The Chronicle of Edessa

Chronicle of Edessa (c. AD 540)

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(28) [April, SELECTIONS FROM THE SYRIAC, No. 1.----THE CHRONICLE OF EDESSA. SOME of the early Christian writers refer in very eulogistic terms to the archives of Edessa. The archives were, of course, the public or royal library of the city, the existence and value of which cannot be called in question. It included both Greek and Oriental books, and was therefore a depository from which literary men could largely benefit. Moses of Chorene consulted the books while compiling his history of Armenia. Eusebius of Caesarea declares himself to have been indebted to this library for his account of the conversion of Edessa, the correspondence between Jesus Christ and king Abgar, and a few other matters true and false, to be read at the end of the first book of the ecclesiastical history. We have substantial reasons for saying that in the particular instance first mentioned, Eusebius was deceived; that the documents he quoted could not have been long written, as appears from further portions of the same story now in the British Museum, under the title of the Acts of Addi.The estimation in which the Edessene archives were held, is shewn by the following sentence from an old Syriac chronicle, some extracts of which are given in Cowper's Syrian Miscellanies:----"In the year 309 of the era of Alexander of Macedon did our Redeemer appear in the world (i. e., about B.C. 2); and he was in the world thirty-three years according to the evidence of the true books of the archives of Edessa, which err in nothing, and which make everything known to us truly." This is something like the stereotyped phraseology for allusions to, the historical documents at Edessa.

The Maronite, Joseph Simon Assemani, devotes a chapter of his great work, the Bibliotheca Orientalis, to the "Chronicle of Edessa." He gives the Syriac text of the Chronicle, with a Latin translation, introduction, and notes. Considering that the matter is of some importance, we propose to give a version of Assemani's introduction, and of the Chronicle itself. The introduction is to the following effect:---- The Chronicle of Edessa. We have hitherto not discovered who was the author of the Edessene Chronicle, nor in what age he flourished. Yet it is |29 sufficiently plain that he followed the Catholic faith, because he declares that he admits four holy councils down to the year 838 of the Greeks, and also because he expressly rejects the opposers of the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, strongly commending their orthodoxy, which was a most certain mark of the Catholics of the time in which he lived. He seems, indeed, to have lived about the year of Christ 550, for he brought down his history to the year 540, as will shortly appear. That he copied it out of the archives of the

Edessene church is shewn by its beginning, course, and end. In the beginning of the history he describes the flood of waters which overflowed Edessa under the emperor Severus and king Abgar, according to the acts formerly drawn up by the notaries, and preserved in the archives, and put by us into their proper place. Moreover, the author is almost wholly occupied in registering the series of bishops of Edessa, and in describing their deeds. He leaves off writing just when the Jacobite pastors began to invade that church.

The epoch which he uses is that of the Greeks, also called that of the Seleucidae, or the Syro-Macedonian. He affirms that the Christian era was later by 309 years, according to the common opinion of the Edessenes. But if we look closely into the indictions which he sometimes mentions, and the days of the month and of the week, which he often mentions, it becomes evident that the aforesaid years are called 309, but are really 311; and, therefore, the nativity of Christ, according to his view, fell in the three hundred and eleventh year of the Greeks, and not in the three hundred and ninth. That is plainly the case from what he writes of the earthquake at Antioch, and the death of Simeon Stylites, who he affirms was taken to heaven in the year 771 of the Greeks, on the second of September, and on the fourth day of the week, which answers to the vulgar era A.D. 460, not 462. He relates that the earthquake at Antioch happened in the year 837 of the Greeks, on the 29th of May, and on the sixth day of the week, which will be A.D. 526, when May 29th fell on the Friday, not A.D. 528, when it could not happen on a Friday. To the year of the Greeks 850 he also adds the "second indiction," which nevertheless answers to 539 A.D., and not to 541. Therefore the vulgar Christian epoch, according to his view, must be later than the era of the Greeks 311 years, and not 309.

He starts at the beginning of the kingdom of Edessa, which he ascribes to the year 180 of the Greeks. He ends at the year of Christ 540, when the Persian war was waged between Justinian and Chosroes. Although he sometimes neglects the order of time or disturbs it, I think this is to be attributed rather to |30 the copyist than to the author. In publishing it, therefore, I shall first restore the events to their own place and order. Some notes which seem to throw light upon it or other histories I shall place in the margin. The Chronicle is intitled A history of events by way of compendium.

[Translation.]

1. In the year 180 kings began to rule in Edessa. 2. In the year 266 Augustus Caesar was made emperor. 3. In the year 309 our Lord was born. 4. In the year 400 Abgar the king built a mausoleum for himself. 5. In the year 449 Marcion forsook the Catholic Church. 6. The year 465, in the month Tammuz, on the eleventh day (i.e., July 11th, 154 A.D.), Bardesanes was born. 7. Lucius Caesar, with his brother, subjugated the Parthians to the Romans in the fifth year of his reign.

