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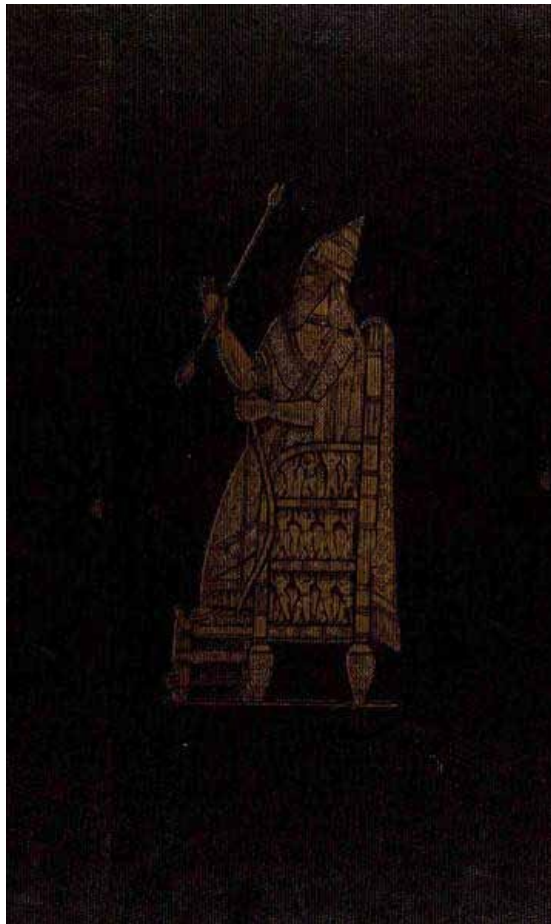
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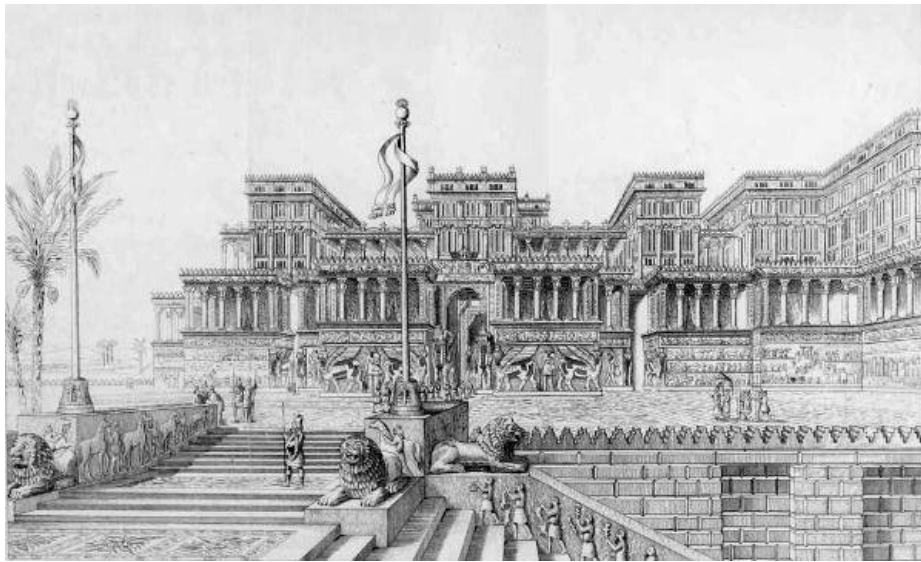
Release date: June 2, 2012 [EBook #39897]

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G P PUTNAM & C^o NEW YORK.

NORTH-EASTERN FACADE AND GRAND ENTRANCE OF SENNACHERIBS PALACE KOUYUNJIK

Restored from a Sketch by J Fergusson, Esq^re

DISCOVERIES AMONG THE RUINS OF NINEVEH AND BABYLON;

WITH

TRAVELS IN ARMENIA, KURDISTAN, AND THE DESERT:
BEING THE RESULT OF A SECOND EXPEDITION
UNDERTAKEN FOR
THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

BY
AUSTEN H. LAYARD, M. P.
AUTHOR OF "NINEVEH AND ITS REMAINS."

"For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin; a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built."—ISAIAH XXV. 2.

ABRIDGED FROM THE LARGER WORK.

NEW-YORK:
G. P. PUTNAM & CO., 10 PARK PLACE.
1853.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

[Pg 3]

The present Abridgment of Mr. Layard's Discoveries among the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon has been prepared with much care and attention; and a studious effort has been made to retain, in the Author's own language, the more interesting and important portions of the larger work. This has been done by omitting the greater part of the minute details of the descriptions of sculpture and monumental remains, by dispensing with several tables of cuneiform characters, elaborate examinations of various matters by scientific men, &c. At the same time there has been retained every thing relating to the Bible, and illustrating and enforcing its truth and the fulfilment of prophecy; as well as the genial and life-like portraitures of Arab habits and customs, and the pleasant adventures of the Author in regions that to most men seem like fairy land.

For general use it is confidently hoped and believed that the present volume will be more widely serviceable than the larger work, from its expensiveness and size, could possibly be.

[Pg 4]

S.

New-York, May 2d, 1853.

PREFACE.

[Pg 5]

Since the publication of my first work on the discoveries at Nineveh much progress has been made in deciphering the cuneiform character, and the contents of many highly interesting and important inscriptions have been given to the public. For these additions to our knowledge we are mainly indebted to the sagacity and learning of two English scholars, Col. Rawlinson and the Rev. Dr. Hincks. In making use of the results of their researches, I have not omitted to own the sources from which my information has been derived. I trust, also, that I have in no instance availed myself of the labors of other writers, or of the help of friends, without due acknowledgments. I have endeavored to assign to every one his proper share in the discoveries recorded in these pages.

I am aware that several distinguished French scholars, amongst whom I may mention my friends, M. Botta and M. de Saulcy, have contributed to the successful deciphering of the Assyrian inscriptions. Unfortunately I have been unable to consult the published results of their investigations. If, therefore, I should have overlooked in any instance their claims to prior discovery, I have to express my regret for an error arising from ignorance, and not from any unworthy national prejudice.

Doubts appear to be still entertained by many eminent critics as to the progress actually made in deciphering the cuneiform writing. These doubts may have been confirmed by too hasty theories and conclusions, which, on subsequent investigation, their authors have been the first to withdraw. But the unbiased inquirer can scarcely now reject the evidence which can be brought forward to confirm the general accuracy of the interpretations of the inscriptions. Had they rested upon a single word, or an isolated paragraph, their soundness might reasonably have been questioned; when, however, several independent investigators have arrived at the same results, and have not only detected numerous names of persons, nations, and cities in historical and geographical series, but have found them mentioned in proper connection with events recorded by sacred and profane writers, scarcely any stronger evidence could be desired. The reader, I would fain hope, will come to this conclusion when I treat of the contents of the various records discovered in the Assyrian palaces.

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To Mr. Thomas Ellis, who has added so much to the value of my work by his translations of inscriptions on Babylonian bowls, now for the first time, through his sagacity, deciphered; to those who have assisted me in my labors, and especially to my friend and companion, Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, to the Rev. Dr. Hincks, to the Rev. S. C. Malan, who has kindly allowed me the use of his masterly sketches, to Mr. Fergusson, Mr. Scharf, and to Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Birch, Mr. Vaux, and the other officers of the British Museum, I beg to express my grateful thanks and acknowledgments.

London, January, 1853.

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NINEVEH AND BABYLON.

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CHAPTER I.

THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM RESUME
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—ARMENIAN CHURCHES.—ERZERROOM.—
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After a few months' residence in England during the year 1848, to recruit a constitution worn by long exposure to the extremes of an Eastern climate, I received orders to proceed to my post at Her Majesty's Embassy in Turkey. The Trustees of the British Museum did not, at that time, contemplate further excavations on the site of ancient Nineveh. Ill health and limited time had prevented me from placing before the public, previous to my return from the East, the results of my first researches, with the illustrations of the monuments and copies of the inscriptions recovered from the ruins of Assyria. They were not published until some time after my departure, and did not consequently receive that careful superintendence and revision necessary to works of this nature. It was at Constantinople that I first learnt the general interest felt in England in the discoveries, and that they had been universally received as fresh illustrations of Scripture and prophecy, as well as of ancient history sacred and profane.

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And let me here, at the very outset, gratefully acknowledge that generous spirit of English criticism which overlooks the incapacity and shortcomings of the laborer when his object is worthy of praise, and that object is sought with sincerity and singleness of purpose. The gratitude, which I deeply felt for encouragement rarely equalled, could be best shown by cheerfully consenting, without hesitation, to the request made to me by the Trustees of the British Museum, urged by public opinion, to undertake the superintendence of a second expedition into Assyria. Being asked to furnish a plan of operations, I stated what appeared to me to be the course best calculated to produce interesting and important results, and to enable us to obtain the most accurate information on the ancient history, language, and arts, not only of Assyria, but of its sister kingdom, Babylonia. Perhaps my plan was too vast and general to admit of performance or warrant adoption. I was merely directed to return to the site of Nineveh, and to continue the researches commenced amongst its ruins.

Arrangements were hastily, and of course inadequately, made in England. The assistance of a competent artist was most desirable, to portray with fidelity those monuments which injury and decay had rendered unfit for removal. Mr. F. Cooper was selected by the Trustees of the British Museum to accompany the expedition in this capacity. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, already well known to many of my readers for the share he had taken in my first discoveries, quitted England with him. They both joined me at Constantinople. Dr. Sandwith, an English physician on a visit to the East, was induced to form one of our party. One Abd-el-Messiah, a Catholic Syrian of Mardin, an active and trustworthy servant during my former residence in Assyria, was fortunately at this time in the capital, and again entered my service: my other attendants were Mohammed Agha, a cawass, and an Armenian named Serkis. The faithful Bairakdar, who had so well served me during my previous journey, had accompanied the English commission for the settlement of the boundaries between Turkey and Persia; with the understanding, however, that he was to meet me at Mosul, in case I should return. Cawal Yusuf, the head of the Preachers of the Yezidis, with four chiefs of the districts in the neighbourhood of Diarbekir, who had been for some months in Constantinople, completed my party.

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In consequence of the severe and unjust treatment of the Yezidis, in compelling them to serve in the Turkish army, Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, the chiefs of the whole community, hearing that I was at Constantinople, sent a deputation to the Sultan. Through Sir Stratford Canning's friendly interference, a firman was obtained, and they were freed from all illegal impositions for the future.

Our arrangements were complete by the 28th of August (1849), and on that day we left the Bosphorus by an English steamer bound for Trebizond. The size of my party and its consequent incumbrances rendering a caravan journey absolutely necessary, I determined to avoid the usual tracks, and to cross eastern Armenia and Kurdistan, both on account of the novelty of part of the country in a geographical point of view, and its political interest as having only recently been brought under the immediate control of the Turkish government.

We disembarked at Trebizond on the 31st, and on the following day commenced our land journey. The country between this port and Erzeroom has been frequently traversed and described. Through it pass the caravan routes connecting Persia with the Black Sea, the great lines of intercourse and commerce between Europe and central Asia. The roads usually frequented are three in number. The summer, or upper, road is the shortest, but is most precipitous, and, crossing very lofty mountains, is closed after the snows commence; it is called *Tchairler*, from its fine upland pastures, on which the horses are usually fed when caravans take this route. The middle road has few advantages over the upper, and is rarely followed by merchants, who prefer the lower, although making a considerable detour by Gumish Khaneh, or the Silver Mines. The three unite at the town of Baiburt, midway between the sea and Erzeroom. Although an active and daily increasing trade is carried on by these roads, no means whatever have until recently been taken to improve them. They consist of mere mountain tracks, deep in mud or dust according to the season of the year. The bridges have been long permitted to fall into decay, and commerce is frequently stopped for days by the swollen torrent or fordless stream. This has been one of the many evil results of the system of centralization so vigorously commenced by Sultan Mahmoud, and so steadily carried out during the present reign.

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Since my visit to Trebizond a road for carts has been commenced, which is to lead from that port to the Persian frontiers; but it will, probably, like other undertakings of the kind be abandoned long before completed, or if ever completed will be permitted at once to fall to ruin from the want of common repair. And yet the Persian trade is one of the chief sources of revenue of the Turkish empire, and unless conveniences are afforded for its prosecution, will speedily pass into other hands. The southern shores of the Black Sea, twelve years ago rarely visited by a foreign vessel, are now coasted by steamers belonging to three companies, which touch nearly weekly at the principal ports; and there is commerce and traffic enough for more. The want of proper harbors is a considerable drawback in the navigation of a sea so unstable and dangerous as the Euxine. Trebizond has a mere roadstead, and from its position is otherwise little calculated for a great commercial port, which, like many other places, it has become rather from its hereditary claims as the representative of a city once famous, than from any local advantages. The only harbour on the southern coast is that of Batoun, nor is there any retreat for vessels on the Circassian shores. This place is therefore probably destined to become the emporium of trade, both from its safe and spacious port, and from the facility it affords of internal communication with Persia, Georgia, and Armenia.

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At the back of Trebizond, as indeed along the whole of this singularly bold and beautiful coast, the mountains rise in lofty peaks, and are wooded with trees of enormous growth and admirable quality, furnishing an unlimited supply of timber for commerce or war. Innumerable streams force their way to the sea through deep and rocky ravines. The more sheltered spots are occupied by villages and hamlets, chiefly inhabited by a hardy and industrious race of Greeks. In spring the choicest flowers perfume the air, and luxuriant creepers clothe the limbs of gigantic trees. In summer the richest pastures enamel the uplands, and the inhabitants of the coasts drive their flocks and herds to the higher regions of the hills.

Our journey to Erzeroom was performed without incident. A heavy and uninterrupted rain for two days tried the patience and temper of those who for the first time encountered the difficulties and incidents of Eastern travel. The only place of any interest, passed during our ride, was a small Armenian village, the remains of a larger, with the ruins of three early Christian churches, or baptisteries. These remarkable buildings, of which many examples exist, belong to an order of architecture peculiar to the most eastern districts of Asia Minor and to the ruins of ancient Armenian cities, on the borders of Turkey and Persia. There are many interesting questions connected with this Armenian architecture which will deserve elucidation. From it was probably derived much that passed into the Gothic, whilst the Tatar conquerors of Asia Minor adopted it, as will be hereafter seen, for their mausoleums and places of worship. It is peculiarly elegant both in its decorations, its proportions, and the general arrangement of the masses, and might with advantage be studied by the modern architect. Indeed, Asia Minor contains a mine of similar materials unexplored and almost unknown.

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We reached Erzeroom on the 8th, and were most hospitably received by the British consul, Mr. Brant, a gentleman who has long, well, and honorably sustained our influence in this part of Turkey, and who was the first to open an important field for our commerce in Asia Minor. With him I visited the commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces in Anatolia, who had recently returned from a successful expedition against the wild mountain tribes of central Armenia. Reshid Pasha, known as the "*Guzlu*," or the "Wearer of Spectacles," enjoyed the advantages of an European education, and had already distinguished himself in the military career. With a knowledge of the French language he united a taste for European literature, which, during his numerous expeditions into districts unknown to western travellers, had led him to examine their geographical features, and to make inquiries into the manners and religion of their inhabitants. His last exploit had been the subjugation of the tribes inhabiting the Dudjook Mountains, to the south-west of Erzeroom, long in open rebellion against the Sultan. The account he gave me of the country and its occupants, though curious and interesting, is not perhaps to be strictly relied on, but a district hitherto inaccessible may possibly contain the remains of ancient races, monuments of antiquity, and natural productions of sufficient importance to merit the attention of the traveller in Asia Minor.

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The city of Erzeroom is rapidly declining in importance, and is almost solely supported by the Persian transit trade. It would be nearly deserted if that traffic were to be thrown into a new channel by the construction of the direct road from Batoun to the Persian frontiers. It contains no buildings of any interest, with the exception of a few ruins of monuments of early Mussulman domination; and the modern Turkish edifices, dignified with the names of palaces and barracks, are meeting the fate of neglected mud.

The districts of Armenia and Kurdistan, through which lay our road from Erzeroom to Mosul, are sufficiently unknown and interesting to merit more than a casual mention. Our route by the lake of Wan, Bitlis, and Jezirah was nearly a direct one. It had been but recently opened to caravans. The haunts of the last of the Kurdish rebels were on the shores of this lake. After the fall of the most powerful of their chiefs, Beder Khan Bey, they had one by one been subdued and carried away into captivity. Only a few months had, however, elapsed since the Beys of Bitlis, who had longest resisted the Turkish arms, had been captured. With them rebellion was extinguished for the time in Kurdistan.

Our caravan consisted of my own party, with the addition of a muleteer and his two

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assistants, natives of Bitlis, who furnished me with seventeen horses and mules from Erzeroom to Mosul. The first day's ride, as is customary in the East, where friends accompany the traveller far beyond the city gates, and where the preparations for a journey are so numerous that everything cannot well be remembered, scarcely exceeded nine miles. We rested for the night in the village of Guli, whose owner, one Shahan Bey, had been apprised of my intended visit. He had rendered his newly-built house as comfortable as his means would permit for our accommodation, and, after providing us with an excellent supper, passed the evening with me. Descended from an ancient family of Dereh-Beys, he had inherited the hospitality and polished manners of a class now almost extinct, in consequence of the policy pursued by the Turkish sultans, Mahmoud and Abdul-Medjid, to break down the great families and men of middle rank, who were more or less independent, and to consolidate and centralize the vast Ottoman empire.

It is customary to regard these old Turkish lords as inexorable tyrants—robber chiefs, who lived on the plunder of travellers and of their subjects. That there were many who answered to this description cannot be denied; but they were, I believe, exceptions. Amongst them were some rich in virtues and high and noble feeling. It has been frequently my lot to find a representative of this nearly extinct class in some remote and almost unknown spot in Asia Minor or Albania. I have been received with affectionate warmth at the end of a day's journey by a venerable Bey or Agha in his spacious mansion, now fast crumbling to ruin, but still bright with the remains of rich, yet tasteful, oriental decoration; his long beard, white as snow, falling low on his breast; his many-folded turban shadowing his benevolent yet manly countenance, and his limbs enveloped in the noble garments rejected by the new generation; his hall open to all comers, the guest neither asked from whence he came or whither he was going, dipping his hands with him in the same dish; his servants, standing with reverence before him, rather his children than his servants; his revenues spent in raising fountains[1] on the wayside for the weary traveller, or in building caravanserais on the dreary plain; not only professing, but practising all the duties and virtues enjoined by the Koran, which are Christian duties and virtues too; in his manners, his appearance, his hospitality, and his faithfulness, a perfect model for a Christian gentleman. The race is fast passing away, and I feel grateful in being able to testify, with a few others, to its existence once, against prejudice, intolerance, and so-called reform.

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Our host at Guli, Shahan Bey, although not an old man, was a very favorable specimen of the class I have described. He was truly, in the noble and expressive phraseology of the East, an "Ojiak Zadeh," "a child of the hearth," a gentleman born. His family had originally migrated from Daghistan, and his father, a pasha, had distinguished himself in the wars with Russia. He entertained me with animated accounts of feuds between his ancestors and the neighbouring chiefs; and steadily refused to allow any recompense to himself or his servants for his hospitality.

From Guli we crossed a high range of mountains, running nearly east and west, by a pass called Ali-Baba, or Ala-Baba, enjoying from the summit an extensive view of the plain of Pasvin, once one of the most thickly peopled and best cultivated districts in Armenia. The Christian inhabitants were partly induced by promises of land and protection, and partly compelled by force, to accompany the Russian army into Georgia after the end of the last war with Turkey. By similar means, that part of the Pashalic of Erzeroom adjoining the Russian territories was almost stripped of its most industrious Armenian population. To the south of us rose the snow-capped mountains of the Bin-Ghiul, or the "Thousand Lakes," in which the Araxes and several confluent of the Euphrates have their source. We descended from the pass into undulating and barren downs. The villages, thinly scattered over the low hills, were deserted by their inhabitants, who, at this season of the year, pitch their tents and seek pasture for their flocks in the uplands.

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Next day we continued our journey amongst undulating hills, abounding in flocks of the great and lesser bustard. Innumerable sheep-walks branched from the beaten path, a sign that villages were near; but, like those we had passed the day before, they had been deserted for the *yilaks*, or summer pastures. These villages are still such as they were when Xenophon traversed Armenia. "Their houses," says he, "were under ground; the mouth resembling that of a well, but spacious below: there was an entrance dug for the cattle, but the inhabitants descended by ladders. In these houses were goats, sheep, cows, and fowls, with their young." [2] The low hovels, mere holes in the hill-side, and the common refuge of man, poultry, and cattle, cannot be seen from any distance, and they are purposely built away from the road, to escape the unwelcome visits of travelling government officers and marching troops. It is not uncommon for a traveller to receive the first intimation of his approach to a village by finding his horse's fore feet down a chimney, and himself taking his place unexpectedly in the family circle through the roof. Numerous small streams wind among the valleys, marking by meandering lines of perpetual green their course to the Arras, or Araxes. We crossed that river about mid-day by a ford not more than three feet deep, but the bed of the stream is wide, and after rains, and during the spring, is completely filled by an impassable torrent.

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During the afternoon we crossed the western spur of the Tiektab Mountains, a high and bold range with three well defined peaks, which had been visible from the summit of the Ala-Baba pass. From the crest we had the first view of Subhan, or Sipan, Dagh, a magnificent conical peak, covered with eternal snow, and rising abruptly from the plain to the north of

Lake Wan. It is a conspicuous and beautiful object from every part of the surrounding country. We descended into the wide and fertile plain of Hinnis. The town was just visible in the distance, but we left it to the right, and halted for the night in the large Armenian village of Kosli, after a ride of more than nine hours. I was received at the guesthouse (a house reserved for travellers, and supported by joint contributions), with great hospitality by one Misrab Agha, a Turk, to whom the village formerly belonged as Spahilik or military tenure, and who, deprived of his hereditary rights, had now farmed its revenues. He hurried with a long stick among the low houses, and heaps of dry dung, piled up in every open space for winter fuel, collecting fowls, curds, bread, and barley, abusing at the same time the *tanzimat*, which compelled such exalted travellers as ourselves, he said, "to pay for the provisions we condescended to accept." The inhabitants were not, however, backward in furnishing us with all we wanted, and the flourish of Misrab Agha's stick was only the remains of an old habit. I invited him to supper with me, an invitation he gladly accepted, having himself contributed a tender lamb roasted whole towards our entertainment.

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The inhabitants of Kosli could scarcely be distinguished either by their dress or by their general appearance from the Kurds. They seemed prosperous and were on the best terms with the Mussulman farmer of their tithes. The village stands at the foot of the hills forming the southern boundary of the plain of Hinnis, through which flows a branch of the Murad Su, or Lower Euphrates. We forded this river near the ruins of a bridge at Kara Kupri. The plain is generally well cultivated, the principal produce being corn and hemp. The villages, which are thickly scattered over it, have the appearance of extreme wretchedness, and, with their low houses and heaps of dried manure piled upon the roofs and in the open spaces around, look more like gigantic dunghills than human habitations. The Kurds and Armenian Christians, both hardy and industrious races, are pretty equally divided in numbers, and live sociably in the same filth and misery.

We left the plain of Hinnis by a pass through the mountain range of Zernak. On reaching the top of the pass we had an interrupted view of the Subhan Dagh. From the village of Karagol, where we halted for the night, it rose abruptly before us. This magnificent peak, with the rugged mountains of Kurdistan, the river Euphrates winding through the plain, the peasants driving the oxen over the corn on the threshing-floor, and the groups of Kurdish horsemen with their long spears and flowing garments, formed one of those scenes of Eastern travel which leave an indelible impression on the imagination, and bring back in after years indescribable feelings of pleasure and repose.

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We crossed the principal branch of the Euphrates soon after leaving Karagol. Although the river is fordable at this time of year, during the spring it is nearly a mile in breadth, overflowing its banks, and converting the entire plain into one great marsh. We had now to pick our way through a swamp, scaring, as we advanced, myriads of wild-fowl. I have rarely seen game in such abundance and such variety in one spot; the water swarmed with geese, duck, and teal, the marshy ground with herons and snipe, and the stubble with bustards and cranes. After the rains the lower road is impassable, and caravans are obliged to make a considerable circuit along the foot of the hills.

We were not sorry to escape the fever-breeding swamp and mud of the plain, and to enter a line of low hills, separating us from the lake of Gula Shailu. I stopped for a few minutes at an Armenian monastery, situated on a small platform overlooking the plain. The bishop was at his breakfast, his fare frugal and episcopal enough, consisting of nothing more than boiled beans and sour milk. He insisted that I should partake of his repast, and I did so, in a small room scarcely large enough to admit the round tray containing the dishes, into which I dipped my hand with him and his chaplain. I found him profoundly ignorant, like the rest of his class, grumbling about taxes, and abusing the Turkish government.

After a pleasant ride of five hours we reached a deep clear lake, embedded in the mountains, two or three pelicans, "swan and shadow double," and myriads of waterfowl, lazily floating on its blue waters. Piron, the village where we halted for the night, stands at the further end of the Gula Shailu, and is inhabited by Kurds of the tribe of Hasananlu, and by Armenians, all living in good fellowship amidst the dirt and wretchedness of their eternal dung-heaps. Ophthalmia had made sad havoc amongst them, and the doctor was soon surrounded by a crowd of the blind and diseased clamoring for relief. The villagers said that a Persian, professing to be a Hakim, had passed through the place some time before, and had offered to cure all bad eyes on payment of a certain sum in advance. These terms being agreed to, he gave his patients a powder which left the sore eyes as they were, and destroyed the good ones. He then went his way: "And with the money in his pocket too," added a ferocious-looking Kurd, whose appearance certainly threw considerable doubt on the assertion; "but what can one do in these days of accursed *Tanzimat* (reform)?"

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The lake of Shailu is separated from the larger lake of Nazik, by a range of low hills about six miles in breadth. We reached the small village of Khers, built on its western extremity, in about two hours and a half, and found the chief, surrounded by the principal inhabitants, seated on a raised platform near a well-built stone house. He assured me, stroking a beard of spotless white to confirm his words, that he was above ninety years of age, and had never seen an European before the day of my visit. Half blind, he peered at me through his blear eyes until he had fully satisfied his curiosity; then spoke contemptuously of the Franks, and abused the *Tanzimat*. The old gentleman, notwithstanding his rough exterior, was hospitable after his fashion, and would not suffer us to depart until we had eaten of every delicacy the

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village could afford.

Leaving the Nazik Gul, we entered an undulating country traversed by very deep ravines, mere channels cut into the sandstone by mountain torrents. The villages are built at the bottom of these gulleys, amidst fruit-trees and gardens, sheltered by perpendicular rocks and watered by running streams. They are undiscovered until the traveller reaches the very edge of the precipice, when a pleasant and cheerful scene opens suddenly beneath his feet. He would have believed the upper country a mere desert had he not spied here and there in the distance a peasant slowly driving his plough through the rich soil. The inhabitants of this district are more industrious and ingenious than their neighbours. They carry the produce of their harvest not on the backs of animals, as in most parts of Asia Minor, but in carts entirely made of wood, no iron being used even in the wheels, which are ingeniously built of walnut, oak, and kara agatch (literally, black tree—? thorn), the stronger woods being used for rough spokes let into the nave. The plough also differs from that in general use in Asia. To the share are attached two parallel boards, about four feet long and a foot broad, which separate the soil and leave a deep and well defined furrow.

We rode for two or three hours on these uplands, until, suddenly reaching the edge of a ravine, a beautiful prospect of a lake, woodland, and mountain opened before us.

CHAPTER II.

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THE LAKE OF WAN.—AKHLAT.—TATAR TOMBS.—
ANCIENT REMAINS.—A DERVISH.—A FRIEND.—
THE MUDIR.—ARMENIAN REMAINS.—AN
ARMENIAN CONVENT AND BISHOP.—JOURNEY
TO BITLIS.—NIMROUD DAGH.—BITLIS.—
JOURNEY TO KHERZAN.—YEZIDI VILLAGE.

The first view the traveller obtains of the Lake of Wan, on descending towards it from the hills above Akhlat, is singularly beautiful. This great inland sea, of the deepest blue, is bounded to the east by ranges of serrated snow-capped mountains, peering one above the other, and springing here and there into the highest peaks of Tiyari and Kurdistan; beneath them lies the sacred island of Akhtamar, just visible in the distance, like a dark shadow on the water. At the further end rises the one sublime cone of the Subhan, and along the lower part of the eastern shores stretches the Nimroud Dagh, varied in shape, and rich in local traditions.

At our feet, as we drew nigh to the lake, were the gardens of the ancient city of Akhlat, leaning minarets and pointed Mausoleums peeping above the trees. We rode through vast burying-grounds, a perfect forest of upright stones seven or eight feet high of the richest red colour, most delicately and tastefully carved with arabesque ornaments and inscriptions in the massive character of the early Mussulman age. In the midst of them rose here and there a conical *turbah*^[3] of beautiful shape, covered with exquisite tracery. The monuments of the dead still stand, and have become the monuments of a city, itself long crumbled into dust. Amidst orchards and gardens are scattered here and there low houses rudely built out of the remains of the earlier habitations, and fragments of cornice and sculpture are piled up into the walls around the cultivated plots.

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Beyond the turbah, said to be that of Sultan Baiandour through a deep ravine such as I have already described, runs a brawling stream, crossed by an old bridge; orchards and gardens make the bottom of the narrow valley, and the cultivated ledges as seen from above, a bed of foliage. The lofty perpendicular rocks rising on both sides are literally honeycombed with entrances to artificial caves, ancient tombs, or dwelling-places. On a high isolated mass of sandstone stand the walls and towers of a castle, the remains of the ancient city of Khelath, celebrated in Armenian history, and one of the seats of Armenian power. I ascended to the crumbling ruins, and examined the excavations in the rocks. The latter are now used as habitations, and as stables for herds and flocks.

Many of the tombs are approached by flights of steps, also cut in the rock. An entrance, generally square, unless subsequently widened, and either perfectly plain or decorated with a simple cornice, opens into a spacious chamber, which frequently leads into others on the same level, or by narrow flights of steps into upper rooms. There are no traces of the means by which these entrances were closed: they probably were so by stones, turning on rude hinges, or rolling on rollers.

Leaving the valley and winding through a forest of fruit trees, here and there interspersed with a few primitive dwellings, I came to the old Turkish castle, standing on the very edge of the lake. It is a pure Ottoman edifice, less ancient than the turbahs, or the old walls towering above the ravine. Inscriptions over the gateways state that it was partly built by Sultan Selim, and partly by Sultan Suleiman, and over the northern entrance occurs the date

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of 975 of the Hejira. In the fort there dwelt, until very recently, a notorious Kurdish freebooter, of the name of Mehemet Bey, who, secure in this stronghold, ravaged the surrounding country, and sorely vexed its Christian inhabitants. He fled on the approach of the Turkish troops, after their successful expedition against Nur-Ullah Bey, and is supposed to be wandering in the mountains of southern Kurdistan.

The ancient city of Khelath was the capital of the Armenian province of Peznouni. It came under the Mohammedan power as early as the ninth century, but was conquered by the Greeks of the Lower Empire at the end of the tenth. The Seljuks took it from them, and it then again became a Mussulman principality. It was long a place of contention for the early Arab and Tartar conquerors. Shah Armen^[4] reduced it towards the end of the twelfth century. It was besieged, without result, by the celebrated Saleh-ed-din, and was finally captured by his nephew, the son of Melek Adel, in A. D. 1207.

The sun was setting as I returned to the tents. The whole scene was lighted up with its golden tints, and Claude never composed a subject more beautiful than was here furnished by nature herself. I was seated outside my tent gazing listlessly on the scene, when I was roused by a well-remembered cry, but one which I had not heard for years. I turned about and saw standing before me a Persian Dervish, clothed in the fawn-colored gazelle skin, and wearing the conical red cap, edged with fur, and embroidered in black braid with verses from the Koran and invocations to Ali, the patron of his sect. He was no less surprised than I had been at his greeting, when I gave him the answer peculiar to men of his order. He was my devoted friend and servant from that moment, and sent his boy to fetch a dish of pears, for which he actually refused a present ten times their value.

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Whilst we were seated chatting in the soft moonlight, Hormuzd was suddenly embraced by a young man resplendent with silk and gold embroidery and armed to the teeth. He was a chief from the district of Mosul, and well known to us. Hearing of our arrival he had hastened from his village at some distance to welcome us, and to endeavour to persuade me to move the encampment and partake of his hospitality. Failing of course, in prevailing upon me to change my quarters for the night, he sent his servant to his wife, who was a lady of Mosul, and formerly a friend of my companion's, for a sheep. We found ourselves thus unexpectedly amongst friends. Our circle was further increased by Christians and Mussulmans of Akhlat, and the night was far spent before we retired to rest.

In the morning, soon after sunrise, I renewed my wanderings amongst the ruins, first calling upon the Mudir, or governor, who received me seated under his own fig-tree. He was an old greybeard, a native of the place, and of a straightforward, honest bearing. I had to listen to the usual complaints of poverty and over-taxation, although, after all, the village, with its extensive gardens, only contributed yearly ten purses, or less than forty-five pounds, to the public revenue. This sum seems small enough, but without trade, and distant from any high road, there was not a para of ready money, according to the Mudir, in the place.

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From the Mudir's house I rode to the more ancient part of the city and to the rock-tombs. I entered many of these; and found all of them to be of the same character, though varying in size. Amongst them there are galleries and passages in the cliffs without apparent use, and flights of steps, cut out of the rock, which seem to lead nowhere. I searched and inquired in vain for inscriptions and remains of sculpture, and yet the place is of undoubted antiquity, and in the immediate vicinity of cotemporary sites where cuneiform inscriptions do exist.

During my wanderings I entered an Armenian church and convent standing on a ledge of rock overhanging the stream, about four miles up the southern ravine. The convent was tenanted by a bishop and two priests. They dwelt in a small low room, scarcely lighted by a hole carefully blocked up with a sheet of oiled paper to shut out the cold; dark, musty, and damp, a very parish clerk in England would have shuddered at the sight of such a residence. Their bed, a carpet worn to threads, spread on the rotten boards; their diet, the coarsest sandy bread and a little sour curds, with beans and mangy meat for a jubilee. A miserable old woman sat in a kind of vault under the staircase preparing their food, and passing her days in pushing to and fro with her skinny hands the goat's skin containing the milk to be shaken into butter. She was the housekeeper and handmaiden of the episcopal establishment. The church was somewhat higher, though even darker than the dwelling-room, and was partly used to store a heap of mouldy corn and some primitive agricultural implements. The whole was well and strongly built, and had the evident marks of antiquity. The bishop showed me a rude cross carved on a rock outside the convent, which, he declared, had been cut by one of the disciples of the Saviour himself. It is, at any rate, considered a relic of very great sanctity, and is an object of pilgrimage for the surrounding Christian population.

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On my return to our encampment the tents were struck, and the caravan had already begun its march. Time would not permit me to delay, and with a deep longing to linger on this favored spot, I slowly followed the road leading along the margin of the lake to Bitlis. I have seldom seen a fairer scene, one richer in natural beauties. The artist and the lover of nature may equally find at Akhlat objects of study and delight. The architect, or the traveller, interested in the history of that graceful and highly original branch of art, which attained its full perfection under the Arab rulers of Egypt and Spain, should extend his journey to the remains of ancient Armenian cities, far from high roads and mostly unexplored. He would then trace how that architecture, deriving its name from Byzantium, had taken the same

development in the East as it did in the West, and how its subsequent combination with the elaborate decoration, the varied outline, and tasteful coloring of Persia had produced the style termed Saracenic, Arabic, and Moresque. He would discover almost daily, details, ornaments, and forms, recalling to his mind the various orders of architecture, which, at an early period, succeeded to each other in Western Europe and in England; modifications of style for which we are mainly indebted to the East during its close union with the West by the bond of Christianity. The Crusaders, too, brought back into Christendom, on their return from Asia, a taste for that rich and harmonious union of color and architecture which had already been so successfully introduced by the Arabs into the countries they had conquered.

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Our road skirted the foot of the Nimroud Dagh, which stretches from Akhlat to the southern extremity of the lake. We crossed several dykes of lava and scoria, and wide mud-torrents now dry, the outpourings of a volcano long since extinct. Our road gradually led away from the lake. With Cawal Yusuf and my companions I left the caravan far behind. The night came on, and we were shrouded in darkness. We sought in vain for the village which was to afford us a resting-place, and soon lost our uncertain track. The Cawal took the opportunity of relating tales collected during former journeys on this spot, of robber Kurds and murdered travellers, which did not tend to remove the anxiety felt by some of my party. At length, after wandering to and fro for above an hour, we heard the distant jingle of the caravan bells. We rode in the direction of the welcome sound, and soon found ourselves at the Armenian village of Keswak, standing in a small bay, and sheltered by a rocky promontory jutting boldly into the lake.

Next morning we rode along the margin of the lake, still crossing the spurs of the Nimroud Dagh, furrowed by numerous streams of lava and mud. In one of the deep gulleys, opening from the mountain to the water's edge, are a number of isolated masses of sandstone, worn into fantastic shapes by the winter torrents, which sweep down from the hills. The people of the country call them "the Camels of Nimrod." Tradition says that the rebellious patriarch, endeavoring to build an inaccessible castle, strong enough to defy both God and man, the Almighty, to punish his arrogance, turned the workmen, as they were working, into stone. The rocks on the border of the lake are the camels, who, with their burdens, were petrified into a perpetual memorial of the Divine vengeance. The unfinished walls of the castle are still to be seen on the top of the mountain; and the surrounding country, the seat of a primeæval race, abounds in similar traditions.

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We left the southern end of the lake, near the Armenian village of Tadwan, once a place of some importance, and soon entered a rugged ravine, worn by the mountain rills, collected into a large stream. This was one of the many head-waters of the Tigris. It was flowing tumultuously to our own bourne, and, as we gazed upon the troubled waters, they seemed to carry us nearer to our journey's end. The ravine was at first wild and rocky; cultivated spots next appeared, scattered in the dry bed of the torrent; then a few gigantic trees; gardens and orchards followed, and at length the narrow valley opened on the long, straggling town of Bitlis. The governor had here provided quarters for us in a large house belonging to an Armenian, who had been tailor to Beder Khan Bey.

My party was now, for the first time during the journey, visited with that curse of Eastern travel, fever and ague. The doctor was prostrate, and having then no experience of the malady, at once had dreams of typhus and malignant fever. A day's rest was necessary, and our jaded horses needed it as well as we, for there were bad mountain roads and long marches before us. I had a further object in remaining:—this was, to obtain indemnity for the robbery committed on some relations of Cawal Yusuf two years before. The official order of Reshid Pasha, and the governor's intervention, speedily effected the desired arrangement.

The governor ordered cawasses to accompany me through the town. I had been told that ancient inscriptions existed in the castle, or on the rock, but I searched in vain for them: those pointed out to me were early Mohammedan. Bitlis contains many picturesque remains of mosques, baths, and bridges, and was once a place of considerable size and importance. It is built in the very bottom of a deep valley, and on the sides of ravines, worn by small tributaries of the Tigris. The export trade is chiefly supplied by the produce of the mountains; galls, honey, wax, wool, and carpets and stuffs, woven and dyed in the tents. The dyes of Kurdistan, and particularly those from the districts around Bitlis, Sert, and Jezireh, are celebrated for their brilliancy. They are made from herbs gathered in the mountains, and from indigo, yellow berries, and other materials, imported into the country. The carpets are of a rich soft texture, the patterns displaying considerable elegance and taste: they are much esteemed in Turkey. There was a fair show of Manchester goods and coarse English cutlery in the shops. The sale of arms, once extensively carried on, had been prohibited.

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Having examined the town, I visited the Armenian bishop, who dwells in a large convent in one of the ravines branching off from the main valley. On my way I passed several hot springs, some gurgling up in the very bed of the torrent. The bishop was maudlin, old, and decrepit; he cried over his own personal woes, and over those of his community, abused the Turks, and the American missionaries, whispering confidentially in my ear as if the Kurds were at his door. He insisted in the most endearing terms, and occasionally throwing his arms round my neck, that I should drink a couple of glasses of fiery raki, although it was still early morning, pledging me himself in each glass. He showed me his church, an ancient building, well hung with miserable daubs of saints and miracles.

There are three roads from Bitlis to Jezireh; two over the mountains through Sert, generally frequented by caravans, but very difficult and precipitous; a third more circuitous, and winding through the valleys of the eastern branch of the Tigris. I chose the last, as it enabled me to visit the Yezidi villages of the district of Kherzan. We left Bitlis on the 20th.

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About five miles from Bitlis the road is carried by a tunnel, about twenty feet in length, through a mass of calcareous rock, projecting like a huge rib from the mountain's side. The mineral stream, which in the lapse of ages has formed this deposit, is still at work, projecting great stalactites from its sides, and threatening to close ere long the tunnel itself. There is no inscription to record by whom and at what period this passage was cut.

We continued during the following day in the same ravine, crossing by ancient bridges the stream, which was gradually gathering strength as it advanced towards the low country. About noon we passed a large Kurdish village, called Goeena, belonging to Sheikh Kassim, one of those religious fanatics who are the curse of Kurdistan. He was notorious for his hatred of the Yezidis, on whose districts he had committed numerous depredations, murdering those who came within his reach. His last expedition had not proved successful; he was repulsed, with the loss of many of his followers. We encamped in the afternoon on the bank of the torrent, near a cluster of Kurdish tents, concealed from view by the brushwood and high reeds. The owners were poor but hospitable, bringing us a lamb, yahgourt, and milk. Late in the evening a party of horsemen rode to our encampment. They were a young Kurdish chief, with his retainers, carrying off a girl with whom he had fallen in love,—not an uncommon occurrence in Kurdistan. They dismounted, eat bread, and then hastened on their journey to escape pursuit.

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Starting next morning soon after dawn we rode for two hours along the banks of the stream, and then, turning from the valley, entered a country of low undulating hills. We halted for a few minutes in the village of Omais-el-Koran, belonging to one of the innumerable saints of the Kurdish mountains. The Sheikh himself was on his terrace superintending the repair of his house, gratuitously undertaken by the neighbouring villagers, who came eagerly to engage in a good and pious work. Leaving a small plain, we ascended a low range of hills by a precipitous pathway, and halted on the summit at a Kurdish village named Khokhi. It was filled with Bashi-Bozuks, or irregular troops, collecting the revenue, and there was such a general confusion, quarrelling of men and screaming of women, that we could scarcely get bread to eat. Yet the officer assured me that the whole sum to be raised amounted to no more than seventy piastres (about thirteen shillings.) The poverty of the village must indeed have been extreme, or the bad will of the inhabitants outrageous.

It was evening before we descended into the plain country of the district of Kherzan. The Yezidi village of Hamki had been visible for some time from the heights, and we turned towards it. As the sun was fast sinking, the peasants were leaving the threshing-floor, and gathering together their implements of husbandry. They saw the large company of horsemen drawing nigh, and took us for irregular troops,—the terror of an Eastern village. Cawal Yusuf, concealing all but his eyes with the Arab kefiéh, which he then wore, rode into the midst of them, and demanded in a peremptory voice provisions and quarters for the night. The poor creatures huddled together, unwilling to grant, yet fearing to refuse. The Cawal, having enjoyed their alarm for a moment, threw his kerchief from his face, exclaiming, "O evil ones, will you refuse bread to your priest, and turn him hungry from your door?" There was surely then no unwillingness to receive us. Casting aside their shovels and forks, the men threw themselves upon the Cawal, each struggling to kiss his hand. The news spread rapidly, and the rejoicing was so great that the village was alive with merriment and feasting.

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Yusuf was soon seated in the midst of a circle of the elders. He told his whole history, with such details and illustrations as an Eastern alone can introduce, to bring every fact vividly before his listeners. Nothing was omitted: his arrival at Constantinople, his reception by me, his introduction to the ambassador, his interview with the great ministers of state, the firman of future protection for the Yezidis, prospects of peace and happiness for the tribe, our departure from the capital, the nature of steamboats, the tossing of the waves, the pains of sea-sickness, and our journey to Kherzan. Not the smallest particular was forgotten; and, when he had finished, it was my turn to be the object of unbounded welcomes and salutations.

As the Cawal sat on the ground, with his noble features and flowing robes, surrounded by the elders of the village, eager listeners to every word which dropped from their priest, and looking towards him with looks of profound veneration, the picture brought vividly to my mind many scenes described in the sacred volumes. Let the painter who would throw off the conventionalities of the age, who would feel as well as portray the incidents of Holy Writ, wander in the East, and mix, not as the ordinary traveller, but as a student of men and of nature, with its people. He will daily meet with customs which he will otherwise be at a loss to understand, and be brought face to face with those who have retained with little change the manners, language, and dress of a patriarchal race.

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CHAPTER III.

RECEPTION BY THE YEZIDIS.—VILLAGE OF
GUZELDER.—TRIUMPHAL MARCH TO REDWAN.
—REDWAN.—ARMENIAN CHURCH.—THE MELEK
TAOUS, OR BRAZEN BIRD.—TILLEH.—VALLEY OF
THE TIGRIS.—BAS RELIEFS.—JOURNEY TO
DEREBOUN—TO SEMIL—ABDE AGHA—JOURNEY
TO MOSUL.—THE YEZIDI CHIEFS.—ARRIVAL AT
MOSUL.—XENOPHON'S MARCH FROM THE ZAB
TO THE BLACK SEA.

I was awoke on the following morning by the tread of horses and the noise of many voices. The good people of Hamki having sent messengers in the night to the surrounding villages to spread the news of our arrival, a large body of Yezidis on horse and on foot had already assembled, although it was not yet dawn, to greet us and to escort us on our journey. They were dressed in their gayest garments, and had adorned their turbans with flowers and green leaves. Their chief was Akko, a warrior well known in the Yezidi wars, still active and daring, although his beard had long turned grey. The head of the village of Guzelder, with the principal inhabitants, had come to invite me to eat bread in his house, and we followed him. As we rode along we were joined by parties of horsemen and footmen, each man kissing my hand as he arrived, the horsemen alighting for that purpose. Before we reached Guzelder the procession had swollen to many hundreds. The men had assembled at some distance from the village, the women and children, dressed in their holiday attire, and carrying boughs of trees, congregated on the housetops.

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Soon after our arrival several Fakirs^[5], in their dark coarse dresses and red and black turbans, came to us from the neighbouring villages. Other chiefs and horsemen also flocked in, and were invited to join in the feast, which was not, however, served up until Cawal Yusuf had related his whole history once more, without omitting a single detail. After we had eaten of stuffed lambs, pillaws, and savory dishes and most luscious grapes, the produce of the district, our entertainer placed a present of home-made carpets at my feet, and we rose to depart. The horsemen, the Fakirs, and the principal inhabitants of Guzelder on foot accompanied me. At a short distance from the village we were met by another large body of Yezidis, and by many Jacobites. A bishop and several priests were with him. Two hours' ride, with this great company, the horsemen galloping to and fro, the footmen discharging their firearms, brought us to the large village of Koshana. The whole of the population, mostly dressed in pure white, and wearing leaves and flowers in their turbans, had turned out to meet us; women stood on the road-side with jars of fresh water and bowls of sour milk, whilst others with the children were assembled on the housetops making the *tahlel*. Resisting an invitation to alight and eat bread, and having merely stopped to exchange salutations with those assembled, I continued on the road to Redwan, our party swollen by a fresh accession of followers from the village. As we passed through the defile leading into the plain of Redwan, we had the appearance of a triumphal procession, but as we approached the small town a still more enthusiastic reception awaited us. First came a large body of horsemen, collected from the place itself, and the neighbouring villages. They were followed by Yezidis on foot, carrying flowers and branches of trees, and preceded by musicians playing on the tubbul and zernai.^[6] Next were the Armenian community headed by their clergy, and then the Jacobite and other Christian sects, also with their respective priests; the women and children lined the entrance to the place and thronged the housetops. I alighted amidst the din of music and the "tahlel" at the house of Nazi, the chief of the whole Yezidi district, two sheep being slain before me as I took my feet from the stirrups.

