always endeavoured to point out, and the citations have been subjected to an accurate revision. An unnecessary assemblage of quotations I have carefully avoided; still, I hold it to be the sacred duty of an historian to add them where required; for he by no means has a right to expect that the reader should believe him upon his mere word.

It was of course necessary that learning and research should form the foundation of my labour; but I have endeavoured to restrain them merely to the groundwork. It has already been a frequent subject of complaint, that our literature boasts but few historical works distinguished for more than simple research. But although my performance is not a history, in the strict sense of the word, yet it belongs to that class; and I trust that a series of pictures of nations, drawn with spirit and fidelity, will help to supply the deficiency complained of. It has then been my wish to write a work which might interest and instruct every reader not entirely uninformed, and especially the young admirers of histori-

2. A paper read before the Royal Society at Goettingen, on the commerce of the city of Palmyra, forming Appendix IX.

3. A paper containing a brief sketch of the works connected with Sanscrit literature, which have appeared since the last German edition of these "Researches," together with a confirmed statement of the author's method of determining the several ages of Sanscrit classical compositions, forming Appendix X.

4. A paper on the ancient commerce of the island of Ceylon, forming Appendix XI.

Valuable as are the works of Professor Heeren, it is hoped that this additional matter, together with the pains which have been taken with the work in general, will enhance the merits of this translation to the English readers, and insure it that success which the publisher anticipates.

cal science. To attain this end I have felt the essential importance of the greatest possible clearness and precision in the descriptions which I have given. I have therefore laboured hard to obtain this object; and have entirely sacrificed to it all those ornaments with which so many disfigure, while they seek to embellish history.

How far I may have attained my object it is not for me to determine; but I think I may fairly venture to refer to the favourable reception which this attempt has met with since its first appearance, both from the well-informed of Germany and of foreign countries, as a proof that I have not altogether failed. I may venture to do this so much the more, as I fortunately know sufficiently well that the good opinion entertained of my work has been formed by the well-informed and independent, and not by the Aristarchs of our literature. This approbation, together with the light which modern geographical discoveries have thrown upon these subjects, imparted to me as it has been by the noble liberality of a government, long known in Germany and Europe as the constant protector of every useful science, has encouraged me to use the greatest exertions to render my second edition, published in 1805, and again, the third in 1815, as complete as my abilities would allow. But it lies in the nature of these investigations that they never can be complete. Every advance made in the knowledge of countries and nations, and the sciences connected with and depending upon it, throws a new light upon them. And how great has been this advance during the ten years that has elapsed since the third edition! How many of the countries of Central Asia, Persia, and Judæa—how completely those of Northern Africa, Ægypt, Æthiopia, even as far as the distant Meroë—have been rescued from obscurity!

That I have lost no opportunity of improving this, the fourth edition, which forms the second half of my historical works, will be better seen from an inspection of it than from any assertions I can make. All that could be gathered respecting Asia, from the works of Kinneir, Ker Porter, Pottinger, Stamford Raffles, and others; as well as from the learned investigations of Rhode, Gesenius, and Brehmer, has been diligently made use of. Scarcely

a page will be found without addition and improvement; some chapters, as those upon Persepolis, Babylon, and so forth, have been wholly or in great part re-written. In some particulars in which I have become better informed, I have altered my text; in general, however, I have had the satisfaction to find, that progressive discovery has not contradicted my earlier views, but rather, frequently in a surprising manner, confirmed them. If, then, the reader, after consulting this edition, will take a retrospective glance at the state of our knowledge of antiquity thirty years ago, when these Researches first appeared, I may confidently expect from his impartial judgment the opinion that I have not written in vain.

According to the original plan of this work, the reasons for which are stated in the Introduction, it comprises the period previous to Alexander the Great, so that the principal nations of three quarters of the globe will be treated of in the same number of parts, each of two or three volumes.* A fourth, containing the Macedonian-Roman period, might very well be added to them, which would complete the whole of antiquity.

The Introduction placed at the beginning is confined entirely to general views of politics and commerce, and will give the reader some previous acquaintance with the ground which he has to wander over.† In the Asiatic Nations I have treated of the Persians, the Babylonians, the Phœnicians, and the Scythians; to these were first added in the third edition, the Indians. The investigations respecting the Persians present the picture of a vast despotic empire, such as Asia has in all times contained. It will, therefore, serve as an introduction to the greatest part of the history of this portion of the globe. The explanations which I have inserted respecting Persepolis would necessarily belong to my plan, from the monuments there being so very important in the study of Persian antiquity and government, even if they were not in themselves of the highest interest.

* These three parts are now all translated into English, and may be had complete.

† This Introduction will be found in some copies prefixed to the first volume of the African Nations.

The second volume, devoted to the Phœnicians, Babylonians, and Scythians, contains on the other hand, more especially a key to the earliest commerce and intercourse of the ancient world; and of the great highways through Asia, upon which it was carried on. All that I have to premise respecting the Indians, will be found in the preface to the volume devoted to that people.

The maps of Asia and Africa, which accompany the work, represent these two parts of the world in the time of Alexander; and possess some value from their having, for the first time, the great trading routes accurately marked upon them. I have only to add, that these maps have been constructed principally for the illustration of this work alone, according to which they must be judged.

I owe especial acknowledgments, and the public as well as myself, to my learned friends the Aulic councillor M. Tychsen, and M. Grotefend, formerly of Frankfort, and now director of the Gymnasium at Hanover, for the valuable information they have furnished me with; which will be found in the Appendixes, and which make no trifling addition to the worth and importance of this part of my work. To the extensive acquaintance of the first with the languages of the East, the reader is indebted for the interpretation of the Indian words adopted by ancient writers from the Persian; whereby an additional light has been thrown upon the ancient languages of Asia. But the kindness of M. Grotefend has led him to furnish the reader at my request with "an essay upon the arrow-headed character, with an attempt to decipher the inscriptions at Persepolis." To these there is now added a second upon "Pasargadæ and the tomb of Cyrus." These will enable the reader to form his own judgment upon these interesting discoveries. I have also added two plates containing the recent deciphering of the Zend alphabet, together with other apparatus for reading it, and the interpretation, as far as the discovery at present reaches.

There can be no greater enjoyment to the inquisitive spirit, than to find light where he has hitherto found nothing but darkness! More than once I have experienced this agreeable sensation in the progress of the present investigations. And I may

venture with the more confidence to deliver this new edition, probably the last that will pass from my hands, to the reader, because happily I can safely assert, that much which formerly I could present to him only in doubtful and obscure gloom, will now be seen in the full and clear light of day.

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