8. In the year 513, in the reign of Severus, and in the reign of Abgar the king, son of Maano the king, in the month Tishrin the latter (i. e., November), the fountain of water which proceeds from the great palace of Abgar the great king increased, and it prevailed, and it went up according to its former manner, and overflowed and ran out on all sides, so that

the courts and the porches and the royal houses began to be filled with water. And when our lord Abgar the king saw it, he went up to the level ground on the hill above his palace, where dwell and reside those who do the work for the government. And while the wise men considered what to do to the waters which had so greatly increased, it happened that there was a great and violent rain in the night, and the Daisan (river) came, neither in its day, nor in its month. And strange waters came; and they encountered the cataracts (? flood gates) which were fastened with great pieces of iron which were overlaid upon them, and with bars of iron which supported them. But not prevailing against them, the waters rose like a great sea beyond the walls of the city. And the waters began to come down from the apertures of the wall into the city.

And Abgar the king stood on the great tower which was called that of the Persians, and saw the water by the light of torches, and he commanded, and they took away the gates and the eight cataracts (? flood-gates) of the western wall of the city where the river flowed out. But that very hour the waters broke down the western wall of the city, and entered the city, and overthrew the great and beautiful palace of our lord the king, and they carried away everything that was found before them, the desirable and beautiful edifices of the city, whatever |31 was near the river on the south and on the north of it. And they destroyed the temple of the church of the Christians. And there were killed by that occurrence more than two thousand men, upon many of whom as they slept in the night the waters came suddenly, and they were drowned, and the city was filled with the sound of lamentation.

And when Abgar the king saw this destruction which had befallen, he commanded that all the craftsmen of the city should remove their cottages (or huts) from near the river, and that no man should build near the river any cottage. And by the wisdom of measurers and men of skill the cottages were placed so that the breadth of the river might be increased, and they added to its former measure. For if the waters were many and strong, the width of the river was too small to receive the water of twenty-five brooks with what they gathered from all sides. And Abgar the king commanded that all who lived in the porch, and were occupied over against the river, from Tishrin the former to Nisan (October to April), should not lodge in their cottages, except the islanders (Gazireans) who kept the city, five of whom should lodge on the wall above the place where the waters entered the city all the time of winter, and when they perceived by night and heard the sound of strange waters, which began to enter the city, and whoever heard the sound and neglected it, and did not publish it, behold the waters should drown the contempt of him that despised the command of the king. And this commandment was decreed from this time wherein it was so to the end of the world.

Our lord Abgar the king commanded, and there was built for him a building for his royal house----a winter house at Tabara ----and there he dwelt all the time of winter; and in summer he came down to the new palace which was built for him at the fountain head. And his nobles also built for themselves buildings to live in, in the neighbourhood in which the king was, in the high street (?) which is called Beth Saharoye. And in order to restore

the welfare of the former city, Abgar the king commanded, and the tributes due from those within, and from those who dwelt in towns, and in hamlets, were remitted: and tribute was not demanded from them for five years, until the city was enriched with men, and was crowned with buildings. Now Mar Yahab Bar Shemesh, and Kajuma Bar Magartat, the scribes of Edessa, recorded this event, and the command of Abgar the king: and Bar Din and Bulid, who are prefects over the archives of Edessa, received and deposited it within them as trusted of the city (i.e., archivists.) |32

9. And in the year 517, Abgar built a palace in his own citadel (? town). 10. The year 551 Manes was born. 11. The year 614, were broken down the walls of Edessa the second time in the days of Diocletian the king. 12. In the year 624, Conon the bishop laid the foundations of the Church of Edessa; and Sha'ad, the bishop who came after him, built and finished the structure. 13. In the year 635, the cemetery of Edessa was built, in the days of Ethalaha the bishop, the year before the great synod of Nicea was held. 14. The year 635, Ethalaha became bishop in Edessa; and he constructed the cemetery, and the eastern side of the church. 15. And the year after, a synod of three hundred and eighteen bishops was assembled at Nicea. 16. The year 639, there was building and enlargement in the church of Edessa.

17. In the year 649, died Mar Jacob, bishop of Nisibis. 18. The year 657, Abraham became bishop in Edessa, and he built the house (or church) of the Confessors. 19. The year 660, Constantius, the son of Constantine, built the city of Amida. 20. And in the year 661, Constantius built Tela, a city which was before called Antipolis. 21. The year 667, Abraham of Chidon, a recluse, became (bishop). 22. In the year 670, Nicomedia was overthrown. 23. In the year 672, Mar Abraham, bishop of Edessa, left the world. 24. And in the same year, Vologesh, bishop of Nisibis, departed from this world. 25. And in the same year came Barses, the bishop from Haran to Edessa by command of the king (i. e., the emperor Constantius, then in that region). 26. And in the year 674, in the month Haziran (June), Julian went down and made war with the Persians, and died there.