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I took up my quarters in the Armenian church, dining in the evening with the chiefs to witness the festivities.

The change was indeed grateful to me, and I found at length a little repose and leisure to reflect upon the gratifying scene to which I had that day been witness. I have, perhaps, been too minute in the account of my reception at Redwan, but I record with pleasure this instance of a sincere and spontaneous display of gratitude on the part of a much maligned and oppressed race. To those, unfortunately too many, who believe that Easterns can only be managed by violence and swayed by fear, let this record be a proof that there are high and generous feelings which may not only be relied and acted upon without interfering with their authority, or compromising their dignity, but with every hope of laying the foundation of real attachment and mutual esteem.

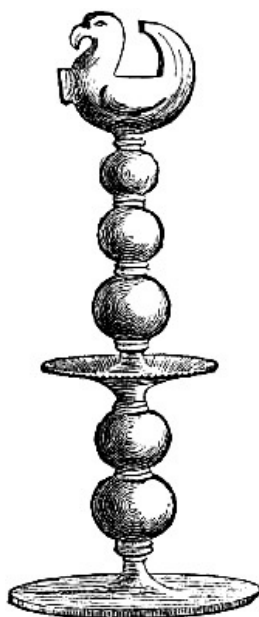
The church stands on the slope of a mound, on the summit of which are the ruins of a castle belonging to the former chiefs of Redwan. It was built expressly for the Christians of the Armenian sect by Mirza Agha, the last semi-independent Yezidi chief, a pleasing example of toleration and liberality well worthy of imitation by more civilised men. Service was performed in the open iwan, or large vaulted chamber, during the afternoon, the congregation kneeling uncovered in the yard. The priests of the different communities called upon me as soon as I was ready to receive their visits. The most intelligent amongst them was a Roman Catholic Chaldæan, a good humoured, tolerant fellow, who with a very small congregation of his own did not bear any ill-will to his neighbours. With the principal Yezidi chiefs, too, I had a long and interesting conversation on the state of their people and on

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their prospects.

Redwan is called a town, because it has a bazar, and is the chief place of a considerable district. It may contain about eight hundred rudely-built huts, and stands on a large stream, which joins the Diarbekir branch of the Tigris, about five or six miles below. The inhabitants are Yezidis, with the exception of about one hundred Armenian, and forty or fifty Jacobite and Chaldæan families. A Turkish Mudir, or petty governor, generally resides in the place, but was absent at the time of my visit.

We slept in a long room opening on the courtyard, and were awoke long before daybreak by the jingling of small bells and the mumbling of priests. It was Sunday, and the Armenians commence their church services betimes. I gazed half dozing, and without rising from my bed, upon the ceremonies, the bowing, raising of crosses, and shaking of bells, which continued for above three hours, until priests and congregation must have been well nigh exhausted. The people, as during the previous afternoon's service, stood and knelt uncovered in the courtyard.



The Melek Taous,
or Copper Bird of the Yezidis.

The Cawals, who are sent yearly by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr to instruct the Yezidis in their faith, and to collect the contributions forming the revenues of the great chief, and of the tomb of Sheikh Adi, were now in Redwan. The same Cawals do not take the same rounds every year. The Yezidis are parcelled out into four divisions for the purpose of these annual visitations, those of the Sinjar, of Kherzan, of the pashalic of Aleppo, and of the villages in northern Armenia, and within the Russian frontiers. The Yezidis of the Mosul districts have the Cawals always amongst them. I was aware that on the occasion of these journeys the priests carry with them the celebrated Melek Taous, or brazen peacock, as a warrant for their mission. As this was a favorable opportunity, I asked and obtained a sight of this mysterious figure. A stand of bright copper or brass, in shape like the candlesticks generally used in Mosul and Baghdad, was surmounted by the rude image of a bird in the same metal, and more like an Indian or Mexican idol than a cock or peacock. Its peculiar workmanship indicated some antiquity, but I could see no traces of inscription upon it. Before it stood a copper bowl to receive contributions, and a bag to contain the bird and stand, which takes to pieces when carried from place to place. There are four such images, one for each district visited by the Cawals. The Yezidis declare that, notwithstanding the frequent wars and massacres to which the sect has been exposed, and the plunder and murder of the priests during their journeys, no Melek Taous has ever fallen into the hands of the Mussulmans. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam was alone permitted to visit the image with me. As I have elsewhere observed,^[7] it is not looked upon as an idol, but as a symbol or banner, as Sheikh Nasr termed it, of the house of Hussein Bey.

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Having breakfasted at Nazi's house we left Redwan, followed by a large company of Yezidis, whom I had great difficulty in persuading to turn back about three or four miles from the town. My party was increased by a very handsome black and tan greyhound with long silky hair, a present from old Akko, the Yezidi chief. Touar, for such was the dog's name, soon forgot his old masters, and formed an equal attachment for his new.

Cawal Yusuf, and the Yezidi chiefs, had sent messengers even to Hussein Bey to apprise him of our coming. As they travelled along they scattered the news through the country, and I was received outside every village by its inhabitants. At Tilleh, the united waters of Bitlis, Sert, and the upper districts of Bohtan, join the western branch of the Tigris. The two

streams are about equal in size, and at this time of the year both fordable in certain places. We crossed the lower, or eastern, which we found wide and exceedingly rapid, the water, however, not reaching above the saddle-girths.

The spot at which we crossed was one of peculiar interest. It was here that the Ten Thousand in their memorable retreat forded this river, called, by Xenophon, the Centritis. The Greeks having fought their way over the lofty mountains of the Carduchians, found their further progress towards Armenia arrested by a rapid stream. The ford was deep, and its passage disputed by a formidable force of Armenians, Mygdonians, and Chaldæans, drawn up on an eminence 300 or 400 feet from the river. In this strait Xenophon dreamt that he was in chains, and that suddenly his fetters burst asunder of their own accord. His dream was fulfilled when two youths casually found a more practicable ford, by which the army, after a skilful stratagem on the part of their commander, safely reached the opposite bank.

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The sun had set before our baggage had been crossed, and we sought, by the light of the moon, the difficult track along the Tigris, where the river forces its way to the low country of Assyria, through a long, narrow, and deep gorge. Huge rocks rose perpendicularly on either side, broken into many fantastic shapes, and throwing their dark shadows over the water. In some places they scarcely left room for the river to pursue its course; and then a footpath, hardly wide enough to admit the loaded mules, was carried along a mere ledge overhanging the gurgling stream. The gradual deepening of this outlet during countless centuries is strikingly shown by the ledges which jutt out like a succession of cornices from the sides of the cliffs. The last ledge left by the retiring waters formed our pathway.

We found no village until we reached Chellek. The place had been deserted by its inhabitants for the Yilaks, or mountain pastures.

For three hours during the following morning we followed the bold and majestic ravine of the Tigris, scenes rivalling each other in grandeur and beauty opening at every turn. Leaving the river, where it makes a sudden bend to the northward, we commenced a steep ascent, and in an hour and a half reached the Christian village of Khouara. We rested during the heat of the day under the grateful shade of a grove of trees, and in the afternoon we stood on the brink of the great platform of Central Asia. Beneath us were the vast plains of Mesopotamia, lost in the hazy distance, the undulating land between them and the Taurus confounded, from so great a height, with the plains themselves; the hills of the Sinjar and of Zakko, like ridges on an embossed map; the Tigris and the Khabour, winding through the low country to their place of junction at Dereboun; to the right, facing the setting sun, and catching its last rays, the high cone of Mardin; behind, a confused mass of peaks, some snow-capped, all rugged and broken, of the lofty mountains of Bohtan and Malataiyah; between them and the northern range of Taurus, the deep ravine of the river and the valley of Redwan. I watched the shadows as they lengthened over the plain, melting one by one into the general gloom, and then descended to the large Kurdish village of Funduk, whose inhabitants, during the rule of Beder Khan Bey, were notorious amongst even the savage tribes of Bohtan for their hatred and insolence to Christians.

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Although we had now nothing to fear, I preferred seeking another spot for our night's halt, but this was not permitted by Resoul Kiayah, who sent after us, and was so urgent in his hospitality that we were compelled to pass the night in the village. The Kurds of Funduk wear the Bohtan dress in its full perfection, a turban nearly three feet in diameter, shalwars or trowsers of enormous width, loose embroidered jackets, and shirt sleeves sweeping the ground; all being striped deep dull red and black, except the under-linen and one kerchief tied diagonally across the turban, which is generally of bright yellow. They are armed, too, to the teeth, and as they crouched round the fires on the housetops, their savage countenances peering through the gloom, my London companion, unused to such scenes, might well have fancied himself in a den of thieves. The Kiayah, notwithstanding his bad reputation, was exact in all the duties of hospitality; the supper was abundant, the coffee flowed perpetually, and he satisfied my curiosity upon many points of revenue, internal administration, tribe-history, and local curiosities.

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We passed the night on the roof without any adventure, and resumed our journey before dawn on the following morning, to the great relief of Mr. C., who rejoiced to feel himself well out of the hands of such dangerous hosts. Crossing a mountain wooded with dwarf oaks, by a very difficult pathway, carried along and over rocks containing many excavated tombs, we descended to Fynyk, a village on the Tigris supposed to occupy the site of an ancient town (Phœnica).^[9]

After we had breakfasted, some Kurds who had gathered round us, offered to take me to a rock, sculptured, they said, with unknown Frank figures. We rode up a narrow and shady ravine, through which leapt a brawling torrent, watering fruit trees and melon beds. The rocks on both sides were honeycombed with tombs. The bas-relief is somewhat above the line of cultivation, and is surrounded by excavated chambers. It consists of two figures, dressed in loose vests and trowsers, one apparently resting his hand on the shoulder of the other. There are the remains of an inscription, but too much weather-worn to be copied with any accuracy. The costume of the figures, and the forms of the characters, as far as they can be distinguished, prove that the tablet belongs to the Parthian period.

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We quitted Fynyk in the afternoon. Accompanied by Cawal Yusuf and Mr. C., I left the

caravan to examine some rock-sculptures, in a valley leading from Jezireh to Derghileh, the former stronghold of Beder Khan Bey. The sculptures are about two miles from the high road, near a small fort built by Mir Saif-ed-din, and now occupied by a garrison of Arnauts. There are two tablets, one above the other; the upper contains a warrior on horseback, the lower a single figure. Although no traces of inscription remain, the bas-reliefs may confidently be assigned to the same period as that at Fynyk.

We found the caravan at Mansouriyah, where they had established themselves for the night. This is one of the very few Nestorian Chaldæan villages of the plains which has not gone over to the Roman Catholic faith. It contains a church, and supports a priest. The inhabitants complained much of oppression, and unfortunately, chiefly from brother Christians formerly of their own creed. I was much struck with the intelligence and beauty of the children; one boy, scarcely twelve years of age, was already a shamasha, or deacon, and could read with ease the Scriptures and the commentaries.

We left Mansouriyah at four in the morning, passing Jezireh about dawn, its towers and walls just visible through the haze on the opposite bank of the Tigris. Shortly after we were unexpectedly met by a number of Yezidi horsemen, from whom we learnt that the country was in a very disturbed state, on account of the incursions of the Desert Arabs; but as a strong party was waiting to accompany us to Semil, I determined upon taking the shorter, though more dangerous and less frequented, road by Dereboun. This road, impracticable to caravans except when the river Khabour is fordable, winds round the spur of the Zakko hills, and thus avoids a difficult and precipitous pass. Dereboun is a large Yezidi village standing on the western spur of the Zakko range. Numerous springs burst from the surrounding rocks, and irrigate extensive rice-grounds. Below is the large Christian village of Feshapoor, where there is a ferry across the Tigris. We were most hospitably entertained by the Yezidi chief, one of the horsemen who had met us near Jezireh.

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We mounted our horses as the moon rose, and resumed our journey, accompanied by a strong escort, which left us when we were within five or six miles of Semil. It was late in the forenoon before we reached our halting-place, after a dreary and fatiguing ride. We were now fairly in the Assyrian plains; the heat was intense—that heavy heat, which seems to paralyse all nature, causing the very air itself to vibrate. The high artificial mound of the Yezidi village, crowned by a modern mud-built castle, had been visible in the distance long before we reached it, miraged into double its real size, and into an imposing group of towers and fortifications. Almost overcome with weariness, we toiled up to it, and found its owner, Abde Agha, the Yezidi chieftain, seated in the gate, a vaulted entrance with deep recesses on both sides, used as places of assembly for business during the day,^[10] and as places of rest for guests during the night. He was of a tall, commanding figure, with the deepest and most powerful voice I ever heard. We arrived earlier than he had expected, our forced march from Dereboun having saved us some hours, and he apologised for not having ridden out to meet us. His reception was most hospitable; the lamb was slain and the feast prepared. But a sudden attack by the Bedouin on a neighbouring village obliged him reluctantly to leave us, and be absent during our stay. Being urged to depart, through apprehension of the Bedouin, we pushed forward, when suddenly a large body of horsemen appeared on a rising ground to the east of us. We could scarcely expect Arabs from that quarter; however, all our party made ready for an attack. Cawal Yusuf and myself, being the best mounted, rode towards them to reconnoitre. Then one or two horsemen advanced warily from the opposite party. We neared each other. Yusuf spied the well-known black turban, dashed forward with a shout of joy, and in a moment we were surrounded, and in the embrace of friends. Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, with the Cawals and Yezidi elders, had ridden nearly forty miles through the night to meet and escort me, if needful, to Mosul! Their delight at seeing us knew no bounds; nor was I less touched by a display of gratitude and good feeling, equally unexpected and sincere.

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They rode with us as far as Tel Eskoff, where the danger from the Arabs ceased; and I was now once more with old friends. In the afternoon, as we rode towards Tel Kef, I left the high road with Hormuzd to drink water at some Arab tents. As we approached we were greeted with exclamations of joy, and were soon in the midst of a crowd of men and women, kissing our knees, and exhibiting other tokens of welcome. They were Jebours, who had been employed in the excavations. Hearing that we were again going to dig after old stones, they at once set about striking their tents to join us at Mosul or Nimroud.

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As we neared Tel Kef we found groups of my old superintendents and workmen by the roadside. There were fat Toma, Mansour, Behnan, and Hannah, joyful at meeting me once more, and at the prospect of fresh service. In the village we found Mr. Rassam (the vice-consul) and Khodja Toma, his dragoman, who had made ready the feast for us at the house of the Chaldæan bishop. Next morning, as we rode the three last hours of our journey, we met fresh groups of familiar faces. Then as we ascend an eminence midway, walls, towers, minarets, and domes rise boldly from the margin of the broad river, cheating us into the belief, too soon to be dispelled, that Mosul is still a not unworthy representative of the great Nineveh. As we draw near, the long line of lofty mounds, the only remains of mighty bulwarks and spacious gates, detach themselves from the low undulating hills; now the vast mound of Kouyunjik overtops the surrounding heaps: then above it peers the white cone of the tomb of the prophet Jonah; many other well-remembered spots follow in rapid succession; but we cannot linger. Hastening over the creaking bridge of boats, we force our

way through the crowded bazars, and alight at the house I had left two years ago. Old servants take their places as a matter of course, and, uninvited, pursue their regular occupations as if they had never been interrupted. Indeed it seemed as if we had but returned from a summer's ride: two years had passed away like a dream.

I may in this place add a few words on part of the route pursued by Xenophon and the Ten Thousand during their memorable retreat, the identification of which had been one of my principal objects during our journey. I have, in the course of my narrative, already pointed out one or two spots signalled by remarkable events on their march.

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I must first state my conviction that the parasang, like its representative, the modern farsang or farsakh of Persia, was not a measure of distance very accurately determined, but rather indicated a certain amount of time employed in traversing a given space. That Xenophon reckoned by the common mode of computation of the country is evident, by his employing, almost always, the Persian "parasang," instead of the Greek stadium; and that the parasang was the same as the modern hour, we find by the distance between Larissa (Nimroud) and Mespila (Kouyunjik) being given as six parasangs, corresponding exactly with the number of hours assigned by the present inhabitants of the country, and by the authorities of the Turkish post, to the same road. The six hours in this instance are equal to about eighteen English miles.

The ford, by which the Greeks crossed the Great Zab (Zabates) may, I think, be accurately determined. It is still the principal ford in this part of the river, and must, from the nature of the bed of the stream, have been so from the earliest periods. It is about twenty-five miles from the confluence of the Zab and Tigris.[11] The Greeks could not have crossed the Zab above the spot I have indicated, as the bed of the river is deep, and confined within high rocky banks. They might have done so *below* the junction of the Ghazir, and a ravine worn by winter rains may correspond with the valley mentioned by Xenophon, but I think the Ghazir far more likely to have been the torrent bed viewed with so much alarm by the Greek commander, and the passage of which Mithridates might have disputed with some prospect of success.[12]

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That Larissa and Mespila are represented by the ruins of Nimroud and Kouyunjik no one can reasonably doubt. Xenophon's description corresponds most accurately with the ruins and with the distance between them.

From Mespila the Greeks marched four parasangs, and probably halted near the modern village of Batnai, between Tel Kef and Tel Eskof, an ancient site exactly four hours, by the usual caravan road, from Kouyunjik. Instead of fording the Khabour near its junction with the Tigris, and thus avoiding the hills, they crossed them by a precipitous pass to the site of the modern Zakko. They reached this range in four days, traversing it on the fifth, probably by the modern caravan road. They were probably much retarded during the last day, by having to fight their way over three distinct mountain ridges. It is remarkable that Xenophon does not mention the Khahour, although he must have crossed that river either by a ford or by a bridge[13] before reaching the plain. Yet the stream is broad and rapid, and the fords at all times deep. Nor does he allude to the Hazel, a confluent of the Khabour, to which he came during his first day's march, after leaving Zakko. These omissions prove that he does not give an accurate itinerary of his route.

Four days' march, the first of only sixty stadia, or about seven miles,[14] brought the Greeks to the high mountains of Kurdistan, which, meeting the Tigris, shut out all further advance, except by difficult and precipitous passes, already occupied by the Persians. Xenophon, having dislodged the enemy from the first ridge, returned to the main body of the army, which had remained in the plain. This must have been near Fynyk, where the very foot of the Kurdish mountains is first washed by the river. The spot agrees accurately with Xenophon's description, as it does with the distance. "The Greeks," says he, "came to a place where the river Tigris is, both from its depth and breadth, absolutely impassable; no road appeared, the craggy mountains of the Carduchians hanging over the river." Xenophon preferred the route across the mountains of Kurdistan, as it led into Armenia, a country from which they might choose their own road to the sea, and which abounded in villages and the necessaries of life.

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Beyond the Carduchian mountains there were, according to the prisoners, two roads into Armenia, one crossing the head waters of the principal branch of the Tigris, the other going round them; that is, leaving them to the left. These are the roads to this day followed by caravans, one crossing the plains of Kherzan to Diarbekir, and thence, by well-known mountain-passes to Kharput, the other passing through Bitlis. Xenophon chose the latter. The villages in the valleys and recesses of the mountains are still found around Funduk; and, on their first day's march over the Carduchian hills, the Greeks probably reached the neighbourhood of this village. There now remained about ten parasangs to the plain through which flows the eastern branch of the Tigris; but the country was difficult, and at this time of the year (nearly midwinter)[15], the lower road along the river was impassable. The Greeks had, therefore, to force their way over a series of difficult passes, all stoutly defended by warlike tribes. They were consequently four days in reaching the Centritis, or eastern Tigris, the united waters of the rivers of Bitlis, Sert, and Bohtan. It was impossible to cross the river at this spot in the face of the enemy. At length, a ford was discovered higher up, and Xenophon, by skilful strategy, effected the passage. This must have been at a short

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distance from Tilleh, as the river, narrowed between rocky banks, is no longer fordable higher up.

Owing to the frequent incursions of the Carduchi, the villages along the banks of the Bitlis had been abandoned, and the Greeks were compelled to turn to the westward, to find provisions and habitations. Still *there was no road* into Armenia, particularly at this time of year, for an army encumbered with baggage, except that through the Bitlis valley. The remains of an ancient causeway are even now to be traced, and this probably has always been the great thoroughfare between western Armenia and the Assyrian plains. Xenophon consequently made nearly the same detour as I had made on my way from Constantinople.

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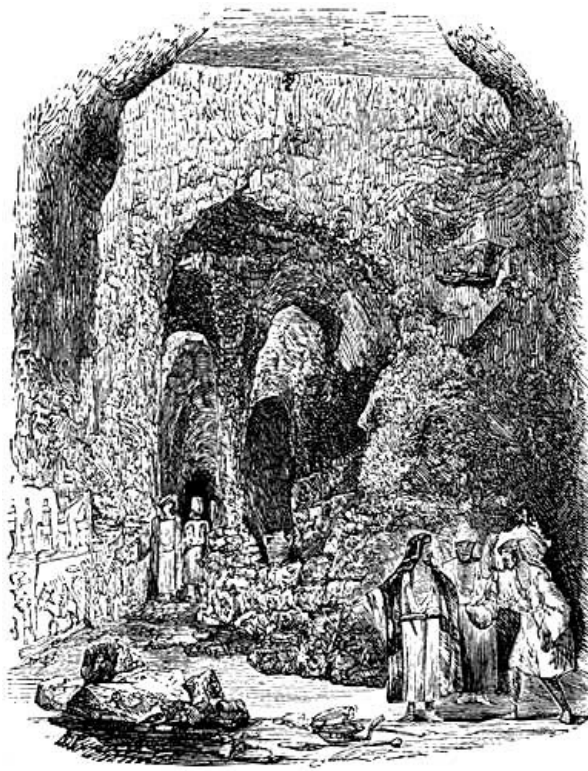
Six marches, of five parasangs each, brought them to the small river Teleboas, which I believe to have been the river of Bitlis. After crossing the low country of Kherzan, well described by Xenophon as "a plain varied by hills of an easy ascent," the Greeks must necessarily have turned slightly to the eastward to reach the Bitlis valley, as inaccessible mountains stopped all further progress. My caravan was thirty-three hours in journeying from Bitlis to Tilleh, corresponding exactly with the six days' march of the Greeks. They probably came to the river somewhat below the site of the modern town, where it well deserves the epithet of "beautiful." It may have then had, as at this day, many villages near its banks. It will be observed that Xenophon says that *they came to*, not that they *crossed*, the Teleboas.

From this river they reached the Euphrates in six marches, making, as usual, five parasangs each day; in all, thirty parasangs, or hours. I believe, therefore, that, after issuing from the valley of Bitlis, Xenophon turned to the westward, leaving the lake of Wan a little to the right, though completely concealed from him by a range of low hills.^[16] Skirting the western foot of the Nimroud Dagh range, he passed through a plain thickly inhabited, abounding in well-provisioned villages, and crossed here and there by ranges of hills. This country still tallies precisely with Xenophon's description.

We have not, I conceive, sufficient data in Xenophon's narrative to identify with any degree of certainty his route after crossing the Euphrates. We know that about twenty parasangs from that river the Greeks encamped near a hot spring, and this spring might be recognised in one of the many which abound in the country. It is most probable that the Greeks took the road still used by caravans through the plains of Hinnis and Hassan-Kalah, as offering the fewest difficulties. But what rivers are we to identify with the Phasis and Harpasus, the distance between the Euphrates and Phasis being seventy parasangs, and between the Phasis and Harpasus ninety-five, and the Harpasus being the larger of the two rivers? I am on the whole inclined to believe, that either the Greeks took a very tortuous course after leaving the Euphrates, making daily but little actual progress towards the great end of their arduous journey, the sea-coast, or that there is a considerable error in the amount of parasangs given by Xenophon; that the Harpasus must be the Tcherouk, and the Phasis either the Araxes or the Kur^[17]; and that Mount Theches, the holy mountain from which the Greeks beheld the sea, was between Batoun and Trebizond, the army having followed the valley of the Tcherouk, but leaving it before reaching the site of the modern port on the Black Sea.

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Subterranean Excavations at Kouyunjik.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE OF THE EXCAVATIONS ON MY RETURN TO MOSUL.—DISCOVERIES AT KOUYUNJIK.—TUNNELS IN THE MOUND.—BAS-RELIEFS REPRESENTING ASSYRIAN CONQUESTS.—A WELL.—SIEGE OF A CITY.—NATURE OF SCULPTURES AT KOUYUNJIK.—ARRANGEMENTS FOR RENEWAL OF EXCAVATIONS.—DESCRIPTION OF MOUND.—KIAMIL PASHA.—VISIT TO SHEIK ADI.—YEZIDI CEREMONIES.—SHEIKH JINDI.—YEZIDI MEETING.—DRESS OF THE WOMEN.—BAVIAN.—DOCTRINES OF THE YEZIDI—JERRAIYAH.—RETURN TO MOSUL.

On the morning after our arrival in Mosul, I rode at sunrise to Kouyunjik. The reader may remember that, on my return to Europe in 1847, Mr. Ross had continued the researches in that mound, and had uncovered several interesting bas-reliefs, which I have already described from his own account of his discoveries.^[18] That gentleman had, to my great regret, left Mosul. Since his departure the excavations had been placed under the charge of Mr. Rassam, the English vice-consul, who was directed by the Trustees of the British Museum to employ a small number of men, rather to retain possession of the spot, and to prevent interference on the part of others, than to carry on extensive operations. Toma Shishman, or "the Fat," was still the overseer of the workmen, and accompanied me on my first visit to the ruins.

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But little change had taken place in the great mound since I had last seen it. It was yellow and bare, as it always is at this time of the year. Heaps of earth marked the site of former excavations, the chambers first discovered having been again completely buried with rubbish. Of the sculptured walls laid bare two years before no traces now remained. The trenches dug under Mr. Ross's directions, in the southern corner, opposite the town of Mosul, were still open. It was evident at a glance that the chambers he had entered did not, as he had been led to suppose, belong to a second palace. They formed part of the same great edifice once standing on this angle of the mound, and already partly explored. The style of the bas-reliefs, and of the inscriptions, marked them at once as of the same epoch as those previously discovered.

The walls of two chambers had been laid bare. In one, the lower part of a long series of sculptures was still partly preserved, but the upper had been completely destroyed, the very alabaster itself having disappeared. The bas-reliefs recorded the subjection by the Assyrian king of a nation inhabiting the banks of a river. The captive women are distinguished by long embroidered robes fringed with tassels, and the castles have a peculiar wedge-shaped ornament on the walls. The towns probably stood in the midst of marshes, as they appear to be surrounded by canes or reeds, as well as by groves of palm trees. The Assyrians having

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captured the strong places by escalade, carried the inhabitants into captivity, and drove away cattle, camels, and carts drawn by oxen. Some of the men bear large baskets of osier work, and the women vases or cauldrons. The king, standing in his chariot, attended by his warriors, and preceded by an eunuch registering the number of prisoners and the amount of the spoil, receives the conquered chiefs. Not a vestige of inscription remains to record the name of the vanquished people; but we may conjecture, from the river and the palm trees, that they inhabited some district in southern Mesopotamia. In the southern wall of this chamber was a doorway formed by plain, upright slabs of a close-grained magnesian limestone, almost as hard as flint; between them were two small, crouching lions, in the usual alabaster. This entrance led into a further room, of which only a small part had been explored. The walls were panelled with unsculptured slabs of the same compact limestone.

The sculptured remains hitherto discovered in the mound of Kouyunjik had been reached by digging down to them from the surface, and then removing the rubbish. After the departure of Mr. Ross, the accumulation of earth above the ruins, had become so considerable, frequently exceeding thirty feet, that the workmen, to avoid the labor of clearing it away, began to tunnel along the walls, sinking shafts at intervals to admit light and air. These long galleries, dimly lighted, lined with the remains of ancient art, broken urns projecting from the crumbling sides, and the wild Arab and hardy Nestorian wandering through their intricacies, or working in their dark recesses, were singularly picturesque.

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Toma Shishman had removed the workmen from the southern corner of the mound, where the sculptures were much injured, and had opened tunnels in a part of the building previously explored, commencing where I had left off on my departure from Mosul. I descended into the vaulted passages by an inclined way, through which the workmen issued from beneath to throw away the rubbish dug out from the ruins. At the bottom I found myself before a wall forming the southern side of the great Hall, discovered, though only partly explored, during my former researches. The sculptures, faintly seen through the gloom, were still well enough preserved to give a complete history of the subject represented, although, with the rest of the bas-reliefs of Kouyunjik, the fire had nearly turned them to lime, and had cracked them into a thousand pieces. The faces of the slabs had been entirely covered with figures, varying from three inches to one foot in height, carefully finished, and designed with great spirit.

In this series of bas-reliefs the history of an Assyrian conquest was more fully portrayed than in any other yet discovered, from the going out of the monarch to battle, to his triumphal return after a complete victory. The first part of the subject has already been described in my former work.^[19] The king, accompanied by his chariots and horsemen, and leaving his capital in the Assyrian plains, passed through a mountainous and wooded district.^[20] He does not appear to have been delayed by the siege of many towns or castles, but to have carried the war at once into the high country. His troops, cavalry and infantry, are represented in close combat with their enemies, pursuing them over hills and through valleys, beside streams, and in the midst of vineyards. The Assyrian horsemen are armed with the spear and the bow, using both weapons whilst at full speed: their opponents seem to be all archers. The vanquished turn to ask for quarter; or, wounded, fall under the feet of the advancing horses, raising their hands imploringly to ward off the impending deathblow. The triumph follows. The king standing in his chariot, beneath the royal parasol, followed by long lines of dismounted warriors leading richly caparisoned horses, and by foot soldiers variously armed and accoutred, is receiving the captives and spoil taken from the conquered people. First approach the victorious warriors, throwing the heads of the slain into heaps before the registering officers. They are followed by others leading, and urging onwards with staves, the prisoners—men chained together, or bound singly in fetters, and women, some on foot, carrying their children on their shoulders, and leading them by the hand, others riding on mules. The procession is finished by asses, mules, and flocks of sheep. As on the bas-reliefs uncovered by Mr. Ross, there is unfortunately no inscription by which the name of the conquered people can be determined. The mountains, valleys, and streams, the vines and dwarf oaks, probably indicate a region north of Assyria, in Armenia, Media, or Kurdistan, countries we know to have been invaded by the royal builder of the palace. The dress of the men consists of a short tunic; that of the women, of a shirt falling to the ankles, and cut low in front of the neck.

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In the side of the hall sculptured with these bas-reliefs was a wide portal, formed by a pair of gigantic human-headed bulls. They had suffered, like all those previously discovered, from the fire, and the upper part, the wings and human head, had been completely destroyed. The lower half had, however, escaped, and the inscriptions were consequently nearly entire. Joined to the forepart of the bulls were four small figures, two on each side, and one above the other. They had long hair, falling in large and massive curls on their shoulders, wore short tunics descending to the knee, and held a pole topped by a kind of cone in one hand, raising the other as in act of adoration. At right angles with the slabs bearing these sculptures were colossal figures carrying the oft-repeated cone and basket.

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In this entrance a well, cut through the large pavement slab between the bulls, was afterwards discovered. It contained broken pottery, not one vase having been taken out whole, apparently human remains, and *some fragments of calcined sculptured alabaster*, evidently detached from the bas-reliefs on the walls. It is doubtful whether this well was sunk after the Assyrian ruins had been buried, or whether it had been from the earliest

times a place of deposit for the dead.

A small doorway to the right of the portal formed by the winged bulls, led into a further chamber, in which an entrance had been found into a third room, whose walls had been completely uncovered. Its dimensions were 26 feet by 23, and it had but this one outlet, flanked on either side by two colossal figures, whose lower extremities alone remained, the upper part of the slabs having been destroyed: one appeared to have been eagle-headed, with the body of a man, and the other a monster, with human head and the feet of a lion. The bas-reliefs round the chamber represented the siege of a castle standing on an artificial mound, surrounded at its base by houses. The besieged defended themselves on the walls and turrets with bows, spears, and stones. The Assyrian army was composed of spearmen, slingers, and bowmen, some of whom had already gained the housetops. Male and female captives had been taken and heads cut off; the victorious warriors according to custom, and probably to claim a reward,[21] bringing them to the registrars. In the back ground were wooded mountains; vines and other trees formed a distinct band in the middle of the slabs; and a river ran at the foot of the mound. The dress of the male prisoners consisted either of a long robe falling to the ankles, or of a tunic reaching to the knees, over which was thrown an outer garment, apparently made of the skins of animals, and they wore greaves laced up in front. The women were clothed in a robe descending to the feet, with an outer fringed garment thrown over the shoulders; a kind of hood or veil covered the back of the head, and fell over the neck. Above the castle was the fragment of an inscription in two lines, containing the name of the city, of which unfortunately the first character is wanting. It reads: "*The city of ... alammo* I attacked and captured; I carried away its spoil." No name, however, corresponding with it has yet been found in the royal annals, and we can only infer, from the nature of the country represented, that the place was in a mountainous district to the north of Assyria.

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This doorway to a third outlet opening to the west, led into a narrow passage, one side of which had alone been excavated; on it was represented the siege of a walled city, divided into two parts by a river. One half of the place had been captured by the Assyrians, who had gained possession of the towers and battlements, but that on the opposite bank of the stream was still defended by slingers and bowmen. Against its walls had been thrown banks or mounds, built of stones, bricks, and branches of trees.[22] The battering-rams, covered with skins or hides looped together, had been rolled up these inclined ways, and had already made a breach in the fortifications. Archers and spearmen were hurrying to the assault, whilst others were driving off the captives, and carrying away the idols of the enemy. The dress of the male prisoners consisted of a plain under-shirt, an upper garment falling below the knees, divided in the front and buttoned at the neck, and laced greaves. Their hair and beards were shorter and less elaborately curled than those of the Assyrians. The women were distinguished by high rounded turbans, ornamented with plaits or folds. A veil fell from the back of this head-dress over the shoulders.[23] No inscription remained to record the name of the vanquished nation.

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Such were the discoveries that had been made during my absence. There could be no doubt whatever that all the chambers hitherto excavated belonged to one great edifice, built by one and the same king. I have already shown how the bas-reliefs of Kouyunjik differed from those of the older palaces of Nimroud, but closely resembled those of Khorsabad in the general treatment, in the costumes of the Assyrian warriors, as well as of the nations with whom they warred, and in the character of the ornaments, inscriptions, and details. Those newly uncovered were, in all these respects, like the bas-reliefs found before my departure, and upon which I had ventured to form an opinion as to the respective antiquity and origin of the various ruins hitherto explored in Assyria.

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At Kouyunjik there were probably few bas-reliefs, particularly those containing representations of castles and cities, that were not accompanied by a short epigraph or label, giving the name of the conquered king and country, and even the names of the principal prisoners, especially if royal personages. Unfortunately these inscriptions having been usually placed on the upper part of the slabs, which has very rarely escaped destruction, but few of them remain. These remarks should be borne in mind to enable the reader to understand the descriptions of the excavated chambers at Kouyunjik, which will be given in the following pages in the order that they were discovered.

I lost no time in making arrangements for continuing the excavations with as much activity as the funds granted to the Trustees of the British Museum would permit. Toma Shishman was placed over Kouyunjik; Mansour, Behnan (the marble cutter), and Hannah (the carpenter), again entered my service. Ali Rahal, a sheikh of the Jebours, was appointed "sheikh of the mound," and duly invested with the customary robe of honor on the occasion.

The accumulation of soil above the ruins was so great, that I determined to continue the tunnelling, removing only as much earth as was necessary to show the sculptured walls. But to facilitate the labor of the workmen, and to avoid the necessity of their leaving the tunnels to empty their baskets, I made a number of rude triangles and wooden pulleys, by which the excavated rubbish could be raised by ropes through the shafts, sunk at intervals for this purpose, as well as to admit light and air. One or two passages then sufficed for the workmen to descend into the subterranean galleries.

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Many of the Nestorians formerly in my service as diggers, having also heard of my intended

return, had left their mountains, and had joined me a day or two after my arrival. There were Jebours enough in the immediate neighbourhood of the town to make up four or five gangs of excavators, and I placed parties at once in the galleries already opened, in different parts of Kouyunjik not previously explored, and at a high mound in the north-west walls, forming one side of the great inclosure opposite Mosul—a ruin which I had only partially examined during my previous visit.[24]

The shape of this great ruin is very irregular; nearly square at the S. W. corner, it narrows almost to a point at the N. E. The palace occupies the southern angle. At the opposite, or northern, extremity are the remains of the village of Kouyunjik, from which the mound takes its name.[25] From this spot a steep road leads to the plain, forming the only access to the summit of the mound for loaded animals or carts. There are ravines on all sides of Kouyunjik, except that facing the Tigris. If not entirely worn by the winter rains, they have, undoubtedly, been deepened and increased by them. They are strewn with fragments of pottery, bricks, and sometimes stone and burnt alabaster, whilst the falling earth frequently discloses in their sides vast masses of solid brick masonry, which fall in when undermined by the rains. Through these ravines are carried the steep and narrow pathways leading to the top of the mound.

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The Khauser winds round the eastern base of Kouyunjik, and leaving it near the angle occupied by the ruins of the palace, runs in a direct line to the Tigris. Although a small and sluggish stream, it has worn for itself a deep bed, and is only fordable near the mound immediately below the southern corner, where the direct road from Mosul crosses it, and at the northern extremity where a flour mill is turned by its waters. After rain it becomes an impetuous torrent, overflowing its banks, and carrying all before it. It then rises very suddenly, and as suddenly subsides. The Tigris now flows about half a mile from the mound, but once undoubtedly washed its base. Between them is a rich alluvium deposited by the river during its gradual retreat; it is always under cultivation, and is divided into corn fields, and melon and cucumber beds.[26] In this plain stands the small modern village of Kouyunjik, removed for convenience from its ancient site on the summit of the mound.

In Mosul I had to call upon the governor, and renew my acquaintance with the principal inhabitants, whose good will was in some way necessary to the pleasant, if not successful, prosecution of my labors. Kiamil Pasha had been lately named to the pashalic. He was the sixth or seventh pasha who had been appointed since I left, for it is one of the banes of Turkish administration that, as soon as an officer becomes acquainted with the country he is sent to govern, and obtains any influence over its inhabitants, he is recalled to make room for a new ruler. Kiamil had been ambassador at Berlin, and had visited several European courts. His manners were eminently courteous and polished; his intelligence, and what is of far more importance in a Turkish governor, his integrity, were acknowledged. His principal defects were great inactivity and indolence, and an unfortunate irritability of temper, leading him to do foolish and mischievous things, of which he generally soon found cause to repent.

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Soon after my arrival, my old friends Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman, of the Abou Salman, and Abd-rubbou, chief of the Jebours, rode into the town to see me; where I had scarcely settled myself, when Cawal Yusuf came in from Baadri, with a party of Yezidi Cawals, to invite me, on the part of Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, to the annual festival at Sheikh Adi. The invitation was too earnest to be refused.

I was accompanied in this visit by my own party, with the addition of Mr. Rassam, the vice-consul, and his dragoman. We rode the first day to Baadri, and were met on the road by Hussein Bey and a large company of Yezidi horsemen. Sheikh Nasr had already gone to the tomb, to make ready for the ceremonies. The young chief entertained us for the night, and on the following morning, an hour after sunrise, we left the village for Sheikh Adi. At some distance from the sacred valley we were met by Sheikh Nasr, Pir Sino, the Cawals, the priests, and the chiefs. They conducted us to the same building in the sacred grove that I had occupied on my former visit. The Cawals assembled around us and welcomed our coming on their tambourines and flutes; and soon about us was formed one of those singularly beautiful and picturesque groups which I have attempted to describe in my previous account of the Yezidi festival.[27]

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The Yezidis had assembled in less numbers this year than when I had last met them in the valley. Only a few of the best armed of the people of Sinjar had ventured to face the dangers of the road now occupied by the Bedouins. Abde Agha and his adherents were fully occupied in defending their villages against the Arab marauders, who, although repulsed after we quitted Semil, were still hanging about the district, bent upon revenge. The Kochers, and the tribes of Dereboun, were kept away by the same fears. The inhabitants of Kherzan and Redwan were harassed by the conscription. Even the people of Baasheikhah and Baazani had been so much vexed by a recent visit from the Pasha that they had no heart for festivities. His excellency not fostering feelings of the most friendly nature towards Namik Pasha, the new commander-in-chief of Arabia, who was passing through Mosul on his way to the head-quarters of the army at Baghdad, and unwilling to entertain him, was suddenly taken ill and retired for the benefit of his health to Baasheikhah. On the morning after his arrival he complained that the asses by their braying during the night had allowed him no rest; and the asses were accordingly peremptorily banished from the village. The dawn of the next day was announced, to the great discomfort of his Excellency, who had no interest

in the matter, by the cocks; and the irregular troops who formed his body-guard were immediately incited to a general slaughter of the race. The third night his sleep was disturbed by the crying of the children, who, with their mothers, were at once locked up, for the rest of his sojourn, in the cellars. On the fourth he was awoke at daybreak by the chirping of sparrows, and every gun in the village was ordered to be brought out to wage a war of extermination against them. But on the fifth morning his rest was sorely broken by the flies, and the enraged Pasha insisted upon their instant destruction. The Kiayah, who, as chief of the village, had the task of carrying out the Governor's orders, now threw himself at his Excellency's feet, exclaiming, "Your Highness has seen that all the animals here, praise be to God, obey our Lord the Sultan; the infidel flies alone are rebellious to his authority. I am a man of low degree and small power, and can do nothing against them; it now behoves a great Vizir like your Highness to enforce the commands of our Lord and Master." The Pasha, who relished a joke, forgave the flies, but left the village.

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I have already so fully described the general nature of the annual festival at Sheikh Adi, and the appearance of the valley on that occasion, that I shall confine myself to an account of such ceremonies as I was now permitted to witness for the first time.

About an hour after sunset, Cawal Yusuf summoned Hormuzd and myself, who were alone allowed to be present, to the inner yard, or sanctuary, of the Temple. We were placed in a room from the windows of which we could see all that took place in the court. The Cawals, Sheikhs, Fakirs, and principal chiefs were already assembled. In the centre of the court was an iron lamp, with four burners—a simple dish with four lips for the wicks, supported on a sharp iron rod driven into the ground. Near it stood a Fakir, holding in one hand a lighted torch, and in the other a large vessel of oil, from which he, from time to time, replenished the lamp, loudly invoking Sheikh Adi. The Cawals stood against the wall on one side of the court, and commenced a slow chant, some playing on the flute, others on the tambourine, and accompanying the measure with their voices. The Sheikhs and chiefs now formed a procession, walking two by two. At their head was Sheikh Jindi. He wore a tall shaggy black cap, the hair of which hung far over the upper part of his face. A long robe, striped with horizontal stripes of black and dark red, fell to his feet. A countenance more severe, and yet more imposing, than that of Sheikh Jindi could not well be pictured by the most fanciful imagination. A beard, black as jet, waved low on his breast; his dark piercing eyes glittered through ragged eyebrows, like burning coals through the bars of a grate. The color of his face was of the deepest brown, his teeth white as snow, and his features, though stern beyond measure, singularly noble and well formed. It was a byword with us that Sheikh Jindi had never been seen to smile. To look at him was to feel that a laugh could not be born in him. As he moved, with a slow and solemn step, the flickering lamp deepening the shadows of his solemn and rugged countenance, it would have been impossible to conceive a being more eminently fitted to take the lead in ceremonies consecrated to the evil one. He is the *Peesh-namaz*, "the leader of prayer," to the Yezidi sect. Behind him were two venerable sheikhs. They were followed by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, and the other chiefs and Sheikhs came after. Their long robes were all of the purest white. As they walked slowly round, sometimes stopping, then resuming their measured step, they chanted prayers in glory and honor of the Deity. The Cawals accompanied the chant with their flutes, beating at intervals the tambourines. Round the burning lamp, and within the circle formed by the procession, danced the Fakirs in their black dresses, with solemn pace timed to the music, raising and swinging to and fro their arms after the fashion of Eastern dancers, and placing themselves in attitudes not less decorous than elegant. To hymns in praise of the Deity succeeded others in honor of Melek Isa and Sheikh Adi. The chants passed into quicker strains, the tambourines were beaten more frequently, the Fakirs became more active in their motions, and the women made the loud *tahlel*, the ceremonies ending with that extraordinary scene of noise and excitement that I have attempted to describe in relating my first visit. When the prayers were ended, those who marched in procession kissed, as they passed by, the right side of the doorway leading into the temple, where a serpent is figured on the wall; but not, as I was assured, the image itself, which has no typical or other meaning, according to Sheikh Nasr and Cawal Yusuf. Hussein Bey then placing himself on the step at this entrance, received the homage of the Sheikhs and elders, each touching the hand of the young chief with his own, and raising it to his lips. All present, afterwards, gave one another the kiss of peace.

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The ceremonies having thus been brought to a close, Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr came to me, and led me into the inner court. Carpets had been spread at the doorway of the temple for myself and the two chiefs; the Sheikhs, Cawals, and principal people of the sect, seated themselves, or rather crouched, against the walls. By the light of a lamp, dimly breaking the gloom within the temple, I could see Sheikh Jindi unrobing. During the prayers, priests were stationed at the doorway, and none were allowed to enter except a few women and girls: the wives and daughters of sheikhs and cawals had free access to the building, and appeared to join in the ceremonies. The Vice-Consul and Khodja Toma were now admitted, and took their places with us at the upper end of the court. Cawal Yusuf was then called upon to give a full account of the result of his mission to Constantinople, which he did with the same detail, and almost in the same words, that he had used so frequently during our journey. After he had concluded, I endeavored to urge upon them to avail themselves of the new privileges and opportunities for advancement and cultivation thus afforded them. It was finally agreed that letters of thanks, sealed by all the chiefs of the Yezidis, should be sent to the Grand Vizir, Reshid Pasha, for the reception given to the Yezidi deputation, and to Sir Stratford

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Canning for his generous intercession in their behalf.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning the Sheikhs and Cawals offered up a short prayer in the court of the temple, but without any of the ceremonies of the previous evening. Some prayed in the sanctuary, frequently kissing the threshold and holy places within the building. When they had ended, they took the green cloth covering from the tomb of Sheikh Adi, and, followed by the Cawals playing on their tambourines and flutes, walked with it round the outer court. The people flocked about them, and reverently carried the corner of the drapery to their lips, making afterwards a small offering of money. After the cover had again been thrown over the tomb, the chiefs and priests seated themselves round the inner court. The Fakirs and Sheikhs especially devoted to the service of the sanctuary, who are called *Kotcheks*, now issued from the kitchens of the temple bearing large platters of smoking *harisa*[28], which they placed on the ground. The company collected in hungry groups round the messes, and whilst they were eating, the *Kotcheks* standing by called upon them continually in a loud voice to partake of the hospitality of Sheikh Adi. After the empty plates had been removed, a collection was made towards the support of the temple and tomb of the saint.

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These ceremonies occupied us until nearly mid-day; we then sat by the fountain in the valley, and the men and women danced before us, the boys climbing into the trees and hanging on the boughs to see the dancers. Sugar, dates, and raisins were afterwards scrambled amongst the children. The men soon took part in the amusement. A party of Kurds, bringing grapes from the mountains to sell at the festival, were maliciously pointed out as good objects for a joke. The hint was no sooner given than they, their donkeys, and their grapes, were all rolled into one heap under a mountain of human beings. The Kurds, who were armed, resisted manfully; and, ignorant of our intentions, might have revenged themselves on their assailants, but were soon restored to good humour when they found that they were to receive ample compensation for their losses and personal injuries. There was general laughing in the valley, and the Yezidis will long remember these days of simple merriment and happiness.

