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**The Chronology of Ancient
Kingdoms Amended To which is
Prefix'd, A Short Chronicle from
the First Memory of Things in
Europe, to the Conquest of Persia
by Alexander the Great**

Isaac, Sir Newton

Imprint

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MDCCXXVIII.

TO THE

QUEEN.

MADAM,

As I could never hope to write any thing my self, worthy to be laid before YOUR MAJESTY; I think it a very great happiness, that it should be my lot to usher into the world, under Your Sacred Name, the last work of as great a Genius as any Age ever produced: an Offering of such value in its self, as to be in no danger of suffering from the meanness of the hand that presents it.

The impartial and universal encouragement which YOUR MAJESTY has always given to Arts and Sciences, entitles You to the best returns the learned world is able to make: And the many extraordinary Honours YOUR MAJESTY vouchsafed the Author of the following sheets, give You a just right to his Productions. These, above the rest, lay the most particular claim to Your Royal Protection; For the Chronology had never appeared in its present Form without YOUR MAJESTY's Influence; and the Short Chronicle, which precedes it, is entirely owing to the Commands with which You were pleased to honour him, out of your singular Care for the education of the Royal Issue, and earnest desire to form their minds betimes, and lead them early into the knowledge of Truth.

The Author has himself acquainted the Publick, that the following Treatise was the fruit of his vacant hours, and the relief he sometimes had recourse to, when tired with his other studies. What an Idea does it raise of His abilities, to find that a Work of such labour and learning, as would have been a sufficient employment and glory for the whole life of another, was to him diversion only, and amusement! The Subject is in its nature incapable of that demonstration upon which his other writings are founded, but his usual accuracy and judiciousness are here no less observable; And at the same time that he supports his suggestions, with all the authorities and proofs that the whole compass of Science can furnish, he offers

them with the greatest caution; And by a Modesty, that was natural to Him and always accompanies such superior talents, sets a becoming example to others, not to be too presumptuous in matters so remote and dark. Tho' the Subject be only Chronology, yet, as the mind of the Author abounded with the most extensive variety of Knowledge, he frequently intersperses Observations of a different kind; and occasionally instills principles of Virtue and Humanity, which seem to have been always uppermost in his heart, and, as they were the Constant Rule of his actions, appear Remarkably in all his writings.

Here YOUR MAJESTY will see Astronomy, and a just Observation on the course of Nature, assisting other parts of Learning to illustrate Antiquity; and a Penetration and Sagacity peculiar to the great Author, dispelling that Mist, with which Fable and Error had darkened it; and will with pleasure contemplate the first dawnings of Your favourite Arts and Sciences, the noblest and most beneficial of which He alone carried farther in a few years, than all the most Learned who went before him, had been able to do in many Ages. Here too, MADAM, You will observe, that an Abhorrence of Idolatry and Persecution (the very essence and foundation of that Religion, which makes so bright a part of YOUR MAJESTY's character) was one of the earliest Laws of the Divine Legislator, the Morality of the first Ages, and the primitive Religion of both Jews and Christians; and, as the Author adds, ought to be the standing Religion of all Nations; it being for the honour of God, and good of Mankind. Nor will YOUR MAJESTY be displeased to find his sentiments so agreeable to Your own, whilst he condemns all oppression; and every kind of cruelty, even to brute beasts; and, with so much warmth, inculcates Mercy, Charity, and the indispensable duty of doing good, and promoting the general welfare of mankind: Those great ends, for which Government was first instituted, and to which alone it is administred in this happy Nation, under a KING, who distinguished himself early in opposition to the Tyranny which threatned Europe, and chuses to reign in the hearts of his subjects; Who, by his innate Benevolence, and Paternal Affection to his People, establishes and confirms all their Liberties; and, by his Valour and Magnanimity, guards and defends them.

That Sincerity and Openness of mind, which is the darling quality of this Nation, is become more conspicuous, by being placed upon the Throne; And we see, with Pride, OUR SOVEREIGN the most eminent for a Virtue, by which our country is so desirous to be distinguished. A Prince, whose views and heart are above all the mean arts of Disguise, is far out of

the reach of any temptation to Introduce Blindness and Ignorance. And, as HIS MAJESTY is, by his incessant personal cares, dispensing Happiness at home, and Peace abroad; You, MADAM, lead us on by Your great Example to the most noble use of that Quiet and Ease, which we enjoy under His Administration, whilst all Your hours of leisure are employed in cultivating in Your Self That Learning, which You so warmly patronize in Others.

YOUR MAJESTY does not think the instructive Pursuit, an entertainment below Your exalted Station; and are Your Self a proof, that the abstruser parts of it are not beyond the reach of Your Sex. Nor does this Study end in barren speculation; It discovers itself in a steady attachment to true Religion; in Liberality, Beneficence, and all those amiable Virtues, which increase and heighten the Felicities of a Throne, at the same time that they bless All around it. Thus, MADAM, to enjoy, together with the highest state of publick Splendor and Dignity all the retired Pleasures and domestick Blessings of private life; is the perfection of human Wisdom, as well as Happiness.