27. In the year 675, in the month Shebat (February), Valentinian the Great became king, and Valens his brother. |33 28. In the year 678, Mar Julian Saba departed from the world. 29. The year 681, was built the great Beth-ma'amuditho (House of Baptizing) of Edessa. 30. In the year 684, in the month Haziran (June), on the ninth in it, departed from the world Mar Ephraim "of his wisdoms" (= the wise). 31. And in the month Elul (September) of that year, the people departed from the church of Edessa, through the persecution of the Arians. 32. In the year 689, in the month Adar, Mar Barses, bishop of Edessa, departed from the world. 33. And on the twenty-seventh day in the mouth Canun the former (December), of the same year, the orthodox came in and recovered the church of Edessa. 34. And in those days Mar Eulogius became bishop in the year that Theodosius the Great became king; and that Mar Eulogius built the house of Mar Daniel, which was called the house of Mar Demet.

35. The year 692, Theodosius the Great built in Osrhoene the city Resaina. 36. The year 693, was gathered the synod of one hundred and fifty bishops in Constantinople. 37. In the

year 698, Mar Eulogius the bishop departed from the world on the Friday of the crucifixion. 38. The year 705, in the month Ab (August), on the twenty-second day in it, they brought the glossocom (i.e., coffin) of Mar Thomas the Apostle to his great temple in the days of Mar Cyrus the bishop. 39. In the year 706, and on the seventeenth of Canun the latter (January), departed from the world Theodosius the great king; and on the twenty-seventh in Nisan (April), Arcadius entered Constantinople; and on the eighth in Tishrin the latter (November), the body of Theodosius entered Constantinople. 40. And in the month of Tammuz (July) of the same year, the Huns crossed over to the territory of the Romans.

41. In the year 707, in the month Tammuz (July), on its twenty-second, departed from the world Mar Cyrus, bishop of Edessa. 42. And in the year 708 Mar Silvanus became bishop of Edessa. 43. In the year 710, on the seventeenth of Tishrin the former (October), Mar Silvanus, bishop of Edessa, departed from the world. 44. And on the twenty-third of the month Tishrin the latter |34 (November) of that year, Mar Pakida became bishop in Edessa. 45. And in that year arose Johanan Chrysostomos, bishop in Constantinople. 46. The year 714 began Theodorus, bishop of Mompsesta, to expound the Scriptures. 47. The year 715, 'Absamia Kashisha (presbyter), son of the sister of the blessed Mar Ephraim, composed madroshé (poems?) and discourses upon the coming of the Huns to the territory of the Romans. 48. The year 720, Mar Diogenes became bishop in Edessa, and he began to build the house of Mar Barlaha.

49. And in that year, in the neomenia of Ab (August), Mar Pakida, bishop of Edessa, departed from the world. 50. The year 721, Cyrillus became bishop in Alexandria the great. 51. The year 723, Rabula became bishop in Edessa. And he built the house of Mar Stephanus, which had been formerly a house of Sabbath (synagogue) of the Jews. Now he built it by command of the king. 52. The year 724, the walls of Edessa were again broken down by water the third time, in the days of Honorius and Arcadius the victorious kings. 53. The year 732, Eutychius the monk arose, who rejected the incarnation. 54. At that time the blessed Jacob, the mutilated, was a martyr. 55. The year 739, the heresy of those who say that sin is implanted in nature, became known. 56. The year 740, Andrew, bishop of Samosata, became famous. 57. The year 741, dust came down from heaven.

58. The year 742, was assembled the first synod at Ephesus. 59. The year 746, Rabula, bishop of Edessa, departed from the world on the eighth of Ab (August), and the great Hiba became (bishop) instead of him. He built the new church which now is called the house of the apostles. 60. The year 749, in. the days of the excellent Hiba, Senator brought a great table of silver, in which were seven hundred and twenty pounds (of silver), and it was put in the old church of Edessa. |35 61. The year 753, Anatolius, the stratelates (military commander) made a coffin of silver, in honour of the bones of Thomas the holy apostle. 62. The year 756, Dioscurus became bishop in Alexandria the great. 63. And there was assembled again at Ephesus another synod. This anathematized the great Flavianus bishop of Constantinople, and Domnus of Antioch, and Irenaeus of Tyre, and Hiba of Edessa, and

Eusebius of Dorylaeum, and Daniel of Haran, and Sophronius of Tela, and Theodoret of Cyrus.