In the afternoon the wives and daughters of the chiefs and Cawals called upon me. The families of the Cawals, evidently descended from the same stock, are remarkable for the beauty both of the men and women, all of whom are strikingly like one another. Their complexion is, perhaps, too dark, but their features are regular and admirably formed. The dresses of the girls were elegant, and as rich as the material they could obtain would allow. Some wove flowers into their hair, others encircled their black turbans with a single wreath of myrtle, a simple and elegant ornament. They all wore many strings of coins, amber, coral, agate, and glass beads round their necks, and some had the black skull cap completely covered with gold and silver money. A kind of apron of grey or yellowish check, like a Scotch plaid, tied over one shoulder, and falling in front over the silk dress, is a peculiar feature in the costume of the Yezidi girls, and of some Christians from the same district. Unmarried women have the neck bare, the married conceal it with a white kerchief, which passes under the chin, and is tied on the top of the head. The brightest colors are worn by the girls, but the matrons are usually clothed in plain white. The females of the Cawal families always wear black turbans and skull caps. Cawal Yusuf, to show how the Frank ladies he had seen at Constantinople were honored by their husbands, made his young wife walk arm in arm with him before us, to the great amusement of the bystanders.

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At night the same religious ceremonies were repeated in the temple, and I was allowed to sleep in the room overlooking the inner court from whence I had witnessed them on the previous evening. After all had retired to rest, the Yezidi Mullah recited, in a low chanting tone, a religious history, or discourse, consisting of the adventures and teachings of a certain Mirza Mohammed. He stood before the burning lamp, and around him were at full length on the stone pavement, and covered by their white cloaks, the sleeping Sheikhs and Cawals. The scene was singularly picturesque and impressive.

Next morning I visited, with Mr. Rassam and Mr. Cooper, the rock-sculptures of Bavian, which are not more than six miles from the valley of Sheikh Adi in the same range of hills; but I will defer a description of these remarkable monuments until I come to relate my second journey to the spot.

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Cawal Yusuf had promised, on the occasion of the festival, to show me the sacred book of the Yezidis. He accordingly brought a volume to me one morning, accompanied by the secretary of Sheikh Nasr, the only Yezidi, as far as I am aware, who could read it. It consisted of a few tattered leaves, of no ancient date, containing a poetical rhapsody on the merits and attributes of Sheikh Adi, who is identified with the Deity himself, as the origin and creator of all things, though evidently distinguished from the Eternal Essence by being represented as seeking the truth, and as reaching through it the highest place, which he declares to be attainable by all those who like him shall find the truth.[29]

This was the only written work that I was able to obtain from the Yezidis; their cawals repeated several prayers and hymns to me, which were purely laudatory of the Deity, and unobjectionable in substance. Numerous occupations during the remainder of my residence in Assyria prevented me prosecuting my inquiries much further on this subject. Cawal Yusuf informed me that before the great massacre of the sect by the Bey of Rahwanduz, they possessed many books which were lost during the general panic, or destroyed by the Kurds.

He admitted that this was only a fragmentary composition, and by no means "the Book" which contained the theology and religious laws of the Yezidi. He even hinted that the great work did still exist, and I am by no means certain that there is not a copy at Baasheikhah or Baazani. The account given by the Cawal seems to be confirmed by the allusion made in the poem to the "Book of Glad Tidings," and "the Book that comforteth the oppressed," which could scarcely have been inserted for any particular purpose, such as to deceive their Mohammedan neighbours.

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I will here add a few notes concerning the Yezidis and their faith to those contained in my former work; they were chiefly obtained from Cawal Yusuf.

They believe that Christ will come to govern the world, but that after him Sheikh Medi will appear, to whom will be given special jurisdiction over those speaking the Kurdish language, including the Yezidis (this is evidently a modern interpolation, derived from Mussulman sources, perhaps invented to conciliate the Mohammedans).

All who go to heaven must first pass an expiatory period in hell, but no one will be punished eternally. Mohammedans they exclude from all future life, but not Christians. (This may have been said to avoid giving offence.)

The Yezidis will not receive converts to their faith; circumcision is optional. When a child is born near enough to the tomb of Sheikh Adi, to be taken there without great inconvenience or danger, it should be baptized as early as possible after birth. The Cawals in their periodical visitations carry a bottle or skin filled with the holy water, to baptize those children who cannot be brought to the shrine.

There are forty days fast in the spring of the year, but they are observed by few; one person in a family may fast for the rest.^[30] They should abstain during that period as completely as the Chaldæans from animal food. Sheikh Nasr fasts rigidly for one month in the year, eating only once in twenty-four hours and immediately after sunset.

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Only one wife is strictly lawful, although the chief takes more; but concubines are not forbidden. The wife may be turned away for great misconduct, and the husband, with the consent of the Sheikhs, may marry again; but the discarded wife never can. Even such divorces ought only to be given in cases of adultery; for formerly, when the Yezidis administered their own temporal laws, the wife was punished with death, and the husband of course was then released.

The religious, as well as the political, head of all Yezidis, wherever they may reside, is Hussein Bey, who is called the Kalifa, and he holds this position by inheritance. As he is young and inexperienced, he deposes his religious duties to Sheikh Nasr. Sheikh Nasr is only the chief of the Sheikhs of the district of Sheikhan. The Cawals are all of one family, and are under the orders of Hussein Bey, who sends them periodically to collect the voluntary contributions of the various tribes. The amount received by them is divided into two equal parts, one of which goes to the support of the tomb of Sheikh Adi, and half of the other to Hussein Bey, the remainder being equally shared by the Cawals. Neither the priests nor Hussein Bey ever shave their beards. They ought not to marry out of their own order, and though the men do not observe this rule very strictly, the women are never given in marriage to one out of the rank of the priesthood. Hussein Bey ought to take his wife from the family of Chul Beg.

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After death, the body of a Yezidi, like that of a Mohammedan, is washed in running water, and then buried with the face turned towards the north star.

I have stated that it is unlawful amongst the Yezidis to know how to read or write. This, I am assured, is not the case, and their ignorance arises from want of means and proper teachers. Formerly a Chaldæan deacon used to instruct the children. Cawal Yusuf mentioned accidentally, that, amongst the Yezidis, the ancient name for God was Azed, and from it he derived the name of his sect. Their Kublah, he declared, was the polar star and not the east.

On my way to Mosul from Sheikh Adi, I visited the ruins of Jerraiyah, where excavations had been again carried on by one of my agents. No ancient buildings were discovered. The principal mound is lofty and conical in shape, and the base is surrounded by smaller mounds, and irregularities in the soil which denote the remains of houses. I had not leisure during my residence in Assyria to examine the spot as fully as it may deserve.

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Mound of Nimroud.

CHAPTER V.

RENEWAL OF EXCAVATIONS AT KOUYUNJIK.—FIRST VISIT TO NIMROUD.—STATE OF RUINS.—RENEW EXCAVATIONS IN MOUND.—VISIT OF COLONEL RAWLINSON.—MR. H. RASSAM.—THE JEBOUR WORKMEN AT KOUYUNJIK.—DISCOVERIES AT KOUYUNJIK.—SCULPTURES REPRESENTING MOVING OF GREAT STONES AND WINGED BULLS.—METHODS ADOPTED.—EPIGRAPHS ON BAS-RELIEFS OF MOVING BULLS.—SCULPTURES REPRESENTING INVASION OF MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRY, AND SACK OF CITY.—DISCOVERY OF GATEWAY.—EXCAVATION IN HIGH CONICAL MOUND AT NIMROUD.—DISCOVERY OF WALL OF STONE.—VISIT TO KHORSABAD.—DISCOVERY OF SLAB.—STATE OF THE RUINS.—FUTHLIYAH.—BAAZANI.—BAASHEIKHAH.

We were again in Mosul by the 12th of October. The Jebours, my old workmen, had now brought their families to the town. I directed them to cross the river, and to pitch their tents over the excavations at Kouyunjik, as they had formerly done around the trenches at Nimroud. The Bedouins, unchecked in their forays by the Turkish authorities, had become so bold, that they ventured to the very walls of Mosul, and I felt it necessary to have a strong party on the ruins for self-defence. The Jebours were, however, on good terms with the Bedouins, and had lately encamped amongst them.

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About one hundred workmen, divided into twelve or fourteen parties, were employed at Kouyunjik. The Arabs, as before, removed the earth and rubbish, whilst the more difficult labor with the pick was left entirely to the Nestorian mountaineers. My old friend, Yakoub, the Rais of Asheetha, was named superintendent of the Tiyari workmen, for whom I built mud huts near the foot of the mound.

The work having been thus begun at Kouyunjik, I rode with Hormuzd to Nimroud for the first time on the 18th of October. It seemed but yesterday that we had followed the same track. We stopped at each village, and found in each old acquaintances ready to welcome us. From the crest of the hill half way, the first view of Nimroud opened upon us; the old mound, on which I had gazed so often from this spot, and with which so many happy recollections were bound up, rising boldly above the Jaif, the river winding through the plain, the distant wreaths of smoke marking the villages of Naifa and Nimroud. I dismounted at my old house, which was still standing, though somewhat in ruins, for it had been the habitation of the Kiayah during my absence, and to avoid the vermin swarming in the rooms, my tent was pitched in the court-yard, and I dwelt entirely in it.

The village had still, comparatively speaking, a flourishing appearance, and had not diminished in size since my last visit. The *tanzimat*, or reformed system of local administration, had been introduced into the pashalic of Mosul, and although many of its regulations were evaded, and arbitrary acts were still occasionally committed, yet on the whole a marked improvement had taken place in the dealings of the authorities with the subjects of the Sultan. The great cause of complaint was the want of security. The troops under the command of the Pasha were not sufficient in number to keep the Bedouins in check, and there was scarcely a village in the low country which had not suffered more or less from their depredations. Nimroud was particularly exposed to their incursions, and the inhabitants lived in continual agitation and alarm.

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By sunrise I was amongst the ruins. The mound had undergone no change. There it rose from the plain, the same sun-burnt yellow heap that it had stood for twenty centuries. The earth and rubbish, which had been heaped over the excavated chambers and sculptured slabs, had settled, and had left uncovered in sinking the upper part of several bas-reliefs. A

few colossal heads of winged figures rose calmly above the level of the soil, and with two pairs of winged bulls, which had not been reburied on account of their mutilated condition, was all that remained above ground of the north-west palace, that great storehouse of Assyrian history and art.

Collecting together my old excavators from the Shemutti and Jehesh (the Arab tribes who inhabit Nimroud and Naifa), and from the tents of a few Jebours who still lingered round the village to glean a scanty subsistence after the harvest, I placed workmen in different parts of the mound. The north-west palace had not been fully explored. Most of the chambers which did not contain sculptured slabs, but were simply built of sundried bricks, had been left unopened. I consequently directed a party of workmen to resume the excavations where they had been formerly abandoned. New trenches were also opened in the ruins of the centre palace, where, as yet, no sculptures had been discovered in their original position against the walls. The high conical mound forming the north-west corner of Nimroud, the pyramid as it has usually been called, had always been an object of peculiar interest, which want of means had hitherto prevented me fully examining. With the exception of a shaft, about forty feet deep, sunk nearly in the centre, and passing through a solid mass of sundried bricks, no other opening had been made into this singular ruin. I now ordered a tunnel to be carried into its base on the western face, and on a level with the conglomerate rock upon which it rested.

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As I ascended the mound next morning I perceived a group of travellers on its summit, their horses picketed in the stubble. Ere I could learn what strangers had thus wandered to this remote region, my hand was seized by the faithful Bairakdar. Beneath, in an excavated chamber, wrapped in his travelling cloak, was Rawlinson deep in sleep, wearied by a long and harassing night's ride. For the first time we met in the Assyrian ruins, and besides the greetings of old friendship there was much to be seen together, and much to be talked over. The fatigues of the journey had, however, brought on fever, and we were soon compelled, after visiting the principal excavations, to take refuge from the heat of the sun in the mud huts of the village. The attack increasing in the evening it was deemed prudent to ride into Mosul at once, and we mounted our horses in the middle of the night.

During two days Col. Rawlinson was too ill to visit the excavations at Kouyunjik. On the third we rode together to the mound. After a hasty survey of the ruins we parted, and he continued his journey to Constantinople and to England, to reap the laurels of a well-earned fame.

My readers would be wearied were I to relate, day by day, the progress of the excavations, and to record, as they were gradually made, the discoveries in the various ruins. It will give a more complete idea of the results of the researches to describe the sculptured walls of a whole chamber when entirely explored, instead of noting, one by one, as dug out, bas-reliefs which form but part of the same subject. I will, therefore, merely mention that during the months of October and November, my time was spent between Kouyunjik and Nimroud, and that the excavations were carried on at both places without interruption. Mr. Cooper was occupied in drawing the bas-reliefs discovered at Kouyunjik, living in Mosul, and riding over daily to the ruins. To Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who usually accompanied me in my journeys, were confided, as before, the general superintendence of the operations, the payment of the workmen, the settlement of disputes, &c. His services were invaluable, and of the greatest consequence to the success of my labors.

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The Arab workmen were divided into several classes, and their wages varied according to their respective occupations, as well as according to the time of year. They were generally paid weekly by Hormuzd. The diggers, who were exposed to very severe labor, and even to considerable risk, received from two piastres and a half to three piastres (from 5*d.* to 6*d.*) a-day; those who filled the baskets from two piastres to two and a half; and the general workmen from one and a half to two piastres. The earth, when removed, was sifted by boys, who earned about one piastre for their day's labor. These wages may appear low, but they are amply sufficient for the support of a family in a country where the camel-load of wheat (nearly 480 lbs.) is sold for about four shillings, and where no other protection from the inclemencies of the weather is needed than a linen shirt and the black folds of an Arab tent.

[31]

The Kouyunjik workmen were usually paid in the subterraneous galleries, some convenient space where several passages met being chosen for the purpose; those of Nimroud generally in the village. A scene of wild confusion ensued on these occasions, from which an inexperienced observer might argue a sad want of order and method. This was, however, but the way of doing business usual in the country. When there was a difference of opinion, he who cried the loudest gained the day, and after a desperate struggle of voices matters relapsed into their usual state, every one being perfectly satisfied. Screaming and gesticulation with Easterns by no means signify ill will, or even serious disagreement. Without them, except of course amongst the Turks, who are staid and dignified to a proverb, the most ordinary transactions cannot be carried on, and they are frequently rather symptoms of friendship than of hostility.

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By the end of November several entire chambers had been excavated at Kouyunjik, and many bas-reliefs of great interest had been discovered. The four sides of the hall, part of which has already been described,[32] had now been explored.[33] In the centre of each side

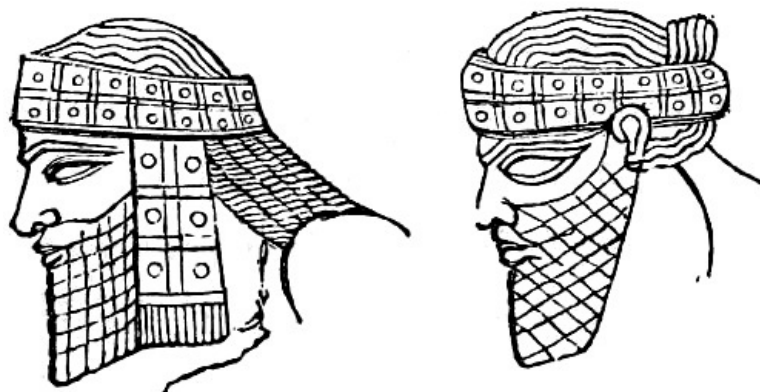
was a grand entrance, guarded by colossal human-headed bulls.[34] This magnificent hall was no less than 124 feet in length by 90 feet in breadth, the longest sides being those to the north and south. It appears to have formed a centre, around which the principal chambers in this part of the palace were grouped. Its walls had been completely covered with the most elaborate and highly-finished sculptures. Unfortunately all the bas-reliefs, as well as the gigantic monsters at the entrances, had suffered more or less from the fire which had destroyed the edifice; but enough of them still remained to show the subject, and even to enable me in many places to restore it entirely.

The narrow passage leading from the great hall at the south-west corner had been completely explored. Its sculptures have already been described.[35] It opened into a chamber 24 feet by 19, from which branched two other passages. The one to the west was entered by a wide doorway, in which stood two plain spherical stones about three feet high, having the appearance of the bases of columns, although no traces of any such architectural ornament could be found. This was the entrance into a broad and spacious gallery, about 218 feet long and 25 wide. A tunnel at its western end, cut through the solid wall, as there was no doorway on this side of the gallery, led into the chambers excavated by Mr. Ross, thus connecting them with the rest of the building.

I have already described the bas-reliefs representing the conquest of a mountainous country on the southern side of the great hall.[36] The same subject was continued on the western wall, without much variety in the details. But on the northern, the sculptures differed from any others yet discovered, and from their interest and novelty merit a particular notice. But before giving a description of them, I must return to the long gallery to the west of the great hall, as the sculptures still preserved in it form part of and complete this important series.

The slabs on one side of this gallery had been entirely destroyed, except at the eastern end; and from the few which still remained, every trace of sculpture had been carefully removed by some sharp instrument. Along the opposite wall (that to the right on leaving the great hall) only eight bas-reliefs still stood in their original position, and even of these only the lower part was preserved. Detached fragments of others were found in the rubbish, and from them I ascertained that the whole gallery had been occupied by one continuous series, representing the different processes adopted by the Assyrians in moving and placing various objects used in their buildings, and especially the human-headed bulls, from the first transport of the huge stone in the rough from the quarry, to the raising of these gigantic sculptures in the gateways of the palace-temples. On these fragments were seen the king in his chariot, superintending the operations, and workmen carrying cables, or dragging carts loaded with coils of ropes, and various implements for moving the colossi.

I will commence, then, by a description of the sculptures still standing in their original position in the gallery. A huge block of stone (probably of the alabaster used in the Assyrian edifices), somewhat elongated in form so as to resemble an obelisk in the rough, is lying on a low flat-bottomed boat floating on a river. It has probably been towed down the Tigris from some quarry, and is to be landed near the site of the intended palace, to be carved by the sculptor into the form of a colossal bull. It exceeds the boat considerably in length, projecting beyond both the head and stern, and is held by upright beams fastened to the sides of the vessel, and kept firm in their places by wooden wedges. Two cables are passed through holes cut in the stone itself, and a third is tied to a strong pin projecting from the head of the boat. Each cable is held by a large body of men, who pull by means of small ropes fastened to it and passed round their shoulders. Some of these trackers walk in the water, others on dry land. The number altogether represented must have been nearly 300, about 100 to each cable, and they appear to be divided into distinct bands, each distinguished by a peculiar costume. Some wear a kind of embroidered turban, through which their long hair is gathered behind; the heads of others are encircled by a fringed shawl, whose ends hang over the ears and neck, leaving the hair to fall in long curls upon the shoulders. Many are represented naked, but the greater number are dressed in short chequered tunics, with a long fringe attached to the girdle. They are urged on by taskmasters armed with swords and staves. The boat is also pushed by men wading through the stream. An overseer, who regulates the whole proceedings, is seated astride on the forepart of the stone. His hands are stretched out in the act of giving commands.



The huge stone having been landed, and carved by the Assyrian sculptor into the form of a colossal human-headed bull, is to be moved from the bank of the river to the site it is meant to occupy permanently in the palace-temple. This process is represented on the walls of the great hall. From these bas-reliefs, as well as from discoveries to be hereafter mentioned, it is therefore evident that the Assyrians sculptured their gigantic figures before, and not after, the slabs had been raised in the edifice, although all the details and the finishing touches were not put in, as it will be seen, until they had been finally placed.[37] I am still, however, of opinion, that the smaller bas-reliefs were entirely executed after the slabs had been attached to the walls.

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In the first bas-relief I shall describe, the colossal bull rests horizontally on a sledge similar in form to the boat containing the rough block from the quarry, but either in the carving the stone has been greatly reduced in size, or the sledge is much larger than the boat, as it considerably exceeds the sculpture in length. The bull faces the spectator, and the human head rests on the fore-part of the sledge, which is curved upwards and strengthened by a thick beam, apparently running completely through from side to side. The upper part, or deck, is otherwise nearly horizontal; the under, or keel, being slightly curved throughout. Props, probably of wood, are placed under different parts of the sculpture to secure an equal pressure. The sledge was dragged by cables, and impelled by levers. The cables are four in number; two fastened to strong projecting pins in front, and two to similar pins behind. They are pulled by small ropes passing over the shoulders of the men, as in the bas-reliefs already described.

On the bull itself are four persons, probably the superintending officers. The first is kneeling, and appears to be clapping his hands, probably beating time, to regulate the motions of the workmen, who unless they applied their strength at one and the same moment would be unable to move so large a weight. Behind him stands a second officer with outstretched arm, evidently giving the word of command. The next holds to his mouth, either a speaking-trumpet, or an instrument of music. If the former, it proves that the Assyrians were acquainted with a means of conveying sound, presumed to be of modern invention. In form it undoubtedly resembles the modern speaking-trumpet, and in no bas-relief hitherto discovered does a similar object occur as an instrument of music. The fourth officer, also standing, carries a mace, and is probably stationed behind to give directions to those who work the levers. The sledge bearing the sculpture is followed by men with coils of ropes and various implements, and drawing carts laden with cables and beams.

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A subject similar to that just described is represented in another series of bas-reliefs, with even fuller details. The bull is placed in the same manner on the sledge, which is also moved by cables and levers. It is accompanied by workmen with saws, hatchets, pick-axes, shovels, ropes, and props, and by carts carrying cables and beams. Upon it are three officers directing the operations, one holding the trumpet in his hands, and in front walk four other overseers. Above the sledge and the workmen are rows of trees, and a river on which are circular boats resembling in shape the "kufas," now used on the lower part of the Tigris, and probably, like them, built of reeds and ozier twigs, covered with square pieces of hide. They are heavily laden with beams and implements required for moving the bulls.

On a fallen slab, forming part of the same general series, is the king standing in a richly decorated chariot, the pole of which, curved upwards at the end, and ornamented with the head of a horse, is raised by eunuchs. From the peculiar form of this chariot and the absence of a yoke, it would seem to have been intended purposely for such occasions as that represented in the bas-relief, and to have been a kind of moveable throne drawn by men and not by horses. Behind the monarch, who holds a kind of flower, or ornament in the shape of the fruit of the pine, in one hand, stand two eunuchs, one raising a parasol to shade him from the sun, the other cooling him with a fan. He appears to have been superintending the transport of one of the colossal sculptures, and his chariot is preceded and followed by his body-guard armed with maces.

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The next series of bas-reliefs represents the building of the artificial platforms on which the palaces were erected, and the Assyrians moving to their summit the colossal bulls. The king is again seen in his chariot drawn by eunuchs, whilst an attendant raises the royal parasol above his head. He overlooks the operations from that part of the mound to which the sledge is being dragged, and before him stands his body-guard, a long line of alternate spearmen and archers, resting their arms and shields upon the ground. At the bottom of the slab is represented a river, on the banks of which are seen men raising water by a simple machine, still generally used for irrigation in the East, as well as in Southern Europe, and called in Egypt a *shadoof*. It consists of a long pole, balanced on a shaft of masonry, and turning on a pivot; to one end is attached a stone, and to the other a bucket, which, after being lowered into the water and filled, is easily raised by the help of the opposite weight. Its contents are then emptied into a conduit communicating with the various watercourses running through the fields. In the neighbourhood of Mosul this mode of irrigation is now rarely used, the larger skins raised by oxen affording a better supply, and giving, it is considered, less trouble to the cultivator.[38]

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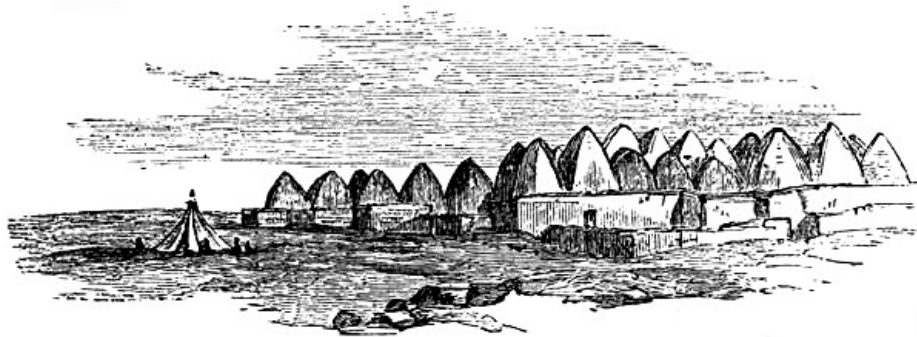
It would appear that the men employed in building the artificial mound were captives and

malefactors, for many of them are in chains, some singly, others bound together by an iron rod attached to rings in their girdles. The fetters, like those of modern criminals, confine the legs, and are supported by a bar fastened to the waist, or consist of simple shackles round the ankles. They wear a short tunic, and a conical cap, somewhat resembling the Phrygian bonnet, with the curved crest turned backwards, a costume very similar to that of the tribute bearers on the Nimroud obelisk. Each band of workmen is followed and urged on by taskmasters armed with staves.

The mound, or artificial platform, having been thus built, not always, as it has been seen, with regular layers of sun-dried bricks, but frequently in parts with mere heaped-up earth and rubbish, the next step was to drag to its summit the colossal figures prepared for the palace. As some of the largest of these sculptures were full twenty feet square, and must have weighed between forty and fifty tons, this was no easy task with such means as the Assyrians possessed. The only aid to mere manual strength was derived from the rollers and levers.

Behind the monarch, on an adjoining slab, are carts bearing the cables, wedges, and implements required in moving the sculpture. A long beam or lever is slung by ropes from the shoulders of three men, and one of the great wedges is carried in the same way. In the upper compartment of this slab is a stream issuing from the foot of hills wooded with vines, fig-trees, and pomegranates. Beneath stands a town or village, the houses of which have domes and high conical roofs, probably built of mud, as in parts of northern Syria. The domes have the appearance of dish-covers with a handle, the upper part being topped by a small circular projection, perhaps intended as an aperture to admit light and air.

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Village with the conical Roofs, near Aleppo.

This interesting series is completed by a bas-relief, showing, it would seem, the final placing of the colossal bull. The figure no longer lies horizontally on the sledge, but is raised by men with ropes and forked wooden props. It is kept in its erect position by beams, held together by cross bars and wedges,^[39] and is further supported by blocks of stone, or wood, piled up under the body. Cables, ropes, rollers, and levers are also employed on this occasion to move the gigantic sculpture. The captives are distinguished by the peculiar turbans before described.^[40]

We have thus represented, with remarkable fidelity and spirit^[41], the several processes employed to place these colossi where they still stand, from the transport down the river of the rough block to the final removal of the sculptured figure to the palace. From these bas-reliefs we find that the Assyrians were well acquainted with the lever and the roller, and that they ingeniously made use of the former by carrying with them wedges, of different dimensions, and probably of wood, to vary the height of the fulcrum. When moving the winged bulls and lions now in the British Museum from the ruins to the banks of the Tigris, I used almost the same means. The Assyrians, like the Egyptians, had made considerable progress in rope twisting, an art now only known in its rudest state in the same part of the East. The cables appear to be of great length and thickness, and ropes of various dimensions are represented in the sculptures.

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On comparing representations of similar works among the Egyptians, it will be found that they succeeded in removing masses of stone far exceeding in weight any sculpture which has yet been discovered in Assyria. Yet it is a singular fact, that whilst the quarries of Egypt bear witness of themselves to the stupendous nature of the works of the ancient inhabitants of the country, and still show on their sides engraved records of those who made them, no traces whatever, notwithstanding the most careful research, have yet been found to indicate from whence the builders of the Assyrian palaces obtained their large slabs of alabaster. That they were in the immediate neighbourhood of Nineveh there is scarcely any reason to doubt, as strata of this material, easily accessible, abound, not only in the hills but in the plains. This very abundance may have rendered any particular quarry unnecessary, and blocks were probably taken as required from convenient spots, which have since been covered by the soil.

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There can be no doubt, as will hereafter be shown, that the king represented as superintending the building of the mounds and the placing of the colossal bulls is

Sennacherib himself, and that the sculptures celebrate the building at Nineveh of the great palace and its adjacent temples described in the inscriptions as the work of this monarch. Unfortunately only fragments of the epigraphs have been preserved. From them it would appear that the transport of more than one object was represented on the walls. Besides bulls and sphynxes in stone are mentioned figures in some kind of wood, perhaps of olive, like "the two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high," in the temple of Solomon.[42] Over the king superintending the removal of one of these colossi is the following short inscription thus translated by Dr. Hincks:—

"Sennacherib, king of Assyria, the great figures of bulls, which in the land of Belad, were made for his royal palace at Nineveh, he transported *thither*." (?)

The land of Belad, mentioned in these inscriptions, appears to have been a district in the immediate vicinity of Nineveh, and probably on the Tigris, as these great masses of stone would have been quarried near the river for the greater convenience of moving them to the palace. The district of Belad may indeed have been that in which the city itself stood.

Over the representation of the building of the mound there were two epigraphs, both precisely similar, but both unfortunately much mutilated. As far as they can be restored, they have thus been interpreted by Dr. Hincks:—

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"Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Hewn stones, *which*, as the gods[43] willed, were found in the land of Belad, for the *walls* (?) (or foundations, the word reads '*shibrī*') of my palace, *I caused the inhabitants of foreign countries* (?) and the people of the forests (Kershani), the great bulls for the gates of my palace to *drag* (?) (or bring)."

If this inscription be rightly rendered, we have direct evidence that captives from foreign countries were employed in the great public works undertaken by the Assyrian kings, as we were led to infer, from the variety of costume represented in the bas-reliefs, and from the fetters on the legs of some of the workmen. The Jews themselves, after their captivity, may have been thus condemned to labor, as their forefathers had been in Egypt, in erecting the monuments of their conquerors; and we may, perhaps, recognise them amongst the builders portrayed in the sculptures.

From the long gallery, we have unfortunately only three fragments of inscriptions without the sculptured representations of the events recorded. The most perfect is interesting on more than one account. According to Dr. Hincks it is to be translated:—

"Sennacherib, king of Assyria ... (some object, the nature not ascertained) of wood, which from the Tigris I caused to be brought up (*through* ?) the Kharri, or Khasri, on sledges (or boats), I caused to be carried (or to mount)."

The name of the river in this inscription very nearly resembles that of the small stream which sweeps round the foot of the great mound of Kouyunjik.

In the fragment of another epigraph, we have mention of some objects also of wood "brought from Mount Lebanon, and taken up (to the top of the mound) from the Tigris." These may have been beams of cedar, which, it will be hereafter seen, were extensively used in the Assyrian palaces. It is highly interesting thus to find the inhabitants of Nineveh fetching their rare and precious woods from the same spots that king Solomon had brought the choicest woodwork of the temple of the Lord and of his own palaces.

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On a third fragment similar objects are described as coming from or up the same Kharri or Khasri. I have mentioned that the long gallery containing the bas-relief representing the moving of the great stone, led out of a chamber, whose walls had been completely uncovered. The sculptures upon them were partly preserved, and recorded the conquest of a city standing on a broad river, in the midst of mountains and forests.

The last bas-relief of the series represented the king seated within a fortified camp, on a throne of elaborate workmanship, and having beneath his feet a footstool of equally elegant form. He was receiving the captives, who wore long robes falling to their ankles. Unfortunately, no inscription remained by which we might identify the conquered nation.

It will be remembered that excavations had been resumed in a lofty mound in the north-west line of walls forming the enclosure round Kouyunjik. It was apparently the remains of a gate leading into this quarter of the city, and part of a building, with fragments of two colossal winged figures, had already been discovered in it. By the end of November, the whole had been explored, and the results were of considerable interest. As the mound rises nearly fifty feet over the plain, we were obliged to tunnel along the walls of the building within it, through a compact mass of rubbish, consisting almost entirely of loose bricks. Following the rows of low limestone slabs, from the south side of the mound, and passing through two halls or chambers, we came at length to the opposite entrance. This gateway, facing the open country, was formed by a pair of majestic human-headed bulls, fourteen feet in length, still entire, though cracked and injured by fire. They were similar in form to those of Khorsabad and Kouyunjik, wearing the lofty head-dress, richly ornamented with rosettes, and edged with a fringe of feathers peculiar to that period. Their faces were in full, and the relief was high and bold. More knowledge of art was shown in the outline of the limbs and in the delineation of the muscles, than in any sculpture I have seen of this period. The naked leg and foot were designed with a spirit and truthfulness worthy of a Greek artist. It is,

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however, remarkable that the four figures were unfinished, none of the details having been put in, and parts being but roughly outlined.

The sculptures to the left, on entering from the open country, were in a far more unfinished state than those on the opposite side. The hair and beard were but roughly marked out, square bosses being left for carving the elaborate curls. The horned cap of the human-headed bull was, as yet, unornamented, and the wings merely outlined. The limbs and features were hard and angular, still requiring to be rounded off, and to have expression given to them by the finishing touch of the artist. The other two figures were more perfect. No inscription had yet been carved on either sculpture.

The entrance formed by these colossal bulls was fourteen feet and a quarter wide. It was paved with large slabs of limestone, still bearing the marks of chariot wheels. The sculptures were buried in a mass of brick and earth, mingled with charcoal and charred wood; for "the gates of the land had been set wide open unto the enemy, and the fire had devoured the bars."^[44] They were lighted from above by a deep shaft sunk from the top of the mound. It would be difficult to describe the effect produced, or the reflections suggested by these solemn and majestic figures, dimly visible amidst the gloom, when, after winding through the dark, underground passages, you suddenly came into their presence. Between them Sennacherib and his hosts had gone forth in all their might and glory to the conquest of distant lands, and had returned rich with spoil and captives, amongst whom may have been the handmaidens and wealth of Israel. Through them, too, the Assyrian monarch had entered his capital in shame, after his last and fatal defeat. Then the lofty walls, now but long lines of low, wave-like mounds, had stretched far to the right and to the left—a basement of stone supporting a curtain of solid brick masonry, crowned with battlements and studded with frowning towers.

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Behind the colossal figures, and between the outer and inner face of the gateway, were two chambers, nearly 70 feet in length, by 23 in breadth. Of that part of the entrance which was within the walls, only the fragments of winged figures, discovered during my previous researches, now remained.

The whole entrance thus consisted of two distinct chambers and three gateways, two formed by human-headed bulls, and a third between them simply panelled with low limestone slabs like the chambers. Its original height, including the tower, must have been full one hundred feet. Most of the baked bricks found amongst the rubbish bore the name of Sennacherib, the builder of the palace of Kouyunjik. A similar gateway, but without any remains of sculptured figures, and panelled with plain alabaster slabs, was subsequently discovered in the inner line of walls forming the eastern side of the quadrangle, where the road to Baashiekhah and Baazani leaves the ruins.

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At Nimroud discoveries of very considerable importance were made in the high conical mound at the north-west corner. Desirous of fully exploring that remarkable ruin, I had employed nearly all the workmen in opening a tunnel into its western base. After penetrating for no less than eighty-four feet through a compact mass of rubbish, composed of loose gravel, earth, burnt bricks, and fragments of stone, the excavators came to a wall of solid stone masonry. I have already observed that the edifice covered by this high mound was originally built upon the natural rock, a bank of hard conglomerate rising about fifteen feet above the plain, and washed in days of yore by the waters of the Tigris. Our tunnel was carried for thirty-four feet on a level with this rock, which appears to have been covered by a kind of flooring of sun-dried bricks, probably once forming a platform in front of the building. It was buried to the distance of thirty feet from the wall, by baked bricks, broken and entire, and by fragments of stone, remains of the superstructure once resting upon the basement of still existing stone masonry. This mass of rubbish was about thirty feet high, and in it were found bones apparently human, and a yellow earthen jar, rudely colored with simple black designs. The rest of this part of the mound consisted of earth, through which ran two thin lines of extraneous deposit, one *of pebbles*, the other of fragments of brick and pottery. I am totally at a loss to account for their formation.

I ordered tunnels to be carried along the basement wall in both directions, hoping to reach some doorway or entrance, but it was found to consist of solid masonry, extending nearly the whole length of the mound. Its height was exactly twenty feet, which, singularly enough, coincides with that assigned by Xenophon to the stone basement of the wall of the city (Larissa).^[45] The stones in this structure were carefully fitted together, though not united with mortar, unless the earth which filled the crevices was the remains of mud, used, as it still is in the country, as a cement. They were bevelled with a slanting bevel, and in the face of the wall were eight recesses or false windows, four on each side of a square projecting block between gradines.

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The basement, of which this wall proved to be only one face, was not excavated on the northern and eastern side until a later period, but I will describe all the discoveries connected with this singular building at once. The northern side was of the same height as, and resembled in its masonry, the western. It had a semicircular hollow projection in the centre, sixteen feet in diameter, on the east side of which were two recesses, and on the west four, so that the two ends of the wall were not uniform. That part of the basement against which the great artificial mound or platform abutted, and which was consequently concealed by it, that is, the eastern and southern sides, was of simple stone masonry without

recesses or ornament. The upper part of the edifice, resting on the stone substructure, consisted of compact masonry of burnt bricks, which were mostly inscribed with the name of the founder of the centre palace (the obelisk king), the inscription being in many instances turned outwards.

It was thus evident that the high conical mound forming the north-west corner of the ruins of Nimroud, was the remains of a square tower, and not of a pyramid, as had previously been conjectured. The lower part, built of solid stone masonry, had withstood the wreck of ages, but the upper walls of burnt brick, and the inner mass of sun-dried brick which they encased, falling outwards, and having been subsequently covered with earth and vegetation, the ruin had taken the pyramidal form that loose materials falling in this manner would naturally assume.

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It is very probable that this ruin represents the tomb of Sardanapalus, which, according to the Greek geographers, stood at the entrance of the city of Nineveh. It will hereafter be seen that it is not impossible the builder of the north-west palace of Nimroud was a king of that name, although it is doubtful whether he can be identified with the historical Sardanapalus. Subsequent discoveries proved that he must himself have raised the stone substructure, although his son, whose name is found upon the bricks, completed the building. It was, of course, natural to conjecture that some traces of the chamber in which the royal remains were deposited, were to be found in the ruin, and I determined to examine it as fully as I was able. Having first ascertained the exact centre of the western stone basement, I there forced a passage through it. This was a work of some difficulty, as the wall was 8 ft. 9 in. thick, and strongly built of large rough stones. Having, however, accomplished this step, I carried a tunnel completely through the mound, at its very base, and on a level with the natural rock, until we reached the opposite basement wall, at a distance of 150 feet. Nothing having been discovered by this cutting, I directed a second to be made at right angles to it, crossing it exactly in the centre, and reaching from the northern to the southern basement; but without any discovery.

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The next cutting was made in the centre of the mound, on a line with the top of the stone basement wall, which was also the level of the platform of the north-west palace. The workmen soon came to a narrow gallery, about 100 feet long, 12 feet high, and 6 feet broad, which was blocked up at the two ends without any entrance being left into it. It was vaulted with sun-dried bricks, a further proof of the use of the arch at a very early period, and the vault had in one or two places fallen in. No remains whatever were found in it, neither fragments of sculpture or inscription, nor any smaller relic. There were, however, undoubted traces of its having once been broken into on the western side, by digging into the face of the mound after the edifice was in ruins, and consequently, therefore, long after the fall of the Assyrian empire. The remains which it may have contained, probably the embalmed body of the king, with vessels of precious metals and other objects of value buried with it, had been carried off by those who had opened the tomb at some remote period, in search of treasure. They must have had some clue to the precise position of the chamber, or how could they have dug into the mound exactly at the right spot? Had this depository of the dead escaped earlier violation, who can tell with what valuable and important relics of Assyrian art or Assyrian history it might have furnished us? I explored, with feelings of great disappointment, the empty chamber, and then opened other tunnels, without further results, in the upper parts of the mound.

It was evident that the long gallery or chamber I have described was the place of deposit for the body of the king, if this were really his tomb. The tunnels and cuttings in other parts of the mound only exposed a compact and solid mass of sun-dried brick masonry. I much doubt, for many reasons, whether any sepulchre exists in the rock beneath the foundations of the tower, though, of course, it is not impossible that such may be the case.^[46]

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From the present state of the ruin it is difficult to conjecture the exact original form and height of this edifice. There can be no doubt that it was a vast square tower, and it is not improbable that it may have terminated in a series of three or more gradines, like the obelisk of black marble from the centre palace now in the British Museum. Like the palaces, too, it was probably painted on the outside with various mythic figures and devices, and its summit may have been crowned by an altar, on which the Assyrian king offered up his great sacrifices, or on which was fed the ever-burning sacred fire. But I will defer any further remarks upon this subject until I treat of the architecture of the Assyrians.

As the ruin is 140 feet high, the building could scarcely have been much less than 200, whilst the immense mass of rubbish surrounding and covering the base shows that it might have been considerably more.

During the two months in which the greater part of the discoveries described in this chapter were made, I was occupied almost entirely with the excavations, my time being spent between Nimroud and Kouyunjik.

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Wishing to visit Baasheikhah, Khorsabad, and other ruins at the foot of the range of low hills of the Gebel Makloub, I left Nimroud on the 26th of November with Hormuzd and the Bairakdar. Four hours' ride brought us to some small artificial mounds near the village of Lak, about three miles to the east of the high road to Mosul. Here we found a party of workmen excavating under one of the Christian superintendents. Nothing had been discovered except fragments of pottery and a few bricks bearing the name of the Kouyunjik

king. As the ruins, from their size, did not promise other results, I sent the men back to Mosul. We reached Khorsabad after riding for nearly eight hours over a rich plain, capable of very high cultivation, though wanting in water, and still well stocked with villages, between which we startled large flocks of gazelles and bustards. I had sent one of my overseers there some days before to uncover the platform to the west of the principal edifice, a part of the building I was desirous of examining. Whilst clearing away the rubbish, he had discovered two bas-reliefs sculptured in black stone. They represented a hunting scene, and were executed with much truth and spirit. They belonged to a small building, believed to be a temple, entirely constructed of black marble, and attached to the palace. It stood upon a platform 165 feet in length and 100 in width, raised about six feet above the level of the flooring of the chambers, and ascended from the main building by a flight of broad steps. This platform, or stylobate, is remarkable for a cornice in grey limestone carried round the four sides,—one of the few remains of exterior decoration in Assyrian architecture, with which we are acquainted. It is carefully built of separate stones, placed *side by side*, each forming part of the section of the cornice. Mr. Fergusson observes,^[47] with reference to it, “at first sight it seems almost purely Egyptian; but there are peculiarities in which it differs from any found in that country, especially in the curve being continued beyond the vertical tangent, and the consequent projection of the torus giving a second shadow. Whether the effect of this would be pleasant or not in a cornice placed so high that we must look up to it, is not quite clear; but below the level of the eye, or slightly above it, the result must have been more pleasing than any form found in Egypt, and where sculpture is not added might be used with effect anywhere.”

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Many fragments of bas-reliefs in the same black marble, chiefly parts of winged figures, had been uncovered; but this building has been more completely destroyed than any other part of the palace of Khorsabad, and there is scarcely enough rubbish even to cover the few remains of sculpture which are scattered over the platform.

The sculptures in the palace itself had rapidly fallen to decay, and of those which had been left exposed to the air after M. Botta's departure, scarcely any traces remained. Since my former visit to Khorsabad, the French consul at Mosul had sold to Col. Rawlinson the pair of colossal human-headed bulls and winged figures, now in the great hall of the British Museum. They had stood in a propylæum, about 900 feet to the south-east of the palace, within the quadrangle, but not upon the artificial mound. In form this small building appears to have been nearly the same as the gateway, in the walls of Kouyunjik, and like it was built of brick and panelled with low limestone slabs. From the number of enamelled bricks discovered in the ruins it is probable that it was richly decorated in color.

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Trenches had also been opened in one of the higher mounds in the line of walls, and in the group of ruins at the S. W. corner of the quadrangle, but no discoveries of any interest had been made. The centre of the quadrangle was now occupied by a fever-breeding marsh formed by the waters of the Khauser.

We passed the night at Futhliyah, a village built at the foot of the Gabel Makloub, about a mile and a half from Khorsabad. Near Futhliyah, and about two miles from the palace of Khorsabad, is a lofty conical Tel visible from Mosul, and from most parts of the surrounding country. It is one of those isolated mounds so numerous in the plains of Assyria, which do not appear to form part of any group of ruins, and the nature of which I have been unable to determine. Its vicinity to Khorsabad led me to believe that it might have been connected with those remains, and might have been raised over a tomb. By my directions deep trenches were opened into its sides, but only fragments of pottery were discovered.

From Futhliyah we rode across the plain to the large village of Baazani, chiefly inhabited by Yezidis. There we found Hussein Bey, Sheikh Nasr, and a large party of Cawals assembled at the house of one Abd-ur-rahman Chelibi, a Mussulman gentleman of Mosul, who had farmed the revenues of the place.

Near Baazani are a group of artificial mounds of no great size. Having examined them, and taken leave of the chiefs, I rode to the neighbouring village of Baasheikhah, only separated from Baazani by a deep watercourse, dry except during the rains. Both stand at the very foot of the Gebel Makloub. Immediately behind them are craggy ravines worn by winter torrents. In these valleys are quarries of the kind of alabaster used in the Assyrian palaces, but I could find no remains to show that the Assyrians had obtained their great slabs from them, although they appear to be of ancient date.

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I have mentioned, in my former work, the Assyrian ruin near Baasheikhah. It is a vast mound, little inferior in size to Nimroud, irregular in shape, uneven in level, and furrowed by deep ravines worn by the winter rains. Standing, as it does, near abundant quarries of the favorite sculpture-material of the Assyrians, and resembling the platforms of Kouyunjik or Khorsabad, there was every probability that it contained the remains of an edifice like those ruins. There are a few low mounds scattered around it, but no distinct line of walls forming an inclosure. During the former excavations only earthen jars, and bricks, inscribed with the name of the founder of the centre palace at Nimroud, had been discovered. A party of Arabs and Tiyari were now opening trenches and tunnels in various parts of the mound, under the superintendence of Yakoub Rais of Asheetha. The workmen had uncovered, on the west side of the ruin near the surface, some large blocks of yellowish limestone apparently forming a flight of steps; the only other antiquities of any interest found during the excavations were a

few bricks bearing the name of the early Nimroud king, and numerous fragments of earthenware.

It is remarkable that no remains of more interest have been discovered in this mound, which must contain a monument of considerable size and antiquity. Although the trenches opened in it were numerous and deep, yet the ruin has not yet probably been sufficiently examined. It can scarcely be doubted that on the artificial platform, as on others of the same nature, stood a royal palace, or some monument of equal importance.



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Bulls, with historical Inscriptions of Sennacherib (Kouyunjik).

CHAPTER VI.

DISCOVERY OF GRAND ENTRANCE TO THE PALACE OF KOUYUNJIK.—OF THE NAME OF SENNACHERIB IN THE INSCRIPTIONS.—THE RECORDS OF THAT KING IN THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE BULLS.—AN ABRIDGED TRANSLATION OF THEM.—NAME OF HEZEKIAH.—ACCOUNT OF SENNACHERIB'S WARS WITH THE JEWS.—DR. HINCKS AND COL. RAWLINSON.—THE NAMES OF SARGON AND SHALMANESER.—DISCOVERY OF SCULPTURES AT KOUYUNJIK, REPRESENTING THE SIEGE OF LACHISH.—DESCRIPTION OF THE SCULPTURES.—DISCOVERY OF CLAY SEALS—OF SIGNETS OF EGYPTIAN AND ASSYRIAN KINGS.—CARTOUCHE OF SABACO.—NAME OF ESSARHADDON.—CONFIRMATION OF HISTORICAL RECORDS OF THE BIBLE.—ROYAL CYLINDER OF SENNACHERIB.

