

IV. *An Account by the Rev. Zachary Pearce, D. D. F. R. S. of a Book intituled, Reflexions Critiques sur les Histoires des Anciens Peuples, &c. Paris 1735. 4<sup>o</sup>. in 2 Vol.*

**M**ONS. *Fourmont* is well known to the learned World for some curious Pieces which he has already published, and for very many others in almost all Languages, which he has prepared for the Press, and the Titles of which he has given us in a Catalogue of his Works printed at *Amsterdam* 1731. in 8vo.

This Work of his, which now lies before the Society, is intituled, *Reflexions Critiques sur les Histoires des Anciens Peuples, &c.* lately printed at *Paris*, in 2 Vols. in 4to, at the Expence of some *French* Gentlemen of his Acquaintance, as he tells us in the *Advertisement* placed before his *Preface*.

His general Design is to set right the History of the most antient Nations, particularly the *Chaldeans, Hebrews, Phœnicians, Egyptians, Greeks, &c.* down to the Time of *Cyrus* the Founder of the *Persian* Empire.

The Work consists of three Books.

In the First of which he gives us at Length the famous Fragment of *Sanhoniathon* the *Phœnician*, as translated by *Philo Byblius*, and preserved by *Eusebius* in his *Preparatio Evangelica*, Lib. I. cap. 9.

With this Fragment he has published a *French* Version of it, in which he endeavours to distinguish between the Account given by *Sanhoniathon* the  
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Author, and what he supposes to be the Additions of *Philo* the *Greek* Translator.

After this he examines into the Reasons brought by several of the Learned *for* and *against* the Genuineness of the Fragment, and determines in favour of it with as much Weight of Argument as the Question will admit. He then takes Notice of a Treatise, written on the same Subject as his own, by our learned Countryman Bishop *Cumberland*; and having examined and declared his Dislike of the Bishop's Scheme in the main, he prepares his Reader to expect full Satisfaction from his own, which makes the Subject of his second Book.

In his second Book, he undertakes to reconcile the Generations of Men set forth in *Sanconiathon's* Fragment, with those which are recorded by *Moses* of the Patriarchs before and for some time after the Flood.

By the Help of *Hebrew*, *Phœnician* and *Egyptian* Etymologies, he often makes the Names, which at first Sight are almost all quite unlike, to be the same in Sound, or at least in Sense. And by this Application of his Skill in the antient Languages, he readily finds out a Coincidence between *Moses's* and *Sanconiathon's* earliest Generations.

But his main Work, and what he appears most pleased with, is his Discovery of *Abraham* and his Family among the later Generations recorded by *Sanconiathon*. Having laid down (upon good Grounds, as he assures us) that *Ouranos* is *Terah*, the Father of *Abraham*, he undertakes to prove, that *Abraham* is the *Cronus* of *Sanconiathon* and the *Saturnus* of the *Latins*; that *Sarah* (his Wife) is  
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the same with the Goddess *Rhea*; that *Ishmael* (*Abraham's* Son) is the *Muth* of *Sanchoniathon*, and the *Dis* or *Pluto* of the *Greeks* and *Romans*: That *Isaac* (*Abraham's* other Son) is the same with the *Sadid* of *Sanchoniathon*, with *Jupiter* among the *Latins*, and *Zeus* among the *Greeks*, his Wife *Rebecca* being *Juno*; that *Esau* (*Isaac's* eldest Son) is *Osiris* and *Bacchus*, and that *Jacob* (the youngest) is *Typhon*. And, in like manner, he finds a very great Part of the *Grecian* Theology in *Abraham's* Family.

In the mean while his Readers will, perhaps, make two very material Observations on this extraordinary Discovery of his: The one, that *Cronus's* Character in *Sanchoniathon's* Fragment, is the most immoral and tyrannous of any recorded there: And how to reconcile this with the Character given in Scripture to *Abraham*, as *the Friend of God*, *the Father of the Faithful*, &c. is no easy Task: It requires (to be sure) more than a Resemblance of two or three Circumstances, common to *Cronus* and *Abraham*, when their Historians in Fifty other Circumstances make their Characters essentially different. The other Consideration, which occurs, when we read this Treatise, is, that *Abraham* had ill Luck indeed, if, when he left his native Country because of the Rise of Idolatry there, all the grosser Idolatry of the Heathen Nations after his Time took its Rise from him and his Family: The very Crime which he took Pains to avoid, he was the accidental Occasion of, if he and his are to be thus placed at the Head of the Heathen Theology.

The Author, having finished this remarkable Part of his Work, enters into a very learned Detail of the particular Gods of the several Heathen Nations, who are most celebrated in History; and he has shewed a great Compass of Reading upon this Occasion. Hardly any Writer has been more copious on the Subject, or has given better Hints for clearing up many Passages of sacred and profane Story.

In his third Book he has treated at large about the Dynasties of *Egypt*, and the Shepherd-Kings who reigned there: Both of them, perhaps, the darkest Spots in the whole Face of Antiquity. He has taken great Pains to fix the Epochs of the Kings of *Sicyon*, *Sidon* and *Tyre*, of *Arabia*, *Assyria*, *Lydia*, of the *Medes* and *Babylonians*; concerning all which he has laid together the most remarkable Testimonies of the Antients. At length he comes to his favourite Point, the *Chinese* History, and gives us (as he says) a complete List of their Kings, from the Flood down to the present Monarch of that Empire, and shews that the Chronology of the *Chinese* may be made pretty nearly consistent with the true Chronology of the *Old Testament*.

And for this Part of the Work the Author seems well fitted, being skill'd (as he tells us in his *Preface*) in the learned Characters of that Country, which he has studied for near twenty Years, and has for some time taught in the Royal College at *Paris*; and having composed five Dictionaries, and a Grammar of that Language, together with a Translation, almost intire, of the Geography of *Tamim*, which contains no less than the whole History of that Empire: On which Occasion he applies to himself, and  
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the Progress which he has made in the *Chinese* Learning, those expressive Verses of *Virgil* in his Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*:

——— *Pauci, quos æquus amavit*  
*Jupiter, aut ardens evexit ad æthera virtus,*  
*Diis geniti, potuere.*

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V. *A Query proposed to such curious Persons as use the Greenland Trade, occasioned by the annexed Letter from Mr. David Nicolson, Surgeon, to Dr. Mortimer, Sec. R. S.*

“ **W**HETHER the *Scurvy-grass* of *Greenland* be the same Species, as to its external Appearance, with the common *Scurvy-grass* of *England*? And, having no acrid Taste while growing in *Greenland*, doth it, being brought growing in Earth from *Greenland*, gradually acquire an acrid Taste, as it is brought into a warmer Climate?”

*S I R,*

*London, Dec. 16. 1730.*

**I** Communicate this as Matter of Truth, and not Hypothetic, *viz.* That the *Scurvy-grass* in *Greenland*, equally the same with ours in *England*, as to the Figure of the Plant, and all its Appearance to the Eye, changes its Nature much, as it approaches the Sun; for in that Climate, its principal Quality, the volatile Salt, is neither pungent nor perceivable; but to the Taste, the whole Plant is intirely as inspid as the Colwort or Beet. So by my Endeavour,