64. The year 759, Hibas the bishop departed from Edessa on the first day in the month Canun the latter (January 1), and on the twenty-first day of the month Tammuz (July), Nonnus came in in his stead, and continued two years, and made a hierateion (sacristy) in the church. 65. Anno 760, arose Leo bishop in Rome. 66. Anno 762, a synod was assembled in the city of Chalcedon. 67. An. 763, Mar Isaac, a composer (an author) and abbot (or Archimandrite) was famous. 68. An. 769, in the month Tishriu the former (October), on the twenty-eighth, Hiba, bishop of Edessa, went to rest; and Nonnus came into his place, and built the house of Mar Johanan the Baptist, and (he constructed) a place for poor invalids, outside the gate of Beth Shemesh; and in the place for the poor he built the house of martyrs to Mar Cosma and Mar Damian. Now he built also convents and towers, and made bridges, and levelled the roads.

69. In the year 771, departed the blessed Simeon of "his column" (Stylites) from the world, on Elul the second (September 2), on Wednesday (the fourth day in the week), the time the eleventh hour. 70. The year 777, Leo built Callinicns in Osrhoene, and named it after his own name Leontopolis; and set in it also a bishop. 71. An. 782, Nonnus, bishop of Edessa, rested, and Cyrus became (bishop) in his stead. 72. An. 795, Leontius rebelled against Zeno, and reigned in Antioch two years. 73. An. 800, the school of the Persians was eradicated from Edessa. 74. An. 809, the (tribute of) gold was remitted to the artificers in all the land, in the month Iyar (May). 75. And on the sixth in the month Haziran (June), Cyrus, bishop of Edessa, rested, and Peter became (bishop) in his stead, |36 and he entered Edessa on the twelfth of Elul (September) of the same year.

76. An. 810, many locusts appeared, but did no great damage that year: but the herbage grew again. And there was a great earthquake. And the warm bath of the Iberians failed three days. And the city of Nicopolis was overthrown, and buried in it all its inhabitants, save the temple, and the bishop, and two Syncelli (sons of his cell). And a sign that was like a spear appeared in heaven many days, in the month Canun the latter (January). 77. Now Anastasius the king deposed Euphemius, bishop of Constantinople, from his place, and Macedon became bishop in his stead. 78. An. 811, many locusts came and destroyed and devoured all the produce. 79. An. 813, a great fire appeared on the side of the north, which blazed all night on the twenty-second of Ab (August). 80. An. 814, Cavades, king of the Persians, encamped against Amida, a city of Beth Naharotha (Mesopotamia), on the fifth day in the month Tishrin the former (October), and fought with it, and took it in ninety-seven days.

81. And in the month Elul (September) of that year, he came and encamped against Edessa, and by the grace of God, did it no harm, except that he burnt the house of Mar Sergius and the northern basilica of Beth-maudiné (the House of Confessors, see above, No. 18.) 82. An. 821, Peter, bishop of Edessa, rested on the day of the Sabbath of the resurrection (Saturday, April 10, 510 A.D.), and Paul was appointed instead of him. 83. And in the year twenty-one

of the reign of Anastus (Anastasius), he commanded them to open the coffin of Euphemia the martyr, and to bring forth from thence the book which the synod that was assembled at Chalcedon had put there, and to burn it; and there came forth fire from thence, and smote upon the faces of those who wished to bring it out, and because of this Anastasius refrained from taking it away from thence and burning it.

84. But he removed Macedon, the bishop of Constantinople, because he did not anathematize the synod, and Timothy became (bishop) instead of him. 85. And in the twenty-fourth of the same Anastasius Vitalian rebelled against him. 86. An. 829, in the month Tammuz (July), on the ninth, Anastasius the king departed from the world, and Justin became (king) in his stead. |37 87. And in the second year of the reign of Justin, which was An. 830, he thrust out of Antioch Severus, and Xenaias from Mabug, and everybody that received not the four synods. 88. Now such was the care and concern of the friend of God, king Justinian, that he wrote in the diptychs of the church the four holy synods, that is to say, that of Nicea, and that of Constantinople, and the first of Ephesus, and that of Chalcedon.

89. And in An. 831 came the patrician (or Patricius) to Edessa to remove Paul in the month Tishrin the latter (November) on the fourth, and he urged him to do one of two things, either to receive the synod and continue on his seat, or if he would not be persuaded he would remove him from his seat. But he was not persuaded to do one of these, but fled and went in and stayed in the House of Baptism. Now when the patrician (or Patricius) saw that he was unpersuaded to do one of these, and was afraid of the command of the king, he was compelled to remove him from the House of Baptism, and conveyed him to Seleucia. And when the king heard that he had taken him from the House of Baptism, he commanded that he should return to his seat, in hope that he would repent and receive the synod. And Paul re-entered his seat in forty-four days, and he was a long time without receiving the synod, and when the king saw that he was not persuaded, he sent him to Euchata. And Paul departed from Edessa on Tammuz (July) 27, of the year 833, and Asclepius was (bishop) instead of him, and entered Edessa on the 23rd of Tishrin the former (October), of the year 834, three months after Paul the bishop departed from Edessa.