During the month of December, several discoveries of the greatest interest and importance were made, both at Kouyunjik and Nimroud. I will first describe the results of the excavations in the ruins opposite Mosul.

I must remind the reader that, shortly before my departure for Europe in 1848, the forepart of a human-headed bull of colossal dimensions had been uncovered on the east side of the Kouyunjik Palace. This sculpture then appeared to form one side of an entrance or doorway, and it is so placed in the plan of the ruins accompanying my former work.^[48] The excavations had, however, been abandoned before any attempt could be made to ascertain the fact. On my return, I had directed the workmen to dig out the opposite sculpture. A tunnel, nearly 100 feet in length, was accordingly opened at right angles to the bull, first discovered, but without coming upon any other remains than a pavement of square limestone slabs which stretched without interruption as far as the excavation was carried. I consequently discontinued the cutting, as it was evident that no entrance could be of so great a width, and as there were not even traces of building in that direction.

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The workmen having been then ordered to uncover the bull which was still partly buried in the rubbish, it was found that adjoining it were other sculptures, and that it formed part of an exterior façade. The upper half of the next slab had been destroyed, but the lower still remained, and enabled me to restore the figure of the Assyrian Hercules strangling the lion, similar to that discovered between the bulls in the propylæa of Khorsabad, and now in the Louvre. The hinder part of the animal was still preserved. Its claws grasped the huge limbs of the giant, who lashed it with the serpent-headed scourge. The legs, feet, and drapery of the god were in the boldest relief, and designed with great truth and vigor. Beyond this figure, in the same line, was a second bull. The façade then opened into a wide portal, guarded by a pair of winged bulls, twenty feet long, and probably, when entire, more than twenty feet high. Forming the angle between them and the outer bulls were gigantic winged figures in low relief, and flanking them were two smaller figures, one above the other. Beyond this entrance was a group similar to and corresponding with that on the opposite side, also leading to a smaller entrance into the palace, and to a wall of sculptured slabs; but here all traces of building and sculpture ceased, and we found ourselves near the edge of the water-worn ravine.

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Thus a façade of the south-east side of the palace, forming apparently the grand entrance to the edifice, had been discovered. Ten colossal bulls, with six human figures of gigantic proportions, were here grouped together, and the length of the whole, without including the sculptured walls continued beyond the smaller entrances, was 180 feet. They had represented the conquest of a district, probably part of Babylonia, watered by a broad river and wooded with palms, spearmen on foot in combat with Assyrian horsemen, castles besieged, long lines of prisoners, and beasts of burden carrying away the spoil. Amongst various animals brought as tribute to the conquerors, could be distinguished a lion led by a chain.

The bulls, as I have already observed, were all more or less injured. The same convulsion of nature—for I can scarcely attribute to any human violence the overthrow of these great masses—had shattered some of them into pieces, and scattered the fragments amongst the ruins. Fortunately, however, the lower parts of all, and, consequently, the inscriptions, had been more or less preserved. To this fact we owe the recovery of some of the most precious records with which the monuments of the ancient world have rewarded the labors of the antiquary.

On the great bulls forming the centre portal of the grand entrance, was one continuous inscription, injured in parts, but still so far preserved as to be legible almost throughout. It contained 152 lines. On the four bulls of the façade were two inscriptions, one inscription being carried over each pair, and the two being of precisely the same import. These two distinct records contain the annals of six years of the reign of Sennacherib, besides numerous particulars connected with the religion of the Assyrians, their gods, their temples, and the erection of their palaces, all of the highest interest and importance.

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In my first work I pointed out the evidence, irrespective of the inscriptions, which led me to identify the builder of the great palace of Kouyunjik with Sennacherib.^[49] Dr. Hincks, in a memoir on the inscriptions of Khorsabad, read in June, 1849, but published in the "Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy"^[50] in 1850, was the first to detect the name of this king in the group of arrowheaded characters at the commencement of nearly all the inscriptions, and occurring on all the inscribed bricks from the ruins of this edifice. Subsequent discoveries confirmed this identification, but it was not until August, 1851, that the mention of any actual event recorded in the Bible, and in ancient profane history, was detected on the monuments, thus removing all further doubt as to the king who had raised them.

Shortly after my return to England my copies of these inscriptions having been seen by Colonel Rawlinson, he announced in the Athenæum of the 23d August, 1851, that he had found in them notices of the reign of Sennacherib, "which placed beyond the reach of dispute his historic identity," and he gave a recapitulation of the principal events recorded on the monuments, the greater part of which are known to us through history either sacred or profane. These inscriptions have since been examined by Dr. Hincks, and translated by him independently of Colonel Rawlinson. He has kindly assisted me in giving the following abridgment of their contents.

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The inscriptions begin with the name and titles of Sennacherib. It is to be remarked that he does not style himself "King, or rather High Priest, of Babylon," as his father had done in the latter part of his reign, from which it may be inferred that at the time of engraving the record he was not the immediate sovereign of that city, although its chief may have paid tribute to him, and, no doubt, acknowledged his supremacy. He calls himself "the subduer of kings from the upper sea of the setting sun (the Mediterranean) to the lower sea of the rising sun (the Persian Gulf)." In the first year of his reign he defeated Merodach Baladan, a name with which we are familiar, for it is this king who is mentioned in the Old Testament as sending letters and a present to Hezekiah^[51], when the Jewish monarch in his pride showed the ambassadors "the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominions that Hezekiah showed them not;" an act of vain boasting which led to the reproof of the prophet Isaiah, and to his foretelling that all this wealth, together with the descendants of its owner, should be carried

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away as spoil to the very city from which these ambassadors came. Merodach Baladan is called king of Kar-Duniyas, a city and country frequently mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions, and comprising the southernmost part of Mesopotamia, near the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, together with the districts watered by those two rivers, to the borders of Susiana. This king, with the help of his Susianian allies, had recently recovered Babylon, from which Sargon, Sennacherib's father, had expelled him in the twelfth year of his reign. The battle appears to have been fought considerably to the north of that city. The result was that Sennacherib totally defeated Merodach Baladan, who fled to save his life, leaving behind him his chariots, *wagons* (?), horses, mares, *asses* (?), camels, and *riding horses with their trappings for war* (?). The victorious king then advanced to Babylon, where he plundered the palace, carrying off a vast treasure of gold, silver, vessels of gold and silver, precious stones, men and women servants, and a variety of objects which cannot yet be satisfactorily determined. No less than seventy-nine cities (or fortresses), all the castles of the Chaldæans, and eight hundred and twenty small towns (or villages), dependent upon them, were taken and spoiled by the Assyrian army, and the great wandering tribes "that dwelt around the cities of Mesopotamia," the Syrians (Arameans), and Chaldæans, &c., &c., were brought under subjection. Sennacherib having made Belib[52], one of his own officers, sovereign of the conquered provinces, proceeded to subdue the powerful tribes who border on the Euphrates and Tigris, and amongst them the Hagarenes and Nabathæans. From these wandering people he declares that he carried off to Assyria, probably colonising with them, as was the custom, new-built towns and villages, 208,000 men, women, and children, together with 7200 horses and mares, 11,063 *asses* (?), 5230 camels, 120,100 oxen, and 800,500 sheep. It is remarkable that the camels should bear so small a proportion to the oxen and asses in this enumeration of the spoil. Amongst the Bedouin tribes, who now inhabit the same country, the camels would be far more numerous.[53] It is interesting to find, that in those days, as at a later period, there was both a nomade and stationary population in Northern Arabia.

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In the same year, Sennacherib received a great tribute from the conquered Khararah, and subdued the people of Kherimmi, whom he declares to have been long rebellious (neither people can as yet be identified), rebuilding (? or consecrating) the city of the latter, and sacrificing on the occasion, for its dedication to the gods of Assyria, one ox, ten sheep, ten goats or lambs, and twenty other animals.

In the second year of his reign, Sennacherib appears to have turned his arms to the north of Nineveh, having reduced in his first year the southern country to obedience. By the help of Ashur, he says, he went to Bishi and Yasubirablai (both names of doubtful reading and not identified), who had long been rebellious to the kings his fathers. He took Beth Kilamzakh, their principal city, and carried away their men, small and great, horses, mares, *asses* (?), oxen, and sheep. The people of Bishi and Yasubirablai, who had fled from his servants, he brought down from the mountains and placed them under one of his eunuchs, the governor of the city of Arapkha. He made tablets, and *wrote on them the laws (or tribute) imposed upon the conquered, and set them up* in the city. He took permanent possession of the country of Illibi (Luristan ?), and Ispabara, its king, after being defeated, fled, leaving the cities of Marubishti and Akkuddu, the royal residences, with thirty-four principal towns, and villages not to be counted, to be destroyed by the Assyrians, who carried away a large amount of captives and cattle. Beth-barrua, the city itself and its dependencies, Sennacherib separated from Illibi, and added to his immediate dominions. The city of *Ilbinzash* (?) he appointed to be the chief city in this district. He abolished its former name, called it Kar-Sanakhirba (*i. e.* the city of Sennacherib), and placed in it a new people, annexing it to the government of Kharkhar, which must have been in the neighbourhood of Holwan, commanding the pass through Mount Zagros.

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In the third year of his reign, Sennacherib appears to have overran with his armies the whole of Syria. He probably crossed the Euphrates above Carchemish, at or near the ford of Thapsacus, and marched to the sea-coast, over the northern spur of Mount Lebanon. The Syrians are called by their familiar biblical name of Hittites, the Khatti, or Khetta, by which they were also known to the Egyptians. The first opposition he appears to have received was from Luli (or Luliya), king of Sidon, who had withheld his homage; but who was soon compelled to fly from Tyre to Yavan in the middle of the sea. Dr. Hincks identifies this country with the island of Crete, or some part of the southern coast of Asia Minor, and with the Yavan (יָוָן) of the Old Testament, the country of the Ionians or Greeks, an identification which I believe to be correct. This very Phœnician king is mentioned by Josephus (quoting from Menander), under the name of Elulæus, as warring with Shalmaneser, a predecessor of Sennacherib. He appears not to have been completely subdued before this, but only to have paid homage or tribute to the Assyrian monarchs.[54] Sennacherib placed a person, whose name is doubtful (Col. Rawlinson reads it Tubaal), upon the throne of Luli, and appointed his annual tribute. All the kings of the sea-coast then submitted to him, except Zidkaha (compare Zedekiah) or Zidkabal, king of Ascalon. This chief was, however, soon subdued, and was sent, with his household and wealth, to Assyria, — (name destroyed), the son of *Rukipti* (?), a former king, being placed on the throne in his stead. The cities dependent upon Ascalon, which had not been obedient to his authority, he captured and plundered. A passage of great importance, which now occurs, is unfortunately so much injured that it has not yet been satisfactorily restored. It appears to state that the *chief priests* (?) and people of Ekron (?) had dethroned their king Padiya, who was dependent upon Assyria, and had delivered him up to Hezekiah, king of Judæa. The kings of Egypt sent an army, the main part

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of which is said to have belonged to the king of Milukhkha, (Meroe, or Æthiopia), to Judæa, probably to help their Jewish allies. Sennacherib joined battle with the Egyptians, totally defeated them near the city of Al...ku, capturing the charioteers of the king of Milukhkha, and placing them in confinement. This battle between the armies of the Assyrians and Egyptians appears to be hinted at in Isaiah and in the Book of Kings.[55] Padiya having been brought back from Jerusalem, was replaced by Sennacherib on his throne. "Hezekiah, king of Judah," says the Assyrian king, "who had not submitted to my authority, forty-six of his principal cities, and fortresses and villages depending upon them, of which I took no account, I captured and carried away their spoil. I *shut up* (?) himself within Jerusalem, his capital city. The fortified towns, and the rest of his towns, which I spoiled, I severed from his country, and gave to the kings of Ascalon, Ekron, and Gaza, so as to make his country small. In addition to the former tribute imposed upon their countries, I added a tribute, the nature of which I fixed." The next passage is somewhat defaced, but the substance of it appears to be, that he took from Hezekiah the treasure he had collected in Jerusalem, 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, the treasures of his palace, besides his sons and his daughters, and his male and female servants or slaves, and brought them all to Nineveh. The city itself, however, he does not pretend to have taken.

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There can be little doubt that the campaign against the cities of Palestine recorded in the inscriptions of Sennacherib at Kouyunjik, is that described in the Old Testament. The events agree with considerable accuracy. We are told in the Book of Kings, that the king of Assyria, in the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah, "came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them,"[56] as he declares himself to have done in his annals. And, what is most important, and perhaps one of the most remarkable coincidences of historic testimony on record, the amount of the treasure in gold taken from Hezekiah, thirty talents, agrees in the two perfectly independent accounts.[57] Too much stress cannot be laid on this singular fact, as it tends to prove the general accuracy of the historical details contained in the Assyrian inscriptions. There is a difference of 500 talents, as it will be observed, in the amount of silver. It is probable that Hezekiah was much pressed by Sennacherib, and compelled to give him all the wealth that he could collect, as we find him actually taking the silver from the house of the Lord, as well as from his own treasury, and cutting off the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple, to satisfy the demands of the Assyrian king. The Bible may therefore only include the actual amount of money in the 300 talents of silver, whilst the Assyrian records comprise all the precious metal taken away. There are some chronological discrepancies which cannot at present be satisfactorily reconciled, and which I will not attempt to explain. It is natural to suppose that Sennacherib would not perpetuate the memory of his own overthrow; and that, having been unsuccessful in an attempt upon Jerusalem, his army being visited by the plague described in Scripture, he should gloss over his defeat by describing the tribute he had previously received from Hezekiah as the general result of his campaign.

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There is no reason to believe, from the biblical account, that Sennacherib was slain by his sons *immediately* after his return to Nineveh; on the contrary, the expression "he returned and dwelt at Nineveh," infers that he continued to reign for some time over Assyria. We have accordingly his further annals on the monuments he erected. In his fourth year he went southward, and subdued the country of Beth-Yakin, defeating Susubira, the Chaldæan, who dwelt in the city of Bittut on the river—(Agammi, according to Rawlinson). Further mention is made of Merodach Baladan. "This king whom I had defeated in a former campaign, escaped from my principal servants and fled to an island (name lost); his brothers, the seed of his father's house, whom he left behind him on the coast, with the rest of the men of his country from Beth-Yakin, near the *salt* (?) river (the Shat-el-Arab, or united waters of the Tigris and Euphrates), I carried away, and several of his towns I threw down and burnt; Assurnadimmi (? Assurnadin, according to Rawlinson), my son, I placed on the throne of his kingdom." He appears then to have made a large government, of which Babylon was the chief place.

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In the fifth year he defeated the Tokkari, capturing their principal stronghold or Nipour (*detached hill-fort* ?), and others of their castles. He also attacked Maniyakh, king of *Okku* or *Wukku* (?), a country to which no previous Assyrian king had penetrated. This chief deserted his capital and fled to a distance. Sennacherib carried off the spoil of his palace and plundered his cities. This expedition seems to have been to the north of Assyria in Armenia or Asia Minor.

In the following year Sennacherib again marched to the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris, and attacked the two cities of Naghit and Naghit Dibeena. Both cities belonged to the King of Elam (Elamti), or Nuvaki, the two names being used indifferently for the same country. The Assyrian king, in order to reach them, was compelled to build ships, and to employ the mariners of Tyre, Sidon, and Yavan, as navigators. He brought these vessels down the Tigris, and crossed on them to the Susian side of the river, after having first, it would seem, taken the city Naghit which stood on the western bank. He offered precious sacrifices to a god (? Neptune, but name doubtful) on the bank of the salt river, and dedicated to him a ship of gold, and two other golden objects, the nature of which has not been determined. Mention is then made of his having captured Naghit Dibeena, together with three other cities, whose names cannot be well ascertained, and of his crossing the river *Ula* (? the Ulai of Daniel, the Eulæus of the Greeks, and the modern Karoon). Unfortunately the whole of the passage which contains the record of the expedition against these cities is much

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defaced, and has not yet been satisfactorily restored. It appears to give interesting details of the building of the ships on the Tigris, by the men of Tyre and Sidon, and of the navigation of that river.

Such are the principal historical facts recorded on the bulls placed by Sennacherib in his palace at Nineveh. I have given them fully, in order that we may endeavour to identify the sculptured representations of these events on the walls of the chambers and halls of that magnificent building, described in the course of this work.

As the name of Sennacherib, as well as those of many kings, countries and cities, are not written phonetically, that is, by letters having a certain alphabetic value, but by monograms, and the deciphering of them is a peculiar process, which may sometimes appear suspicious to those not acquainted with the subject, a few words of explanation may be acceptable to my readers. The greater number of Assyrian proper names with which we are acquainted, whether royal or not, appear to have been made up of the name, epithet, or title, of one of the national deities, and of a second word, such as "slave of," "servant of," "beloved of," "protected by;" like the "Theodosius," "Theodorus," &c. of the Greeks, and the "Abdullah," and "Abd-ur-Rahman," of Mohammedan nations. The names of the gods being commonly written with a monogram, the first step in deciphering is to know which god this particular sign denotes. Thus, in the name of Sennacherib, we have first the determinative of "god," to which no phonetic value is attached; whilst the second character denotes an Assyrian god, whose name was San. The first component part of the name of Essarhaddon, is the monogram for the god Assur. It is this fact which renders it so difficult to determine, with any degree of confidence, most of the Assyrian names, and which leads me to warn my readers that, with the exception of such as can with certainty be identified with well-known historic kings, as Sargon, Sennacherib, and Essarhaddon, the interpretation of all those which are found on the monuments of Nineveh, is liable to very considerable doubt. In speaking of them I shall, therefore, not use any of the readings which have been suggested by different writers.

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Although no question can reasonably exist as to the identification of the king who built the palace of Kouyunjik with the Sennacherib of Scripture, it may still be desirable to place before my readers all the corroborative evidence connected with the subject. In so doing, however, I shall have to refer to the discoveries made at a subsequent period, and which ought consequently to be described, if the order of the narrative be strictly preserved, in a subsequent part of this work. In the first place, it must be remembered that the Kouyunjik king was undoubtedly the son of the founder of the palace at Khorsabad. He is so called in the inscriptions behind the bulls in the S. W. palace at Nimroud, and in numerous detached inscriptions on bricks, and on other remains from those ruins and from Kouyunjik. Now the name of the Khorsabad king was generally admitted to be Sargon, even before his relationship to the Kouyunjik king was known; although here again we are obliged to attach phonetic powers to characters used as monograms, which, when occurring as simple letters, appear to have totally different values. Colonel Rawlinson states, that this king bears in other inscriptions the name of Shalmaneser, by which he was better known to the Jews.^[58] Dr. Hincks denies that the two names belong to the same person.

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Unfortunately the upper parts of nearly all the bas-reliefs at Kouyunjik having been destroyed the epigraphs are wanting; and we are unable, as yet, to identify with certainty the subject represented with any known event in the reign of Sennacherib. There is, however, one remarkable exception.

During the latter part of my residence at Mosul a chamber was discovered in which the sculptures were in better preservation than any before found at Kouyunjik. Some of the slabs, indeed, were almost entire, though cracked and otherwise injured by fire; and the epigraph, which fortunately explained the event portrayed, was complete. These bas-reliefs represented the siege and capture by the Assyrians, of a city evidently of great extent and importance. It appears to have been defended by double walls, with battlements and towers, and by fortified outworks. The country around it was hilly and wooded, producing the fig and the vine. The whole power of the great king seems to have been called forth to take this stronghold. In no other sculptures were so many armed warriors seen drawn up in array before a besieged city. The besieged defended themselves with great determination. Spearmen, archers, and slingers thronged the battlements and towers, showering arrows, javelins, stones, and blazing torches upon the assailants. Part of the city had, however, been taken. Beneath its walls were seen Assyrian warriors impaling their prisoners, and from the gateway of an advanced tower, or fort, issued a procession of captives, reaching to the presence of the king, who, gorgeously arrayed, received them seated on his throne. The vanquished people were distinguished from the conquerors by their dress, those who defended the battlements wore a pointed helmet, differing from that of the Assyrian warriors in having a fringed lappet falling over the ears. Some of the captives had a kind of turban with one end hanging down to the shoulder, not unlike that worn by the modern Arabs of the Hedjaz. Others had no head-dress, and short hair and beards. Their garments consisted either of a robe reaching to the ankles, or of a tunic scarcely falling lower than the thigh, and confined at the waist by a girdle. The women wore long shirts, with an outer cloak thrown, like the veil of modern Eastern ladies, over the back of the head and falling to the feet.

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Several prisoners were already in the hands of the torturers. Two were stretched naked

upon the ground to be flayed alive, others were being slain by the sword before the throne of the king. The haughty monarch was receiving the chiefs of the conquered nation, who crouched and knelt humbly before him. They were brought into the royal presence by the Tartan of the Assyrian forces, probably the Rabshakeh himself, followed by his principal officers. The general was clothed in embroidered robes, and wore on his head a fillet adorned with rosettes and long tasseled bands.

The throne of the king stood upon an elevated platform, probably an artificial mound, in the hill country. Its arms and sides were supported by three rows of figures one above the other. The wood was richly carved, or encased in embossed metal, and the legs ended in pine-shaped ornaments, probably of bronze. The throne, indeed, appears to have resembled, in every respect, one discovered in the north-west palace at Nimroud, which I shall hereafter describe.^[59] Over the high back was thrown an embroidered cloth, doubtless of some rare and beautiful material.

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Sennacherib on his Throne
before Lachish.

The royal feet rested upon a high footstool of elegant form, fashioned like the throne, and cased with embossed metal; the legs ended in lions' paws. Behind the king were two attendant eunuchs raising fans above his head, and holding the embroidered napkins.

The monarch himself was attired in long loose robes richly ornamented, and edged with tassels and fringes. In his right hand he raised two arrows, and his left rested upon a bow; an attitude, probably denoting triumph over his enemies, and in which he is usually portrayed when receiving prisoners after a victory.

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Behind the king was the royal tent or pavilion: and beneath him were his led horses, and an attendant on foot carrying the parasol, the emblem of royalty. His two chariots with their charioteers, were waiting for him. The trappings of the horses were handsomely decorated, and an embroidered cloth, hung with tassels, fell on their chests. Two quivers, holding a bow, a hatchet, and arrows, were fixed to the side of the chariot.

This fine series of bas-reliefs, occupying thirteen slabs, was finished by the ground-plan of a castle, or of a fortified camp containing tents and houses. Within the walls was also seen a fire-altar with two beardless priests, wearing high conical caps, standing before it. In front of the altar, on which burned the sacred flame, was a table bearing various sacrificial objects, and beyond it two sacred chariots, such as accompanied the Persian kings in their wars.^[60] The horses had been taken out, and the yokes rested upon stands. Each chariot carried a lofty pole surmounted by a globe, and long tassels or streamers; similar standards were introduced into scenes representing sacrifices^[61] in the sculptures of Khorsabad.

Above the head of the king was an inscription, which may be translated, "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment, before (or at the entrance of) the city of Lachish (Lakhisha). I give permission for its slaughter."

Here, therefore, was the actual picture of the taking of Lachish, the city, as we know from the Bible, besieged by Sennacherib, when he sent his generals to demand tribute of Hezekiah, and which he had captured before their return^[62]; evidence of the most remarkable character to confirm the interpretation of the inscriptions, and to identify the king who caused them to be engraved with the Sennacherib of Scripture. This highly interesting series of bas-reliefs contained, moreover, an undoubted representation of a king,

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a city, and a people, with whose names we are acquainted, and of an event described in Holy Writ. They furnish us, therefore, with illustrations of the Bible of very great importance. The captives were undoubtedly Jews, their physiognomy was strikingly indicated in the sculptures, but they had been stripped of their ornaments and their fine raiment, and were left bare-footed and half-clothed. From the women, too, had been removed "the splendor of the foot ornaments and the caps of network, and the crescents; the ear-pendants, and the bracelets, and the thin veils; the head-dress, and the ornaments of the legs and the girdles, and the perfume-boxes and the amulets; the rings and the jewels of the nose; the embroidered robes and the tunics, and the cloaks and the satchels; the transparent garments, and the fine linen vests, and the turbans and the mantles, for they wore instead of a girdle, a rope; and instead of a stomacher, a girdling of sackcloth."^[63]

Other corroborative evidence as to the identity of the king who built the palace of Kouyunjik with Sennacherib, is scarcely less remarkable. In a chamber, or passage, in the south-west corner of this edifice, were found a large number of pieces of fine clay bearing the impressions of seals, which, there is no doubt, had been affixed, like modern official seals of wax, to documents written on leather, papyrus, or parchment. Such documents, with seals in clay still attached, have been discovered in Egypt, and specimens are preserved in the British Museum. The writings themselves had been consumed by the fire which destroyed the building or had perished from decay. In the stamped clay, however, may still be seen the holes for the string, or strips of skin, by which the seal was fastened; in some instances the ashes of the string itself remain,^[64] with the marks of the fingers and thumb.

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The greater part of these seals are Assyrian, but with them are others bearing Egyptian, Phœnician, and doubtful symbols and characters. Sometimes the same seal is impressed more than once on the same piece of clay. The Assyrian devices are of various kinds; the most common is that of a king plunging a dagger into the body of a rampant lion. This appears to have been the royal, and, indeed, the national, seal or signet. It is frequently encircled by a short inscription, which has not yet been deciphered, or by a simple guilloche border. The same group, emblematic of the superior power and wisdom of the king, as well as of his sacred character, is found on Assyrian cylinders, gems, and monuments.

Other devices found among these impressions of seals are:—1. A king, attended by a priest, in act of adoration before a deity standing on a lion, and surrounded by seven stars: above the god's head, on one seal, is a scorpion. 2. The king, followed by an attendant bearing a parasol, and preceded by a rampant horse. 3. A god, or the king, probably the former, rising from a crescent. There appears to be a fish in front of the figure. 4. The king, with an eunuch or priest before him; a flower, or ornamented staff, between them. 5. A scorpion, surrounded by a guilloche border (a device of very frequent occurrence, and probably astronomical). 6. A priest worshipping before a god. Behind him are a bull, and the sacred astronomical emblems. 8. An ear of corn, surrounded by a fancy border. 9. An object resembling a dagger, with flowers attached to the handle; perhaps a sacrificial knife. 10. The head of a bull and a trident, two sacred symbols of frequent occurrence on Assyrian monuments. 11. A crescent in the midst of a many-rayed star. 12. Several rudely cut seals, representing priests and various sacred animals, stars, &c.

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The seals most remarkable for beauty of design and skilful execution represent horsemen, one at full speed raising a spear, the other hunting a stag. The impressions show that they were little inferior to Greek intaglios. No Assyrian or Babylonian relics yet discovered, equal them in delicacy of workmanship, and the best examples of the art of engraving on gems,—an art which appears to have reached great perfection amongst the Assyrians,—are unknown to us, except through these impressions.

There are three seals apparently Phœnician; two of them bearing Phœnician characters, for which I cannot suggest any interpretation. A few have doubtful symbols upon them, which I will not attempt to explain; perhaps hieroglyphical signs.

Of the purely Egyptian seals there are four. One has two cartouches placed on the symbol of gold, and each surmounted by a tall plume; they probably contained the prænomens and name of a king, but not the slightest trace remains of the hieroglyphs. The impression is concave, having been made from a convex surface: the back of some of the Egyptian ovals, the rudest form of the scarabæus, are of this shape. On the second seal is the figure of the Egyptian god Harpocrates, seated on a lotus flower, with his finger placed upon his mouth; an attitude in which he is represented on an ivory from Nimroud. The hieroglyph before him does not appear to be Egyptian.

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But the most remarkable and important of the Egyptian seals are two impressions of a royal signet, which, though imperfect, retain the cartouche, with the name of the king, so as to be perfectly legible. It is one well known to Egyptian scholars, as that of the second Sabaco the Æthiopian, of the twenty-fifth dynasty. On the same piece of clay is impressed an Assyrian seal, with a device representing a priest ministering before the king, probably a royal signet.

There can be no doubt whatever as to the identity of the cartouche. Sabaco reigned in Egypt at the end of the seventh century before Christ, the exact time at which Sennacherib came to the throne. He is probably the So mentioned in the second book of Kings (xvii. 4.) as having received ambassadors from Hoshea, the king of Israel, who, by entering into a league with the Egyptians, called down the vengeance of Shalmaneser, whose tributary he was, which led to the first great captivity of the people of Samaria. Shalmaneser we know to have

been an immediate predecessor of Sennacherib, and Tirakhah, the Egyptian king, who was defeated by the Assyrians near Lachish, was the immediate successor of Sabaco II.

It would seem that a peace having been concluded between the Egyptians and one of the Assyrian monarchs, probably Sennacherib, the royal signets of the two kings, thus found together, were attached to the treaty, which was deposited amongst the archives of the kingdom. Whilst the document itself, written upon parchment or papyrus, has completely perished, this singular proof of the alliance, if not actual meeting, of the two monarchs is still preserved amidst the remains of the state papers of the Assyrian empire; furnishing one of the most remarkable instances of confirmatory evidence on record,^[65] whether we regard it as verifying the correctness of the interpretation of the cuneiform character, or as an illustration of Scripture history.

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Little doubt, I trust, can now exist in the minds of my readers as to the identification of the builder of the palace of Kouyunjik, with the Sennacherib of Scripture. Had the name stood alone, we might reasonably have questioned the correctness of the reading, especially as the signs or monograms, with which it is written, are admitted to have no phonetic power. But when characters, whose alphabetic values have been determined from a perfectly distinct source, such as the Babylonian column of the trilingual inscriptions, furnish us with names in the records attributed to Sennacherib, written almost identically as in the Hebrew version of the Bible, such as Hezekiah, Jerusalem, Judah, Sidon, and others, and all occurring in one and the same paragraph, their reading, moreover, confirmed by synchronisms, and illustrated by sculptured representations of the events, the identification must be admitted to be complete.

The palace of Khorsabad, as I have already observed, was built by the father of Sennacherib. The edifice in the south-west corner of Nimroud was raised by the son, as we learn from the inscription on the back of the bulls discovered in that building. The name of the king is admitted to be Essarhaddon, and there are events, as it will hereafter be seen, mentioned in his records, which further tend to identify him with the Essarhaddon of Scripture, who, after the murder of his father Sennacherib, succeeded to the throne.

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I may mention in conclusion, as connected with the bulls forming the grand entrance, that in the rubbish at the foot of one of them were found four cylinders and several beads, with a scorpion in lapis lazuli, all apparently once strung together. On one cylinder of translucent green felspar, called amazon stone, which I believe to have been the signet, or amulet, of Sennacherib himself, is engraved the king standing in an arched frame as on the rock tablets at Bavian, and at the Nahr-el-Kelb in Syria. The intaglio of this beautiful gem is not deep but sharp and distinct, and the details are so minute, that a magnifying glass is almost required to perceive them.

On a smaller cylinder, in the same green felspar, is a cuneiform inscription, which has not yet been deciphered, but which does not appear to contain any royal name. On two cylinders of onyx, also found at Kouyunjik, and now in the British Museum, are, however, the name and titles of Sennacherib.

CHAPTER VII.

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ROAD OPENED FOR REMOVAL OF WINGED LIONS.—
DISCOVERY OF VAULTED DRAIN.—OF OTHER
ARCHES.—OF PAINTED BRICKS.—ATTACK OF
THE TAI ON THE VILLAGE OF NIMROUD.—VISIT
TO THE HOWAR.—DESCRIPTION OF THE
ENCAMPMENT OF THE TAI.—THE PLAIN OF
SHOMAMOK.—SHEIKH FARAS.—WALI BEY.—
RETURN TO NIMROUD.

The gigantic human-headed lions, first discovered in the north-west palace at Nimroud, were still standing in their original position. Having been carefully covered up with earth previous to my departure in 1848, they had been preserved from exposure to the effects of the weather, and to wanton injury on the part of the Arabs. The Trustees of the British Museum wishing to add these fine sculptures to the national collection, I was directed to remove them entire. A road through the ruins, for their transport to the edge of the mound, was in the first place necessary, and it was commenced early in December. They would thus be ready for embarkation as soon as the waters of the river were sufficiently high to bear a raft so heavily laden, over the rapids and shallows between Nimroud and Baghdad. This road was dug to the level of the pavement or artificial platform, and was not finished till the end of February, as a large mass of earth and rubbish had to be taken away to the depth of fifteen or twenty feet. During the progress of the work we found some carved fragments of ivory similar to those already placed in the British Museum; and two massive sockets in

bronze, in which turned the hinges of a gate of the palace. No remains of the door-posts, or other parts of the gate, were discovered in the ruins, and it is uncertain whether these rings were fixed in stone or wood.[66]

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In the south-eastern corner of the mound tunnels carried beneath the ruined edifice, which is of the seventh century B. C., showed the remains of an earlier building. A *vaulted* drain, about five feet in width, was also discovered. The arch was turned with large kiln-burnt bricks, and rested upon side walls of the same material. The bricks being square, and not expressly made for vaulting, a space was left above the centre of the arch, which was filled up by bricks, laid longitudinally.

Although this may not be a perfect arch, we have seen from the vaulted chamber discovered in the very centre of the high mound at the north-west corner, that the Assyrians were well acquainted at an early period with its true principle. Other examples were not wanting in the ruins. The earth falling away from the sides of the deep trench opened in the north-west palace for the removal of the bull and lion during the former excavations, left uncovered the entrance to a vaulted drain or passage, built of sun-dried bricks. Beneath was a small watercourse, inclosed by square pieces of alabaster. A third arch, equally perfect in character, was found beneath the ruins of the south-east edifice. A tunnel had been opened almost on a level with the plain, and carried far into the southern face of the mound, but without the discovery of any other remains of building than this solitary brick arch.

In the south-east corner of the quadrangle, formed by the low mounds marking the walls once surrounding this quarter of the city of Nineveh, or the park attached to the royal residence, the level of the soil is considerably higher than in any other part of the inclosed space. This sudden inequality evidently indicates the site of some ancient edifice. Connected with it, rising abruptly, and almost perpendicularly, from the plain, and forming one of the corners of the walls, is a lofty, irregular mound, which is known to the Arabs by the name of the Tel of Athur, the Lieutenant of Nimroud.[67] Tunnels and trenches opened in it showed nothing but earth, unmingled even with bricks or fragments of stone. Remains of walls and a pavement of baked bricks were, however, discovered in the lower part of the platform. The bricks had evidently been taken from some other building, for upon them were traces of coloured figures and patterns, of the same character as those on the sculptured walls of the palaces. Their painted faces were placed downwards, as if purposely to conceal them, and the designs upon them were in most instances injured or destroyed. A few fragments were collected, and are now in the British Museum. The colors have faded, but were probably once as bright as the enamels of Khorsabad. The outlines are white, and the ground a pale blue and olive green. The only other color used is a dull yellow. The most interesting specimens are:—

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1. Four captives tied together by their necks, the end of the rope being held by the foremost prisoner, whose hands are free, whilst the others have their arms bound behind. They probably formed part of a line of captives led by an Assyrian warrior. They are beardless, and have bald heads, to which is attached a single feather.[68] Two of them have white cloths round their loins, the others long white shirts open in front, like the shirt of the modern Arab. The figures on this fragment are yellow on a blue ground.

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2. Similar captives followed by an Assyrian soldier. The armour of the warrior is that of the later period, the scales and greaves are painted blue and yellow, and the tunic blue. The ground blue.

3. Parts of two horses, of a man holding a dagger, and of an Assyrian warrior. The horses are blue. The man appears to have been wounded or slain in battle, and is naked, with the exception of a twisted blue cloth round the loins. Ground an olive green.

4. Fragment, with Assyrian warriors on horses. Horses yellow, with blue trappings. Ground olive green.

5. Part of a chariot and horse, yellow on a blue ground.

6. A man, with a white cloth round his loins, pierced by two arrows. A fish, blue, with the scales marked in white; and part of a horse's head, yellow. Ground yellow.

7. Part of a walled tower, or fort, with square battlements; white, on a blue ground.

8. Fragment of a very spirited design representing a chariot and horses passing over a naked figure, pierced through the neck by an arrow. Under this group are the heads, and parts of the shields, of two Assyrian warriors. The wounded man wears a fillet round his head, to which is attached a feather. The horses are blue, and their trappings white; the wheels of the chariot, yellow. The shields of the warriors are blue, edged by a band of alternate squares of blue and yellow; their helmets are yellow, but the faces appear to be merely outlined in white on the olive green ground.

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9. The lower part of an Assyrian warrior, his armour and greaves blue, yellow, and white. The naked hand is of a pale brown color. Ground olive green.

10. A castle, with angular battlements; white, with yellow bands on a blue ground. A square door is painted blue.

All these fragments evidently belong to the same period, and probably to the same general

subject. I should conjecture that they had been taken from the same building as the detached bas-reliefs in the south-west palace, and that consequently they may be attributed to the same king.[69] The outlines are spirited, in character and treatment resembling the sculptures.

A fragment of painted brick, found in the ruins of the north-west palace, is undoubtedly of a different, and of an earlier, period. The outline is in black, and not in white. The upper robe is blue, the under yellow, and the fringes white. The ground is yellow.

But the most perfect and interesting specimen of painting is that on a brick, 12 inches by 9, discovered in the centre of the mound of Nimroud, and now in the British Museum. It represents the king followed by his attendant eunuch, receiving his general or vizir, a group very similar to those seen in the sculptures from the north-west palace. Above his head is a kind of fringed pavilion and part of an inscription, which appears to have contained his name; beneath him is the Assyrian guilloche border. The outline is in black upon a pale yellow ground, the colors having probably faded. From the costume of the king I believe him to be either the builder of the north-west or centre palace. This is an unique specimen of an entire Assyrian painting.

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During the greater part of the month of December I resided at Nimroud. One morning, I was suddenly disturbed by the reports of firearms, mingled with the shouts of men and the shrieks of women. Issuing immediately from the house, I found the open space behind it a scene of wild excitement and confusion. Horsemen, galloping in all directions and singing their war song, were driving before them with their long spears the cattle and sheep of the village. The men were firing at the invaders; the women, armed with tent poles and pitchforks, and filling the air with their shrill screams, were trying to rescue the animals. The horsemen of the Arab tribe of Tai had taken advantage of a thick mist hanging over the Jaif, to cross the Zab early in the morning, and to fall upon us before we were aware of their approach. No time was to be lost to prevent bloodshed, and all its disagreeable consequences. A horse was soon ready, and I rode towards the one who appeared to be the chief of the attacking party. Although his features were concealed by the *keffieh* closely drawn over the lower part of his face, after the Bedouin fashion in war, he had been recognised as Saleh, the brother of the Howar, the Sheikh of the Tai. At my urgent solicitation Saleh consented to restore all that had been stolen, and each one was accordingly invited to claim his own property. In the midst of the crowd of wranglers about lost cloaks, handkerchiefs, and the like, a hare suddenly sprang from her form and darted over the plain. My greyhounds, who had followed me from the house, immediately pursued her. This was too much for the Arabs; their love of the chase overcame even their propensity for appropriating other people's property; cattle, cloaks, swords, and *keffiehs* were abandoned to their respective claimants, and the whole band of marauders joined wildly in the pursuit. Before we had reached the game we were far distant from Nimroud. I seized the opportunity to conclude the truce, and Saleh with his followers rode slowly back towards the ford of the Zab to seek his brother's tents. I promised to visit, the Howar in two or three days, and we parted with mutual assurances of friendship.

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I spent Christmas-day at Nimroud, and on the 28th set out to visit the Howar. Schloss again accompanied me, Mr. Rolland (a traveller, who had recently joined us), Hormuzd, and Awad being of the party. Leaving the Kuther Elias to the left, we passed the ruined village of Kini-Hareim, taking the direct track to the Zab. The river, winding through a rich alluvial plain, divides itself into four branches, before entering a range of low conglomerate hills, between which it sweeps in its narrowed bed with great velocity. The four channels are each fordable, except during floods, and the Arabs generally cross at this spot. The water reached above the bellies of our horses, but we found no difficulty in stemming the current. The islands and the banks were clothed with trees and brushwood. In the mud and sand near the jungle were innumerable deep, sharp prints of the hoof of the wild boar.

The tents of the Howar were still higher up the Zab. Sending a horseman to apprise the chief of our approach, we rode leisurely towards them. As we passed by a small village named Kaaitli, the women came out with their children, and pointing to me exclaimed, "Look, look! this is the Beg who is come from the other end of the world to dig up the bones of our grandfathers and grandmothers!" a sacrilege which they seemed inclined to resent. Saleh, at the head of fifty or sixty horsemen, met us beyond the village, and conducted us to the encampment of his brother.

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The tents were pitched in long, parallel lines. That of the chief held the foremost place, and was distinguished by its size, the upright spears tufted with ostrich feathers at its entrance, and the many high-bred mares tethered before it. As we approached, a tall, commanding figure, of erect and noble carriage, issued from beneath the black canvass, and advanced to receive me. I had never seen amongst the Arabs a man of such lofty stature. His features were regular and handsome, but his beard, having been fresh dyed with hennah alone, was of a bright brick-red hue, ill suited to the gravity and dignity of his countenance. His head was encircled by a rich cashmere shawl, one end falling over his shoulder, as is the custom amongst the Arabs of the Hedjaz. He wore a crimson satin robe and a black cloak, elegantly embroidered down the back, and on one of the wide sleeves with gold thread and many-colored silks. This was Sheikh Howar.

As I dismounted, the Sheikh advanced to embrace me, and when his arms were round my

neck my head scarcely reached to his shoulder. He led me into that part of the tent which is set aside for guests. It had been prepared for my reception, and was not ill furnished with cushions of silk and soft Kurdish carpets. The tent itself was more capacious than those usually found amongst Arabs. The black goat-hair canvass alone was the load of three camels[70], and was supported by six poles down the centre, with the same number on either side. Around a bright fire was an array of highly burnished metal coffee-pots, the largest containing several quarts, and the smallest scarcely big enough to fill the diminutive cup reserved for the solitary stranger.

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Coffee was, of course, the first business. It was highly spiced, as drank by the Bedouins. The Howar, after some general conversation, spoke of the politics of the Tai, and their differences with the Turkish government. The same ruinous system which has turned some of the richest districts of Asia into a desert, and has driven every Arab clan into open rebellion against the Sultan, had been pursued towards himself and his tribe. Owing to the extortionate demands of the Turkish governors, and intestine dissensions and broils between the Arabs themselves, the country had rapidly been reduced to a state of anarchy. The Arabs, having no one responsible chief, took, of course, to plundering. The villages on the Mosul side of the Zab, as well as in the populous district of Arbil, were laid waste. The Kurds, who came down into the plains during the winter, were encouraged to follow the example of the Tai, and, from the rapaciousness and misconduct of one or two officers of the Turkish government, evils had ensued whose consequences will be felt for years, and which will end in adding another rich district to the desert. Such is the history of almost every tribe in Turkey, and such the causes of the desolation that has spread over her finest provinces.

The Tai is a remnant of one of the most ancient and renowned tribes of Arabia. The Howar himself traces his descent from Hatem, a sheikh of the tribe who lived in the seventh century, and who, as the impersonation of all the virtues of Bedouin life, is the theme to this day of the Arab muse. His hospitality, his generosity, his courage, and his skill as a horseman were alike unequalled, and there is no name more honored amongst the wild inhabitants of the desert than that of Hatem Tai. The Howar is proud of his heroic ancestor, and the Bedouins acknowledge and respect his descent.[71]

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We dined with the Sheikh and sat until the night was far spent, listening to tales of Arab life, and to the traditions of his tribe.

On the following morning the tents were struck at sunrise, and the chief moved with his followers to new pastures. The crowd of camels, flocks, cattle, laden beasts of burden, horsemen, footmen, women and children darkened the plain for some miles. We passed through the midst of them with the Sheikh, and leaving him to fix the spot for his encampment, we turned from the river and rode inland towards the tents of his rival and cousin, Faras. Saleh, with a few horsemen, accompanied me, one of my special objects being to bring about a reconciliation between the two chiefs.

The plain, bounded by the Tigris, the great and lesser Zab, and the Kurdish hills, is renowned for its fertility. It is the granary of Baghdad, and it is a common saying amongst the Arabs, "that if there were a famine over the rest of the earth, Shomamok (for so the principal part of the plain is called) would still have its harvest." This district belongs chiefly to the Tai Arabs, who wander from pasture to pasture, and leave the cultivation of the soil to small sedentary tribes of Arabs, Turcomans, and Kurds, who dwell in villages, and pay an annual tribute in money or in kind.

As we rode along we passed many peasants industriously driving the plough through the rich soil. Large flocks of gazelles grazed in the cultivated patches, scarcely fearing the husbandman, though speedily bounding away over the plain as horsemen approached. Artificial mounds rose on all sides of us, and near one of the largest, called Abou-Jerdeh, we found the black tents of Sheikh Faras. The rain began to fall in torrents before we reached the encampment. The chief had ridden out to a neighbouring village to make arrangements for our better protection against the weather. He soon returned urging his mare to the top of her speed. In person he was a strange contrast to the elder member of his family. He was short, squat, and fat, and his coarse features were buried in a frame of hair dyed bright red. He was, however, profuse in assurances of friendship, talked incessantly, agreed to all I proposed with regard to a reconciliation with the other branch of the tribe, and received Saleh with every outward sign of cordiality. His son had more of the dignity of his race, but the expression of his countenance was forbidding and sinister. The two young men, as they sat, cast looks of defiance at each other, and I had some difficulty in restraining Saleh from breaking out in invectives, which probably would have ended in an appeal to the sword.

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As the rain increased in violence, and the tent offered but an imperfect shelter, we moved to the village, where a house had been prepared for us by its honest, kind-hearted Turcoman chief, Wali Bey. With unaffected hospitality he insisted that we should become his guests, and had already slain the sheep for our entertainment. I have met few men who exceed, in honesty and fidelity, the descendants of the pure Turcoman race, scattered over Asia Minor and the districts watered by the Tigris.

On the following morning, Wali Bey provided an ample breakfast, in which all the luxuries of the village were set before us. On reaching the Zab, we found it rising rapidly from the rains of the previous day. Our servants had already crossed, but the river was now impassable.

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We sought a ford higher up, and above the junction of the Ghazir. Having struggled in vain against the swollen stream, we were compelled to give up the attempt. Nothing remained but to seek the ferry on the high road, between Arbil and Mosul. We did not reach the small village, where a raft is kept for the use of travellers and caravans, until nearly four o'clock in the afternoon, and it was sunset before we had crossed the river.

We hurried along the direct track to Nimroud, hoping to cross the Ghazir before night-fall. But fresh difficulties awaited us. That small river, collecting the torrents of the Missouri hills, had overflowed its bed, and its waters were rushing tumultuously onwards, with a breadth of stream almost equalling the Tigris. We rode along its banks, hoping to find an encampment where we could pass the night. At length, in the twilight, we spied some Arabs, who immediately took refuge behind the walls of a ruined village, and believing us to be marauders from the desert, prepared to defend themselves and their cattle. Directing the rest of the party to stop, I rode forward with the Bairakdar, and was in time to prevent a discharge of fire-arms pointed against us.

The nearest inhabited village was Tel Aswad, or Kara Tuppeh, still far distant. As we rode towards it in the dusk, one or two wolves lazily stole from the brushwood, and jackals and other beasts of prey occasionally crossed our path. We found the Kiayah seated with some travellers round a blazing fire. The miserable hut was soon cleared of its occupants, and we prepared to pass the night as we best could.

Towards dawn the Kiayah brought us word that the Ghazir had subsided sufficiently to allow us to ford. We started under his guidance, and found that the stream, although divided into three branches, reached in some places almost to the backs of the horses. Safe over, we struck across the country towards Nimroud, and reached the ruins as a thick morning mist was gradually withdrawn from the lofty mound.