The good Effects of this Love of knowledge, will not stop with the present Age; It will diffuse its Influence with advantage to late Posterity: And what may we not anticipate in our minds for the Generations to come under a Royal Progeny, so descended, so educated, and formed by such Patterns!

The glorious Prospect gives us abundant reason to hope, that Liberty and Learning will be perpetuated together; and that the bright Examples of Virtue and Wisdom, set in this Reign by the Royal Patrons of Both, will be transmitted with the Scepter to their Posterity, till this and the other Works of Sir ISAAC NEWTON shall be forgot, and Time it self be no more: Which is the most sincere and ardent wish of

MADAM,

May it please YOUR MAJESTY,

YOUR MAJESTY's most obedient and most dutiful subject and
servant,

John Conduitt.

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Advertisement.

Tho' The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms amended, was writ by the Author many years since; yet he lately revis'd it, and was actually preparing it for the Press at the time of his death. But The Short Chronicle was never intended to be made public, and therefore was not so lately corrected by him. To this the Reader must impute it, if he shall find any places where the Short Chronicle does not accurately agree with the Dates assigned in the larger Piece. The Sixth Chapter was not copied out with the other Five, which makes it doubtful whether he intended to print it: but being found among his Papers, and evidently appearing to be a Continuation of the same Work, and (as such) abridg'd in the Short Chronicle; it was thought proper to be added.

Had the Great Author himself liv'd to publish this Work, there would have been no occasion for this Advertisement; But as it is, the Reader is desired to allow for such imperfections as are inseparable from Posthumous Pieces; and, in so great a number of proper names, to excuse some errors of the Press that have escaped.

A SHORT

CHRONICLE

FROM THE
First Memory of Things in *Europe*,
TO THE
Conquest of *Persia* by *Alexander* the Great.

The INTRODUCTION.

The *Greek* Antiquities are full of Poetical Fictions, because the *Greeks* wrote nothing in Prose, before the Conquest of *Asia* by *Cyrus* the *Persian*. Then *Pherecydes Scyrius* and *Cadmus Milesius* introduced the writing in Prose. *Pherecydes Atheniensis*, about the end of the Reign of *Darius Hystaspis*, wrote of Antiquities, and digested his work by Genealogies, and was reckoned one of the best Genealogers. *Epimenides* the Historian proceeded also by Genealogies; and *Hellanicus*, who was twelve years older than *Herodotus*, digested his History by the Ages or Successions of the Priestesses of *Juno Argiva*. Others digested theirs by the Kings of the *Lacedæmonians*, or Archons of *Athens*. *Hippias* the *Elean*, about thirty years before the fall of the *Persian* Empire, published a breviary or list of the Olympic Victors; and about ten years before the fall thereof, *Ephorus* the disciple of *Isocrates* formed a Chronological History of *Greece*, beginning with the return of the *Heraclides* into *Peloponnesus*, and ending with the siege of *Perinthus*, in the twentieth year of *Philip* the father of *Alexander* the great: But he digested things by Generations, and the reckoning by Olympiads was not yet in use, nor doth it appear that the Reigns of Kings were yet set down by numbers of years. The *Arundelian* marbles were composed sixty years after the death of *Alexander* the great (*An.* 4. *Olymp.* 128.) and yet mention not the Olympiads: But in the next Olympiad, *Timæus Siculus* published an history in several books down to his own times, according to the Olympiads, comparing the Ephori, the Kings of *Sparta*, the Archons of *Athens*, and the Priestesses of *Argos*, with the Olympic Victors, so as to make the Olympiads, and the Genealogies and Successions of Kings, Archons, and Priestesses, and poetical histories suit with one another, according to the best of his judgment. And where he left off, *Polybius* began and carried on the history.

So then a little after the death of *Alexander* the great, they began to set down the Generations, Reigns and Successions, in numbers of years, and by putting Reigns and Successions equipollent to Generations, and three Generations to an hundred or an hundred and twenty years (as appears by their Chronology) they have made the Antiquities of *Greece* three or four hundred years older than the truth. And this was the original of the Technical Chronology of the

Greeks. *Eratosthenes* wrote about an hundred years after the death of *Alexander the great*: He was followed by *Apollodorus*, and these two have been followed ever since by Chronologers.

But how uncertain their Chronology is, and how doubtful it was reputed by the *Greeks* of those times, may be understood by these passages of *Plutarch*. Some reckon, saith he, ^[1] *Lycurgus contemporary to Iphitus, and to have been his companion in ordering the Olympic festivals: amongst whom was Aristotle the Philosopher, arguing from the Olympic Disc, which had the name of Lycurgus upon it. Others supputing the times by the succession of the Kings of the Lacedæmonians, as Eratosthenes and Apollodorus, affirm that he was not a few years older than the first Olympiad. First Aristotle and some others made him as old as the first Olympiad; then Eratosthenes, Apollodorus, and some others made him above an hundred years older: and in another place Plutarch* ^[2] *tells us: The congress of Solon with Croesus, some think they can confute by Chronology. But an history so illustrious, and verified by so many witnesses, and (which is more) so agreeable to the manners of Solon, and so worthy of the greatness of his mind and of his wisdom, I cannot persuade my self to reject because of some Chronological Canons, as they call them: which hundreds of authors correcting, have not yet been able to constitute any thing certain, in which they could agree among themselves, about repugnancies. It seems the Chronologers had made the Legislature of Solon too ancient to consist with that Congress.*