90. And in the month Canun the former (December), on the 24th in it, after the entering of Asclepius the bishop to Edessa, he expelled the Oriental monks, and all the monks their allies who were like them, because they did not consent to the synod of Chalcedon. 91. And in the year 836 many waters entered Edessa, the fourth time, and broke down the walls of it, and overturned its dwellings and drowned its children, and made in it much destruction. 92. And through this circumstance Asclepius fled from Edessa, and went up to Antioch the city to Euphrasius the patriarch, and he was there, more or less, seventy days, and he died there in Antioch on the 27th in the month Haziran of that year, and was buried there in Antioch. And on the 4th in the month Elul of the same year they brought his body from Antioch and buried it at Beth Mar Barlaha, by Mar Nonnus the bishop. |38

93. And when Paul heard that Asclepius was dead he repented and offered a petition to Mar Justinian the patrician (Patricius), and he made also a libellum to Euphrasius the patriarch,

and because of the libellum that he made, and because of the epistle of the illustrious and friend of God, Mar Justinian the patrician (Patricius), he was returned and restored to his seat, and he entered Edessa on the 8th in Adar (March) of the year 837, eight months after the death of Asclepius. 94. Now Paul the bishop lived after he returned to his seat the third time, eight months minus eight days; and on the 30th in the month Tishrin the former (October) of the year 838 Paul the bishop rested. 95. And Andreas became (bishop) in his stead, and entered Edessa on the 7th of the month Shebat of the same year 838. 96. And in the year 837 in the month Iyar (May), on the 29th in it on Friday at the seventh hour, there was a great and violent earthquake, and there fell by it much of Antioch, and overwhelmed its children, and suffocated its inhabitants.

97. And in that earthquake died also Euphrasius the patriarch, and was buried under the houses, and as they say he was crying out all day beneath the houses. Now after him Ephraim of Amida became bishop in Antioch, who had been Comes of the East. 98. An. 838 on day 1 in the month of Nisan, Mar Justinian became Caesar, and on the 10th in the month Ab of the same year king Justinian (Justin) rested, and Mar Justinian reigned alone. 99. And in An. 839, in the month Tishrin the latter, on the 15th in it, a great fire happened at Antioch, and burned much of what remained from the earthquake; but whence the origin of the fire remains unknown. 100. An. 842, in the month Tammuz, came down Mar Demosthenes to Edessa to command the Roman forces. 101. And in the month Canun the former of An. 843, on the 18th in the month, the Huns entered the Roman territory, and plundered and wasted as far as the country of the Alepponians, and to the dodecaton [twelfth milestone] from Antioch. And through this affliction Mar Demosthenes fell sick and died at the city of Tela, on the 10th in the month Canun the latter of the same year.

102. And in An. 843, in the month Elul of the same year, Mar Rufinus the patrician made peace between the Persians and the Romans, and this peace was prolonged to the year 851. 103. And in An. 844, in the month Canun the former in that year, Mar Andreas, bishop, departed from the world, and he |39 was deposited at Mar Barlaha's by the bones of Mar Nonnus and Mar Asclepius; and Addi became bishop instead of him, and entered Edessa on the 28th in the month Ab of An. 844. 104. In An. 13 of the reign of Justinian, which was the year 850, indiction deutra (the second), a sign like a spear appeared in heaven on the 5th of Tishrin the former (October). 105. And in the same year in the month Iyar (May) Chosroes king of the Persians broke the peace, and crossed over to the territory of the Romans, and laid waste Shura, and Haleb (Aleppo) and Antioch, and also took possession of Apamea, and turned and came as far as Edessa, but by the grace of God protecting it, he did no harm in it; but the great men of the city brought out to him, and he took away two centenaria (hundreds of pounds or talents) of gold, and he returned to his place.

106. As we learn from the former histories, behold the waters have four times broken down the walls of the blessed [city] and overthrown its towers, and choked its children, since Messiah ascended to his glorious Father. The first time its walls were broken down was in the days of Severus the king of the Romans, which was An. 513, by the reckoning of the

Ionians (Greeks), in the month Tishrin the latter. And the second time its walls were broken down was in the days of Diocletian the king, which was the year 614 in the month Iyar. And the third time its walls were broken down was in the days of Honorius and Theodosius the illustrious kings, which was. An. 724 in the month Adar, on the 18th in it, on the 3rd in the week (Tuesday), when Mar Rabula had become bishop in Edessa. And the fourth time they were broken down was in the days of Justin the king, which was the year 836, when Asclepius had become bishop in Edessa.

NOTES.