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During our absence, a new chamber had been opened in the north-west palace, to the south of the great centre hall. The walls were of plain, sun-dried brick, and there were no remains of sculptured slabs, but in the earth and rubbish which had filled it, were discovered some of the most interesting relics obtained from the ruins of Assyria. A description of its contents alone will occupy a chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

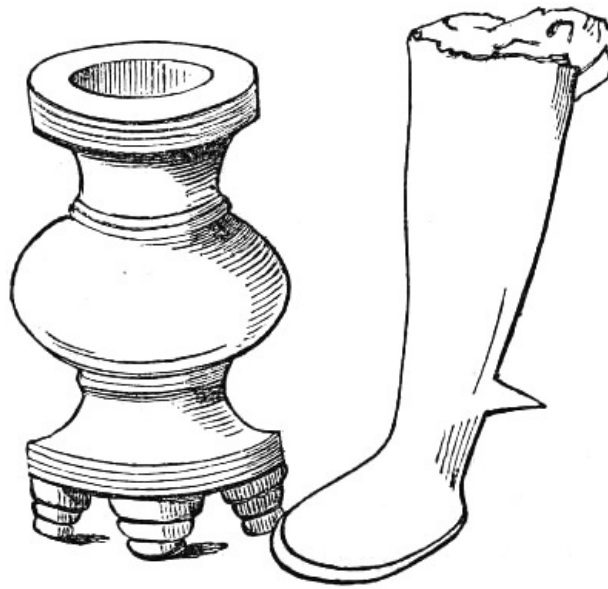
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CONTENTS OF NEWLY DISCOVERED CHAMBER.—A WELL.—LARGE COPPER CALDRONS.—BELLS, RINGS, AND OTHER OBJECTS IN METAL.—TRIPODS.—CALDRONS AND LARGE VESSELS.—BRONZE BOWLS, CUPS, AND DISHES.—DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBOSSINGS UPON THEM.—ARMS AND ARMOUR.—SHIELDS.—IRON INSTRUMENTS.—IVORY REMAINS.—BRONZE CUBES INLAID WITH GOLD.—GLASS BOWLS.—LENS.—THE ROYAL THRONE.

The newly discovered chamber was part of the north-west palace, and adjoining a room previously explored.^[72] Its only entrance was to the west, and almost on the edge of the mound. It must, consequently, have opened upon a gallery or terrace running along the river front of the building. The walls were of sun-dried brick, panelled round the bottom with large burnt bricks, about three feet high, placed one against the other. They were coated with bitumen, and, like those forming the pavement, were inscribed with the name and usual titles of the royal founder of the building. In one corner, and partly in a kind of recess, was a well, the mouth of which was formed by brickwork about three feet high. Its sides were also bricked down to the conglomerate rock, and holes had been left at regular intervals for descent. When first discovered it was choked with earth. The workmen emptied it until they came, at the depth of nearly sixty feet, to brackish water.^[73]

The first objects found in this chamber were two plain copper vessels or caldrons, about 2½ feet in diameter, and 3 feet deep, resting upon a stand of brickwork, with their mouths closed by large tiles. Near them was a copper jar, which fell to pieces almost as soon as uncovered. Several vases of the same metal, though smaller in size, had been dug out of other parts of the ruins; but they were empty, whilst those I am describing were filled with curious relics. I first took out a number of small bronze bells^[74] with iron tongues, and various small copper ornaments, some suspended to wires. With them were a quantity of tapering bronze rods, bent into a hook, and ending in a kind of lip. Beneath were several bronze cups and dishes, which I succeeded in removing entire. Scattered in the earth amongst these objects were several hundred studs and buttons in mother of pearl and ivory, with many small rosettes in metal.

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Feet of Tripods in Bronze and Iron.

All the objects contained in these caldrons, with the exception of the cups and dishes, were probably ornaments of horse and chariot furniture.

Beneath the caldrons were heaped lions' and bulls' feet of bronze; and the remains of iron rings and bars, probably parts of tripods, or stands, for supporting vessels and bowls; which, as the iron had rusted away, had fallen to pieces, leaving such parts entire as were in the more durable metal.

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Two other caldrons, found further within the chamber, contained, besides several plates and dishes, four crown shaped bronze ornaments, perhaps belonging to a throne or couch; two long, ornamented bands of copper, rounded at both ends, apparently belts, such as were worn by warriors in armour; a grotesque head in bronze, probably the top of a mace; a metal wine-strainer of elegant shape; various metal vessels of peculiar form, and a bronze ornament, probably the handle of a dish or vase.

Eight more caldrons and jars were found in other parts of the chamber. One contained ashes and bones, the rest were empty. Some of the larger vessels were crushed almost flat, probably by the falling in of the upper part of the building.

With the caldrons were discovered two circular flat vessels, nearly six feet in diameter, and about two feet deep, which I can only compare with the brazen sea that stood in the temple of Solomon.^[75]

Caldrons are frequently represented as part of the spoil and tribute, in the sculptures of Nimroud and Kouyunjik. They were so much valued by the ancients that, it appears from the Homeric poems, they were given as prizes at public games, and were considered amongst the most precious objects that could be carried away from a captured city. They were frequently embossed with flowers and other ornaments. Homer declares one so adorned to be worth an ox.^[76]

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Behind the caldrons was a heap of curious and interesting objects. In one place were piled without order, one above the other, bronze cups, bowls, and dishes of various sizes and shapes. The upper vessels having been most exposed to damp, the metal had been eaten away by rust, and was crumbling into fragments, or into a green powder. As they were cleared away, more perfect specimens were taken out, until, near the pavement of the chamber, some were found almost entire. Many of the bowls and plates fitted so closely, one within the other, that they have only been detached in England. It required the greatest care and patience to separate them from the tenacious soil in which they were embedded.

Although a green crystalline deposit, arising from the decomposition of the metal, encrusted all the vessels, I could distinguish upon many of them traces of embossed and engraved ornaments. Since they have been in England they have been carefully and skilfully cleaned, and the very beautiful and elaborate designs upon them brought to light.

The bronze objects thus discovered may be classed under four heads—dishes with handles, plates, deep bowls, and cups. Some are plain, others have a simple rosette, scarab, or star in the centre, and many are most elaborately ornamented with the figures of men and animals, and with elegant fancy designs, either embossed or incised. The inside, and not the outside, of these vessels is ornamented. The embossed figures have been raised in the metal by a blunt instrument, three or four strokes of which in many instances very ingeniously produce the image of an animal. Even those ornaments which are not embossed but incised, appear to have been formed by a similar process, except that the punch was applied on the inside.

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The tool of the graver has been sparingly used.

The most interesting dishes in the collection brought to England are:—

No. 1., with moving circular handle (the handle wanting), secured by three bosses; diameter $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches, depth $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches; divided into two friezes surrounding a circular medallion containing a male deity *with bull's ears* (?) and hair in ample curls^[77], wearing bracelets and a necklace of an Egyptian character, and a short tunic; the arms crossed, and the hands held by two *Egyptians* (?), who place their other hands on the head of the centre figure. The inner frieze contains horsemen draped as Egyptians, galloping round in pairs; the outer, figures also wearing the Egyptian "*shenti*" or tunic, hunting lions on horseback, on foot, and in chariots. The hair of these figures is dressed after a fashion, which prevailed in Egypt from the ninth to the eighth century B. C. Each frieze is separated by a band of guilloche ornament.

No. 2., diameter $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, having a low rim, partly destroyed; ornamented with an embossed rosette of elegant shape, surrounded by three friezes of animals in high relief, divided by a guilloche band. The outer frieze contains twelve walking bulls, designed with considerable spirit; between each is a dwarf shrub or tree. The second frieze has a bull, a winged griffin, an ibex, and a gazelle, walking one behind the other, and the same animals seized by leopards or lions, in all fourteen figures. The inner frieze contains twelve gazelles. The handle is formed by a plain movable ring. The ornaments on this dish, as well as the design, are of an Assyrian character.

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No. 3., diameter $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep, with a raised star in the centre; the handle formed by two rings, working in sockets fastened to a rim, running about one-third round the margin, and secured by five nails or bosses; four bands of embossed ornaments in low relief round the centre, the outer band consisting of alternate standing bulls and crouching lions, Assyrian in character and treatment; the others, of an elegant pattern, slightly varied from the usual Assyrian border by the introduction of a fanlike flower in the place of the tulip.

Other dishes were found still better preserved than those just described, but perfectly plain, or having only a star, more or less elaborate, embossed or engraved in the centre. Many fragments were also discovered with elegant handles, some formed by the figures of rams and bulls.

Of the plates the most remarkable are:—

No. 1., shallow, and $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter, the centre slightly raised and incised with a star and five bands of tulip-shaped ornaments; the rest occupied by four groups, each consisting of two winged hawk-headed sphinxes, wearing the "*pschent*," or crown of the upper and lower country of Egypt; one paw raised, and resting upon the head of a man kneeling on one knee, and lifting his hands in the act of adoration. Between the sphinxes, on a column in the form of a papyrus-sceptre, is the bust of a figure wearing on his head the sun's disc, with the *uræi* serpents, a collar round the neck, and four feathers; above are two winged globes with the *asps*, and a row of birds. Each group is inclosed by two columns with capitals in the form of the Assyrian tulip ornament, and is separated from that adjoining by a scarab with outspread wings, raising the globe with its fore feet, and resting with its hind on a papyrus-sceptre pillar. This plate is in good preservation, having been found at the very bottom of a heap of similar relics.

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No. 2., depth, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in.; diameter, $9\frac{1}{8}$ in., with a broad, raised rim, like that of a soup plate, embossed with figures of greyhounds pursuing a hare. The centre contains a frieze in high relief, representing combats between men and lions, and a smaller border of gazelles, between guilloche bands, encircling an embossed star. In this very fine specimen, although the costumes of the figures are Egyptian in character, the treatment and design are Assyrian.

No. 3., shallow; $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches diameter; an oval in the centre, covered with dotted lozenges, and set with nine silver bosses, probably intended to represent a lake or valley, surrounded by four groups of hills, each with three crests in high relief, on which are incised in outline trees and stags, wild goats, bears, and leopards. On the sides of the hills, in relief, are similar figures of animals. The outer rim is incised with trees and deer. The workmanship of this specimen is Assyrian, and very minute and curious.

No. 4., diameter, $7\frac{1}{4}$ inches, the centre raised, and containing an eight-rayed star, with smaller stars between each ray, encircled by a guilloche band. The remainder of the plate is divided into eight compartments, by eight double-faced figures of Egyptian character in high relief; between each figure are five rows of animals, inclosed by guilloche bands; the first three consisting of stags and hinds, the fourth of lions, and the fifth of hares, each compartment containing thirteen figures. A very beautiful specimen, unfortunately much injured.

No. 5., diameter, $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches; depth, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch. The embossings and ornaments on this plate are of an Egyptian character. The centre consists of four heads of the cow-eared goddess Athor (?), forming, with lines of bosses, an eight-rayed star, surrounded by hills, indicated as in plate No. 3., but filled in with rosettes and other ornaments. Between the hills are incised animals and trees. A border of figures, almost purely Egyptian, but unfortunately only in

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part preserved, encircles the plate; the first remaining group is that of a man seated on a throne, beneath an ornamented arch, with the Egyptian Baal, represented as on the coins of Cossura, standing full face; to the right of this figure is a square ornament with pendants (resembling a sealed document), and beneath it the crux ansata or Egyptian symbol of life. The next group is that of a warrior in Egyptian attire, holding a mace in his right hand, and in his left a bow and arrow, with the hair of a captive of smaller proportions, who crouches before him. The next group represents the Egyptian Baal (?), with a lion's skin round his body, and plumes on his head, having on each side an Egyptian figure wearing the "*shent*," or short tunic, carrying a bow, and plucking the plumes from the head of the god, perhaps symbolical of the victory of Horus over Typhon. The Egyptian god Amon, bearing a bird in one hand and a falchion in the other, with female figures similar to that last described, appears to form the next group; but unfortunately this part of the plate has been nearly destroyed: the whole border, however, appears to have represented a mixture of religious and historical scenes.

No. 6., diameter, 6 in.; depth, 1½ in.; a projecting rim, ornamented with figures of vultures with out-spread wings; an embossed rosette, encircled by two rows of fan-shaped flowers and guilloche bands, occupies a raised centre, which is surrounded by a frieze, consisting of groups of two vultures devouring a hare. A highly finished and very beautiful specimen. On the back of this plate are five letters, either in the Phœnician or Assyrian cursive character.

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Nos. 7. and 8.; covered with groups of small stags, surrounding an elaborate star, one plate containing above 600 figures; the animals are formed by three blows from a blunt instrument or punch. These plates are ornamented with small bosses of silver and gold let into the copper.

No. 9., diameter, 7⁵/₈ inches; depth, 1½ inch, of fine workmanship; the centre formed by an incised star, surrounded by guilloche and tulip bands. Four groups on the sides representing a lion, lurking amongst papyri or reeds, and about to spring on a bull.

No. 10., diameter 7½ inches. In the centre a winged scarab raising the disc of the sun, surrounded by guilloche and tulip bands, and by a double frieze, the inner consisting of trees, deer, winged uræi, sphinxes, and papyrus plants; the outer, of winged scarabs, flying serpents, deer, and trees, all incised.

The plates above described are the most interesting specimens brought to this country: there are others, indeed, scarcely less remarkable for beauty of workmanship, or, when plain or ornamented with a simple star in the centre, for elegance of form. Of the seventeen deep bowls discovered, only three have embossings, sufficiently well preserved, to be described; the greater part appear to be perfectly plain. The most remarkable is 8½ inches in diameter, and 3¾ inches deep, and has at the bottom, in the centre, an embossed star, surrounded by a rosette, and on the sides a hunting scene in bold relief.

A second, 7½ inches in diameter, and 3¾ inches deep, has in the centre a medallion similar to that in the one last described, and on the sides, in very high relief, two lions and two sphinxes of Egyptian character, wearing a collar, feathers, and housings, and a head-dress formed by a disc with two uræi. Both bowls are remarkable for the boldness of the relief and the archaic treatment of the figures, in this respect resembling the ivories previously discovered at Nimroud. They forcibly call to mind the early remains of Greece, and especially the metal work, and painted pottery found in very ancient tombs in Etruria, which they so closely resemble not only in design but in subject, the same mythic animals and the same ornaments being introduced, that we cannot but attribute to both the same origin. The third, 7¾ inches in diameter, and 2½ inches deep, has in the centre a star formed by the Egyptian hawk of the sun, bearing the disc, and having at its side a whip, between two rays ending in lotus flowers; on the sides are embossed figures of wild goats, lotus-shaped shrubs, and dwarf trees of peculiar form.

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Of the cups the most remarkable are:—

No. 1., diameter 5⁵/₈ inches, and 2¼ inches deep, very elaborately ornamented with figures of animals, interlaced and grouped together in singular confusion, covering the whole inner surface; apparently representing a combat between griffins and lions; a very curious and interesting specimen, not unlike some of the Italian chasing of the cinque cento. No. 2., a fragment, embossed with the figures of lions and bulls, of very fine workmanship.

Of the remaining cups many are plain but of elegant shape, one or two are ribbed, and some have simply an embossed star in the centre.

About 150 bronze vessels discovered in this chamber are now in the British Museum, without including numerous fragments, which, although showing traces of ornament, are too far destroyed by decomposition to be cleaned.

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The metal of the dishes, bowls, and rings, has been carefully analysed, and has been found to contain one part of tin to ten of copper, being exactly the relative proportions of the best ancient and modern bronze. The bells, however, have fourteen per cent. of tin, showing that the Assyrians were well aware of the effect produced by changing the proportions of the metals. These two facts show the advance made by them in the metallurgic art.

The effect of age and decay has been to cover the surface of all these bronze objects with a

coating of beautiful crystals of malachite, beneath which the component substances have been converted into suboxide of copper and peroxide of tin, leaving in many instances no traces whatever of the metals.

It would appear that the Assyrians were unable to give elegant forms or a pleasing appearance to objects in iron alone, and that consequently they frequently overlaid that metal with bronze, either entirely, or partially, by way of ornament. The feet of the ring tripods previously described, furnish highly interesting specimens of this process, and prove the progress made by the Assyrians in it. The iron inclosed within the copper has not been exposed to the same decay as that detached from it, and will still take a polish.

The tin was probably obtained from Phœnicia; and consequently that used in the bronzes of the British Museum may actually have been exported, nearly three thousand years ago, from the British Isles! We find the Assyrians and Babylonians making an extensive use of this metal, which was probably one of the chief articles of trade supplied by the cities of the Syrian coast, whose seamen sought for it on the distant shores of the Atlantic.

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The embossed and engraved vessels from Nimroud afford many interesting illustrations of the progress made by the ancients in metallurgy. From the Egyptian character of the designs, and especially of the drapery of the figures, in several of the specimens, it may be inferred that some of them were not Assyrian, but had been brought from a foreign people. As in the ivories, however, the workmanship, subjects, and mode of treatment are more Assyrian than Egyptian, and seem to show that the artist either copied from Egyptian models, or was a native of a country under the influence of the arts and taste of Egypt. The Sidonians, and other inhabitants of the Phœnician coast, were the most renowned workers in metal of the ancient world. In the Homeric poems they are frequently mentioned as the artificers who fashioned and embossed metal cups and bowls, and Solomon sought cunning men from Tyre to make the gold and brazen utensils for his temple and palaces.[78] It is, therefore, not impossible that the vessels discovered at Nimroud were the work of Phœnician artists, brought expressly from Tyre, or carried away amongst the captives when their cities were taken by the Assyrians, who, we know from many passages in the Bible[79], always secured the smiths and artisans, and placed them in their own immediate dominions. They may have been used for sacrificial purposes, at royal banquets, or when the king performed certain religious ceremonies, for in the bas-reliefs he is frequently represented on such occasions with a cup or bowl in his hand; or they may have formed part of the spoil of some Syrian nation, placed in a temple at Nineveh, as the holy utensils of the Jews, after the destruction of the sanctuary, were kept in the temple of Babylon.[80] It is not, indeed, impossible, that some of them may have been actually brought from the cities round Jerusalem by Sennacherib himself, or from Samaria by Shalmaneser or Sargon, who, we find, inhabited the palace at Nimroud, and of whom several relics have already been discovered in the ruins.

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Around the vessels I have described were heaped arms, remains of armour, iron instruments, glass bowls, and various objects in ivory and bronze. The arms consisted of swords, daggers, shields, and the heads of spears and arrows, which being chiefly of iron fell to pieces almost as soon as exposed to the air. The shields are of bronze, and circular, the rim bending inwards, and forming a deep groove round the edge. The handles are of iron, and fastened by six bosses or nails, the heads of which form an ornament on the outer face of the shield.[81] The diameter of the largest and most perfect is two feet six inches. Although their weight must have impeded the movements of an armed warrior, the Assyrian spearmen are constantly represented in the bas-reliefs with them. Such, too, were probably the bucklers that Solomon hung on his towers.[82]

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A number of thin iron rods, adhering together in bundles, were found amongst the arms. They may have been the shafts of arrows, which, it has been conjectured from several passages in the Old Testament, were sometimes of burnished metal. To "make bright the arrows"[83] may, however, only allude to the head fastened to a reed, or shaft of some light wood. The armour consisted of parts of breast-plates (?) and of other fragments, embossed with figures and ornaments.

Amongst the iron instruments were the head of a pick, a double-handled saw (about 3 feet 6 inches in length), several objects resembling the heads of sledge-hammers, and a large blunt spear-head, such as we find from the sculptures were used during sieges to force stones from the walls of besieged cities.

The most interesting of the ivory relics were, a carved staff, perhaps a royal sceptre, part of which has been preserved, although in the last stage of decay; and several entire elephants' tusks, the largest being about 2 feet 5 inches long.

The ivory could with difficulty be detached from the earth in which it was imbedded. It fell to small fragments, and even to dust, almost as soon as exposed to the air. I have described elsewhere[84] the frequent use of ivory for the adornment of ancient Eastern palaces and temples, as well as for thrones and furniture. Ezekiel includes "horns of ivory" amongst the objects brought to Tyre from Dedan, and the Assyrians may have obtained their supplies from the same country, which some believe to have been in the Persian Gulf.[85]

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Amongst various small objects in bronze were two cubes, each having on one face the figure of a scarab with outstretched wings, inlaid in gold; very interesting specimens, and probably

amongst the earliest known, of an art carried in modern times to great perfection in the East.

Two entire glass bowls, with fragments of others, were also found in this chamber; the glass, like all that from the ruins, is covered with pearly scales, which, on being removed, leave prismatic opal-like colors of the greatest brilliancy, showing, under different lights, the most varied and beautiful tints. On this highly interesting relic is the name of Sargon, with his title of king of Assyria, in cuneiform characters, and the figure of a lion. We are, therefore, able to fix its date to the latter part of the seventh century B. C. It is, consequently, the most ancient known specimen of *transparent* glass, none from Egypt being, it is believed, earlier than the time of the Psamettici (the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century B. C.). Opaque colored glass was, however, manufactured at a much earlier period, and some exists of the fifteenth century B. C. The Sargon vase was blown in one solid piece, and then shaped and hollowed out by a turning-machine, of which the marks are still plainly visible. With it were found, it will be remembered, two larger vases in white alabaster, inscribed with the name of the same king. They were all probably used for holding some ointment or cosmetic.

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With the glass bowls was discovered a rock-crystal lens, with opposite convex and plane faces. Its properties could scarcely have been unknown to the Assyrians, and we have consequently the earliest specimen of a magnifying and burning-glass. It was buried beneath a heap of fragments of beautiful blue opaque glass, apparently the enamel of some object in ivory or wood, which had perished.

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In the further corner of the chamber, to the left hand, stood the royal throne. Although it was utterly impossible, from the complete state of decay of the materials, to preserve any part of it entire, I was able, by carefully removing the earth, to ascertain that it resembled in shape the chair of state of the king, as seen in the sculptures of Kouyunjik and Khorsabad, and particularly that represented in the bas-relief already described, of Sennacherib receiving the captives and spoil, after the conquest of the city of Lachish.[87] With the exception of the legs, which appear to have been partly of ivory, it was of wood, cased or overlaid with bronze, as the throne of Solomon was of ivory, overlaid with gold.[88] The metal was most elaborately engraved and embossed with symbolical figures and ornaments, like those embroidered on the robes of the early Nimroud king, such as winged deities struggling with griffins, mythic animals, men before the sacred tree, and the winged lion and bull. As the woodwork over which the bronze was fastened by means of small nails of the same material, had rotted away, the throne fell to pieces, but the metal casing was partly preserved. The legs were adorned with lion's paws resting on a pine-shaped ornament, like the thrones of the later Assyrian sculptures, and stood on a bronze base. A rod with loose rings, to which was once hung embroidered drapery, or some rich stuff, appears to have belonged to the back of the chair, or to a frame-work raised above or behind it.

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In front of the throne was the foot-stool, also of wood overlaid with embossed metal, and adorned with the heads of rams or bulls. The feet ended in lion's paws and pine cones, like those of the throne. The two pieces of furniture may have been placed together in a temple as an offering to the gods, as Midas placed his throne in the temple of Delphi.[89] The ornaments on them were so purely Assyrian, that there can be little doubt of their having been expressly made for the Assyrian king, and not having been the spoil of some foreign nation.

Such, with an alabaster jar, and a few other objects in metal, were the relics found in the newly-opened room. After the examination I had made of the building during my former excavations, this accidental discovery proves that other treasures may still exist in the mound of Nimroud, and increases my regret that means were not at my command to remove the rubbish from the centre of the other chambers in the palace.

CHAPTER IX.

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VISIT TO THE WINGED LIONS BY NIGHT.—THE BITUMEN SPRINGS.—REMOVAL OF THE WINGED LIONS TO THE RIVER.—FLOODS AT NIMROUD.—YEZIDI MARRIAGE FESTIVAL.—BAAZANI.—VISIT TO BAVIAN.—SITE OF THE BATTLE OF ARBELA.—DESCRIPTION OF ROOK SCULPTURES.—INSCRIPTIONS.—THE SHABBAKS.

By the 28th of January, the colossal lions forming the portal to the great hall in the north-west palace of Nimroud were ready to be dragged to the river-bank. The walls and their

sculptured panelling had been removed from both sides of them, and they stood isolated in the midst of the ruins. We rode one calm cloudless night to the mound, to look on them for the last time before they were taken from their old resting-places. The moon was at her full, and as we drew nigh to the edge of the deep wall of earth rising around them, her soft light was creeping over the stern features of the human heads, and driving before it the dark shadows which still clothed the lion forms. One by one the limbs of the gigantic sphinxes emerged from the gloom, until the monsters were unveiled before us. I shall never forget that night, or the emotions which those venerable figures caused within me. A few hours more and they were to stand no longer where they had stood unscathed amidst the wreck of man and his works for ages. It seemed almost sacrilege to tear them from their old haunts to make them a mere wonder-stock to the busy crowd of a new world. They were better suited to the desolation around them; for they had guarded the palace in its glory, and it was for them to watch over it in its ruin. Sheikh Abd-ur-Rahman, who had ridden with us to the mound, was troubled with no such reflections. He gazed listlessly at the grim images, wondered at the folly of the Franks, thought the night cold, and turned his mare towards his tents. We scarcely heeded his going, but stood speechless in the deserted portal, until the shadows again began to creep over its hoary guardians.

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Beyond the ruined palaces a scene scarcely less solemn awaited us. I had sent a party of Jebours to the bitumen springs, outside the walls to the east of the inclosure. The Arabs having lighted a small fire with brushwood, awaited our coming to throw the burning sticks upon the pitchy pools. A thick heavy smoke rolled upwards in curling volumes, hiding the light of the moon, and spreading wide over the sky. Tongues of flame and jets of gas, driven from the burning pit, shot through the murky canopy. As the fire brightened, a thousand fantastic forms of light played amidst the smoke. To break the cindered crust, and to bring fresh slime to the surface, the Arabs threw large stones into the springs; a new volume of fire then burst forth, throwing a deep red glare upon the figures and upon the landscape. The Jebours danced round the burning pools, like demons in some midnight orgie, shouting their war-cry, and brandishing their glittering arms. In an hour the bitumen was exhausted for the time, the dense smoke gradually died away, and the pale light of the moon again shone over the black slime pits.

The colossal lions were moved by still simpler and ruder means than those adopted on my first expedition. They were tilted over upon loose earth heaped behind them, their too rapid descent being checked by a hawser, which was afterwards replaced by props of wood and stone. They were then lowered, by levers and jackscrews, upon the cart brought under them. A road paved with flat stones had been made to the edge of the mound, and the sculpture was, without difficulty, dragged from the trenches.

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Owing to recent heavy rains, which had left in many places deep swamps, we experienced much difficulty in dragging the cart over the plain to the river side. Three days were spent in transporting each lion. The unwieldy mass was propelled from behind by enormous levers of poplar wood; and in the costumes of those who worked, as well as in the means adopted to move the colossal sculptures, except that we used a wheeled cart instead of a sledge, the procession closely resembled that which in days of yore transported the same great figures, and which we see so graphically represented on the walls of Kouyunjik. As they had been brought so were they taken away.

It was necessary to humor and excite the Arabs to induce them to persevere in the arduous work of dragging the cart through the deep soft soil into which it continually sank. At one time, after many vain efforts to move the buried wheels, it was unanimously declared that Mr. Cooper, the artist, brought ill luck, and no one would work until he retired. The cumbrous machine crept onwards for a few more yards, but again all exertions were fruitless. Then the Frank lady would bring good fortune if she sat on the sculpture. The wheels rolled heavily along, but were soon clogged once more in the yielding soil. An evil eye surely lurked among the workmen or the bystanders. Search was quickly made, and one having been detected upon whom this curse had alighted, he was ignominiously driven away with shouts and execrations. This impediment having been removed, the cart drew nearer to the village, but soon again came to a standstill. All the Sheikhs were now summarily degraded from their rank and honors, and a weak ragged boy having been dressed up in tawdry kerchiefs, and invested with a cloak, was pronounced by Hormuzd to be the only fit chief for such puny men. The cart moved forwards, until the ropes gave way, under the new excitement caused by this reflection upon the character of the Arabs. When that had subsided, and the presence of the youthful Sheikh no longer encouraged his subjects, he was as summarily deposed as he had been elected, and a greybeard of ninety was raised to the dignity in his stead. He had his turn; then the most unpopular of the Sheikhs were compelled to lie down on the ground, that the groaning wheels might pass over them, like the car of Juggernaut over its votaries. With yells, shrieks, and wild antics the cart was drawn within a few inches of the prostrate men. As a last resource I seized a rope myself, and with shouts of defiance between the different tribes, who were divided into separate parties and pulled against each other, and amidst the deafening *tahlel* of the women, the lion was at length fairly brought to the water's edge.

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The winter rains had not yet swelled the waters of the river so as to enable a raft bearing a very heavy cargo to float with safety to Baghdad. It was not until the month of April, after I had left Mosul on my journey to the Khabour, that the floods, from the melting of the snows

in the higher mountains of Kurdistan, swept down the valley of the Tigris. I was consequently obliged to confide the task of embarking the sculptures to Behnan, my principal overseer, a Mosuleean stonecutter of considerable skill and experience, Mr. Vice-consul Rassam kindly undertaking to superintend the operation. Owing to extraordinary storms in the hills, the river rose suddenly and with unexampled rapidity. The Jaif was one vast sea, and a furious wind drove the waves against the foot of the mound. The Arabs had never seen a similar inundation, and before they could escape to the high land many persons were overwhelmed in the waters.

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When the flood had subsided, the lions on the river bank, though covered with mud and silt, were found uninjured. They were speedily placed on the rafts prepared for them, but unfortunately during the operation one of them, which had previously been cracked nearly across, separated into two parts. Both sculptures were doomed to misfortune. Some person, uncovering the other during the night, broke the nose. I was unable to discover the author of this wanton mischief. He was probably a stranger, who had some feud with the Arabs working in the excavations.^[90]

The rafts reached Baghdad in safety. After receiving the necessary repairs they floated onwards to Busrah; and although they encountered several serious dangers and mishaps, they finally reached England.

During my hasty visit in the autumn to Bavian, I had been unable either to examine the rock-tablets with sufficient care, or to copy the inscriptions. The lions having been moved, I seized the first leisure moment to return to those remarkable monuments.

Cawal Yusuf having invited me to the marriage of his niece at Baashiekhah, we left Nimroud early in the morning for that village. The Cawal, followed by the principal inhabitants on horseback, and by a large concourse of people on foot, accompanied by music, and by children bringing lambs as offerings, met us not far from the village. It was already the second day of the marriage. On the previous day the parties had entered into the contract before the usual witnesses, amidst rejoicing and dances. After our arrival, the bride was led to the house of the bridegroom, surrounded by the inhabitants, dressed in their gayest robes, and by the Cawals playing on their instruments of music. She was covered from head to foot by a thick veil, and was kept behind a curtain in the corner of a darkened room. Here she remained until the guests had feasted three days, after which the bridegroom was allowed to approach her.

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The courtyard of the house was filled with dancers, and during the day and the greater part of the night, nothing was heard but the loud signs of rejoicing of the women, and the noise of the drum and the pipe.

On the third day the bridegroom was sought early in the morning, and led in triumph by his friends from house to house, receiving at each a trifling present. He was then placed within a circle of dancers, and the guests and bystanders, wetting small coins, stuck them on his forehead. The money was collected as it fell, in an open kerchief held by his companions under his chin.

After this ceremony a party of young men, who had attached themselves to the bridegroom, rushed into the crowd, and carrying off the most wealthy of the guests, locked them up in a dark room until they consented to pay a ransom for their release. The money thus collected was added to the dowry of the newly married couple.

Leaving the revellers I rode to Baazani with Cawal Yusuf, Sheikh Jindi (the stern leader of the religious ceremonies at Sheikh Adi), and a few Yezidi notables, to examine the rocky valleys behind the village. I once more searched in vain for some traces of ancient quarries from whence the Assyrians might have obtained the slabs used in their buildings. At the entrance of one of the deep ravines, which runs into the Gebel Makloub, a clear spring gushes from a grotto in the hill-side. Tradition says that this is the cave of the Seven Sleepers and their Dog, and the Yezidis have made the spot a *ziarah*, or place of pilgrimage.^[91]

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A ride of seven hours brought us to the foot of the higher limestone range, and to the mouth of the ravine containing the rock-sculptures. Bavian is a mere Kurdish hamlet of five or six miserable huts on the left bank of the Ghazir. We stopped at the larger village of Khinnis; the two being scarcely half a mile apart, the place is usually called "Khinnis-Bavian." The Arab population ceases with the plains, the villages in the hills being inhabited by Kurds, and included in the district of Missouri. Adjoining is the Yezidi district of Sheikhan.

The rock-sculptures of Bavian are the most important that have yet been discovered in Assyria.^[92] They are carved in relief on the side of a narrow, rocky ravine, on the right bank of the Gomel, a brawling mountain torrent issuing from the Missouri hills, and one of the principal feeders of the small river Ghazir, the ancient Bumadus. The Gomel or Gomela may, perhaps, be traced in the ancient name of Gaugamela, celebrated for that great victory which gave to the Macedonian conqueror the dominion of the Eastern world. Although the battle-field was called after Arbela, a neighbouring city, we know that the river Zab intervened between them, and that the battle was fought near the village of Gaugamela, on the banks of the Bumadus or Ghazir, the Gomela of the Kurds. It is remarkable that tradition has not preserved any record of the precise scene of an event which so materially affected

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the destinies of the East. The history of this great battle is unknown to the present inhabitants of the country; nor does any local name, except perhaps that which I have pointed out, serve to connect it with these plains. The battle-field was probably in the neighbourhood of Tel Aswad, or between it and the junction of the Ghazir with the Zab, on the direct line of march to the fords of that river. We had undoubtedly crossed the very spot during our ride to Bavian. The whole of the country between the Makloub range and the Tigris is equally well suited to the operations of mighty armies, but from the scanty topographical details given by the historians of Alexander, we are unable to identify the exact place of his victory. It is curious that hitherto no remains or relics have been turned up by the plough which would serve to mark the precise site of so great a battle as that of Arbela.

The principal rock-tablet at Bavian contains four figures, sculptured in relief upon the smoothed face of a limestone cliff, rising perpendicularly from the bed of the torrent. They are inclosed by a kind of frame 28 feet high by 30 feet wide, and are protected by an overhanging cornice from the water which trickles down the face of the precipice. Two deities, facing each other, are represented, as they frequently are on monuments and relics of the same period, standing on mythic animals resembling dogs. They wear the high square head-dress, with horns uniting in front, peculiar to the human-headed bulls of the later Assyrian palaces. One holds in the left hand a kind of staff surmounted by the sacred tree. To the centre of this staff is attached a ring encircling a figure, probably that of the king. The other hand is stretched forth towards the opposite god, who carries a similar staff, and grasps in the right hand an object which is too much injured to be accurately described. These two figures may represent but one and the same great tutelary deity of the Assyrians, as the two kings who stand in act of adoration before them are undoubtedly but one and the same king. The monarch, thus doubly portrayed, is behind the god. He raises one hand, and holds in the other the sacred mace, ending in a ball. His dress resembles that of the builder of the Kouyunjik palace, Sennacherib, with whom the inscriptions I shall presently describe, identify him.

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This bas-relief has suffered greatly from the effects of the atmosphere, and in many parts the details can no longer be distinguished. But they have been still more injured by those who occupied the country after the fall of the Assyrian empire. Strangers, having no reverence for the records or sacred monuments of those who went before them, excavated in the ready-scarped rocks the sepulchral chambers of their dead.^[93] In this great tablet there are four such tombs. I entered them by means of a rope lowered from above by a party of Kurds. They were empty, their contents having, of course, been long before carried away, or destroyed.

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To the left of this great bas-relief, and nearer the mouth of the ravine, is a second tablet containing a horseman at full speed, and the remains of other figures. Both horse and rider are of colossal proportions, and remarkable for the spirit of the outline. The warrior wears the Assyrian pointed helmet, and couches a long ponderous spear, as in the act of charging the enemy. Before him is a colossal figure of the king, and behind him a deity with a horned cap; above his head a row of smaller figures of gods standing on animals of various forms, as in the rock-sculptures of Malthaiyah.

This fine bas-relief has, unfortunately, suffered even more than the other monuments from the effects of the atmosphere, and would easily escape notice without an acquaintance with its position.

Scattered over the cliff, on each side of the principal bas-reliefs, are eleven small tablets, some easily accessible, others so high up on the face of the precipice, that they are scarcely seen from below. One is on a level with the bed of the stream, and was, indeed, almost covered by the mud deposit of the floods. Each arched recess, for they are cut into the rock, contains a figure of the king, as at the Nahr-el-Kelb, near Beyrout in Syria^[94], 5 feet 6 inches high. Above his head are the sacred symbols, arranged in four distinct groups. The first group consists of three tiaras, like those worn by the gods and human-headed bulls, and of a kind of altar on which stands a staff ending in the head of a ram; the second of a crescent and of the winged disk, or globe; the third of a pedestal, on which are a trident and three staffs, one topped by a cone, another without ornament, and the last ending in two bulls' heads turned in opposite directions; and the fourth of a Maltese cross (? symbolical of the sun) and the seven stars. Some of these symbols have reference, it would seem, to the astral worship of the Assyrians; whilst others, probably, represent instruments used during sacrifices, or sacred ceremonies.

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Across three of these royal tablets are inscriptions. One can be reached from the foot of the cliff, the others, being on the higher sculptures, cannot be seen from below. They are all more or less injured, but being very nearly, word for word, the same, they can to some extent be restored. I was lowered by ropes to those on the face of the precipice, which are not otherwise accessible. Standing on a ledge scarcely six inches wide, overlooking a giddy depth, and in a constrained and painful position, I had some difficulty in copying them. The stupidity and clumsiness, moreover, of the Kurds, who had never aided in such proceedings before, rendered my attempts to reach the sculptures somewhat dangerous.

The inscriptions, the longest of which contains sixty-three lines, are in many respects of considerable importance, and have been partly translated by Dr. Hincks. They commence

with an invocation to Ashur and the great deities of Assyria, the names of only eleven of whom are legible, although probably the whole thirteen are enumerated, as on the monuments from Nimroud. Then follow the name and titles of Sennacherib. Next there is an account of various great works for irrigation undertaken by this king. From eighteen districts, or villages, he declares he dug eighteen canals to the Ussur or Khusur (?), in which he collected their waters. He also dug a canal, from the borders of the town or district of Kisri to Nineveh, and brought these waters through it; he called it the canal of Sennacherib.

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A long obscure passage precedes a very detailed account of the expedition to Babylon and Kar-Duniyas against Merodach-baladan, recorded under the first year of the annals on the Kouyunjik bulls.^[95] After mentioning some canals which he had made in the south of Assyria, Sennacherib speaks of the army which defended the workmen being attacked by the king of Elam and the king of Babylon, with many kings of the hills and the plains who were their allies. He defeated them in the neighbourhood of Khalul (site undetermined). Many of the great people of the king of Elam and the son of the king of Kar-Duniyas were either killed or taken prisoners, while the kings themselves fled to their respective countries. Sennacherib then mentions his advance to Babylon, his conquest and plunder of it, and concludes with saying, that he brought back from that city the images of the gods which had been taken by *Merodach-adakhe* (?), the king of Mesopotamia, from Assyria 418 years before, and put them in their places.

Now, the importance of this inscription, presuming it to be correctly interpreted, will at once be perceived, for it proves almost beyond a doubt, that at that remote period the Assyrians kept an exact computation of time. We may consequently hope that sooner or later chronological tables may be discovered, which will furnish us with minute and accurate information as to the precise epoch of the occurrence of various important events in Assyrian history. It is, indeed, remarkable that Sennacherib should mark so exactly the year of the carrying away of the Assyrian gods. This very date enables us, as will hereafter be seen, to restore much of the chronology, and to place, almost with certainty, in the dynastic lists, a king whose position was before unknown.

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We find also that the greater part, if not the whole, of the rock-sculptures were executed either at the end of the first, or at the beginning of the second, year of the reign of Sennacherib. As he particularly describes six tablets, it is probable that the others were added at some future period, and after some fresh victory. When the whole inscription is restored, we shall probably obtain many other important details which are wanting in the annals of Kouyunjik, and in the records of the same period.

Beneath the sculptured tablets, and in the bed of the Gomel, are two enormous fragments of rock, which appear to have been torn from the overhanging cliff, and to have been hurled by some mighty convulsion of nature into the torrent below. The pent up waters eddy round them in deep and dangerous whirlpools, and when swollen by the winter rains sweep completely over them. They still bear the remains of sculpture. One has been broken by the fall into two pieces. On them is the Assyrian Hercules strangling the lion between two winged human-headed bulls, back to back, as at the grand entrances of the palaces of Kouyunjik and Khorsabad. Above this group is the king, worshipping between two deities, who stand on mythic animals, having the heads of eagles, the bodies and fore feet of lions, and hind legs armed with the talons of a bird of prey. The height of the whole sculpture is 24 feet, that of the winged bull 8 ft. 6 in.

Near the entrance to the ravine the face of the cliff has been scraped for some yards to the level of the bed of the torrent. A party of Kurds were hired to excavate at this spot, as well as in other parts of the narrow valley. Remains and foundations of buildings in well-hewn stone were discovered under the thick mud deposited by the Gomel when swollen by rains. Higher up the gorge, on removing the earth, I found a series of basins cut in the rock, and descending in steps to the stream. The water had originally been led from one to the other through small conduits, the lowest of which was ornamented at its mouth with two rampant lions in relief. These outlets were choked up, but we cleared them, and by pouring water into the upper basin restored the fountain as it had been in the time of the Assyrians.

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From the nature and number of the monuments at Bavian, it would seem that this ravine was a sacred spot, devoted to religious ceremonies and to national sacrifices. When the buildings, whose remains still exist, were used for these purposes, the waters must have been pent up between quays or embankments. They now occasionally spread over the bottom of the valley, leaving no pathway at the foot of the lofty cliffs. The remains of a well-built raised causeway of stone, leading to Bavian from the city of Nineveh, may still be traced across the plain to the east of the Gebel Makloub.

The place, from its picturesque beauty and its cool refreshing shade even in the hottest day of summer, is a grateful retreat, well suited to devotion and to holy rites. The brawling stream almost fills the bed of the narrow ravine with its clear and limpid waters. The beetling cliffs rise abruptly on each side, and above them tower the wooded declivities of the Kurdish hills. As the valley opens into the plain, the sides of the limestone mountains are broken into a series of distinct strata, and resemble a vast flight of steps leading up to the high lands of central Asia. The banks of the torrent are clothed with shrubs and dwarf trees, amongst which are the green myrtle and the gay oleander, bending under the weight of its rosy blossoms.

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I remained two days at Bavian to copy the inscriptions, and to explore the Assyrian remains. Wishing to visit the Yezidi chiefs, I took the road to Ain Sifni, passing through two large Kurdish villages, Atrush and Om-es-sukr, and leaving the entrance to the valley of Sheikh Adi to the right. The district to the north-west of Khinnis is partly inhabited by a tribe professing peculiar religious tenets, and known by the name of Shabbak. Although strange and mysterious rites are, as usual, attributed to them, I suspect that they are simply the descendants of Kurds, who emigrated at some distant period from the Persian slopes of the mountains, and who still profess Sheeite doctrines.

We passed the night in the village of Esseeyah, where Sheikh Nasr had recently built a dwelling-house. I occupied the same room with the Sheikh, Hussein Bey, and a large body of Yezidi Cawals, and was lulled to sleep by an interminable tale, about the prophet Mohammed and a stork, which, when we had all lain down to rest, a Yezidi priest related with the same soporific effect upon the whole party. On the following day I hunted gazelles with Hussein Bey, and was his guest for the night at Baadri, returning next morning to Mosul.

CHAPTER X.

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VISIT TO KALAH SHERGHAT PREVENTED.—VISIT TO SHOMAMOK.—KESHAF.—THE HOWAR.—A BEDOUIN.—HIS MISSION.—DESCENT OF ARAB HORSES.—THEIR PEDIGREE.—RUINS OF MOKHAMOUR.—THE MOUND OF THE KASR.—PLAIN OF SHOMAMOK.—THE GLA OR KALAH.—XENOPHON AND THE TEN THOUSAND.—A WOLF.—RETURN TO NIMROUD AND MOSUL.—DISCOVERIES AT KOUYUNJIK.—DESCRIPTION OF THE BAS-RELIEFS.

The mound of Kalah Sherghat having been very imperfectly examined during my former residence in Assyria^[96], I had made arrangements to return to the ruins. All my preparations were complete by the 22d of February, and I floated down the Tigris on a raft laden with provisions and tools necessary for at least a month's residence and work in the desert. I had expected to find Mohammed Seyyid, one of my Jebour Sheikhs, with a party of the Ajel, his own particular tribe, ready to accompany me. The Bedouins, however, were moving to the north, and their horsemen had already been seen in the neighbourhood of Kalah Sherghat. Nothing would consequently induce the Ajel, who were not on the best terms with the Shammar Arabs, to leave their tents, and, after much useless discussion, I was obliged to give up the journey.

Awad, with a party of Jehesh, had been for nearly six weeks exploring the mounds in the plain of Shomamok, the country of the Tai Arabs, and had sent to tell me that he had found remains of buildings, vases, and inscribed bricks. I determined, therefore, to spend a few days in inspecting his excavations, and in carefully examining those ruins which I had only hastily visited on my previous journey. I accordingly started from Nimroud on the 2d of March, accompanied by Hormuzd, the doctor, and Mr. Rolland. We descended the Tigris to its junction with the Zab, whose waters, swollen by the melting of the snows in the Kurdish mountains, were no longer fordable. Near the confluence of the streams, and on the southern bank of the Zab, is the lofty mound of Keshaf, where are the remains of a deserted fort, commanding the two rivers. It was garrisoned a few years ago by an officer and a company of irregular troops from Baghdad, who were able from this stronghold to check the inroads of the Bedouins, as well as of the Tai and other tribes, who plundered the Mosul villages. Since it has been abandoned, the country has again been exposed to the incursions of these marauders, who now cross the rivers unmolested, and lay waste the cultivated districts.

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The tents of the Howar were about five miles from Keshaf. Since my last visit, he had become once more the acknowledged chief of the Tai. Faras had, however, withdrawn from his rival, and, followed by his own adherents, had moved to the banks of the Lesser Zab. The Shammar Bedouins, encouraged by the division in the tribe, had, only three days before our visit, crossed the Tigris and fallen suddenly upon the Kochers, or Kurdish wanderers, of the Herki clans. These nomades descend annually from the highest mountain regions to winter in the rich meadows of Shomamok. They pay a small tribute to the Tai for permission to pasture their flocks, and for protection against the desert Arabs. The Howar was consequently bound to defend them; but in endeavoring to do so, had been beaten with the loss of forty of their finest mares.

We found the Howar much cast down and vexed by his recent misfortunes. The chiefs of the tribe were with him, in gloomy consultation over their losses. A Bedouin, wrapped in his

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ragged cloak, was seated listlessly in the tent. He had been my guest the previous evening at Nimroud, and had announced himself on a mission from the Shammar to the Tai, to learn the breed of the mares which had been taken in the late conflict. His message might appear, to those ignorant of the customs of the Arabs, one of insult and defiance. But he was on a common errand, and although there was blood between the tribes, his person was as sacred as that of an ambassador in any civilised community. After a battle or a foray, the tribes who have taken horses from the enemy will send an envoy to ask their breed, and a person so chosen passes from tent to tent unharmed, hearing from each man, as he eats his bread, the descent and qualities of the animal he may have lost.

