

Persia from the Earliest Period to the Arab Conquest

W.S.W. Vaux



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From the preface: "THE history of Persia, as generally understood, may be considered as a supplement to that of Assyria and Babylonia, the events that have made her most famous in antiquity having been achieved after the empire of the first had passed away, and the second had been subjugated by the Persians. The small province of Persis (in the Bible Paras, in the native inscriptions Parsa), whence the name of Persia is derived, was bounded on the north by Media on the south by the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, on the east by Caramania (Kerman) and on the west by Susiana. It was, indeed, nearly the same district as the modern Farsistan, the name of which is obviously derived from it; and in length and breadth not more than 450 and 250 miles respectively. With regard to the population which occupied this district at the earliest historical period, it is certain from the Cuneiform inscriptions that they were not the original dwellers in the district, but themselves immigrants, though it is not so certain whence. It would lead us too far a-field to discuss here the wide question of the settlement of the nations after the Biblical Flood, confirmed so remarkably as this is by Mr. George Smith's recent discoveries. Moreover, it is not possible to fill up, except conjecturally, many wide spaces, both of time and territory. Admitting, however, the existence of a Deluge, such as that recorded in Holy Writ, a long period must have elapsed before the different families of mankind had arranged themselves in the groups and in the districts we find them occupying at the dawn of history."

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