The numbers of the Notes correspond with the sections of the translation. 1. The year 180, i.e. of the Greeks, of the Seleucidae, or of the Syro-Macedonians, coincides, says Assemani, with B.C. 129. Dionysius places the commencement of the Edessene kingdom in B.C. 136, or, as he calls it, in the year of Abraham 1880.----"The year 1880 of Abraham, there began to reign over Edessa (Urhoi) the first King Orhoi, son of Hevia, five years, and after his name it was called Urhoi." No great antiquity is ascribed to the name of the city by this version of its story. 3. The chronicle of Edessa says, "In the year 309 our Lord was born," i.e., in the forty-fourth of Augustus. See Pagi in Apparatu, No. 157. 4. The Syriac is remarkable. Abgar "built a naphsho in honour of his death." The word naphsho is usually translated "soul," or " self," but is said sometimes to denote a sepulchre or mausoleum. Perhaps the word should be nauso, a shrine or temple. Assemani says this Abgar was Abgar Bar Ajazat, the nineteenth King of Edessa. Bayer thinks he was old when he began to reign, because he built a mausoleum for himself. Bibl. Or., i., 421; Bayer, Hist. Osrhoena, p. 147.

5. Marcion is joined with Manetes in the extracts from the Syriac Chronicle quoted in Syriac Miscellanies, p. 87. "In the year 448, Marcion and Manetes, heretics in Phrygia, were famous." This is a year earlier than the date above given. 6. Other dates have been given for Bardesanes. Thus in Syriac Miscellanies, p. 87, we read that Bardesanes, who promulgated the doctrine of Valentinus, was famous or flourished in the year 479. If he were only born in 465 (A.D. 154) this can hardly be correct; but other authorities clearly imply an earlier date than that of the Edessene Chronicle. 7. This event really occupies an earlier place in the chronicle under the year 449, which Assemani says is wrong, and he has therefore corrected it. 8. Dionysius places this flood in A.D. 216. 9. This palace probably stood upon the hill where the citadel of modern Urfah now stands.

11. This overthrow of the walls in 303 was also caused by a flood, as shewn by Dionysius in his chronicle, and as stated below. The account of Dionysius, as quoted by Assemani, is to this effect,----" In the year 614 of Alexander, Edessa was taken by the waters, and its eastern walls were broken down and fell, and (the river) carried away and removed all that was in it; and the flood made great havoc in it, both upon men and cattle, and in all the plain of Edessa and Haran." |41 13. This cemetery is perhaps the first on record constructed for the special use of Christians. 17. Jacob of Nisibis was one of the most famous of the bishops of his time. He was at the council of Nicea, and so was Ethilhas or Ethalaha of Edessa. 20. Constantius is said to have built Tela, but probably he restored or enlarged it, and called

it Constantina. Dionysius refers this restoration to Constantine. Assemani says the new name was Constantina, and not Constantinople, as Dionysius affirms.

21. Chidon was not far from Edessa. 22. This happened in consequence of an earthquake, at the very time a council was being held in the city. The bishops removed to Seleucia, in Isauria, and finished their business there. 25. Barses seems to have been translated from Haran to Edessa simply by the command of the emperor. 29. The great baptistery may have stood where Mr. Badger says a mosque now stands,----"The mosque called Oloor Jamesi was an old Christian church, as is evident from the hexangular belfry which is now converted into a minaret, and from the lower parts of the building. As in the case of the Great Mosque at Diarbekir, the nave of the church has been turned into a court-yard, in which a fountain has been introduced for the religious ablutions of the Mussulmans; and the southern wall of the church is now the northern wall of the mosque. The fountain is surmounted by a dome raised upon four Corinthian pillars taken from some more ancient building." (Nestorians, i., 326). May not the fountain be really of ancient origin?

30. The grave of Ephraim, or rather his tomb in a cave, is still shewn at Urfah, and upon it the Jacobites consecrate the Eucharistic elements. 33. Certainly not in the same year as the death of Barses. It is not clear when these years begin. They are usually supposed to begin Sept. 1, but our author seems to have some other day, as several of his entries suggest. Above in No. 31 he reckons September, as in the same year with the preceding June. Assemani says this belongs to the year 690. 34. Mar Demet is rendered by Assemani as if it were a contraction of Domitius, "Domus Mar Domitii." He prints it in italics, apparently as if in doubt. The vowels are as we give them, and therefore we prefer to think Demetrius is meant, both here and elsewhere (B. O., i., 215). 35. Resaina signifies Fountain-head, and was restored by Theodosius. |42

36. The second general council in A.D. 381. It began in October, hence the author assigns it to 693, and not 692; Assemani at least puts it in October, with which however others do not agree. Socrates assigns it to May; and the very ancient MS. quoted in Syriac Miscellanies (A.D. 500) refers it to August. So also the Syriac Chronicle quoted, in Syriac Miscellanies, p. 89. Eulogius of Edessa attended the council. 37. Eulogius died on Good Friday. 38. It does not appear where they obtained the relics of the Apostle. They were, however, deposited in "his great temple," i.e., a church dedicated to his name, or called after him. 40. This invasion of the Huns or Asiatic Tartars (A.D. 395) was probably the first in that direction; it was not the last. 47. The Madrashé of Absamia may have been poems, but the word is also used of prose. Assemani says "odas et sermones composuit."