Amongst men who attach the highest value to the pure blood of their horses, and who have no written pedigree, for amongst the Bedouins documents of this kind do not exist, such customs are necessary. The descent of a horse is preserved by tradition, and the birth of a colt is an event known to the whole tribe. It would be considered disgraceful to the character of a true Bedouin to give false testimony on such a point, and his word is usually received with implicit confidence.

The morning following, though the Howar and the Arabs refused to accompany me, I set off for the ruins, which are in the deserted district between the Karachok range and the river Tigris. The plains in which they are situated are celebrated for the richness of their pastures, and are sought in spring by the Tai and the Kurdish Kochers. We kept as much as possible in the broken country at the foot of the mountain to escape observation. The wooded banks of the Tigris and the white dome of the tomb of Sultan Abdallah were faintly visible in the distance, and a few artificial mounds rose in the plains. The pastures were already fit for the flocks, and luxuriant grass furnished food for our horses amidst the ruins.

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The principal mound of Mokhamour is of considerable height, and ends in a cone. It is apparently the remains of a platform built of earth and sun-dried bricks, originally divided into several distinct stages or terraces. On one side are the traces of an inclined ascent, or of a flight of steps, once leading to the summit. It stands in the centre of a quadrangle of lower mounds, about 480 paces square. I could find no remains of masonry, nor any fragments of inscribed bricks, pottery, or sculptured alabaster.

The ruins are near the southern spur of Karachok, where that mountain, after falling suddenly into low broken hills, again rises into a solitary ridge, called Bismar, stretching to the Lesser Zab, Mokhamour being between the two rivers. These detached limestone ridges, running parallel to the great range of Kurdistan, such as the Makloub, Sinjar, Karachok, and Hamrin, are a peculiar feature in the geological structure of the country lying between the ancient province of Cilicia and the Persian Gulf.

Having examined the ruins, taken bearings of the principal landmarks, and allowed our horses to refresh themselves in the high grass, I returned to the encampment of the Tai. A ride of three hours next morning, across the spurs of the Karachok, brought us to the ruins of Abou-Jerdeh, near which we had found the tents of Faras on our last visit. The mound is of considerable size, and on its summit are traces of foundations in stone masonry; but I could find no remains to connect it with the Assyrian period.

We breakfasted with our old host Wali Beg, and then continued our journey to one of the principal artificial mounds of Shomamok, called the "Kasr," or palace. The pastures were covered with the flocks of the Arabs, the Kochers, and the Disdayi Kurds. We crossed a broad and deep valley, called the Kordereh, and encamped for the night at the foot of the Kasr, on the banks of a rivulet called As-Surayji, which joins the Kordereh below Abou-Jerdeh, near a village named "Salam Aleik," or "Peace be with you."

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The mound is both large and lofty, and is surrounded by the remains of an earthen embankment. It is divided almost into two distinct equal parts by a ravine or watercourse, where an ascent probably once led from the plain to the edifice on the summit of the platform. Awad had opened several deep trenches and tunnels in the mound, and had discovered chambers, some with walls of plain sun-dried bricks, others panelled round the lower part with slabs of reddish limestone, about 3½ or 4 feet high. He had also found inscribed bricks, with inscriptions declaring that Sennacherib had here built a city, or rather palace, for the name of which, as written in the cuneiform characters, I am not able to suggest a reading. I observed a thin deposit, or layer, of pebbles and rubble above the remains of the Assyrian building, and about eight feet beneath the surface, as at Kouyunjik.

From the summit of the Kasr of Shomamok I took bearings of twenty-five considerable mounds, the remains of ancient Assyrian population; [97] the largest being in the direction of the Lesser Zab. Wishing to examine several ruins in the neighbourhood I left our tents early on the following morning, and rode to the mound of Abd-ul-Azeez, about eight or nine miles distant, and on the road between Baghdad and Arbil. The latter town, with its castle perched upon a lofty artificial mound, all that remains of the ancient city of Arbela, which gave its name to one of the greatest battles the world ever saw, was visible during the greater part of our day's ride. The plain abounds in villages and canals for irrigation, supplied by the As-Surayji. The soil thus irrigated produces cotton, rice, tobacco, millet, melons, cucumbers, and a few vegetables. The jurisdiction of the Tai Sheikh ends at the Kasr; the villages beyond are under the immediate control of the governor of Arbil, to whom they pay their taxes. The inhabitants complained loudly of oppression, and appeared to be an active, industrious race. Upon the banks of the Lesser Zab, below Altun Kupri (or Guntera, the "Bridge," as the Arabs

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call the place), encamp the Arab tribe of Abou-Hamdan, renowned for the beauty of its women.

The mounds I examined, and particularly that of Abd-ul-Azeez, abound in sepulchral urns and in pottery, apparently not Assyrian.

The most remarkable spot in the district of Shomamok is the Gla (an Arab corruption of Kalah), or the Castle, about two miles distant from the Kasr. It is a natural elevation, left by the stream of the Kordereh, which has worn a deep channel in the soil, and dividing itself at this place into two branches forms an island, whose summit, but little increased by artificial means, is, therefore, nearly on a level with the top of the opposite precipices. The valley may be in some places about a mile wide, in others only four or five hundred yards. The Gla is consequently a natural stronghold, above one hundred feet high, furnished on all sides with outworks, resembling the artificial embankments of a modern citadel. A few isolated mounds near it have the appearance of detached forts, and nature seems to have formed a complete system of fortification. I have rarely seen a more curious place.

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There are no remains of modern habitations on the summit of the Gla, which can only be ascended without difficulty from one side. Awad excavated by my directions in the mound, and discovered traces of Assyrian buildings, and several inscribed bricks, bearing the name of Sennacherib, and of a castle or palace, which, like that on the bricks from the Kasr, I am unable to interpret.

From the Gla I crossed the plain to the mound of Abou Sheetha, in which Awad had excavated for some time without making any discovery of interest. Near this ruin, perhaps at its very foot, must have taken place an event which led to one of the most celebrated episodes of ancient history. Here were treacherously seized Clearchus, Proxenus, Menon, Agias, and Socrates; and Xenophon, elected to the command of the Greek auxiliaries, commenced the ever-memorable retreat of the Ten Thousand. The camp of Tissaphernes, dappled with its many-colored tents, and glittering with golden arms and silken standards, the gorgeous display of Persian pomp, probably stood on the Kordereh, between Abou-Sheetha and the Kasr. The Greeks having taken the lower road, to the west of the Karachok range, through a plain even then as now a desert^[98], turned to the east, and crossed the spur of the mountain, where we had recently seen the tents of the Howar, in order to reach the fords of the Zab. I have already pointed out the probability of their having forded that river above the junction of the Ghazir^[99], and to this day the ford to the east of Abou-Sheetha is the best, and that usually frequented by the Arabs. Still not openly molested by the Persians, the Greeks halted for three days on the banks of the stream, and Clearchus, to put an end to the jealousies which had broken out between the two armies, sought an interview with the Persian chief. The crafty Eastern, knowing no policy but that to which the descendants of his race are still true, inveigled the Greek commanders into his power, and, having seized them, sent them in chains to the Persian monarch. He then put to death many of their bravest companions and soldiers, who had accompanied their chiefs. The effect which this perfidious act had on the Greek troops, surrounded by powerful enemies, wandering in the midst of an unknown and hostile country, betrayed by those they had come so far to serve, and separated from their native land by impassable rivers, waterless deserts, and inaccessible mountains, without even a guide to direct their steps, is touchingly described by the great leader and historian of their retreat: "Few ate anything that evening, few made fires, and many that night never came to their quarters, but laid themselves down, every man in the place where he happened to be, unable to sleep, through sorrow and longing for their country, their parents, their wives, and children, whom they never expected to see again." But there was one in the army who was equal to the difficulties which encompassed them, and who had resolved to encourage his hopeless countrymen to make one great effort for their liberty and their lives. Before the break of day, Xenophon had formed his plans. Dressed in the most beautiful armour he could find, "for he thought if the gods granted him victory these ornaments would become a conqueror, and if he were to die they would decorate his fall," he harangued the desponding Greeks, and showed them how alone they could again see their homes. His eloquence and courage gave them new life, and, after fording the river Zab, they commenced that series of marches, directed with a skill and energy unequalled, which led them through difficulties almost insurmountable to their native shores.

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Near Abou-Sheetha, too, Darius, a fugitive, urged his flying horses through the Zab, followed by the scattered remnants of an army which numbered in its ranks men of almost every race and clime of Asia. A few hours after, the Macedonian plunged into the ford in pursuit of the fallen monarch, at the head of those invincible legions which he was to lead, without almost a second check, to the banks of the Indus. The plains which stretch from the Zab below Abou-Sheetha have since been more than once the battle-field of Europe and Asia.

I gazed with deep interest upon the scene of such great events—a plain, where nothing remains to tell of the vast armies which once moved across it, of European valour, or of Eastern magnificence.

Whilst riding through the jungle towards Negoub, a wolf rose before me from its lair, and ran towards the plain. Following the animal, I wounded it with one barrel of my pistol, and was about to discharge the second, when my horse slipt on some wet straw left by a recent encampment, and we fell together upon the wolf. It struggled and freed itself, leaving me

besmeared with its blood. The cock of the pistol fortunately broke in going off whilst the muzzle was close to my head, and I escaped without other injury than a bruised hand, the complete use of which I did not recover for some months.

On my return to Nimroud, I remained there a few days to give directions to the overseers for continuing the work during a prolonged absence which I meditated in the desert. At Kouyunjik several new chambers had been opened. The western portal of the great hall, whose four sides were now completely uncovered, led into a long narrow chamber (eighty-two feet by twenty-six), the walls of which had unfortunately been almost entirely destroyed. In the chamber beyond, a few slabs were still standing in their original places. In length this room was the same as that parallel to it, but in breadth it was only eighteen feet. The bas-reliefs represented the siege and sack of one of the many cities taken by the great king, and the transfer of its captives to some distant province of Assyria. The Assyrians, as was their custom, carried away in triumph the images of the gods of the conquered nation, which were placed on poles and borne in procession on men's shoulders. "Hath any god of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" exclaimed the Assyrian general to the Jews. "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim?"^[100] They had been carried away with the captives, and the very idols that were represented in this bas-relief may be amongst those to which Rabshakeh made this boasting allusion. The captured gods were three, a human figure with outstretched arms, a lion-headed man carrying a long staff in one hand, and an image inclosed by a square frame.

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On the northern side of the great hall the portal formed by the winged bulls, and the two smaller doorways guarded by colossal winged figures, led into a chamber one hundred feet by twenty-four, which opened into a further room of somewhat smaller dimensions. In the first, a few slabs were still standing, to show that on the walls had been represented some warlike expedition of the Assyrian king, and, as usual, the triumphant issue of the campaign. The monarch, in his chariot, and surrounded by his body-guards, was seen receiving the captives and the spoil in a hilly country, whilst his warriors were dragging their horses up a steep mountain near a fortified town, driving their chariots along the banks of a river, and slaying with the spear the flying enemy.

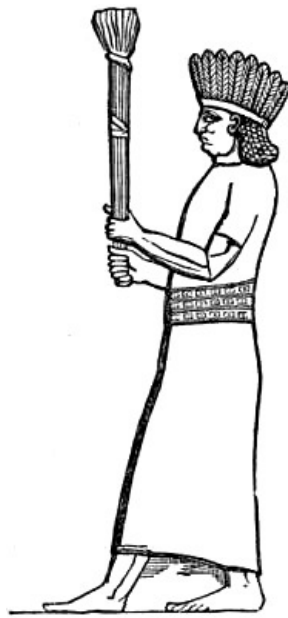
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The bas-reliefs, which had once ornamented the second chamber, had been still more completely destroyed. A few fragments proved that they had recorded the wars of the Assyrians with a maritime people, whose overthrow was represented on more than one sculptured wall in the palace, and who may probably be identified with some nation on the Phoenician coast conquered by Sennacherib, and mentioned in his great inscriptions. Their galleys, rowed by double banks of oarsmen, and the high conical head-dress of their women, have already been described.^[101] On the best preserved slab was the interior of a fortified camp, amidst mountains. Within the walls were tents whose owners were engaged in various domestic occupations, cooking in pots placed on stones over the fire, receiving the blood of a slaughtered sheep in a jar, and making ready the couches. Warriors were seated before a table, with their shields hung to the tent-pole above them.

To the south of the palace, but part of the same great building, though somewhat removed from the new excavations, and adjoining those formerly carried on, an additional chamber had been opened, in which several bas-reliefs of considerable interest had been discovered.

Its principal entrance, facing the west, was formed by a pair of colossal human-headed lions, carved in coarse limestone, so much injured that even the inscriptions on the lower part of them were nearly illegible. Unfortunately the bas-reliefs were equally mutilated, four slabs only retaining any traces of sculpture. One of them represented Assyrian warriors leading captives, who differed in costume from any other conquered people hitherto found on the walls of the palaces. Their head-dress consisted of high feathers, forming a kind of tiara like that of an Indian chief, and they wore a robe confined at the waist, by an ornamented girdle. Some of them carried an object resembling a torch. Amongst the enemies of the Egyptians represented on their monuments is a tribe similarly attired. Their name has been read Tokkari, and they have been identified with an Asiatic nation. We have seen that in the inscriptions on the bulls, the Tokkari are mentioned amongst the people conquered by Sennacherib^[102], and it is highly probable that the captives in the bas-reliefs I am describing belonged to them. Unfortunately no epigraph, or vestige of an inscription, remained on the sculptures themselves, to enable us to identify them.

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A captive (of the Tokkari?) Kouyunjik.

On a second slab, preserved in this chamber, was represented a double-walled city with arched gateways, and inclined approaches leading to them from the outer walls. Within were warriors with horses; outside the fortifications was a narrow stream or canal, planted on both sides with trees, and flowing into a broad river, on which were large boats, holding several persons, and a raft of skins, bearing a man fishing, and two others seated before a pot or caldron. Along the banks, and apparently washed by the stream, was a wall with equidistant towers and battlements. On another part of the same river were men ferrying horses across the river in boats, whilst others were swimming over on inflated skins. The water swarmed with fish and crabs. Gardens and orchards, with various kinds of trees, appeared to be watered by canals similar to those which once spread fertility over the plains of Babylonia, and of which the choked-up beds still remain. A man, suspended by a rope, was being lowered into the water. Upon the corner of a slab almost destroyed, was a hanging garden, supported upon columns, whose capitals were not unlike those of the Corinthian order. This representation of ornamental gardens was highly curious. It is much to be regretted that the bas-reliefs had sustained too much injury to be restored or removed.

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CHAPTER XI.

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PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY TO THE KHABOUR.
—SCULPTURES DISCOVERED THERE.—SHEIKH
SUTTUM.—HIS REDIFF.—DEPARTURE FROM
MOSUL.—FIRST ENCAMPMENT.—ABOU
KHAMEERA.—A STORM.—TEL ERMAH.—A
STRANGER.—TEL JEMAL.—THE CHIEF OF TEL
AFER.—A SUNSET IN THE DESERT.—A JEBOUR
ENCAMPMENT.—THE BELLED SINJAR.—THE
SINJAR HILL.—MIRKAN.—BUKRA.—THE DRESS
OF THE YEZIDIS.—THE SHOMAL.—OSSOFA.—
ALDINA.—RETURN TO THE BELLED.—A SNAKE-
CHARMER.—JOURNEY CONTINUED IN THE
DESERT.—RISHWAN.—ENCAMPMENT OF THE
BORAIJ.—DRESS OF ARAB WOMEN.—
RATHAIYAH.—A DEPUTATION FROM THE
YEZIDIS.—ARAB ENCAMPMENTS.—THE
KHABOUR.—MOHAMMED EMIN.—ARRIVAL AT
ARBAN.

I had long wished to visit the banks of the Khabour. This river, the Chaboras of the Greek geographers, and the Habor, or Chebar, of the Samaritan captivity^[103], rises in the north of Mesopotamia, and flowing to the west of the Sinjar hill, falls into the Euphrates near the site of the ancient city of Carchemish^[104] or Circesium, still known to the Bedouins by the name of Carkeseea. As it winds through the midst of the desert, and its rich pastures are the resort of wandering tribes of Arabs, it is always difficult of access to the traveller. It was

examined, for a short distance from its mouth, by the expedition under Colonel Chesney; but the general course of the river was imperfectly known, and several geographical questions of interest connected with it were undetermined previous to my visit.

With the Bedouins, who were occasionally my guests at Mosul or Nimroud, as well as with the Jebours, whose encamping grounds were originally on its banks, the Khabour was a constant theme of exaggerated praise. The richness of its pastures, the beauty of its flowers, its jungles teeming with game of all kinds, and the leafy thickness of its trees yielding an agreeable shade during the hottest days of summer, formed a terrestrial paradise to which the wandering Arab eagerly turned his steps when he could lead his flocks thither in safety. My old friend Sheikh Mohammed Emin, who had pitched his tents on the river, having invited me to visit him, and sent me word that two colossal idols, similar to those of Nimroud, had suddenly appeared in a mound by the river side, I did not hesitate, but determined to start at once for the Khabour.

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As the Shammar Bedouins were scattered over the desert between Mosul and the Khabour, and their horsemen continually scoured the plains in search of plunder, it was necessary that we should be protected and accompanied by an influential chief of the tribe. I accordingly made arrangements with Suttum, a Sheikh of the Boraij, one of the principal branches of the Shammar, whose tents were at that time pitched between the river and the ruins of El Hather, and punctual to his appointment, he brought his camels to Mosul on the 19th of March. He was accompanied by Khoraif, his *rediff*, as the person who sits on the dromedary^[105] behind the principal rider is called by the Bedouins. Amongst the two great nomade tribes of the Shammar and Aneyza, the word "rediff" frequently infers a more intimate connection than a mere companionship on a camel. It is customary with them for a warrior to swear a kind of brotherhood with a person not only not related to him by blood, but frequently even of a different tribe. Two men connected by this tie are inseparable. They go together to war, they live in the same tent, and are allowed to see each other's wives. They become, indeed, more than brothers. Khoraif was of the tribe of the Aneyza, who have a deadly feud with the Shammar, and was consequently able to render equal services to any of his old or new friends, who might fall into each other's hands. It is on this account that a warrior generally chooses his rediff from a warlike tribe with which he is at enmity, for if taken in war, he would then be *dakheel*, that is, protected, by the family, or rather particular sept, of his companion. On the other hand, should one of the rediff's friends become the prisoner of the sub-tribe into which his kinsman has been adopted, he would be under its protection, and could not be molested. He rides, when travelling, on the naked back of the animal, clinging to the hinder part of the saddle, his legs crouched up almost to his chin—a very uncomfortable position for one not accustomed from childhood to a hard seat and a rough motion.

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As our desert trip would probably last for more than two months, during which time we should meet with no villages, or permanent settlements, we were obliged to take with us supplies of all kinds, both for ourselves and the workmen; consequently, flour, rice, burghoul (prepared wheat, to be used as a substitute for rice), and biscuits, formed a large portion of our baggage. Various luxuries, such as sugar, coffee, tea, and spices, with robes of silk and cotton, and red and yellow boots, together with baskets, tools for excavating, tents, and working utensils, formed the rest of our baggage.

As it was my intention to explore any ruins of importance that we might see on our way, I chose about fifty of my best Arab excavators, and twelve Tiyari, or Nestorians, to accompany us. They were to follow on foot, but one or two extra camels were provided in case any were unable from fatigue to keep up with the caravan. After the usual noise and confusion in settling the loads on the camels, and such matters, about mid-day the caravan got ready to set out.

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I did not leave the town until nearly an hour and a half after the caravan, to give time for the loads to be finally adjusted, and the line of march to be formed. When we had all assembled outside the Sinjar gate, our party had swollen into a little army. The Doctor, Mr. Cooper, and Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, of course, with other friends, accompanied me. Thirteen or fourteen Bedouins had charge of the camels, so that, with the workmen and servants, our caravan consisted of nearly one hundred well-armed men; a force sufficient to defy almost any hostile party with which we were likely to fall in during our journey. Hussein Bey, the Yezidi chief, and many of our friends, as it is customary in the East, rode with us during part of our first stage; and my excellent friend, the Rev. Mr. Ford, an American missionary, then resident in Mosul, passed the first evening under our tents in the desert.

Suttum, with his rediff, rode a light fleet dromedary, which had been taken in a plundering expedition from the Aneyza. Its name was Dhwaita. Its high and picturesque saddle was profusely ornamented with brass bosses and nails; over the seat was thrown the Baghdad double bags adorned with long tassels and fringes of many-colored wools, so much coveted by the Bedouin. The Sheikh had the general direction and superintendence of our march. The Mesopotamian desert had been his home from his birth, and he knew every spring and pasture. He was of the Saadi, one of the most illustrious families of the Shammar, and he possessed great personal influence in the tribe. His intelligence was of a very high order, and he was as well known for his skill in Bedouin intrigue, as for his courage and daring in war. In person he was of middle height, of spare habit, but well made, and of noble and dignified carriage; although a musket wound in the thigh, from which the ball had not been

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extracted, gave him a slight lameness in his gait. His features were regular and well proportioned, and of that delicate character so frequently found amongst the nomades of the desert. A restless and sparkling eye of the deepest black spoke the inner man, and seemed to scan and penetrate everything within its ken. His dark hair was platted into many long tails; his beard, like that of the Arabs in general, was scanty. He wore the usual Arab shirt, and over it a cloak of blue cloth, trimmed with red silk and lined with fur, a present from some Pasha as he pretended, but more probably a part of some great man's wardrobe that had been appropriated without its owner's consent. He was the very picture of a true Bedouin Sheikh, and his liveliness, his wit, and his singular powers of conversation, which made him the most agreeable of companions, did not belie his race.[106] The Bairakdar had the general management of the caravan, superintending, with untiring zeal and activity, the loading and unloading of the animals, the pitching of the tents, and the night watches, which are highly necessary in the desert.

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As we wound slowly over the low rocky hills to the west of the town of Mosul, in a long straggling line, our caravan had a strange and motley appearance; Europeans, Turks, Bedouins, town-Arabs, Tiyari, and Yezidis, were mingled in singular confusion; each adding, by difference of costume and a profusion of bright colors, to the general picturesqueness and gaiety of the scene.

The Tigris, from its entrance into the low country at the foot of the Kurdish mountains near Jezireh, to the ruined town of Tekrit, is separated from the Mesopotamian plains by a range of low limestone hills. We rode over this undulating ground for about an hour and a half, and then descended into the plain of Zerga, encamping for the night near the ruins of a small village. There is now scarcely one permanent settlement on the banks of the Tigris from Jezireh to the immediate vicinity of Baghdad, with the exception of Mosul and Tekrit. One of the most fertile countries in the world, watered by a river navigable for nearly six hundred miles, has been turned into a desert and a wilderness, by continued misgovernment, oppression, and neglect.

The loads had not yet been fairly divided amongst the camels, and the sun had risen above the horizon, before the Bedouins had arranged them to their satisfaction, and were ready to depart. The plain of Zerga was carpeted with tender grass, scarcely yet forward enough to afford pasture for our animals. Scattered here and there were tulips of a bright scarlet hue, the earliest flower of the spring.

A ride of three hours and a quarter brought us to a second line of limestone hills, the continuation of the Tel Afer and Sinjar range, dividing the small plain of Zerga from the true Mesopotamian desert. From a peak which I ascended to take bearings, the vast level country, stretching to the Euphrates, lay a map beneath me, dotted with mounds, but otherwise unbroken by a single eminence. The nearest and most remarkable group of ruins was called Abou Khameera, and consisted of a lofty, conical mound surrounded by a square inclosure, or ridge of earth, marking, as at Kouyunjik and Nimroud, the remains of ancient walls.

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Eight or ten of my workmen, under a Christian superintendent, had been for some days excavating in the ruins of Abou Khameera. I therefore ordered the tents to be pitched near the reedy stream, and galloped to the mounds, which were rather more than a mile distant. In general plan the ruins closely resemble those of Mokhamour in the Tai country.[107] The workmen had opened deep trenches and tunnels in several parts of the principal ruin, and had found walls of sun-dried brick, unsculptured alabaster slabs, and some circular stone sockets for the hinges of gates, similar to those discovered at Nimroud. The baked bricks and the pieces of gypsum and pottery scattered amongst the rubbish bore no inscriptions, nor could I, after the most careful search, find the smallest fragment of sculpture. I have no hesitation, however, in assigning the ruins to the Assyrian period.

One of those furious and sudden storms, which frequently sweep over the plains of Mesopotamia during the spring season, burst over us in the night. Whilst incessant lightnings broke the gloom, a raging wind almost drowned the deep roll of the thunder. The united strength of the Arabs could scarcely hold the flapping canvass of the tents. Rain descended in torrents, sparing us no place of shelter. Towards dawn the hurricane had passed away, leaving a still and cloudless sky. When the round clear sun rose from the broad expanse of the desert, a delightful calm and freshness pervaded the air, producing mingled sensations of pleasure and repose.

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The vegetation was far more forward in that part of the desert traversed during the day's journey than in the plain of Zerga. We trod on a carpet of the brightest verdure, mingled with gaudy flowers. On all sides of us rose lofty Assyrian mounds, now covered with soft herbage. These, seen from a great distance, and the best of landmarks in a vast plain, guide the Bedouin in his yearly wanderings.[108]

Tel Ermah, "the mound of the spears," had been visible from our tents, rising far above the surrounding ruins. As it was a little out of the direct line of march, Suttum mounted one of our led horses, and leaving Khoraiif to protect the caravan, rode with me to the spot. The mound is precisely similar in character to Abou Khameera and Mokhamour, and, like them, stands within a quadrangle of earthen walls. I was unable to find any inscribed fragments of stone or brick.

Whilst I was examining the ruins, Suttum, from the highest mound, had been scanning the plain with his eagle eye. At length it rested upon a distant moving object. Although with a telescope I could scarcely distinguish that to which he pointed, the Sheikh saw that it was a rider on a dromedary. He now, therefore, began to watch the stranger with that eager curiosity and suspicion always shown by a Bedouin, when the solitude of the desert is broken by a human being of whose condition and business he is ignorant. Suttum soon satisfied himself as to the character of the solitary wanderer. He declared him to be a messenger from his own tribe, who had been sent to lead us to his father's tents. Mounting his horse, he galloped towards him. The Arab soon perceived the approaching horseman, and then commenced on both sides a series of manœuvres practised by those who meet in the desert, and are as yet distrustful of each other. I marked them from the ruin as they cautiously approached, now halting, now drawing nigh, and then pretending to ride away in an opposite direction. At length, recognising one another, they met, and, having first dismounted to embrace, came together towards us. As Suttum had conjectured, a messenger had been sent to him from his father's tribe, to say that their tents would be pitched in three or four days beneath the Sinjar hill.

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From this spot the old castle of Tel Afer, standing boldly on an eminence about ten miles distant, was plainly visible. Continuing our march we reached, towards evening, a group of mounds known as Tel Jemal, and pitched in the midst of them on a green lawn, enamelled with flowers, that furnished a carpet for our tents unequalled in softness of texture, or in richness of color, by the looms of Cashmere.

The tents had scarcely been raised when a party of horsemen were seen coming towards us. As they approached our encampment they played the Jerid with their long spears, galloping to and fro on their well-trained mares. They were the principal inhabitants of Tel Afer with Ozair Agha, their chief, who brought us a present of lambs, flour, and fresh vegetables. The Agha rode on a light chestnut mare of beautiful proportions and rare breed. His dress, as well as that of his followers, was singularly picturesque. His people are Turcomans, a solitary colony in the midst of the desert; and although their connection with the Bedouins has taught them the tongue and the habits of the wandering tribes, yet they still wear the turban of many folds, and the gay flowing robes of their ancestors. They allow their hair to grow long, and to fall in curls on their shoulders.

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As the evening crept on, I watched from the highest mound the sun as it gradually sank in unclouded splendor below the sea-like expanse before me. On all sides, as far as the eye could reach, rose the grass-covered heaps marking the site of ancient habitations. The great tide of civilisation had long since ebbed, leaving these scattered wrecks on the solitary shore. Are those waters to flow again, bearing back the seeds of knowledge and of wealth that they have wafted to the West? We wanderers were seeking what they had left behind, as children gather up the colored shells on the deserted sands. At my feet there was a busy scene, making more lonely the unbroken solitude which reigned in the vast plain around, where the only thing having life or motion were the shadows of the lofty mounds as they lengthened before the declining sun. Above three years before, when, watching the approach of night from the old castle of Tel Afer, I had counted nearly one hundred ruins^[109], now, when in the midst of them, no less than double that number were seen from Tel Jemal. Our tents crowning the lip of a natural amphitheatre bright with flowers, Ozair Agha and his Turcomans seated on the greensward in earnest talk with the Arab chief, the horses picketed in the long grass, the Bedouins driving home their camels for the night's rest, the servants and grooms busied with their various labors; such was the foreground to a picture of perfect calm and stillness. In the distance was the long range of the Sinjar hills, furrowed with countless ravines, each marked by a dark purple shadow, gradually melting into the evening haze.

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We had a long day's march before us to the village of Sinjar. The wilderness appeared still more beautiful than it had done the day before. The recent storm had given new life to a vegetation which, concealed beneath a crust of apparently fruitful earth, only waits for a spring shower to burst, as if by enchantment, through the thirsty soil. Here and there grew patches of a shrub-like plant with an edible root, having a sharp pungent taste like mustard, eaten raw and much relished by the Bedouins. Among them lurked game of various kinds. Troops of gazelles sprang from the low cover, and bounded over the plain. The greyhounds coursed hares; the horsemen followed a wild boar of enormous size, and nearly white from age; and the Doctor, who was the sportsman of the party, shot a bustard, with a beautiful speckled plumage, and a ruff of long feathers round its neck.

We rode in a direct line to the Belled Sinjar, the residence of the governor of the district. There was no beaten track, and the camels wandered along as they listed, cropping as they went the young grass. The horsemen and footmen, too, scattered themselves over the plain in search of game. War-songs were chanted, and general hilarity prevailed. The more sedate Bedouins smiled in contempt at these noisy effusions of joy, only worthy of tribes who have touched the plough; but they indulged in no less keen, though more suppressed, emotions of delight. Even the Tiyari caught the general enthusiasm, and sung their mountain songs as they walked along.

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As we drew near to the foot of the hills we found a large encampment, formed partly by Jebours belonging to Sheikh Abdul-Azeez, and partly by a Sinjar tribe called Mendka, under a chief known as the "Effendi," who enjoys considerable influence in this district.

I dismounted at a short distance from the encampment, to avoid a breach of good manners, as to refuse to eat bread, or to spend the night, after alighting near a tent, would be thought a grave slight upon its owner. The caravan continued its journey towards the village. I was soon surrounded by the principal people of the camp; amongst them was one of my old workmen, Khuther, who now cultivated a small plot of ground in the desert. It was with difficulty that I resisted the entreaties of the Effendi to partake of his hospitality, and we did not reach the Belled until after the sun had gone down, the caravan having been ten hours in unceasing march.

I had scarcely entered my tent when the governor of the district, who resides in a small modern castle built on the hill-side, came to see me. He was a Turkish officer belonging to the household of Kiamil Pasha, and complained bitterly of his solitude, of the difficulties of collecting the taxes, and of dealing with the Bedouins who haunted the plains. He was almost shut up within the walls of his wretched fort, in company with a garrison of a score of half-starved Albanians. This state of things was chiefly owing to the misconduct of his predecessor, who, when the inhabitants of the Sinjar were quiet and obedient, had treacherously seized two of their principal chiefs, Mahmoud and Murad, and had carried them in chains to Mosul, where they had been thrown into prison. A deputation having been sent to obtain their release, I had been able to intercede with Kiamil Pasha in their behalf, and now bore to their followers the welcome news of their speedy return to their homes.

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Early on the following morning, I returned the visit of the governor, and, from the tower of the small castle, took bearings of the principal objects in the plain. The three remarkable peaks rising in the low range of Kebriteeyah, behind Abou Khameera, were still visible in the extreme distance, and enabled me to fix with some accuracy the position of many ruins. About four or five miles distant from the Belled, is another large group of mounds, resembling that of Abou Khameera, called by the Bedouins simply the "Hosh," the courtyard or inclosure.

The ruins of the ancient town, known to the Arabs as "El Belled," or *the* city, are divided into two distinct parts by a range of rocky hills, which, however, are cleft in the centre by the bed of a torrent, forming a narrow ravine between them. The ruins are, undoubtedly, those of the town of Sinjar, the capital of an Arab principality in the time of the Caliphs. Its princes frequently asserted their independence, coined money, and ruled from the Khabour and Euphrates to the neighbourhood of Mosul. The province was included within the dominions of the celebrated Saleh-ed-din (the Saladin of the Crusades), and was more than once visited by him. The ruins of Sinjar are also believed to represent the Singara of the Romans. On coins struck under the Emperor Gordian, and bearing his effigy with that of the empress Tranquillina, this city is represented by a female wearing a mural crown surmounted by a centaur, seated on a hill *with a river at her feet* (?). According to the Arab geographers, the Sinjar was celebrated for its palms. This tree is no longer found there, nor does it bear fruit, I believe, anywhere to the north of Tekrit in Mesopotamia.

Wishing to visit the villages of the *Shomal*, or northern side of the mountain, and at the same time to put an end, if possible, to the bloodshed between their inhabitants, and to induce them to submit to the governor, I quitted the Belled in the afternoon, accompanied by Cawal Yusuf and his Yezidi companions, Mr. and Mrs. R., the Doctor, and Mr. Cooper. We followed a precipitous pathway along the hill-side to Mirkan, the village destroyed by Tahyar Pasha on my first visit to the Sinjar.[110] Mirkan was in open rebellion, and had refused both to pay taxes and to receive the officer of the Pasha of Mosul. I was, at first, somewhat doubtful of our reception. Esau, the chief, came out, however, to meet me, and led us to his house. We were soon surrounded by the principal men of the village. They were also at war with the tribes of the "Shomal." Seconded by Cawal Yusuf, I endeavored to make them feel that peace and union amongst themselves was essential to their welfare; and after a lengthened discussion the chief consented to accompany me to the neighbouring village of Bukra, with whose inhabitants his people had been for some time at war.

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Mirkan had been partly rebuilt since its destruction three years before; but the ruins and charred timbers of houses still occupied much of its former site. There are two pathways from Mirkan to the "Shomal," one winding through narrow valleys, the other crossing the shoulder of the mountain. I chose the latter, as it enabled me to obtain an extensive view of the surrounding country, and to take bearings of many points of interest. Near the crest of the hill we passed a white conical building, shaded by a grove of trees. It was the tomb of the father of Murad, one of Yusuf's companions, a Cawal of note, who had died near the spot of the plague some years before. The walls were hung with the horns of sheep, slain in sacrifice, by occasional pilgrims.

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I had little anticipated the beauty and extent of the view which opened round us on the top of the pass. The Sinjar hill is a solitary ridge rising abruptly in the midst of the desert; from its summit, therefore, the eye ranges on one side over the vast level wilderness stretching to the Euphrates, and on the other over the plain bounded by the Tigris and the lofty mountains of Kurdistan. Nisibin and Mardin were both visible in the distance. I could distinguish the hills of Baadri and Sheikh Adi, and many well-known peaks of the Kurdish Alps. Behind the lower ranges, each distinctly marked by its sharp, serrated outline, were the snow-covered heights of Tiary and Bohtan. Whilst to the south of the Sinjar artificial mounds appeared to abound, to the north I could distinguish but few such remains. We dismounted to gaze upon this truly magnificent scene lighted up by the setting sun. I have

rarely seen any prospect more impressive than these boundless plains viewed from a considerable elevation. Besides the idea of vastness they convey, the light and shade of passing clouds flitting over the face of the land, and the shadows as they lengthen towards the close of day, produce constantly changing effects of singular variety and beauty.[111]

It was night before we reached Bukra, where we were welcomed with great hospitality. The best house in the village had been made ready for us, and was scrupulously neat and clean, as the houses of the Yezidis usually are. The elders of Bukra came to me after we had dined, and seated themselves respectfully and decorously round the room. They were not averse to the reconciliation I proposed, received the hostile chief without hesitation, and promised to accompany me on the morrow to the adjoining village of Ossofa, with which they were also at war. In the morning we visited several houses in the village. They were all neat and clean. The women received us without concealing their faces, which are, however, far from pleasing, their features being irregular, and their complexion sallow. Those who are married dress entirely in white, with a white kerchief under their chins, and another over their heads held by the *agal*, or woollen cord, of the Bedouins. The girls wear white shirts and drawers, but over them colored *zabouns*, or long silk dresses, open in front, and confined at the waist by a girdle ornamented with pieces of silver. They twist gay kerchiefs round their heads, and adorn themselves with coins, and glass and amber beads, when their parents are able to procure them. But the Yezidis of the Sinjar are now very poor, and nearly all the trinkets of the women have long since fallen into the hands of the Turkish soldiery, or have been sold to pay taxes and arbitrary fines. The men have a dark complexion, black and piercing eyes, and frequently a fierce and forbidding countenance. They are of small stature, but have well proportioned limbs strongly knit together, and are muscular, active, and capable of bearing great fatigue. Their dress consists of a shirt, loose trowsers and cloak, all white, and a black turban, from beneath which their hair falls in ringlets.

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The Yezidis are, by one of their religious laws, forbidden to wear the common Eastern shirt open in front, and this article of their dress is always closed up to the neck. This is a distinctive mark of the sect, by which its members may be recognised at a glance. The language of the people of Sinjar is Kurdish, and few speak Arabic.

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As the people of Ossofa, or Usifa, were at war with their neighbours, and as this was one of the principal seats of rebellion and discontent, I was anxious to have an interview with its chief. The position of Ossofa is very picturesque. It stands on the edge of a deep ravine; behind it are lofty crags and narrow gorges, whose sides are filled with natural caverns. On overhanging rocks, towering above the village, are two *ziarehs*, or holy places, of the Yezidis, distinguished from afar by their white fluted spires. Pulo, the chief, met us at the head of the principal inhabitants and led me to his house, where a large assembly was soon collected to discuss the principal object of my visit. The chiefs of Mirkan and Bukra were induced to make offers of peace, which were accepted, and, after much discussion, the terms of an amicable arrangement were agreed to and ratified by general consent. Sheep were slain to celebrate the event.

We passed the night at Aldina, in the house of Murad, one of the imprisoned chiefs, whose release I had obtained before leaving Mosul. I was able to announce the good tidings of his approaching return to his wife, to whom he had been lately married, and who had given birth to a child during his absence.

Below Aldina stands a remarkable *ziareh*, inclosed by a wall of cyclopean dimensions. In the plain beneath, in the midst of a grove of trees, is the tomb of Cawal Hussein, the father of Cawal Yusuf, who died in the Sinjar during one of his periodical visitations. He was a priest of sanctity and influence, and his grave is still visited as a place of pilgrimage. Sacrifices of sheep are made there, but they are merely in remembrance of the deceased, and have no particular religious meaning attached to them. The flesh is distributed amongst the poor, and a sum of money is frequently added. Approving the ceremony as one tending to promote charity and kindly feeling, I gave a sheep to be sacrificed at the tomb of the Cawal, and one of my fellow travellers added a second, the carcasses being afterwards divided among the needy.

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A messenger brought me word during the night that Suttum had returned from his tribe, and was waiting with a party of horsemen to escort us to his tents. I determined, therefore, to cross at once to the Belled by a direct though difficult pass. We visited Nogray and Ameera, before entering the gorge leading to the pass. Only two other villages of any importance, Semoka and Jafri, were left unseen. The ascent of the mountain was extremely precipitous, and we were nearly two hours in reaching the summit. We then found ourselves on a broad green platform, thickly wooded with dwarf oak. I was surprised to see snow still lying in the sheltered nooks. On both sides of us stretched the great Mesopotamian plains. To the south, glittering in the sun, was a small salt lake about fifteen miles distant from the Sinjar, called by the Arabs, Munaif. From it the Bedouins, when in their northern pastures, obtain their supplies of salt.

We descended to the Belled through a narrow valley, thick with oak and various shrubs, and were nearly five hours in crossing the mountain. Suttum and his Bedouin companions were waiting for us, but were not anxious to start before the following morning. A Yezidi snake-charmer, with his son, a boy of seven or eight years old, came to my tents in the afternoon, and exhibited his tricks in the midst of a circle of astonished beholders. He first pulled from

a bag a number of snakes knotted together, which the bystanders declared to be of the most venomous kind. The child took the reptiles fearlessly from his father, and placing them in his bosom allowed them to twine themselves round his neck and arms. The Bedouins gazed in mute wonder at these proceedings, but when the Sheikh, feigning rage against one of the snakes which had drawn blood from his son, seized it, and biting off its head with his teeth threw the writhing body amongst them, they could no longer restrain their horror and indignation. They uttered loud curses on the infidel snake-charmer and his kindred to the remotest generations. Suttum did not regain his composure during the whole evening, frequently relapsing into profound thought, then suddenly breaking out in a fresh curse upon the Sheikh, who, he declared, had a very close and unholy connection with the evil one. Many days passed before he had completely got over the horror the poor Yezidi's feats had caused him.

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Suttum had changed his deloul for a white mare of great beauty, named Athaiba. She was of the race of Kohaila, of exquisite symmetry, in temper docile as a lamb, yet with an eye of fire, and of a proud and noble carriage when excited in war or in the chase. His saddle was the simple stuffed pad generally used by the Bedouins, without stirrups. A halter alone served to guide the gentle animal.

We followed a pathway over the broken ground at the foot of the Sinjar, crossing deep watercourses worn by the small streams, which lose themselves in the desert. The villages, as on the opposite slope, or "Shomal," are high up on the hill-side. We encamped, after a short ride, upon a pleasant stream beneath the village of Jedaila. We remained here a whole day in order to visit Suttum's tribe, which was now migrating towards the Sinjar. Early in the morning a vast crowd of moving objects could be faintly perceived on the horizon. These were the camels and sheep of the Boraij, followed by the usual crowd of men, women, children, and beasts of burden. We watched them as they scattered themselves over the plain, and gradually settled in different pastures. By midday the encampment had been formed, and all the stragglers collected. We could scarcely distinguish the black tents, and their site was only marked by curling wreaths of white smoke.

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In the afternoon Suttum's father, Rishwan, came to us, accompanied by several Sheikhs of the Boraij. He rode on a white deloul, celebrated for her beauty and swiftness. His saddle and the neck of the animal were profusely adorned with woollen tassels of many colors, glass beads, and small shells, after the manner of the Arabs of Nejd. The well-trained dromedary having knelt at the door of my tent, the old man alighted, and throwing his arms round my neck kissed me on both shoulders. He was tall, and of noble carriage. His beard was white with age, but his form was still erect and his footsteps firm. Rishwan was one of the bravest warriors of the Shammar. He was a noble specimen of the true Bedouin, both in character and appearance. With the skill and daring of the Arab warrior, he united the hospitality, generosity, and good faith of a hero of Arab romance.

The Yezidi chiefs of Kerraniyah or Sekkiniyah (the village is known by both names) came to our encampment soon after Rishwan's arrival. As they had a feud with the Bedouins, I took advantage of their visit to effect a reconciliation, both parties swearing on my hospitality to abstain from plundering one another hereafter. Being anxious to reach the end of our journey I declined Suttum's invitation to sleep in his tent, but sending the caravan to the place appointed for our night's encampment, I made a detour to visit his father, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. R., the Doctor, Mr. C., and Hormuzd. Although the Boraij were above six miles from the small rivulet of Jedaila, they were obliged to send to it for water.^[112] As we rode towards their tents we passed their camels and sheep slowly wandering towards the stream. In the throng we met Sahiman, the elder brother of Suttum. He was riding on a bay horse, whose fame had spread far and wide amongst the tribes, and whose exploits were a constant theme of praise and wonder with the Shammar. He was of the race of Obeyan Sherakh, a breed now almost extinct, and perhaps more highly prized than any other of the Desert. He had established his fame when but two years old. Ferhan, with the principal warriors of the Khuruseh, had crossed the Euphrates to plunder the Aneyza. They were met by a superior force, and were completely defeated. The best mares of the tribe fell into the hands of the enemy, and the bay colt alone, although followed by the fleetest horses of the Aneyza, distanced his pursuers.^[113] Such noble qualities, united with the purest blood, rendered him worthy to be looked upon as the public property of the Shammar, and no sum of money would induce his owner to part with him.

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Near the encampment of the Boraij was a group of mounds resembling in every respect those I have already described. The Bedouins call them Abou-Khaima. Are these singular ruins those of towns or of temples? Their similarity of form,—a centre mound divided into a series of terraces, ascended by an inclined way or steps, and surrounded by equilateral walls,—would lead to the conjecture that they were fire temples, or vast altars, destined for Astral worship. It will be seen hereafter that the well-known ruin of the Birs Nimroud, on or near the site of ancient Babylon, is very nearly the same in shape. When I come to describe those remarkable remains, I will add some further observations upon their original form.

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The Bedouins who accompanied us galloped to and fro, engaging in mimic war with their long quivering spears, until we reached the encampment of the Boraij. Rishwan, Suttum, Mijwell his younger brother, and the elders of the tribe, were standing before the tent ready to receive us. All the old carpets and coverlets of the family, and ragged enough they were, had been spread out for their guests. As we seated ourselves two sheep were slain before us

for the feast; a ceremony it would not have been considered sufficiently hospitable to perform previous to our arrival, as it might have been doubtful whether the animals had been slain wholly for us. The chief men of the encampment collected round us, crouching in a wide circle on the grass. We talked of Arab politics and Arab war, *ghazous* (or party for plundering), and Aneyza mares stolen or carried off in battle by the Shammar. Huge wooden platters, heavy with the steaming messes of rice and boiled meat, were soon brought in and placed on the ground before us. Immense lumps of fresh butter were then heaped upon them, and allowed to melt, the chief occasionally mixing and kneading the whole up together with his hands. When the dishes had cooled[114] the venerable Rishwan stood up in the centre of the tent, and called in a loud voice upon each person by name and in his turn to come to the feast. We fared first with a few of the principal Sheikhs. The most influential men were next summoned, each however resisting the honor, and allowing himself to be dragged by Suttum and Mijwell to his place. The children, as is usual, were admitted last, and wound up the entertainment by a general scramble for the fragments and the bones. Neither Rishwan nor his sons would eat of the repast they had prepared, the laws of hospitality requiring that it should be left entirely to their guests.

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After we had eaten I accompanied Mrs. R. to the harem, where we found assembled the wives and daughters of Rishwan, of his sons, and of the elders of the tribe, who had met together to see the Frank lady. Amongst them were several of considerable beauty. The wife of Sahiman, the eldest of the three brothers, was most distinguished for her good looks. They were all dressed in the usual long blue shirt, and striped, or black, abba, with a black headkerchief, or keffieh, confined by a band of spun camel's wool. Massive rings of silver, adorned with gems and coral, hung from their noses[115], and bracelets in the same metal, and also set with precious stones, encircled their wrists and ankles.

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Their eyes are large, almond-shaped, expressive, and of extraordinary brilliancy and fire. They suffer their black, and luxuriant hair to fall in clusters of curls. Their carriage in youth is erect and graceful. They are able to bear much fatigue, and show great courage and spirit in moments of difficulty and danger. But their beauty is only the companion of extreme youth. With few exceptions, soon after twenty, and the birth of one or two children, they rapidly change into the most hideous of old hags, the lightning-like brightness of the eye alone surviving the general wreck. When young, the daughters and wives of the chiefs are well cared for; they move with the tribe in the covered camel-saddle, shaded by carpets from the rays of the sun. Daughters are looked upon in the Desert as a source of strength and advantage, from the alliances they enable the father to make with powerful and influential chiefs, being frequently the means of healing feuds which have existed for many years.