For reconciling such repugnancies, Chronologers have sometimes doubled the persons of men. So when the Poets had changed *Io* the daughter of *Inachus* into the *Egyptian Isis*, Chronologers made her husband *Osiris* or *Bacchus* and his mistress *Ariadne* as old as *Io*, and so feigned that there were two *Ariadnes*, one the mistress of *Bacchus*, and the other the mistress of *Theseus*, and two *Minos's* their fathers, and a younger *Io* the daughter of *Jasus*, writing *Jasus* corruptly for *Inachus*. And so they have made two *Pandions*, and two *Erechtheus's*, giving the name of *Erechthonius* to the first; *Homer* calls the first, *Erechtheus*: and by such corruptions they have exceedingly perplexed Ancient History.

And as for the Chronology of the *Latines*, that is still more uncertain. *Plutarch* represents great uncertainties in the Originals of *Rome*: and so doth *Servius*. The old records of the *Latines* were burnt by the

Gauls, sixty and four years before the death of *Alexander the great*; and *Quintus Fabius Pictor*, the oldest historian of the *Latines*, lived an hundred years later than that King.

In Sacred History, the *Assyrian* Empire began with *Pul* and *Tiglathpilaser*, and lasted about 170 years. And accordingly *Herodotus* hath made *Semiramis* only five generations, or about 166 years older than *Nitocris*, the mother of the last King of *Babylon*. But *Ctesias* hath made *Semiramis* 1500 years older than *Nitocris*, and feigned a long series of Kings of *Assyria*, whose names are not *Assyrian*, nor have any affinity with the *Assyrian* names in Scripture.

The Priests of *Egypt* told *Herodotus*, that *Menes* built *Memphis* and the sumptuous temple of *Vulcan*, in that City: and that *Rhampsinitus*, *Mæris*, *Asychis* and *Psammiticus* added magnificent porticos to that temple. And it is not likely that *Memphis* could be famous, before *Homer's* days who doth not mention it, or that a temple could be above two or three hundred years in building. The Reign of *Psammiticus* began about 655 years before Christ, and I place the founding of this temple by *Menes* about 257 years earlier: but the Priests of *Egypt* had so magnified their Antiquities before the days of *Herodotus*, as to tell him that from *Menes* to *Mæris* (who reigned 200 years before *Psammiticus*) there were 330 Kings, whose Reigns took up as many Ages, that is eleven thousand years, and had filled up the interval with feigned Kings, who had done nothing. And before the days of *Diodorus Siculus* they had raised their Antiquities so much higher, as to place six, eight, or ten new Reigns of Kings between those Kings, whom they had represented to *Herodotus* to succeed one another immediately.

In the Kingdom of *Sicyon*, Chronologers have split *Apis Epaphus* or *Epopeus* into two Kings, whom they call *Apis* and *Epopeus*, and between them have inserted eleven or twelve feigned names of Kings who did nothing, and thereby they have made its Founder *Ægialeus*, three hundred years older than his brother *Phoroneus*. Some have made the Kings of *Germany* as old as the Flood: and yet before the use of letters, the names and actions of men could scarce be remembred above eighty or an hundred years after their deaths: and therefore I admit no Chronology of things done in *Europe*,

above eighty years before *Cadmus* brought letters into *Europe*; none, of things done in *Germany*, before the rise of the *Roman Empire*.

Now since *Eratosthenes* and *Apollodorus* computed the times by the Reigns of the Kings of *Sparta*, and (as appears by their Chronology still followed) have made the seventeen Reigns of these Kings in both Races, between the Return of the *Heraclides* into *Peloponnesus* and the Battel of *Thermopylæ*, take up 622 years, which is after the rate of $36\frac{1}{2}$ years to a Reign, and yet a Race of seventeen Kings of that length is no where to be met with in all true History, and Kings at a moderate reckoning Reign but 18 or 20 years a-piece one with another: I have stated the time of the return of the *Heraclides* by the last way of reckoning, placing it about 340 years before the Battel of *Thermopylæ*. And making the Taking of *Troy* eighty years older than that Return, according to *Thucydides*, and the *Argonautic Expedition* a Generation older than the *Trojan War*, and the Wars of *Sesostris* in *Thrace* and death of *Ino* the daughter of *Cadmus* a Generation older than that Expedition: I have drawn up the following Chronological Table, so as to make Chronology suit with the Course of Nature, with Astronomy, with Sacred History, with *Herodotus* the Father of History, and with it self; without the many repugnancies complained of by *Plutarch*. I do not pretend to be exact to a year: there may be Errors of five or ten years, and sometimes twenty, and not much above.