48. Who was Barlaha, "the son of God?" A writer of the name copied Ephraim's works in A.D. 551, and is spoken of by Assemani as an "egregius scriptor." B. O. i., 83. 49. The Syriac text has the word neomenia. 51. This adaptation of a Jewish synagogue for Christian worship at the emperor's bidding, was probably an act of spoliation perpetrated upon the Jews. 53. The Eutychian heresy began later than A.D. 421, and probably later than 431 by a few years at least. Eutyches affirmed that there was but one nature in Christ, and there

are many Monophysites to this day. 54. Possibly Jacob the "mutilated," had misunderstood and misapplied Matthew xix. 12. Jacob was, however, doubtless a real martyr; as he was certainly a famous one. 55. Assemani understands this to allude to the heresy of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and thinks the writer favoured him and Pelagius, from the form in which he puts the record. The orthodox held that "sin was implanted in nature;" it was the heterodox who maintained that it was not. The scribe then makes the orthodox the heretics.

57. A shower of dust at Edessa must have been a rare event. 58. For 742 the MS. had 744, which Assemani corrected. 60. The weight of the table offered by Senator is put down at 720 litra, the same as the Latin libra, a pound of about twelve ounces avoirdupois. This would make about 540 lbs. avoirdupois. 61. In the Syriac we read that Anatol the Stratelates made a nauso of silver. The name Anatol is, of course, a shortened form of Anatolius,----proper names are frequently abbreviated in |43 this chronicle, but we have not always indicated the fact. The Nauso seems to be a mere variation of Naos, a temple or shrine. Christianity was now looking up the trappings of exploded idolatry. The reader will be reminded of the silver shrines of Artemis in Acts xix. 24, where the Greek has this very word, and so has the Syriac Peshito. The other word Stratelates,= strathla&thj, a commander of soldiers, is as old as Sophocles and Euripides.

63. The second synod of Ephesus, says Assemani, was held, not in 756, but in 760, or A.D. 449. Although Ibas of Edessa was anathematised on that occasion, the fact is recorded without a remark. The bishop, we are told in the following article, left Edessa on January 1st, 759; if, however, the synod was held in 760, the bishop could not have been removed till the next year. Nounus, called Nono in the Syriac text, "made a hierateion in the church." A "hierateion" is a "locus sacer ac venerandus, tabulate inclusus, clericis tantum, viris saecularibus raro, mulieribus nunquam penetrabilis." 65. This reference to a "bishop in Rome" (as the Syriac has it), is the first and only indication given by the chronicle that there were bishops there at all. From first to last there is no sign of dependence upon Rome, or of any connection with it. 67. Mar Isaac is called an Archimandrite by Assemani, but the Syriac is "head of a convent," or monastery,----the Greek word is not used.

68. Ibas was restored and Nonnus removed; but when Ibas died Nonnus resumed episcopal functions. Nonnus was no doubt a zealous churchman, for he not only made a sacristy in the church, he built the Church of John the Baptist, etc. As Assemani renders it, he also built a "nosocomium pauperum invalidorum extra portam Beth-Semes." The Syriac is here peculiar, and might be rendered "the field of the house of poor invalids." Michaelis says "videtur significare hortos, subdio sed porticibus cinctos, in quibus obambulari aegroti poterant." Within this inclosure Nonnus built a church. His philanthropy and religious zeal further appear in his erection of convents, towers and bridges, and in the improvement of the highways. These things certainly indicate wealth, influence and public spirit. 69. The death of this famous enthusiast, whom Assemani calls "Sanctissimum Stylitam," is said to have happened in the year 770, or A.D. 459. So the Chronicle quoted in Syriac Miscellanies (p. 83), "In 730 Mar Simeon ascended the pillar, and in 770 he died on the 2nd of Elul."

74. All artificers were required to pay a tax of one Aureus |44 every fourth year. The taxes levied are enumerated in the extracts given by Assemani (B. O., i., 268), and are very curious, including horses, oxen, mules, asses, dogs, beggars, and dunghills. 76. The Syncelli were the personal attendants and assistants of the bishop. Assemani overlooks in his translation the clause about the sign which appeared in the sky, and which was probably a comet. 79. The great fire in the north was no doubt the aurora borealis. From this record we should infer that it is seldom seen in those parts. 82. The sabbath of the resurrection is, of course, the day before Easter Sunday. In the tables of lessons appended by Widmanstadt to his Syriac Testament, the day after Good Friday is called the "sabbath of the annunciation." 83. The receptacle in question was probably the shrine of St. Euphemia. According to Theophanes, the book was laid up in the altar, and was actually conveyed to the emperor. The miracle was of course an after-thought.