Before we left the encampment Suttum led before me as a present a handsome grey colt, which was as usual returned with a request to take care of it until it was required, the polite way to decline a gift of this nature.[116]

Suttum having saddled his deloul was ready to accompany us on our journey. As he was to be for some time absent from his tents, he asked to take his wife with him, and I willingly consented. Rathaiyah was the sister of Suttām el Meekh, the chief of the powerful tribe of the Abde, one of the principal divisions of the Shammar. She was a lady of a very haughty and imperious temper, as poor Suttum had found to his cost, for she carried matters with so high a hand that he had been compelled, almost immediately after his marriage, to send back a young and beautiful wife to her father's tent. She rode on the dromedary behind her lord, a comfortable seat having been made for her with a rug and a coverlet.

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The true Sinjar mountain ends about nine miles from Jedaila, the high ridge suddenly subsiding into low broken hills. From all parts of the plain it is a very beautiful object. Its limestone rocks, wooded here and there with dwarf oak, are of a rich golden color; and the numberless ravines, which furrow its sides, form ribs of deep purple shadow. The western part of the Sinjar is inhabited by the Yezidi tribe of Kherraniyah. We rode over the plain in a parallel line to the mountain, and about seven or eight miles from it. Towards nightfall we skirted a ridge of very low hills rising to our left: but night set in before we could see the tents. No sound except the mournful note of the small desert owl, which has often misled the weary wanderer,[117] broke the deep silence, nor could we distinguish the distant fires usually marking the site of an encampment. Suttum, however, well knew where the Bedouins would halt, and about an hour after dark we heard the well-known voice of Dervish, and others of my workmen, who, anxious at our delay, had come out to seek us.

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Our encampment was full of Yezidis of the Kherraniyah tribe, who had ridden from the tents to see me, bringing presents of sheep, flour, and figs. They were at war, both with the Bedouins and the inhabitants of the northern side of the mountain. My large tent was soon crowded with guests. They squatted down on the ground in double ranks. For the last time I spoke on the advantage of peace and union amongst themselves, and I exacted from them a solemn promise that they would meet the assembled tribes at the next great festival in the valley of Sheikh Adi, referring their differences in future to the decision of Hussein Bey, Sheikh Nasr, and the Cawals, instead of appealing to arms. I also reconciled them with the Bedouins, Suttum entering into an engagement for his tribe, and both parties agreeing to abstain from lifting each other's flocks when they should again meet in the pastures at the foot of the hills. The inhabitants of the Sinjar are too powerful and independent to pay *kowee*,[118] or black mail, to the Shammar, who, indeed, stand in much awe of their Yezidi enemies.

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The Yezidis returned to their encampment late at night, but about a hundred of their horsemen were again with me before the tents were struck in the morning. They promised to fulfil the engagements entered into on the previous evening, and accompanied me for some miles on our day's journey. Cawal Yusuf returned with them on his way back to Mosul. It was agreed that he should buy, at the annual auction, the Mokhatta, or revenues of the Sinjar,^[119] and save the inhabitants from the tyranny and exactions of the Turkish tax-gatherer. I wrote letters for him to the authorities of Mosul, recommending such an arrangement, as equally beneficial to the tranquillity of the mountain and the treasury of the Pasha.

After leaving Om-el-Dhiban we entered an undulating country crossed by deep ravines, worn by the winter torrents. Four hours' ride brought us to a scanty spring; half an hour beyond we passed a second; and in five and a half hours pitched the tents, for the rest of the day, near a small stream. All these springs are called Maalaga, and rising in the gypsum or Mosul marble, have a brackish and disagreeable taste. The Bedouins declare, that, although unpalatable, they are exceedingly wholesome, and that even their mares fatten on the waters of Jeraiba.

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Suttum came to me before nightfall, somewhat downcast in look, as if a heavy weight were on his mind. At length, after various circumlocutions, he said that his wife would not sleep under the white tent which I had lent her, such luxuries being, as she declared, only worthy of city ladies, and altogether unbecoming the wife and daughter of a Bedouin. "So determined is she," said Suttum, "in the matter, that, Billah! she deserted my bed last night and slept on the grass in the open air; and now she swears she will leave me and return on foot to her kindred, unless I save her from the indignity of sleeping under a white tent." It was inconvenient to humor the fancies of the Arab lady, but as she was inexorable, I gave her a black Arab tent, used by the servants for a kitchen. Under this sheet of goat-hair canvass, open on all sides to the air, she said she could breathe freely, and feel again that she was a Bedouin.

We crossed, during the following evening, a beautiful plain covered with sweet smelling flowers and aromatic herbs, and abounding in gazelles, hares, and bustards. We reached in about two hours the encampments, whose smoke we had seen during the preceding evening. They belonged to Bedouins of the Hamoud branch of the Shammar, and had recently been plundering a government caravan and slaughtering the soldiers guarding it. They are notorious for treachery and cruelty, and certainly the looks of those who gathered around us, many of them grotesquely attired in the plundered garments of the slaughtered Turkish soldiery, did not belie their reputation. They fingered every article of dress we had on, to learn its texture and value.

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Leaving their encampments, we rode through vast herds of camels and flocks of sheep belonging to the tribe, and at length came in sight of the river.

The Khabour flows through the richest pastures and meadows. Its banks were now covered with flowers of every hue, and its windings through the green plain were like the coils of a mighty serpent. I never beheld a more lovely scene. An uncontrollable emotion of joy seized all our party when they saw the end of their journey before them. The horsemen urged their horses to full speed; the Jebours dancing in a circle, raised their colored kerchiefs on their spears, and shouted their war cry, Hormuzd leading the chorus; the Tiyari sang their mountain songs and fired their muskets into the air.

The tents of Mohammed Emin, the Jebour Sheikh, were pitched under the ruins of Arban, and on the right or northern bank of the river, which was not at this time fordable. As we drew near to them, after a ride of nearly two hours, the Sheikh pointed in triumph to the sculptures, which were the principal objects of my visit. They stood a little above the water's edge, at the base of a mound of considerable size. We had passed several tels and the double banks of ancient canals, showing that we were still amidst the remains of ancient civilisation.

At length we stopped opposite to the encampment of the Jebour Sheikh, but it was too late to cross the river, some time being required to make ready the rafts. We raised our tents, therefore, for the night on the southern bank. They were soon filled by a motley group of Boraij, Hamoud, Assaiyah, and Jebour Arabs. Moghamis, Suttum's uncle, came shortly after our arrival, bringing me as a present a well-trained hawk and some bustards, the fruits of his morning's sport. The falcon was duly placed on his stand in the centre of the spacious tent, and remained during the rest of my sojourn in the East a member of my establishment. His name was Fawaz, and he was a native of the hills of Makhhoul, near Tekrit, celebrated for their breed of hawks. He was of the species called "chark," and had been given by Sadoun-el-Mustafa, the chief of the great tribe of Obeid, to Ferhan, the Sheikh of the Shammar, who had bestowed him in token of friendship on Moghamis.

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A Sheikh of the Hamoud also brought us a wild ass-colt, scarcely two months old, which had been caught whilst following its dam, and had been since fed upon camel's milk. Indeed, nearly all those who came to my tent had some offering, either sheep, milk, curds, or butter; even the Arab boys had caught for us the elegant jerboa, which burrows in vast numbers on the banks of the river. Suitable presents were made in return. Dinner was cooked for all our guests, and we celebrated our first night on the Khabour by general festivities.

CHAPTER XII.

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ARBAN.—OUR ENCAMPMENT.—SUTTUM AND MOHAMMED EMIN.—WINGED BULLS DISCOVERED.—EXCAVATIONS COMMENCED.—THEIR RESULTS.—DISCOVERY OF SMALL OBJECTS—OF SECOND PAIR OF WINGED BULLS—OF LION—OF CHINESE BOTTLE—OF VASE—OF EGYPTIAN SCARABS—OF TOMBS.—THE SCENE OF THE CAPTIVITY.

On the morning after our arrival in front of the encampment of Sheikh Mohammed Emin, we crossed the Khabour on a small raft, and pitched our tents on its right, or northern, bank. I found the ruins to consist of a large artificial mound of irregular shape, washed, and indeed partly carried away by the river, which was gradually undermining the perpendicular cliff left by the falling earth. The Jebours were encamped to the west of it. I chose for our tents a recess, like an amphitheatre, facing the stream. We were thus surrounded and protected on all sides. Behind us and to the east rose the mound, and to the west were the family and dependents of Mohammed Emin. In the Desert, beyond the ruins, were scattered far and wide the tents of the Jebours, and of several Arab tribes who had placed themselves under their protection; the Sherabeen, wandering keepers of herds of buffaloes; the Buggara, driven by the incursions of the Aneyza from their pasture grounds at Ras-al-Ain (the source of the Khabour); and some families of the Jays, a large clan residing in the district of Orfa, whose sheikh having quarrelled with his brother chiefs had now joined Mohammed Emin. From the top of the mound the eye ranged over a level country bright with flowers, and spotted with black tents, and innumerable flocks of sheep and camels. During our stay at Arban the color of these great plains was undergoing a continual change. After being for some days of a golden yellow, a new family of flowers would spring up, and it would turn almost in a night to a bright scarlet, which would again as suddenly give way to the deepest blue. Then the meadows would be mottled with various hues, or would put on the emerald green of the most luxuriant of pastures. The glowing descriptions I had so frequently received from the Bedouins of the beauty and fertility of the banks of the Khabour were more than realised.

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In the extreme distance, to the east of us, rose a solitary conical elevation, called by the Arabs, Koukab. In front, to the south, was the beautiful hill of the Sinjar, ever varying in color and in outline as the declining sun left fresh shadows on its furrowed sides. Behind us, and not far distant, was the low, wooded range of Abd-ul-Azeez. Artificial mounds, smaller in size than Arban, rose here and there above the thin belt of trees and shrubs skirting the river bank.

I had brought with me a tent large enough to hold full two hundred persons, and intended as a "museef," or place of reception, always open to the wayfarer and the Arab visitor; for the first duty of a traveller wishing to mix with true Bedouins, and to gain an influence over them, is the exercise of hospitality. This great pavilion was pitched in the centre of my encampment, with its entrance facing the river. To the right were the tents of the Cawass and servants; one fitted up expressly for the Doctor to receive patients, of whom there was no lack at all times, and the black Arab tent of Rathaiyah, who would not mix with the Jebours. To the left were those of my fellow travellers, and about two hundred yards beyond, near the excavations, my own private tent, to which I retired during the day, when wishing to be undisturbed, and to which the Arabs were not admitted. In it, also, we usually breakfasted and dined, except when there were any Arab guests of distinction with whom it was necessary to eat bread. In front of our encampment, and between it and the river, was a small lawn, on which were picketed our horses. Suttum and Mohammed Emin usually eat with us, and soon became perfectly reconciled to knives and forks, and the other restraints of civilised life. Suttum's tact and intelligence were indeed remarkable. Nothing escaped his hawk-like eye. A few hours had enabled him to form a correct estimate of the character of each one of the party, and he had detected peculiarities which might have escaped the notice of the most observant European. The most polished Turk would have been far less at home in the society of ladies, and during the whole of our journey he never committed a breach of manners, only acquired after a few hours' residence with us. As a companion he was delightful,—full of anecdote, of unclouded spirits, acquainted with the history of every Bedouin tribe, their politics and their wars, and intimate with every part of the Desert, its productions and its inhabitants. Many happy hours I spent with him, seated, after the sun went down, on a mound overlooking the great plain and the winding river, listening to the rich flow of his graceful Bedouin dialect, to his eloquent stories of Arab life, and to his animated descriptions of forays, wars, and single combats.

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Mohammed Emin, the Sheikh of the Jebours, was a good-natured portly Arab, in intelligence

inferior to Suttum, and wanting many of the qualities of the pure Bedouin. During our intercourse I had every reason to be satisfied with his hospitality and the cordial aid he afforded me. The Jebour chief was a complete patriarch in his tribe, having no less than sixteen children, of whom six sons were horsemen and the owners of mares. The youngest, a boy of four years old, named Sultan, was as handsome and dirty as the best of Arab children. His mother, who had recently died, was the beautiful sister of Abd-rubbou. I chanced to be her brother's guest when the news of her death was brought to him. An Arab of the tribe, weary and wayworn, entered the tent and seated himself without giving the usual salutation; all present knew that he had come from the Khabour and from distant friends. His silence argued evil tidings. By an indirect remark, immediately understood, he told his errand to one who sat next him, and who in turn whispered it to Sheikh Ibrahim, the chief's uncle. The old man said aloud, with a sigh, "It is the will and mercy of God; she is not dead but released!" Abd-rubbou at once understood of whom he spake. He arose and went forth, and the wailing of the mother and of the women soon issued from the inner recesses of the tent.

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My first care, after crossing to Arban, was to examine the sculptures described by the Arabs. The river having gradually worn away the mound had, during the recent floods, left uncovered a pair of winged human-headed bulls, some six feet above the water's edge, and full fifty beneath the level of the ruin. Only the forepart of these figures had been exposed to view, and Mohammed Emin would not allow any of the soil to be removed before my arrival. The earth was soon cleared away, and I found them to be of a coarse limestone, not exceeding 5½ feet in height by 4½ in length. Between them was a pavement slab of the same material. They resembled in general form the well-known winged bulls of Nineveh, but in the style of art they differed considerably from them. The outline and treatment was bold and angular, with an archaic feeling conveying the impression of great antiquity. They bore the same relation to the more delicately finished and highly ornamented sculptures of Nimroud, as the earliest remains of Greek art do to the exquisite monuments of Phidias and Praxiteles. The human features were unfortunately much injured, but such parts as remained were sufficient to show that the countenance had a peculiar character, differing from the Assyrian type. The sockets of the eyes were deeply sunk, probably to receive the white and the ball of the eye in ivory or glass. The nose was flat and large, and the lips thick and overhanging like those of a negro. Human ears were attached to the head, and bull's ears to the horned cap, which was low and square at the top, not high and ornamented like those of Khorsabad and Kouyunjik, nor rounded like those of Nimroud. The hair was elaborately curled, as in the pure Assyrian sculptures, though more rudely carved. The wings were small in proportion to the size of the body, and had not the majestic spread of those of the bulls that adorned the palaces of Nineveh.

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It would appear from them that the sculptures belonged to the palace of a king whose name has been found on no other monument. No titles are attached to it, not even that of "king;" nor is the country over which he reigned mentioned; so that some doubt may exist as to whether it really be a royal name.

The great accumulation of earth above these sculptures proves that, since the destruction of the edifice in which they stood, other habitations have been raised on its ruins. Arban, indeed, is mentioned by the Arab geographers as a flourishing city, in a singularly fertile district of the Khabour. Part of a minaret, whose walls were cased with colored tiles, and ornamented with cufic inscriptions in relief, like that of the Sinjar, and the foundations of buildings, are still seen on the mound; and at its foot; on the western side, are the remains of a bridge which once spanned the stream. But the river has changed its course. The piers, adorned with elegantly shaped arabesque characters, are now on the dry land.

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I will describe, at once, the results of the excavations carried on during the three weeks our tents were pitched at Arban. To please the Jebour Sheikh, and to keep around our encampment, for greater security, a body of armed men, when the tribe changed their pastures, I hired about fifty of Mohammed Emin's Arabs, and placed them in parties with the workmen who had accompanied me from Mosul. Tunnels were opened behind the bulls already uncovered, and in various parts of the ruins on the same level. Trenches were also dug into the surface of the mound.

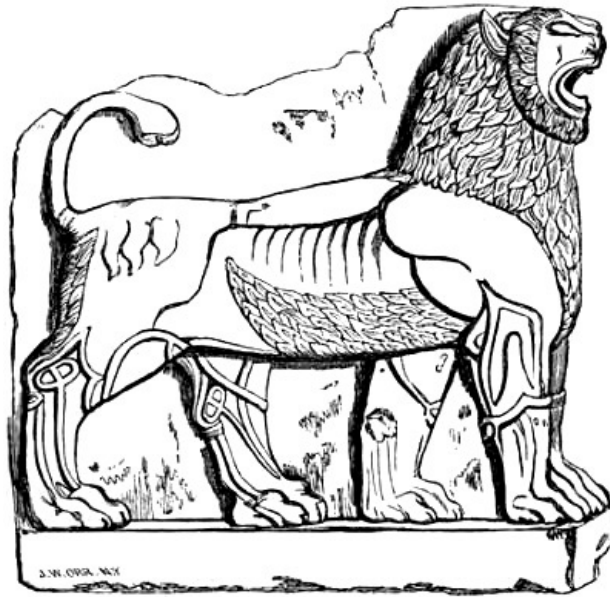
Behind the bulls were found various Assyrian relics; amongst them a copper bell, like those from Nimroud, and fragments of bricks with arrow-headed characters painted yellow with white outlines, upon a pale green ground. In other parts of the mound were discovered glass and pottery, some Assyrian, others of a more doubtful character. Several fragments of earthenware, ornamented with flowers and scrollwork, and highly glazed, had assumed the brilliant and varied iridescence of ancient glass.^[120]

It was natural to conclude, from the usual architectural arrangement of Assyrian edifices, that the two bulls described stood at an entrance to a hall or chamber. We searched in vain for the remains of walls, although digging for three days to the right and left of the sculptures, a work of considerable difficulty in consequence of the immense heap of superincumbent earth. I then directed a tunnel to be carried towards the centre of the mound, hoping to find a corresponding doorway opposite. I was not disappointed. On the fifth day a similar pair of winged bulls were discovered. They were of the same size, and inscribed with the same characters. A part of one having been originally broken off, either in carving the sculpture or in moving it, a fresh piece of stone had been carefully fitted into its place. I also dug to the right and left of these sculptures for remains of walls, but without

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success, and then resumed the tunnelling towards the centre of the mound. In a few days a lion, with extended jaws, sculptured in the same coarse limestone, and in the same bold archaic style as the bulls, was discovered. It had five legs, and the tail had the claw at the end, as in the Nineveh bas-reliefs. In height it was nearly the same as the bulls. I searched in vain for the one which must have formed the opposite side of the doorway.



Lion discovered at Arban.

With the exception of these sculptures, no remains of building were found in this part of the mound. In another tunnel, opened at some distance from the bulls, half of a human figure in relief was discovered.^[121] The face was in full. One hand grasped a sword or dagger; the other held some object to the breast. The hair and beard were long and flowing, and ornamented with a profusion of curls as in the Assyrian bas-reliefs. The head-dress appeared to consist of a kind of circular helmet, ending in a sharp point. The treatment and style marked the sculpture to be of the same period as the bull and lion.

Such were the sculptures discovered in the mound of Arban. Amongst smaller objects of different periods were some of considerable interest, jars, vases, funeral urns, highly-glazed pottery, and fragments of glass. In a trench, on the south side of the ruin, was found a small green and white bottle, inscribed with Chinese characters.

A jar, about four feet high, in coarse half-baked clay, was dug out of the centre of the mound. The handles were formed by rudely-designed human figures, and the sides covered with grotesque representations of men and animals, and arabesque ornaments in relief.

Vases of the same material, ornamented with figures, are frequently discovered in digging the foundations of houses in the modern town of Mosul. They appear to belong to a comparatively recent period, later probably than the Christian era, but previous to the Arab occupation. As they have upon them human figures, dressed in a peculiar costume, consisting of a high cap and embroidered robes, I should attribute them to the Persians. A vase similar in size and shape to that of Arban, and also covered with grotesque representations of monstrous animals, the finest specimen I have seen of this class of antiquities, was found beneath the foundations of the very ancient Chaldæan church of Meskinta at Mosul, when that edifice was pulled down and rebuilt two years ago. It was given to me by the Catholic Chaldæan Patriarch, to whom it belonged as chief of the community, but was unfortunately destroyed, with other interesting relics, by the Arabs, who plundered a raft laden with antiquities, on its way to Baghdad, after my return to Europe.

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Amongst other relics discovered at Arban were, a large copper ring, apparently Assyrian; an ornament in earthenware, resembling the pine-cone of the Assyrian sculptures; a bull's head in terracotta; fragments of painted bricks, probably of the same period; and several Egyptian scarabæi. It is singular that engraved stones and scarabs bearing Egyptian devices, and in some instances even royal cartouches, should have been found on the banks of the Khabour. Similar objects were subsequently dug up at Nimroud, and brought to me by the Arabs from various ruins in Assyria.

It may be well for the reader to observe in this connection, that most of the Egyptian relics discovered in the Assyrian ruins are of the time of the 18th Egyptian dynasty, or of the 15th century before Christ; a period when, as we learn from Egyptian monuments, there was a close connection between Assyria and Egypt.

Several tombs were also found in the ruins, consisting principally of boxes, or sarcophagi, of

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earthenware, like those existing above the Assyrian palaces near Mosul. Some, however, were formed by two large earthen jars, like the common Eastern vessel for holding oil, laid horizontally, and joined mouth to mouth. These terracotta coffins appear to be of the same period as those found in all the great ruins on the banks of the rivers of Mesopotamia, and are not Assyrian. They contained human remains turned to dust, with the exception of the skull and a few of the larger bones, and generally three or four urns of highly-glazed blue pottery.

Fewer remains and objects of antiquity were discovered in the mounds on the Khabour than I had anticipated. They were sufficient, however, to prove that the ruins are, on the whole, of the same character as those on the banks of the Tigris. That the Assyrian empire at one time embraced the whole of Mesopotamia, including the country watered by the Khabour, there can be no doubt, as indeed is shown by the inscriptions on the monuments of Nineveh. Whether the sculptures at Arban belong to the period of Assyrian domination, or to a distinct nation afterwards conquered, or whether they may be looked upon as cotemporary with, or more ancient than, the bas-reliefs of Nimroud, are questions not so easily answered. The archaic character of the treatment and design, the peculiar form of the features, the rude though forcible delineation of the muscles, and the simplicity of the details, certainly convey the impression of greater antiquity than any monuments hitherto discovered in Assyria Proper.^[122]

A deep interest, at the same time, attaches to these remains from the site they occupy. To the Chebar were transported by the Assyrian king, after the destruction of Samaria, the captive children of Israel, and on its banks "the heavens were opened" to Ezekiel, and "he saw visions of God," and spake his prophecies to his brother exiles.^[123] Around Arban may have been pitched the tents of the sorrowing Jews, as those of the Arabs were during my visit. To the same pastures they led their sheep, and they drank of the same waters. Then the banks of the river were covered with towns and villages, and a palace-temple still stood on the mound, reflected in the transparent stream. We have, however, but one name connected with the Khabour recorded in Scripture, that of Tel-Abib, "the mound of Abib, or, of the heaps of ears of corn," but whether it applies to a town, or to a simple artificial elevation, such as still abound, and are still called "tels," is a matter of doubt. I sought in vain for some trace of the word amongst the names now given by the wandering Arab to the various ruins on the Khabour and its confluents.^[124]

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We know that Jews still lingered in the cities of the Khabour until long after the Arab invasion; and we may perhaps recognise in the Jewish communities of Ras-al-Ain, at the sources of the river, and of Karkisia, or Carchemish, at its confluence with the Euphrates, visited and described by Benjamin of Tudela, in the latter end of the twelfth century of the Christian æra, the descendants of the captive Israelites.

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But the hand of time has long since swept even this remnant away, with the busy crowds which thronged the banks of the river. From its mouth to its source, from Carchemish to Ras-al-Ain, there is now no single permanent human habitation on the Khabour. Its rich meadows and its deserted ruins are alike become the encamping places of the wandering Arab.

CHAPTER XIII.

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RESIDENCE AT ARBAN.—MOHAMMED EMIN'S TENT.—THE AGAYDAT.—OUR TENTS.—BREAD-BAKING.—FOOD OF THE BEDOUINS.—THIN BREAD.—THE PRODUCE OF THEIR FLOCKS.—DISEASES AMONGST THEM.—THEIR REMEDIES.—THE DELOUL OR DROMEDARY.—BEDOUIN WARFARE.—SUTTUM'S FIRST WIFE.—A STORM.—TURTLES.—LIONS.—A BEDOUIN ROBBER.—BEAVERS.—RIDE TO LEDJMIYAT.—A PLUNDERING EXPEDITION.—LOSS OF A HAWK.—RUINS OF SHEMSHANI.—RETURN TO ARBAN.—VISIT TO MOGHAMIS.

In the preceding chapter I have given an account of the discoveries made in the ruins of Arban, I will now add a few notes of our residence on the Khabour. A sketch of Arab life, and a description of a country not previously visited by European travellers, may be new and not uninteresting to my readers.

During the time we dwelt at Arban, we were the guests and under the protection of Mohammed Emin, the Sheikh of the Jebours. On the day we crossed the river, he celebrated our arrival by a feast after the Arab fashion, to which the notables of the tribe were invited.

Sheep, as usual, were boiled and served up piecemeal in large wooden bowls, with a mass of butter and bread soaked in the gravy. The chief's tent was spacious, though poorly furnished. It was the general resort of those who chanced to wander, either on business or for pleasure, to the Khabour, and was, consequently, never without a goodly array of guests; from a company of Shammar horsemen out on a foray to the solitary Bedouin who was seeking to become a warrior in his tribe, by first stealing a mare from some hostile encampment.

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Amongst the strangers partaking, at the time of our visit, of the Sheikh's hospitality, were Serhan, a chief of the Agaydat, and Dervish Agha, the hereditary Lord of Nisibin, the ancient Nisibis. The tents of the former were at the junction of the Khabour and Euphrates, near Karkisia (the ancient Carchemish), or, as it is more generally called by the Arabs, Abou-Psera. The fertile meadows near the confluence of the two rivers formerly belonged to the Jebours, who occupied the banks of the Khabour throughout nearly the whole of its course. An old feud kept them at continual war with the great tribe of the Aneyza. They long successfully struggled with their enemies, but having at length been overcome they sought refuge in the neighborhood of Mosul. Having returned to the Khabour, they claimed their former rights, and Mohammed Emin was invited by Serhan to settle the contending claims; but it was to no effect.

Dervish Agha, of Kurdish descent, was the representative of an ancient family, and had come to persuade the Jebour Sheikh to assist Ferhan in recovering the plundered treasure from the Hamoud. My own large tent was no less a place of resort than that of Mohammed Emin, and as we were objects of curiosity, Bedouins from all parts flocked to see us. With some of them I was already acquainted, having either received them as my guests at Mosul, or met them during excursions in the Desert. They generally passed one night with us, and then returned to their own tents. A sheep was always slain for them, and boiled with rice, or prepared wheat, in the Arab way: if there were not strangers enough to consume the whole, the rest was given to the workmen or to the needy, as it is considered derogatory to the character of a truly hospitable and generous man to keep meat until the following day, or to serve it up a second time when cold. Even the poorest Bedouin who kills a sheep, invites all his friends and neighbours to the repast, and if there be still any remnants, distributes them amongst the poor and the hungry, although he should himself want on the morrow.

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The wandering Arabs have no other means of grinding their corn than by handmills, which they carry with them wherever they go. They are always worked by the women, for it is considered unworthy of a man to engage in any domestic occupation. These handmills are simply two circular flat stones, generally about eighteen inches in diameter, the upper turning loosely upon a wooden pivot, and moved quickly round by a wooden handle. The grain is poured through the hole of the pivot, and the flour is collected in a cloth spread under the mill. It is then mixed with water, kneaded in a wooden bowl, and pressed by the hand into round balls ready for baking. During these processes, the women are usually seated on the bare ground: hence, in Isaiah (xlvi. 1, 2), is the daughter of Babylon told to sit in the dust and on the ground, and "to take the mill-stones to grind meal."

The tribes who are always moving from place to place bake their bread on a slightly convex iron plate, called a *sadj*, moderately heated over a low fire of brushwood or camels' dung. The lumps of dough are rolled, on a wooden platter, into thin cakes, a foot or more in diameter, and laid by means of the roller upon the iron. They are baked in a very short time, and should be eaten hot. The Kurds, whose flour is far whiter and more carefully prepared than that of the Arabs, roll the dough into large cakes, scarcely thicker than a sheet of paper. When carefully baked by the same process, it becomes crisp and exceedingly agreeable to the taste. All Arab bread is unleavened.

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If a Bedouin tribe be moving in great haste before an enemy, and should be unable to stop for many hours, or be making a forced march to avoid pursuit over a desert where the wells are very distant from each other, the women sometimes prepare bread whilst riding on camels. The fire is then lighted in an earthen vessel. One woman kneads the flour, a second rolls out the dough, and a third bakes, boys or women on foot passing the materials, as required, from one to the other. But it is very rare that the Bedouins are obliged to have recourse to this process, and I have only once witnessed it.

The fuel used by the Arabs consists chiefly of the dwarf shrubs, growing in most parts of the Desert, of dry grass and of camels' dung. They frequently carry bags of the latter with them when in summer they march over very arid tracts. On the banks of the great rivers of Mesopotamia, the tamarisk and other trees furnish them with abundant firewood. They are entirely dependent for their supplies of wheat upon the villages on the borders of the Desert, or on the sedentary Arabs, who, whilst living in tents, cultivate the soil. The Bedouins usually draw near to the towns and cultivated districts soon after the harvest, to lay in their stock of grain. A party of men and women, chosen by their companions, then take with them money, or objects for sale or exchange, and drive the camels to the villages, where they load them and return to their tents.

Nearly the whole revenue of an Arab Sheikh, whatever it may be, is laid out in corn, rice and other provisions. The quantity of food consumed in the tents of some of the great chiefs of the Bedouins is very considerable. The common Bedouin can rarely get meat. His food consists almost exclusively of wheaten bread with truffles, which are found in great

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abundance during the spring, a few wild herbs, such as asparagus, onions, and garlic, fresh butter, curds, and sour milk. But, at certain seasons, even these luxuries cannot be obtained; for months together he often eats bread alone. Roasted meat is very rarely seen in a Bedouin tent. Rice is only eaten by the Sheikhs, except amongst the tribes who encamp in the marshes of Southern Mesopotamia, where rice of an inferior quality is very largely cultivated. There it is boiled with meat and made into pilaws.

The Bedouins do not make cheese. The milk of their sheep and goats is shaken into butter or turned into curds: it is rarely or never drunk fresh, new milk being thought very unwholesome, as by experience I soon found it to be, in the Desert. The sour milk, or sheneena, an universal beverage amongst the Arabs, is either buttermilk pure and diluted, or curds mixed with water. Camel's milk is drunk fresh. It is pleasant to the taste, rich, and exceedingly nourishing. It is given in large quantities to the horses. The Shammar and Aneyza Bedouins have no cows or oxen, those animals being looked upon as the peculiar property of tribes who have forgotten their independence, and degraded themselves by the cultivation of land. The sheep are milked at dawn, or even before daybreak, and again in the evening on their return from the pastures. The milk is immediately turned into leben, or boiled to be shaken into butter. Amongst the Bedouins and Jebours it is considered derogatory to the character of a man to milk a cow or a sheep, but not to milk a camel.

The Sheikhs occasionally obtain dates from the cities. They are either eaten dry with bread and leben, or fried in butter, a very favorite dish of the Bedouin.[125]

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To this spare and simple dish the Bedouins owe their freedom from sickness, and their extraordinary power of bearing fatigue. Diseases are rare amongst them; and the epidemics, which rage in the cities, seldom reach their tents. The cholera, which has of late visited Mosul and Baghdad with fearful severity, has not yet struck the Bedouins, and they have frequently escaped the plague, when the settlements on the borders of the Desert have been nearly depopulated by it. The small pox, however, occasionally makes great havoc amongst them, vaccination being still unknown to the Shammar, and intermittent fever prevails in the autumn, particularly when the tribes encamp near the marshes in Southern Mesopotamia. Rheumatism prevails somewhat, and Ophthalmia is common in the Desert as well as in all other parts of the East, and may be attributed as much to dirt and neglect as to any other cause.

The Bedouins are acquainted with few medicines. The Desert yields some valuable simples, which are, however, rarely used. Dr. Sandwith hearing from Suttum that the Arabs had no opiates, asked what they did with one who could not sleep. "Do!" answered the Sheikh, "why, we make use of him, and set him to watch the camels." If a Bedouin be ill, or have received a wound, he sometimes comes to the nearest town to consult the barbers, who are frequently not unskilful surgeons.

The women suffer little in labor, which often takes place during a march, or when they are far from the encampment watering the flocks or collecting fuel. They allow their children to remain at the breast until they are nearly two and even three years old, and, consequently, have rarely many offspring.

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Soon after our arrival at the Khabour I bought a deloul, or dromedary, as more convenient than a horse for making excursions in the Desert. Her name was Sahaima, and she belonged to Moghamis, the uncle of Suttum, having been taken by him from the Aneyza; she was well trained, and swift and easy in her paces. The best delouls come from Nedjd and the Gebel Shammar. They are small and lightly made, the difference between them and a common camel being as great as that between a high-bred Arab mare and an English cart-horse. Their powers of endurance are very great.

The deloul is much prized, and the race is carefully preserved. The Arabs breed from them once in two years, and are very particular in the choice of the male. An ordinary animal can work for twenty years. Suttum assured me that they could travel in the spring as many as six days without water. Their color is generally light brown and white, darker colors and black are more uncommon. Their pace is a light trot kept up for many hours together without fatigue; they can increase it to an unwieldy gallop, a speed they cannot long maintain. A good deloul is worth at the most 10*l.*, the common price is about 5*l.*

After the day's work at Arban I generally rode with Suttum into the Desert on our delouls, with the hawks and greyhounds. During these rides over the flowered greensward, the Arab Sheikh would entertain me with stories of his tribe, of their wars and intrigues, their successful plundering expeditions, and their occasional defeats. In the evening Mohammed Emin would join our party in the tent, remaining until the night was far spent.

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The grass around Arban having been eaten by the flocks, the Jebours struck their tents at dawn on the 4th of April, and wandered down the Khabour in search of fresh pastures. The Borajj, too, moved further inland from the river. During the whole morning the Desert around the ruins was a busy scene; sheep, cattle, beasts of burden, men, women, and children being scattered far and wide over the plain. By mid-day the crowd had disappeared, and the meadows, which a few hours before had been teeming with living things, were now again left lonely and bare. Mohammed Emin alone, with a few Sherabeen Arabs, remained to protect us.

Soon after our arrival at the Khabour, Adla, Suttum's first wife, came to us with her child. After the Sheikh's marriage with Rathaiyah, she had been driven from her husband's tent by the imperious temper of his new bride, and had returned to Moghamis, her father. Her eldest sister was the wife of Suttum's eldest brother Sahiman, and her youngest, Maizi, was betrothed to Suttum's youngest brother Midjwell. The three were remarkable for their beauty; their dark eyes had the true Bedouin fire, and their long black hair fell in clusters on their shoulders. Their cousins, the three brothers, had claimed them as their brides, according to Bedouin law. Adla now sought to be reconciled through me to her husband. After much difficulty, all the outward forms of perfect reconciliation between the two wives were satisfactorily gone through, although Suttum evidently saw that there was a different reception in store for himself when there were no European eye-witnesses. Such are the trials of married life in the Desert! [126]

On the sixth of April we witnessed a remarkable electrical phenomenon. During the day heavy clouds had been hanging on the horizon, foreboding one of those furious storms which at this time of the year occasionally visit the Desert. Late in the afternoon these clouds had gathered into one vast circle, which moved slowly round, like an enormous wheel, presenting one of the most extraordinary and awful appearances I ever saw. From its sides leaped, without ceasing, forked flames of lightning. Clouds springing up from all sides of the heavens, were dragged hurriedly into the vortex, which advanced gradually towards us, and threatened soon to break over our encampment. Fortunately, however, we only felt the very edge of the storm,—a deluge of rain and of hail of the size of pigeons' eggs. The great rolling cloud, attracted by the Sinjar hill, soon passed away, leaving in undiminished splendor the setting sun.

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Monday, 8th of April. The Mogdessi, one of my servants, caught a turtle in the river measuring three feet in length. The Arabs have many stories of the voracity of these animals, which attain, I am assured, to even a larger size, and Suttum declared that a man had been pulled under water and devoured by one, probably an Arab exaggeration.

A Bedouin, who had been attacked by a lion whilst resting, about five hours lower down on the banks of the river, came to our encampment. He had escaped with the loss of his mare. The lion is not uncommon in the jungles of the Khabour, and the Bedouins and Jebours frequently find their cubs in the spring season.

April 9th. A Bedouin youth, thin and sickly, though of a daring and resolute countenance, sat in my guest tent. His singular appearance at once drew my attention. His only clothing was a kerchief, very dirty and torn, falling over his head, and a ragged cloak, which he drew tightly round him, allowing the end of a knotted club to appear above its folds. His story, which he was at length induced to tell, was characteristic of Bedouin education. He was of the Boraij tribe, and related to Suttum. His father was too poor to equip him with mare and spear, and he was ashamed to be seen by the Arabs on foot and unarmed. He had now become a man, for he was about fourteen years old, and he resolved to trust to his own skill for his outfit as a warrior. Leaving in his father's tent all his clothes, except his dirty keffieh and his tattered aba, and, without communicating his plans to his friends, he bent his way to the Euphrates. For three months his family hearing nothing of him, believed him to be dead. During that time, however, he had lived in the river jungle, feeding on roots and herbs, hiding himself during the day in the thickets, and prowling at night round the tents of the Aneyza in search of a mare that might have strayed, or might be less carefully guarded than usual. At length the object of his ambition was found, and such a mare had never been seen before; but, alas! her legs were bound with iron shackles, and he had brought no file with him. He succeeded in leading her to some distance from the encampment, where, as morning dawned, to avoid detection, he was obliged to leave his prize and return to his hiding-place. He was now on his way back to his tents, intending to set forth again, after recruiting his strength, on new adventures in search of a mare and spear, promising to be wiser in future, and to carry a file under his cloak. Suttum seemed very proud of his relative, and introduced him to me as a promising, if not distinguished, character. [127] It is thought no disgrace thus to steal a mare as long as the thief has not eaten bread in the tent of her owner.

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April 11th. The waters of this river had been rising rapidly since the recent storm, and had now spread over the meadows. We moved our tents, and the Arabs took refuge on the mound, which stood like an island in the midst of the flood. The Jebours killed four beavers, and brought three of their young to us alive. They had been driven from their holes by the swollen stream. Mohammed Emin eagerly accepted the musk bags, which are much valued as *majouns* by the Turks, and, consequently, fetch a large price in the towns. Beavers were formerly found in large numbers on the Khabour, but in consequence of the value attached to the musk bag, they have been hunted almost to extermination by the Arabs. Mohammed Emin assured me that for several years not more than one or two had been seen. Sofuk, the great Shammar Sheikh, used to consider the musk bag of a beaver the most acceptable present he could send to a Turkish Pasha, whose friendship he wished to secure.

April 12th. We rode this morning to the tents of the Jebours, which had now been moved some miles down the river. Rathaiyah remained behind. The large tents and the workmen were left under the care of the Bairakdar. About three miles from Arban we passed a small artificial mound called Tel Hamer (the red); and similar ruins abound on the banks of the river. Three hours from Arban we reached a remarkable artificial mound called Shedadi,

washed by the Khabour. It consists of a lofty platform, nearly square, from the centre of which springs a cone. On the top are the tombs of several Jebour chiefs, marked by the raised earth, and by small trees now dry, fixed upright in the graves. I found fragments of pottery and bricks, but no trace of inscriptions.

We did not reach the encampment of Mohammed Emin, spreading three or four miles along the Khabour, until after sunset. The chief's tents were pitched near a mound called Ledjmiyat, on a bend of the river, and opposite to a very thick *zor* or jungle, known to the Arabs as El Bostan "the garden," a kind of stronghold of the tribe, which the Sheikh declared could resist the attack of any number of *nizam* (regular troops), if only defended by Jebours. Suttum looked upon the grove rather as a delicious retreat from the rays of the summer's sun, to which the Borajj occasionally resorted, than as a place for war.

During the evening, the different Sheikhs assembled in my tent to plan a *ghazou*, or plundering expedition, for the following day, against the Agaydat, encamped at Abou Psera (Carchemish). On the following morning, Mohammed Emin, with two of his sons, the horsemen of the tribe, and the Sheikhs who were his guests, started on their *ghazou*. The plain, like all the country watered by the Khabour, was one vast meadow teeming with flowers. Game abounded, and the falcon soon flew towards a bustard, which his piercing eye had seen lurking in the long grass. The sun was high in the heavens, already soaring in the sky, was the enemy of the trained hawk, the "agab," a kind of kite or eagle, whose name, signifying "butcher," denotes his bloody propensities.[128] Although far beyond our ken, he soon saw Hattab, and darted upon him in one swoop. The affrighted falcon immediately turned from his quarry, and with shrill cries of distress flew towards us. After circling round, unable from fear to alight, he turned towards the Desert, still followed by his relentless enemy. In vain his master, following as long as his mare could carry him, waved the lure, and called the hawk by his name; he saw him no more. Whether the noble bird escaped, or fell a victim to the "butcher," we never knew.

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Suttum was inconsolable at his loss. He wept when he returned without his falcon on his wrist, and for days he would suddenly exclaim, "O Bej! Billah! Hattab was not a bird, he was my brother." He was one of the best trained hawks I ever saw amongst the Bedouins, and was of some substantial value to his owner, as he would daily catch six or seven bustards, except during the hottest part of summer, when the falcon is unable to hunt.

About a mile and a half below Ledjmiyat, but on the opposite bank of the river, was another large mound called Fedghami. We reached Shemshani in an hour and three quarters. It is a considerable ruin on the Khabour, and consists of one lofty mound, surrounded on the Desert side by smaller mounds and heaps of rubbish. It abounds in fragments of glazed and plain pottery, bricks, and black basaltic stone, but I could find no traces of sculpture or inscription.

Leaving Mohammed Emin to continue his journey we returned to our tents. On our road we met Moghamis, and a large party of Bedouins on their way to join the Jebour horsemen, for they also had been invited to take part in the attack on the Agaydat, and to share in the spoil. They rode their swift dromedaries, two men on each, the *rediff* leading the mare of his companion; that of the Sheikh was of the Obeyan race, and far famed in the Desert. She was without saddle or clothes, and we could admire the exquisite symmetry and beauty of her form.

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We dismounted, embraced, and exchanged a few words. The Bedouins then continued their rapid course over the Desert. We passed other riders on delouls and mares, hastening to join the main body, or to meet their friends at the rendezvous for the night near Abou Psera. The attack on the tents was to be made at dawn on the following morning, the true Bedouin never taking an unfair advantage of his enemy in the dark.

On the 16th of April, Mohammed Emin and his sons returned from their expedition, driving before them their spoil of cows, oxen, and mares. The Agaydat were taken by surprise, and made but a feeble defence; there was, consequently, little bloodshed, as is usually the case when Arabs go on these forays. The fine horse of the Jays chief had received a bad gunshot wound, and this was the only casualty amongst my friends. Mohammed Emin brought me one or two of the captured mares as an offering. They were, of course, returned, but they involved the present of silk dresses to the Sheikh and his sons.

April 18th. To-day we visited the tents of Moghamis and his tribe; they were pitched about five miles from the river. The face of the desert was as burnished gold. Its last change was to flowers of the brightest yellow hue, and the whole plain was dressed with them. Suttum rioted in the luxuriant herbage and scented air. I never saw him so exhilarated. "What Kef (delight)," he continually exclaimed, as his mare waded through the flowers, "has God given us equal to this? It is the only thing worth living for. Ya Bej! what do the dwellers in cities know of true happiness, they have never seen grass or flowers? May God have pity on them!"

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Moghamis clad himself in a coat of chain mail, of ordinary materials and rude workmanship, but still strong enough to resist the coarse iron spear-heads of the Arab lance, though certainly no protection against a well-tempered blade. The Arabs wear their armour beneath the shirt, because an enemy would otherwise strike at the mare and not at her rider.[129]

After we had enjoyed all the luxuries of an Arab feast, visited the women's compartments, where most of the ladies of the tribe had assembled to greet us, examined the "chetab," or camel saddle, used by the wives of the chiefs, and enquired into various details of the harem, we returned as we came, through the flowers and long grass to our tents at Arban.

CHAPTER XIV.

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LEAVE ARBAN.—THE BANKS OF THE KHABOUR.—ARTIFICIAL MOUNDS.—MIJWELL.—THE CADI OF THE BEDOUINS.—THE THAR, OR BLOOD REVENGE.—CAUTION OF ARABS.—A NATURAL CAVERN.—AN EXTINCT VOLCANO.—THE CONFLUENTS OF THE KHABOUR.—BEDOUIN MARKS.—SULEIMAN AGHA.—ENCAMPMENT AT UM-JERJEH.—THE TURKISH IRREGULAR CAVALRY.—MOUND OF MIJDEL.—RUINS OF THE KHABOUR.—MOHAMMED EMIN LEAVES US.—VISIT TO KURDISH TENTS AND HAREM.—THE MILLI KURDS.—THE FAMILY OF RISHWAN.—ARAB LOVE-MAKING.—THE DAKHEEL.—BEDOUIN POETS AND POETRY.—TURKISH CAVALRY HORSES.

The hot weather was rapidly drawing near. Enough had not been discovered in the mound of Arban, nor were there ruins of sufficient importance near the river, to induce me to remain much longer on the Khabour. I wished, however, to explore the stream, as far as I was able, towards its principal source, and to visit Suleiman Agha, the Turkish commander, who was now encamped on its banks. In answer to a letter, he urged me to come to his tents, and to bring the Sheikh of the Jebours with me, pledging himself to place no restraint whatever on the perfect liberty of the chief. With such a guarantee, I ventured to invite Mohammed Emin to accompany me. After much hesitation, arising from a very natural fear of treachery, he consented to do so.

On the 19th of April we crossed the Khabour, and on the following morning we commenced our journey to the eastward. Mohammed Emin was still in doubt as to whether he should go with me or not; but at last, after more than once turning back, he took a desperate resolution, and pushed his mare boldly forward. His children commended him, with tears, to my protection, and then left our caravan for their tents.

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We rode from bend to bend of the river, without following its tortuous course. Its banks are belted with poplars, tamarisks, and brushwood, the retreat of wild boars, francolins, and other game, and studded with artificial mounds, the remains of ancient settlements. This deserted though rich and fertile district must, at one time, have been the seat of a dense population. It is only under such a government as that of Turkey that it could remain a wilderness. The first large ruin above Arban, and some miles from it on the left bank of the river, is called Mishnak. About one mile and a half beyond is another ruin called Abou Shalah, and three miles further up the stream a third, called Taaban, upon which are the remains of a modern fort. After a short day's journey of four hours and a half, we encamped near a large mound named Mehlaibiyah.

Next morning Suttum returned to his tents with Rathaiyah, leaving us under the care of his younger brother Mijwell. After I had visited the Turkish commander, whom he did not appear over anxious to meet, he was to join us in the Desert, and accompany me to Mosul. Mijwell was even of a more amiable disposition than his brother; and although he could neither read nor write, he was one of the cadis or judges of the Shammar, an office hereditary in the family of the Saadi, at the head of which is Rishwan. The old man had delegated the dignity to his younger son, who, by the consent of his brothers, will enjoy it after their father's death. Disputes of all kinds are referred to these recognised judges. Their decrees are obeyed with readiness, and the other members of the tribe are rarely called upon to enforce them. They administer rude justice; and, although pretending to follow the words of the Prophet, are rather guided by ancient custom than by the law of the Koran, which binds the rest of the Mohammedan world. The most common source of litigation is, of course, stolen property. They receive for their decrees, payment in money or in kind; and he who gains the suit has to pay the fee. Amongst the Shammar, if the dispute relates to a deloul, the cadi gets two gazees, about eight shillings; if to a mare, a deloul; if to a man, a mare. Various ordeals, such as licking a red-iron, are in use, to prove a man's innocence. If the accused's tongue is burnt, no doubt exists as to his guilt.