87. To this item Assemani appends the words "exilio mulctavit," probably because he supposed this implied by the previous verb. 89. This Paul was Bishop of Edessa twice. The Syrians call him an "interpreter of books," either because he translated out of Greek into Syriac, or because he wrote expositions of Scripture. Respecting him Assemani gives an interesting extract from John of Asia (or of Ephesus) preserved by Dionysius in his Chronicle. The baptistery alluded to in the text is probably the one mentioned above, number 29. 90. For "December" Assemani has "October" by mistake. Who were the oriental monks so summarily ejected? They were monophysites, but how came they to be styled "orientals" at Edessa? 92. The remains of Asclepius were exhumed and transferred to Edessa to be buried in the Church of St. Barlaha, upon or beside those of Nonnus. 97. Ephraim of Amida is called "Comes Orientis," a dignity which he appears not to have retained, although Assemani passes over the verbs which we translate "had been."

101. The Huns who thus come upon the scene, it is needless to say, were Asiatic Tartars. 102. Rufinus is called "patricius" or the patrician, a name borne by the presidents or prefects of Edessa. (See Nos. 89, 93.) 104. The word "indiction" occurs in the text. This mode of reckoning is often given in old Syriac writers. Procopius |45 says that a comet appeared in the thirteenth of Justinian, and hence Assemani infers that for 850 we should read 851 in the text. 105. Shura or Sura is mentioned by Procopius, De Aedific. Justin, ii. 9. See Martiniere sub voc. Surum. D'Anville places it on the Euphrates, and with others calls it Sura. Procopius terms it Surwn polisma ----the town of Suron. The Syriac word means usually "a wall." Instead of two hundred pounds of gold, or, as the Syriac text has it, "two centenaria of gold," Assemani writes "duobus auri pondo," but surely "pondo" does not equal "centenaria;" probably we should read "ducentis auri pondo."

106. This Chronicle is followed in Assemani by a list of the kings of Edessa, and a list of its bishops from A.D. 313 to 769. We may note that the Chronicle mentions no Bishop of Edessa before Conon, "who laid the foundation of the Church of Edessa" in A.D. 313. But we must not misinterpret this indication. There had long been Christians in Edessa, as authentic records prove. Not only so, this very Chronicle, in recording the overthrow of the

city by water in 513 (A.D. 202), mentions the destruction of the ”temple of the church of the Christians.” This remarkable phrase shews not only that the disciples had a house of worship then, but that it was called a temple. More than this, the Christian community seems to monopolize the word Church, which was not yet applied to the building in which they assembled. Assemani observes that the words under notice shew that the Archivists were still heathen, although the king was a Christian, as Eusebius notes from Africanus (in Chron). Conon, above-named, refounded the church at Edessa, and hoped to rebuild it, but this work was accomplished by his successor. It can hardly be supposed that the reference is to the restoration of the ”temple” destroyed in A.D. 202; it is rather to what is called ”the old church” in number 60; restored by Justinian with immense splendour.---- (Vid. Bayer, p. 250).

B.H.C. [Footnotes numbered and placed at the end] 1. For an account of these curious relics see J. S. L., Third Series, Vol. VII., p. 423, for July, 1858. 2. Syrian Miscellanies, p. 81. 3. Bibliotheca Orientalis, vol. i., cap. ix., p. 387, et seqq. 4. See Syrian Miscellanies, p. 87; ”In the year 448, Marcion and Manetes (i.e., Manichaeus), heretics in Phrygia, were famous (i.e., flourished);” and again, ”In the year 573 arose the deceiver Manes.” 5. At the end we read, ”And again a second time were broken down its walls, in the days of Diocletian who was king,----the year 614, in the month Iyar (May).” 6. Assemani says ”southern side,” and we may guess why. 7. Lower down, said to have been on Tuesday the eighteenth of March, and the name of Theodosius properly substituted for that of Arcadius, who had been dead five or six years.

8. Observe, July was in 833, and October in 834. 9. In the later portions of the translation we have put ”An.” where the text has ”the year,” or ”in the year;” and we have not always explained the month. The year A.D. may of course be ascertained by deducting 311; care being taken to remember that the years properly commence in September. Hence Haziran 636 is A.D. 325; but so is Canun the former 637. Therefore, when an occurrence falls in the first eight months of the year we must deduct 311 to reduce it to A.D.; but when an event belongs to the four last months we must deduct 312. There are irregularities, but the year properly began on the Calends of September. For the benefit of some readers we append the months which generally correspond. At present the Persian Nestorians follow the old style, like the Russians, but we may regard the ancient months as agreeing with the Roman:----

Elul.....September. Adar .....March. Tishrin 1 .....October. Nisan .....April. Tishrin 2 .....November. Iyar.....May. Canun 1.....December. Haziran .....June. Canun 2.....January. Tammuz.....July. Shebat.....February. Ab .....August.

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