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One of the most remarkable laws in force amongst the wandering Arabs, and one probably of the highest antiquity, is the law of blood, called the Thar, prescribing the degrees of

consanguinity within which it is lawful to revenge a homicide. Although a law, rendering a man responsible for blood shed by any one related to him within the fifth degree, may appear to members of a civilised community one of extraordinary rigour, and involving almost manifest injustice, it must nevertheless be admitted, that no power vested in any one individual, and no punishment, however severe, could tend more to the maintenance of order and the prevention of bloodshed amongst the wild tribes of the Desert. As Burckhardt has justly remarked, "this salutary institution has contributed in a greater degree than any other circumstance, to prevent the warlike tribes of Arabia from exterminating one another."

If a man commit a homicide, the *cadi* endeavours to prevail upon the family of the victim to accept a compensation for the blood in money or in kind, the amount being regulated according to custom in different tribes. Should the offer of "blood-money" be refused, the "Thar" comes into operation, and any person within the "khomse," or the fifth degree of blood of the homicide, may be legally killed by any one within the same degree of consanguinity to the victim.^[130]

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Mijwell now took Suttum's place in the caravan, and directed the order of our march. Leaving the caravan to pursue the direct road, I struck across the country to the hill of Koukab, accompanied by Mohammed Emin and Mijwell. This remarkable cone, rising in the midst of the plain, had been visible from our furthest point on the Khabour. Some of the Arabs declared it to be an artificial mound; others said, that it was a mountain of stones. Mohammed Emin would tell me of a subterranean lake beneath it, in a cavern large enough to afford refuge to any number of men.

After descending some fifty feet into the cave, we found ourselves on the margin of a lake of fresh water. The pitchy darkness prevented our ascertaining its size, which could not have been very great, although the Arabs declared that no one could reach the opposite side. The cave is frequently a place of refuge for the wandering Arabs, and the Bedouins encamp near it in summer to drink the cool water of this natural reservoir.

Leaving the cavern and issuing from the ravine, we came to the edge of a wide crater, in the centre of which rose the remarkable cone of Koukab. All around were evidences of the remains of an extinct volcano, which had been active within a comparatively recent geological period, even perhaps within the time of history, or tradition, as the name of the mound amongst the Arabs denotes a jet of fire or flame, as well as a constellation.

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I ascended the cone, which is about 300 feet high, and composed entirely of loose lava, scoria, and ashes, thus resembling precisely the cone rising in the craters of Vesuvius and *Ætna*. It is steep and difficult of ascent, except on one side, where the summit is easily reached even by horses. Within, for it is hollow, it resembles an enormous funnel, broken away at one edge, as if a molten stream had burst through it. Anemonies and poppies, of the brightest scarlet hue, covered its sides; although the dry lava and loose ashes scarcely seemed to have collected sufficient soil to nourish their roots. It would be difficult to describe the richness and brilliancy of this mass of flowers, the cone from a distance having the appearance of a huge inverted cup of burnished copper, over which poured streams of blood.

From the summit of Koukab I gazed upon a scene as varied as extensive. Beneath me the two principal branches of the Khabour united their waters. To the left, or the west, was the true Khabour, the Chaboras of the ancients; a name it bears from its source at Ras-al-ain (*i. e.* the head of the spring). The second stream, that to the east, is the ancient Mygdonius, flowing through Nisibin. Khatouniyah and its lake were just visible, backed by the solitary hill of the Sinjar. The Kurdish mountains bounded the view to the east. In the plain, and on the banks of the rivers, rose many artificial mounds; whilst, in the extreme distance to the north could be distinguished the flocks and black tents of a large wandering tribe. They were those of the Chichi and Milli Kurds, encamped with the Turkish commander Suleiman Agha.

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We found our companions near the junction of the rivers, where a raft had been constructed to enable us to cross the smaller stream. I had sent the Bairakdar two days before to apprise Suleiman Agha of my intended visit, and to learn how far I could with safety take Mohammed Emin with me to the Turkish camp. He had returned, and was waiting for me. The Agha had given a satisfactory guarantee for the Sheikh's safety, and had sent an officer, with a party of irregular troops, to receive me.

We had scarcely crossed the river before a large body of horsemen were seen approaching us. As they drew nigh I recognised in the Turkish commander an old friend, "the Topal," or lame, Suleiman Agha, as he was generally called in the country. He had been Kiayah or lieutenant-governor, to the celebrated Injeh Bairakdar Mohammed Pasha, and, like his former master, possessed considerable intelligence, energy, and activity. From his long connection with the tribes of the Desert, his knowledge of their manners, and his skill in detecting and devising treacheries and stratagems, he was generally chosen to lead expeditions against the Arabs. He was now, as I have stated, endeavoring to recover the government treasure plundered by the Hamoud Bedouins.

His tents were about six miles distant; and, after exchanging the usual salutations, we turned towards them. Many fair speeches could scarcely calm the fears of the timid Jebour

Sheikh. Mijwell, on the other hand, rode boldly along, casting contemptuous glances at the irregular cavalry, as they galloped to and fro in mimic combat. The delta, formed by the two streams, was covered with tents. We wended our way through crowds of sheep, horses, cattle, and camels. Suleiman Agha lived under the spacious canvas of the chief of the Chichi Kurds. The tents of the Kurdish tribes, who wander in the low country at the foot of the mountains in winter and spring, and seek the hill pastures in the summer, and especially those of the principal men, are remarkable for their size, and the richness of their carpets and furniture. They are often divided into as many as four or five distinct compartments, by screens of light cane or reeds, bound together with many-colored woollen threads, disposed in elegant patterns and devices. Carpets hung above these screens complete the divisions. In the tents of the great chiefs there is a separate compartment for the servants, and one for the mares and colts.

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I sat a short time with Suleiman Agha, drank coffee, smoked, and listened patiently to a long discourse on the benefits of *tanzimat*, which had put an end to bribes, treachery, and irregular taxation, especially intended for Mohammed Emin, who was however by no means reassured by it. I then adjourned to my own tents, which had been pitched upon the banks of the river opposite a well-wooded island, and near a ledge of rocks forming one of those beautiful falls of water so frequent in this part of the Khabour.

We were encamped near the foot of a large artificial Tel called Umjerjeh; and on the opposite side of the Khabour were other mounds of the same name. My Jebour workmen began to excavate in the ruins the day after our arrival. I remained in my tent to receive the visits of the Kurdish chiefs and of the Hyta-Bashis, or commanders of the irregular cavalry. From these free-booters I have derived much curious and interesting information relating to the various provinces of the Turkish empire and their inhabitants, mingled with pleasant anecdotes and vivid descriptions of men and manners. They are generally very intelligent, frank, and hospitable. Although too often unscrupulous and cruel, they unite many of the good qualities of the old Turkish soldier with most of his vices. They love hard-drinking and gambling, staking their horses, arms, and even clothes, on the most childish game of chance. Their pay, at the same time, is miserably small, rarely exceeding a few shillings a month, and they are obliged to plunder the peaceable inhabitants to supply their actual wants. The race is now fast disappearing before the Nizam, or regular troops.

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On the second day, accompanied by Mijwell, I visited a large mound called Mijdel, on the right bank of the river about five miles above Umjerjeh. It is a lofty platform, surrounded by groups of smaller mounds, amongst which may still be traced the lines of streets and canals. It is about four or five miles from the ridge of Abd-ul-Azeez. These low hills, scantily wooded with dwarf oak, are broken into innumerable valleys and ravines, which abound, it is said, with wild goats, boars, leopards, and other animals. According to my Bedouin informants, the ruins of ancient towns and villages still exist, but they could only give me the name of one, Zakkarah. On the opposite side of the Khabour, and running parallel with the Abd-ul-Azeez range, is another line of small hills, called Hamma, in which there are many wells.

The Shammar Bedouins encamp on the banks of this part of the Khabour during the hot months. The mound of Mijdel is a favorite resort of the Boraij in the "eye of the summer:" the waters of the river are always cool, and there is sufficient pasture for the flocks and herds of the whole tribe.

An Arab whom I met in the tent of one of the Hyta-Bashis, pretended that he was well acquainted with the ruins called *Verhan-Shehr*^[131], of which I had so frequently heard from the natives of Mardin and the Shammar. He described them as being on a hill three days distant from our encampment, and to consist of columns, buildings, and sculptured stones like those of Palmyra.

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In the evening Mohammed Emin left us. Suleiman Agha had already invested him with a robe of honor, and had prevailed upon him to join with Ferhan in taking measures for the recovery of the plundered treasure. The scarlet cloak and civil treatment had conciliated the Jebour chief, and when he parted with the Turkish commander in my tent there was an unusual display of mutual compliments and pledges of eternal friendship. Mijwell looked on with indignant contempt, swearing between his teeth that all Jebours were but degenerate, ploughing Arabs, and cursing the whole order of *temminahs*.^[132]

We were detained at Umjerjeh several days by the severe illness of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. I took the opportunity to visit the tents of the Milli, whose chief, Mousa Agha, had invited us to a feast. The spacious tent of the chief was divided by partitions of reeds tastefully interwoven with colored wool. The coolest part of the salamlik had been prepared for our reception, and was spread with fine carpets and silken cushions. The chief and his brothers, followed by their servants bearing trays loaded with cups, presented the coffee to their guests.

After some conversation we went to the harem, and were received by his mother, a venerable lady, with long silvery locks and a dignified countenance and demeanor. Her dress was of the purest white and scrupulously clean. Altogether she was almost the only comely woman I had seen amongst Eastern tribes. The wives and daughters of the chiefs, with a crowd of women, were collected in the tent; but it was evident, at a glance, that they were of a different race from the wandering tribes of the Desert.

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The principal ladies led us into the private compartment, divided by colored screens from the rest of the tent. It was furnished with more than usual luxury. The cushions were of the choicest silk, and the carpets (in the manufacture of which the Milli excel) of the best fabric. Sweetmeats and coffee had been prepared for us, and the women did not object to partake of them at the same time. Mousa Agha's mother described the various marriage ceremonies of the tribe. Our account of similar matters in Europe excited great amusement amongst the ladies. The Milli girls are highly prized by the Kurds. Twenty purses, nearly 100*l.*, we were boastfully told, had been given for one of unusual attractions. The chief pointed out one of his own wives who had cost him that sum. Other members of the same establishment had deserved a less extravagant investiture of money. The prettiest girls were called before us, and the old lady appraised each, amidst the loud laughter of their companions, who no doubt rejoiced to see their friends valued at their true worth. They were all tattooed on the arms, and on other parts of the body, but less so than the Bedouin ladies. The Kurdish ladies do not, like the Mussulman women of the town, conceal their features with a veil; nor do they object to mingle, or even eat, with the men. During my stay at Umjerjeh I invited the harem of the Chichi chief, and their friends, to a feast in my tent—an invitation they accepted with every sign of satisfaction.

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The Milli were formerly one of the wealthiest Kurdish tribes; but they were wantonly plundered, and almost reduced to want, by the Turkish troops three years ago. Although the Porte openly condemned the outrage, and had promised compensation, no step whatever had been taken to restore the stolen property, the greater part of which had passed into the government treasury.

Mijwell, during our visit, had been seated in a corner, his eyes wandering from the tent and its furniture to the horses and mares picketed without, and to the flocks pasturing around. He cast, every now and then, significant glances towards me, which said plainly enough, "All this ought to belong to the Bedouins. These people and their property were made for *ghazous*." As we rode away I accused him of evil intentions. "Billah, ya Bej!" said he, "there is, indeed, enough to make a man's heart grow white with envy; but I have now eaten his bread under your shadow, and should even his stick, wherewith he drives his camel, fall into my hand, I would send it to him." He entertained me, as we returned home, with the domestic affairs of his family. Rathaiyah had offered herself in marriage to Suttum, and not he to her; a common proceeding, it would appear, among the Bedouins. Mijwell rather looked upon his brother with pity, as a henpecked husband. He himself, although already married to one wife, and betrothed to Maizi, whom he would soon be able to claim, was projecting a third marriage. His heart had been stolen by an unseen damsel, whose beauties and virtues had been the theme of some wandering Arab rhymers, and she was of the Fedhan Aneyza, the mortal enemies of the Shammar. Her father was the sheikh of the tribe, and his tents were on the other side of the Euphrates. The difficulties and dangers of the courtship served only to excite still more the ardent mind of the Bedouin. His romantic imagination had pictured a perfection of loveliness; his whole thoughts were now occupied in devising the means of possessing this treasure.^[133] He had already apprised the girl of his love by a trusty messenger, one of her own tribe, living with the Shammar, and she had, at last, promised him her hand, if he could claim her in her own tent. Mijwell had now planned a scheme which he was eager to put into execution. Waiting until the Fedhan were so encamped that he could approach them without being previously seen, he would mount his deloul, and leading his best mare, ride to the tent of the girl's father. Meat would, of course, be laid before him, and having eaten he would be the guest, and under the protection of the Sheikh. On the following morning he would present his mare, describing her race and qualities, to his host, and ask his daughter; offering, at the same time, to add any other gift that might be thought worthy of her. The father, who would probably not be ignorant of what had passed between the lovers, would at once consent to the union, and give back the mare to his future son-in-law. The marriage would shortly afterwards be solemnised, and an alliance would thus be formed between the two tribes. Such was Mijwell's plan, and it was one not unfrequently adopted by Bedouins under similar circumstances.

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The laws of Dakheel, another very remarkable branch of Bedouin legislation, in force amongst the Shammar, are nearly the same as those of the Aneyza and Hedjaz Arabs, of which Burckhardt has given so full and interesting an account. I have little, therefore, to add upon the subject, but its importance demands a few words. No customs are more religiously respected by the true Arab than those regulating the mutual relations of the protected and protector. A violation of Dakheel (as this law is called) would be considered a disgrace not only upon the individual but upon his family, and even upon his tribe, which never could be wiped out. No greater insult can be offered to a man, or to his clan, than to say that he has broken the Dakheel. A disregard of this sacred obligation is the first symptom of degeneracy in an Arab tribe; and when once it exists, the treachery and vices of the Turk rapidly succeed to the honesty and fidelity of the true Arab character. The relations between the Dakheel and the Dakhal (or the protector and protected) arise from a variety of circumstances, the principal of which are, eating a man's salt and bread, and claiming his protection by doing certain acts, or repeating a certain formula of words. Amongst the Shammar, if a man can seize the end of a string or thread, the other end of which is held by his enemy, he immediately becomes his Dakheel. If he touch the canvas of a tent, or can even throw his mace towards it, he is the Dakheel of its owner. If he can spit upon a man, or touch any article belonging to him with his teeth, he is Dakhal, unless of course, in case of

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theft, it be the person who caught him. A woman can protect any number of persons, or even of tents.[134] If a horseman ride into a tent, he and his horse are Dakhal. A stranger who has eaten with a Shammar, can give Dakheel to his enemy; for instance, I could protect an Aneyza, though there is blood between his tribe and the Shammar. According to Mijwell, any person, by previously calling out "Nuffo" (I renounce), may reject an application for Dakheel.

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An Arab who has given his protection to another, whether formally, or by an act which confers the privilege of Dakheel, is bound to protect his Dakhal under all circumstances, even to the risk of his own property and life. I could relate many instances of the greatest sacrifices having been made by individuals, and even of whole tribes having been involved in war with powerful enemies by whom they have been almost utterly destroyed, in defence of this most sacred obligation. Even the Turkish rulers respect a law to which they may one day owe their safety, and more than one haughty Pasha of Baghdad has found refuge and protection in the tent of a poor Arab Sheikh, whom, during the days of his prosperity, he had subjected to every injury and wrong, and yet who would then defy the government itself, and risk his very life, rather than surrender his guest. The essence of Arab virtue is a respect for the laws of hospitality, of which the Dakheel in all its various forms is but a part.

Amongst the Bedouins who watched our camels was one Saoud, a poet of renown amongst the tribes. With the exception of a few ballads that he had formerly composed in honor of Sofuk, and other celebrated Shammar Sheikhs, he chiefly recited extemporaneous stanzas on passing events, or on persons who were present. He would sit in my tent of an evening, and sing his verses in a wild, though plaintive, strain, to the great delight of the assembled guests, and particularly of Mijwell, who, like a true Bedouin, was easily affected by poetry, especially with such as might touch his own passion for the unknown lady. When the bard improvised an amatory ditty, the young chief's excitement was almost beyond control. The other Bedouins were scarcely less moved by these rude measures, which have the same kind of effect on the wild tribes of the Persian mountains. Such verses, chanted by their self-taught poets, or by the girls of their encampment, will drive warriors to the combat, fearless of death, or prove an ample reward on their return from the dangers of the *ghazou* or the fight. The excitement they produce exceeds that of the grape. He who would understand the influence of the Homeric ballads in the heroic ages, should witness the effect which similar compositions have upon the wild nomades of the East. The art of improvising seems innate in the Bedouin. Although his metre and mode of recitation are rude to European ears, his rich and sonorous language lends itself to this species of poetry, whilst his exuberant imagination furnishes him with endless beautiful and appropriate allegories. The wars between the tribes, the *ghazou*, and their struggles with the Turks, are inexhaustible themes for verse, and in an Arab tent there is little else to afford excitement or amusement. The Bedouins have no books; even a Koran is seldom seen amongst them: it is equally rare to find a wandering Arab who can read. They have no written literature, and their traditional history consists of a little more than the tales of a few storytellers who wander from encampment to encampment, and earn their bread by chanting verses to the monotonous tones of a one-stringed fiddle made of a gourd covered with sheep-skin.

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The day of our departure now drew nigh, and Suleiman Agha, to do us honor, invited us to a general review of the irregular troops under his command. The horsemen of the Milli and Chichi Kurds, and of the Arab tribes who encamped with them, joined the Turkish cavalry, and added to the interest and beauty of the display. The Hyta-Bashis were, as usual, resplendent in silk and gold. There were some high-bred horses in the field; but the men, on the whole, were badly mounted, and the irregular cavalry is daily degenerating throughout the empire. The Turkish Government have unwisely neglected a branch of their national armies to which they owed most of their great victories, and at one time their superiority over all their neighbours. The abolition of the Spahiliks, and other military tenures, has, of course, contributed much to this result, and has led to the deterioration of that excellent breed of horses which once distinguished the Ottoman light cavalry. No effort is now made by the government to keep up the race, and the scanty pay of the irregular troops is not sufficient to enable them to obtain even second-rate animals. Everything has been sacrificed to the regular army, undoubtedly an essential element of national defence; but in a future war the Turks will probably find reason to regret that they have altogether sacrificed it to the ancient irregular horse.

The Kurds, although encumbered by their long flowing garments and huge turbans, are not bad horsemen. Mijwell, however, as he scanned the motley crowd with his eagle eye, included them all in one expression of ineffable contempt.

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Volcanic Cone of Koukab.

CHAPTER XV.

DEPARTURE FROM THE KHABOUR.—ARAB SAGACITY.—THE HOL.—THE LAKE OF KHATOUNIYAH.—RETURN OF SUTTUM.—ENCAMPMENT OF THE SHAMMAR.—ARAB HORSES.—THEIR BREEDS.—THEIR VALUE.—THEIR SPEED.—SHEIKH FERHAN.—YEZIDI VILLAGES.—FALCONS.—AN ALARM. ABU MARIA.—ESKI MOSUL.—ARRIVAL AT MOSUL.—RETURN OF SUTTUM TO THE DESERT.

Mr. Hormuzd Rassam having sufficiently recovered from his dangerous illness to be able to ride a deloul, and no remains, except pottery and bricks, having been discovered in the mounds of Umjerjeh, we left the encampment of Suleiman Agha on the 29th of April, on our return to Mosul.

We again visited the remarkable volcanic cone of Koukab. As we drew near to it, Mijwell detected, in the loose soil, the footprints of two men, which he immediately recognised to be those of Shammar thieves returning from the Kurdish encampments. The sagacity of the Bedouin in determining from such marks, whether of man or beast, and, from similar indications, the tribe, time of passing, and business, of those who may have left them, with many other particulars, is well known. In this respect he resembles the American Indian, though the circumstances differ under which the two are called upon to exercise this peculiar faculty. The one seeks or avoids his enemy in vast plains, which, for three-fourths of the year, are without any vegetation; the other tracks his prey through thick woods and high grass. The quickness of perception is the result of continual observation and of caution encouraged from earliest youth. Whilst the child in a civilised country is still under the care of its nurse, the Bedouin boy is compelled to exercise his highest faculties, and on his prudence and sagacity may sometimes depend the safety of his tribe.

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The expert Bedouin can draw conclusions from the footprints and dung of animals that would excite the astonishment of an European. He will tell whether the camel was loaded or unloaded, whether recently fed or suffering from hunger, whether fatigued or fresh, the time when it passed by, whether the owner was a man of the desert or of the town, whether a friend or foe, and sometimes even the name of his tribe.

We encamped for the night near the mound of Thenenir, and resumed our journey on the following morning. Bidding farewell to the pleasant banks of the Khabour, we struck into the Desert in the direction of the Sinjar. Extensive beds of gypsum, or alabaster, such as was used in the Assyrian edifices, formed for some miles the surface of the plain. We soon approached a dense mass of reeds and rank herbage, covering a swamp called the Hol, which extends from the Lake of Khatouniyah to within a short distance of the Khabour. This jungle is the hiding-place of many kinds of wild beasts: lions lurk in it, and in the thick cover the Bedouins find their cubs.

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During our journey an Arab joined us, riding on a deloul, with his wife. His two children were crammed into a pair of saddle-bags, a black head peeping out of either side. He had quarrelled with his kinsmen, and was moving with his family and little property to another tribe.

After a six hours' ride we found ourselves upon the margin of a small lake, whose surface reflected the deep blue of the cloudless sky. In the midst was a peninsula, joined to the

mainland by a narrow causeway, and beyond it a small island. On the former were the ruins of a town, whose falling walls and towers were doubled in the clear waters.

The small town of Khatouniyah was, until recently, inhabited by a tribe of Arabs. A feud, arising out of the rival pretensions of two chiefs, sprang up amongst them. The factions fought, many persons were killed, and the place was consequently deserted, one party joining the Tai Arabs near Nisibin, the other the Yezidis of Keraniyah. We traced the remains of cultivation, and the dry water-courses, which once irrigated plots of rice and melon beds. The lake may be about six miles in circumference. The water, although brackish, like nearly all the springs in this part of the Desert, is not only drinkable, but, according to the Bedouins, exceedingly wholesome for man and beast. It abounds in fish, some of which are said to be of very considerable size, and waterfowl and waders, of various kinds, congregate on the shores.

We had scarcely resumed our march in the morning when we spied Suttum and Khoraiif coming towards us, and urging their fleet mares to the top of their speed. A Jebour, leaving our encampment at Umjerjeh, when Hormuzd was dangerously ill, had spread a report [135] in the Desert, that he was actually dead. To give additional authenticity to his tale he had minutely described the process by which my companion's body had been first salted, and then sent to Frankistan in a box, on a camel. Suttum, as we met, showed the most lively signs of grief; but when he saw the dead man himself restored to life, his joy and his embraces knew no bounds.

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We rode over a low undulating country, at the foot of the Sinjar hills, every dell and ravine being a bed of flowers. About five miles from Khatouniyah we passed a small reedy stream, called Suffeyra, on which the Boraij (Suttum's tribe) had been encamped on the previous day. They had now moved further into the plain, and we stopped at their watering-place, a brackish rivulet called Sayhel, their tents being about three miles distant from us in the Desert. Their mares, camels, and sheep came to Sayhel for water, and during the whole day there was one endless line of animals passing to and fro before our encampment. I sat watching them from my tent. As each mare and horse stopped to drink at the troubled stream, Suttum named its owner and its breed, and described its exploits. The mares were generally followed by two or three colts, who are suffered, even in their third year, to run loose after their dams, and to gambol unrestrained over the plain. It is to their perfect freedom whilst young that the horses of the Desert owe their speed and the suppleness of their limbs.

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It may not be out of place to add a few remarks on the subject of Arab horses. The Bedouins, as it is well known, divide their thorough-breds into five races, descended, as some declare, from the five favourite mares of the Prophet. The names, however, of these breeds vary amongst different tribes. According to Suttum, who was better acquainted with the history and traditions of the Bedouins than almost any Arab I ever met, they are all derived from one original stock, the Koheyleh, which, in course of time, was divided, after the names of celebrated mares, into the following five branches:—Obeyan Sherakh, Hedba Zayhi, Manekia Hedrehji, Shouaymah Sablah, and Margoub. These form the *Kamse*, or the five breeds, from which alone entire horses are chosen to propagate the race. From the *Kamse* have sprung a number of families no less noble, perhaps, than the original five; but the Shammar receive their stallions with suspicion, or reject them altogether. Among the best known are the Wathna Khersan, so called from the mares being said to be worth their weight in gold; (noble horses of this breed are found amongst the Arab tribes inhabiting the districts to the east of the Euphrates, the Beni Lam, Al Kamees, and Al Kithere;) Khalawi, thus named from a wonderful feat of speed performed by a celebrated mare in Southern Mesopotamia; Jaiaythani, and Julfa. The only esteemed race in the Desert which, according to Suttum, cannot be traced to the *Kamse*, is the Saklawi, although considered by the Shammar and by the Bedouins of the Gebel Shammar, as one of the noblest, if not the noblest, of all. It is divided into three branches, the most valued being the Saklawi Jedran, which is said to be now almost extinct.

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To understand how a man, who has perhaps not even bread to feed himself and his children, can withstand the temptation of such large sums, it must be remembered that, besides the affection proverbially felt by the Bedouin for his mare, which might, perhaps, not be proof against such a test, he is entirely dependent upon her for his happiness, his glory, and, indeed, his very existence. An Arab possessing a horse unrivalled in speed and endurance, and it would only be for such that enormous prices would be offered, is entirely his own master, and can defy the world. Once on its back, no one can catch him. He may rob, plunder, fight, and go to and fro as he lists. No man has a keener sense of the joys of liberty, and a heartier hatred of restraint, than the true Bedouin. Give him the Desert, his mare, and his spear, and he will not envy the wealth and power of the greatest of the earth. He plunders and robs for the mere pleasure and excitement which danger and glory afford.

A mare is generally the property of two or more persons, who have a share in her progeny, regulated by custom, and differing according to the tribe.

The largest number of horses, as well as those of the most esteemed breeds, are still to be found, as in the time of Burckhardt, amongst the tribes who inhabit Mesopotamia and the great plains watered by the Euphrates and Tigris. These rich pastures, nourished by the rains of winter and spring, the climate, and—according to the Arabs—the brackish water of

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the springs rising in the gypsum, seem especially favorable to the rearing of horses. The best probably belong to the Shammar and Aneyza tribes.

The present Sheikh of the Gebel Shammar, Ibn Reshid, has, I am informed, a very choice stud of mares of the finest breeds, and their reputation has spread far and wide over the Desert. The Nawab of Oude, the Ekbal-ed-Doulah, a good judge of horses, who had visited many of the tribes, and had made the pilgrimage to the holy cities by the little frequented route through the interior of Nedjd, assured me that the finest horses he had ever seen were in the possession of the Shereef of Mecca.

The Arab horse is more remarkable for its exquisite symmetry and beautiful proportions, united with wonderful powers of endurance, than for extraordinary speed. I doubt whether any Arab of the best blood has ever been brought to England. The difficulty of obtaining them is so great, that they are scarcely ever seen beyond the limits of the Desert.

Their color is generally white, light or dark grey, light chestnut, and bay, with white or black feet. Black is exceedingly rare, and I never remember to have seen dun, sorrel, or dapple. I refer, of course, to the true-bred Arab, and not to the Turcoman or to Kurdish and Turkish races, which are a cross between the Arab and Persian.

Their average height is from 14 hands to 14³/₄, rarely reaching 15; I have only seen one mare that exceeded it. Notwithstanding the smallness of their stature they often possess great strength and courage. But their most remarkable and valuable quality is the power of performing long and arduous marches upon the smallest possible allowance of food and water. It is only the mare of the wealthy Bedouin that gets even a regular feed of about twelve handfuls of barley, or of rice in the husk, once in twenty-four hours. During the spring alone, when the pastures are green, the horses of the Arabs are sleek and beautiful in appearance. At other times they eat nothing but the withered herbs and scanty hay gathered from the parched soil, and are lean and unsightly. They are never placed under cover during the intense heat of an Arabian summer, nor protected from the biting cold of the Desert winds during the winter. The saddle is rarely taken from their backs, nor are they ever cleaned or groomed. Thus apparently neglected, they are but skin and bone, and the townsman marvels at seeing an animal, which he would scarcely take the trouble to ride home, valued almost beyond price.

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The Shammar Bedouins give their horses, particularly when young, large quantities of camels' milk. I have heard of mares eating raw flesh, and dates are frequently mixed with their food by the tribes living near the mouth of the Euphrates. The Shammar and Aneyza shoe their horses if possible, and wandering farriers regularly visit their tents. The Arab horse has but two ordinary paces, a quick and easy walk, sometimes averaging between four and five miles an hour, and a half running canter. The Bedouin rarely puts his mare to full speed unless pursued or pursuing.

In the evening, as I was seated before my tent, I observed a large party of horsemen and riders on delouls approaching our encampment. They stopped at the entrance of the large pavilion reserved for guests, and picketing their mares, and turning loose their dromedaries adorned with gay trappings, seated themselves on the carpets. The chiefs were our old friends, Mohammed Emin and Ferhan, the great Shammar Sheikh. We cordially embraced after the Bedouin fashion. I had not seen Ferhan since the treacherous murder of his father by Nejib Pasha of Baghdad[136], to which he alluded with touching expressions of grief, bewailing his own incompetency to fill Sofuk's place, and to govern the divided tribe. He was now on his way with the Jebour Sheikh to recover, if possible, the government treasure, plundered by the Hamoud, for which, as head of the Shammar, he was held responsible by the Porte.

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After they had eaten of the feast we were able to prepare for them, they departed about sunset for the tents of the Jebours. I embraced Mohammed Emin for the last time, and saw him no more during my residence in Assyria.

On the 4th of May we made a short day's journey of five hours to a beautiful stream issuing from the Sinjar hill, beneath the village of Khersa or Chersa. A Bedouin of the Boraij tribe accompanied us riding on a swift white dromedary of a true Nedjid breed. This animal was scarcely taller than a large English horse.

Leaving the plain, which was speckled as far as the eye could reach with the flocks and tents of the Bedouins, we skirted the very foot of the Sinjar. Khersa had been deserted by its inhabitants, who had rebuilt their village higher up on the side of the hill.

Since the loss of Hattab, Suttum had never ceased pining for a falcon worthy to take his place. He had been counting the hours of his visit to this part of the Sinjar, known only to yield to the borders of the Persian Gulf in producing the finest and bravest hawks for the chase. He was not successful, however, in pleasing himself with those which were offered to him.

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Next day we made but little progress, encamping near a spring under the village of Aldina, whose chief, Murad, had now returned from his captivity. Grateful for my intercession in his behalf, he brought us sheep and other provisions, and met us with his people as we entered the valley. At his urgent request, I aided materially in inducing the people to pay the dues of the tax-gatherer who was at that time in the village.

During the negotiations, Suttum, surrounded by clamorous Yezidis, was sitting in the shade, examining unfledged hawks. At length three were deemed worthy of his notice: one being pretty well advanced in days was sent to his tent for education, under the charge of the rider of the Nedjd deloul. The others, being yet in a weak state, were restored to the nest, to be claimed on his return from Mosul. The largest bird, being a very promising specimen, cost five gazees or 1*l.*; the others, three gazees and a half, as the times were hard, and the tax-gatherers urgent for ready money.

We rode on the following day for about an hour along the foot of the Sinjar hill, which suddenly subsides into a low undulating country. The narrow valleys and ravines were blood-red with gigantic poppies. The Bedouins adorned the camels and horses with the scarlet flowers, and twisted them into their own head-dresses and long garments. Even the Tiyari dressed themselves up in the gaudy trappings of nature, and as we journeyed chanting an Arab war-song, we resembled the return of a festive procession from some sacrifice of old. During our weary marches under a burning sun, it required some such episodes to keep up the drooping spirits of the men, who toiled on foot by our sides. Poetry and flowers are the wine and spirits of the Arab; a couplet is equal to a bottle, and a rose to a dram, without the evil effects of either. Would that in more civilised climes the sources of excitement were equally harmless!

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In the evening Suttum inveighed bitterly against a habit of some travellers of continually taking notes before strangers. I endeavoured to explain the object and to remove his fears. "It is all very well," said the Sheikh, "and I can understand, and am willing to believe, all you tell me. But supposing the Turks, or any body else, should hereafter come against us, there are many foolish and suspicious men in the tribe, and I have enemies, who would say that I had brought them, for I have shown you everything. You know what would be the consequences to me of such a report. As for you, you are in this place to-day, and 100 days' journey off to-morrow, but I am always here. There is not a plot of grass or a spring that that man (alluding to one of our party) does not write down." Suttum's complaints were not unreasonable, and travellers cannot be too cautious in this respect, when amongst independent tribes, for even if they do not bring difficulties upon themselves, they may do so upon others.

We had a seven hours' ride on the delouls, leaving the caravan to follow, to the large ruin of Abou Maria,^[137] passing through Tel Afer. The Jehesh were encamped about two miles from the place. My workmen had excavated for some time in these remarkable mounds, and had discovered chambers and several enormous slabs of Mosul marble, but no remains whatever of sculpture.

A short ride of three hours brought us to Eski (old) Mosul, on the banks of the Tigris. According to tradition this is the original site of the city. There are mounds, and the remains of walls, which are probably Assyrian. Mosul was still nine caravan hours distant, and we encamped the next night at Hamaydat, where many of our friends came out to meet us. On the 10th of May we were again within the walls of the town, our desert trip having been accomplished without any mishap or accident whatever.

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Suttum left us two days after for his tents, fearing lest he should be too late to join the warriors of the Khorusseh, who had planned a grand *ghazou* into Nedjd. He urged me to accompany them; but I had long renounced such evil habits, and other occupations kept me in Mosul. Finding that I was not to be persuaded, and that the time was at length come for us to part, he embraced me, crammed the presents we had made to himself and his wives into his saddle-bags, and, mounting his deloul, rode off with Mijwell towards the Desert.

CHAPTER XVI.

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DISCOVERIES AT KOUYUNJIK.—PROCESSION OF FIGURES BEARING FRUIT AND GAME.—LOCUSTS.—LED HORSES.—AN ASSYRIAN CAMPAIGN.—DAGON, OR THE FISH-GOD.—THE CHAMBERS OF RECORDS.—INSCRIBED CLAY TABLETS.—RETURN TO NIMROUD.—EFFECTS OF THE FLOOD.—DISCOVERIES.—SMALL TEMPLE UNDER HIGH MOUND.—THE EVIL SPIRIT.—FISH-GOD.—FINE BAS-RELIEF OF THE KING.—EXTRACTS FROM THE INSCRIPTION.—GREAT INSCRIBED MONOLITH.—EXTRACTS FROM THE INSCRIPTION.—CEDAR BEAMS.—SMALL OBJECTS.—SECOND TEMPLE.—MARBLE FIGURE AND OTHER OBJECTS.

During my absence in the Desert, the excavations at Kouyunjik had been actively carried on under the superintendence of Toma Shishman. On my arrival he described many interesting discoveries, and I hastened to the ruins, crossing in a rude ferry-boat the river, now swollen, by the spring rains, to more than double its usual size.[138]

The earth had been completely removed from the sides of the long gallery, on the walls of which had been portrayed the transport of the large stone and of the winged bulls. An outlet was discovered near its western end, opening into a narrow descending passage; an entrance, it would appear, into the palace from the river side. Its length was ninety-six feet, its breadth not more than thirteen. The walls were panelled with sculptured slabs about six feet high. Those to the right, in descending, represented a procession of servants carrying fruit, flowers, game, and supplies for a banquet, preceded by mace-bearers. The first servant following the guard bore an object which I should not hesitate to identify with the pineapple, unless there were every reason to believe that the Assyrians were unacquainted with that fruit. The leaves sprouting from the top proved that it was not the cone of a pine tree or fir. After all, the sacred symbol held by the winged figures in the Assyrian sculptures, may be the same fruit, and not, as I have conjectured, that of a coniferous tree.

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The attendants who followed carried clusters of ripe dates and flat baskets of osier-work, filled with pomegranates, apples, and bunches of grapes. They raised in one hand small green boughs to drive away the flies. Then came men bearing hares, partridges, and dried locusts fastened on rods. The locust has ever been an article of food in the East, and is still sold in the markets of many towns in Arabia.[139] Being introduced in this bas-relief amongst the choice delicacies of a banquet, it was probably highly prized by the Assyrians.

The locust-bearers were followed by a man with strings of pomegranates; then came, two by two, attendants carrying on their shoulders low tables, such as are still used in the East at feasts, loaded with baskets of cakes and fruits of various kinds. The procession was finished by a long line of servants bearing vases of flowers.

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These figures were dressed in a short tunic, confined at the waist by a shawl or girdle. They wore no headgear, their hair falling in curls on their shoulders.

On the opposite walls of the passage were fourteen horses without trappings, each horse having a simple halter twisted round its lower jaw, by which it was led by a groom. The animals and men were designed with considerable truth and spirit.

It is probable that the sculptures forming the upper end of the passage, but now entirely destroyed, represented the king receiving this double procession. The passage may have led to the banqueting-hall, or to a chamber, where royal feasts were sometimes held, and was therefore adorned with appropriate subjects. At its western end the gallery turned abruptly to the north, its walls being there built of solid stone-masonry. I lost all further traces of it, as the workmen were unable, at that time, to carry on the tunnel beneath an accumulated mass of earth and rubbish about forty feet thick.

As the workmen could no longer, without some danger, excavate in this part of the ruins, they had returned to the chamber already described as containing a series of bas-reliefs representing the capture and sack of a large city in the mountains, and as opening into the broad gallery on whose walls were depicted the various processes employed by the Assyrians in moving their colossal figures. From this chamber branched to the south a narrow passage, whose sculptured panels had been purposely destroyed. It led into a great hall, which the workmen did not then explore. They continued for a few feet along its western side, and then turning through a doorway, discovered a chamber, from which again, always following the line of wall, they entered a spacious apartment, completely surrounded with bas-reliefs, representing one continuous subject. The Assyrian army was seen fording a broad river amidst wooded mountains. The king in his chariot was followed by a long retinue of warriors on foot and on horses richly caparisoned, by led horses with even gayer trappings, and by men bearing on their shoulders his second chariot, which had a yoke ornamented with bosses and carvings. After crossing the river they attacked the enemy's strongholds, which they captured one by one, putting to death or carrying into captivity their inhabitants. The captives wore a kind of turban wrapped in several folds round the head, and a short tunic confined at the waist by a broad belt. From the nature of the country it may be conjectured that the sculptures represented a campaign in some part of Armenia, and I am inclined to identify the river with the Euphrates, near whose head-waters, as we learn from the bull inscriptions, Sennacherib waged one of his most important wars.

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The slabs at the western end of this chamber were actually *curved backwards*, showing the enormous pressure that must have taken place from the falling in of the upper part of the building, by which not only the alabaster was bent, but driven into the wall of sundried bricks.

On the north side of the chamber were two doorways leading into separate apartments. Each entrance was formed by two colossal bas-reliefs of Dagon, or the fish-god. Unfortunately the upper part of all these figures had been destroyed, but as the lower remained from above the waist we can have no difficulty in restoring the whole, especially as the same image is seen entire on a fine Assyrian cylinder of agate in my possession. It combined the human shape with that of the fish. The head of the fish formed a mitre above that of the man, whilst its scaly back and fanlike tail fell as a cloak behind, leaving the

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human limbs and feet exposed. The figure wore a fringed tunic, and bore the two sacred emblems, the basket and the cone.

We can scarcely hesitate to identify this mythic form with the Oannes, or sacred man-fish, who, according to the traditions preserved by Berossus, issued from the Erythræan Sea, instructed the Chaldæans, in all wisdom, in the sciences, and in the fine arts, and was afterwards worshipped as a god in the temples of Babylonia. Its body, says the historian, was that of a fish, *but under the head of a fish was that of a man*, and to its tail were joined women's feet. Five such monsters rose from the Persian Gulf at fabulous intervals of time. [140]

The Dagon of the Philistines and of the inhabitants of the Phœnician coast was worshipped, according to the united opinion of the Hebrew commentators on the Bible, under the same form. [141] When the ark of the Lord was brought into the great temple of the idol at Ashdod, and the statue fell a second time, "the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the *fishy part* of Dagon was left to him." [142] His worship appears to have extended over Syria, as well as Mesopotamia and Chaldæa. He had many temples, as we learn from the Bible, in the country of the Philistines, and it was probably under the ruins of one of them that Samson buried the people of Gaza who had "gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice." [143] We also find a Beth-Dagon, or the house of Dagon, amongst the uttermost cities of the children of Judah [144], and another city of the same name in the inheritance of the children of Asher. [145]

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The first doorway, guarded by the fish-gods, led into two small chambers opening into each other, and once panelled with bas-reliefs, the greater part of which had been destroyed. I shall call these chambers "the chambers of records," for, like "the house of the rolls," or records, which Darius ordered to be searched for the decree of Cyrus, concerning the building of the temple of Jerusalem [146], they appear to have contained the decrees of the Assyrian kings, as well as the archives of the empire.

I have mentioned elsewhere [147] that the historical records and public documents of the Assyrians were kept on tablets and cylinders of baked clay. Many specimens have been brought to this country. The importance of such relics will be readily understood. They present, in a small compass, an abridgment, or recapitulation, of the inscriptions on the great monuments and palace walls, giving in a chronological series the events of each monarch's reign. The writing is so minute, and the letters are so close one to another, that it requires considerable experience to separate and transcribe them.

The chambers I am describing appear to have been a depository in the palace of Nineveh for such documents. To the height of a foot or more from the floor they were entirely filled with them; some entire, but the greater part broken into many fragments, probably by the falling in of the upper part of the building. They were of different sizes; the largest tablets were flat, and measured about 9 inches by 6½ inches; the smaller were slightly convex, and some were not more than an inch long, with but one or two lines of writing. The cuneiform characters on most of them were singularly sharp and well defined, but so minute in some instances as to be almost illegible without a magnifying glass. These documents appear to be of various kinds. Many are historical records of wars, and distant expeditions undertaken by the Assyrians; some seem to be royal decrees, and are stamped with the name of a king, the son of Essarhaddon; others again, divided into parallel columns by horizontal lines, contain lists of the gods, and probably a register of offerings made in their temples. On one Dr. Hincks has detected a table of the value of certain cuneiform letters, expressed by different alphabetical signs, according to various modes of using them; a most important discovery: on another, apparently a list of the sacred days in each month; and on a third, what seems to be a calendar. As we find from the Bavian inscriptions, that the Assyrians kept a very accurate computation of time, we may reasonably expect to obtain valuable chronological tables and some information as to their methods of dividing the year, and even the day. Many are sealed with seals, and may prove to be legal contracts or conveyances of land. Others bear rolled impressions of those engraved cylinders so frequently found in Babylonia and Assyria, by some believed to be amulets. The characters appear to have been formed by a very delicate instrument before the clay was hardened by fire, and the process of accurately making letters so minute and complicated must have required considerable ingenuity and experience. On some tablets are found Phœnician, or cursive Assyrian characters and other signs.

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The adjoining chambers contained similar relics, but in far smaller numbers. Many cases were filled with these tablets before I left Assyria, and a vast number of them have been found, I understand, since my departure. A large collection of them is already deposited in the British Museum. We cannot overrate their value. They furnish us with the materials for the complete decipherment of the cuneiform character, for restoring the language and history of Assyria, and for inquiring into the customs, sciences, and, we may perhaps even add, literature, of its people. The documents that have thus been discovered at Nineveh probably exceed all that have yet been afforded by the monuments of Egypt. But years must elapse before the innumerable fragments can be put together, and the inscriptions transcribed for the use of those who in England and elsewhere may engage in the study of the cuneiform character. It is to be hoped that the Trustees of the British Museum will undertake the publication of documents of such importance to the history of the ancient

world.

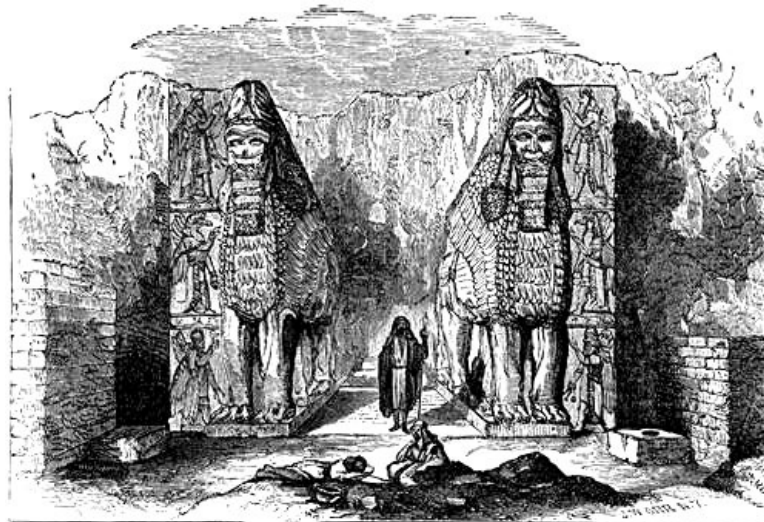
The second entrance formed by the fish-gods opened into a small chamber, whose sides had been lined with bas-reliefs; but there were no remains of inscriptions.

A few days after our return to Mosul, I floated down the river on a raft to Nimroud. The flood which had spread over the plain during my absence in the Desert, had destroyed a part of the village. The centre of the plain of Nimroud was now a large lake, and the cultivated fields were overspread with slime. The Shemutti gathered round me as I arrived, and told me of crops destroyed, and of houses swept away.

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The workmen had not been idle during my absence, and discoveries of considerable interest and importance had been made in the high mound on the level of the artificial platform. The first trenches had been opened in the side of the ravine between the ruins of the tower and those of the north-west palace. A pavement of large square bricks, bearing the usual superscription of the early Nimroud king, was soon uncovered. It led to a wall of sundried bricks, coated with plaster, which proved to be part of a small temple.

I have already mentioned[148] that a superstructure of bricks rested upon the stone basement-wall of the tower, at the north-west corner of the mound. It was against the eastern and southern faces of this upper building that the newly discovered temple abutted. Four of its chambers were explored, chiefly by means of tunnels carried through the enormous mass of earth and rubbish in which the ruins were buried. The great entrances were to the east. The principal portal was formed by two colossal human-headed lions, sixteen feet and a half high and fifteen feet long. They were flanked by three small winged figures, one above the other, and divided by an ornamental cornice, and between them was an inscribed pavement slab of alabaster. In front of each was a square stone, apparently the pedestal of an altar, and the walls on both sides were adorned with enamelled bricks.



ENTRANCE TO A SMALL TEMPLE, (NIMROUD.)

About thirty feet to the right, or north, of the lion gateway was a second entrance, at each side of which were two singular figures. One was that of a monster, whose head, of fanciful and hideous form, had long pointed ears and extended jaws, armed with huge teeth. Its body was covered with feathers, its fore-feet were those of a lion, its hind legs ended in the talons of an eagle, and it had spreading wings and the tail of a bird. Behind this strange image was a winged man, whose dress consisted of an upper garment with a skirt of skin or fur, an under robe fringed with tassels, and the sacred horned hat. A long sword was suspended from his shoulders by an embossed belt; sandals, armlets, and bracelets, completed his attire. He grasped in each hand an object in the form of a double trident, resembling the thunderbolt of the Greek Jove, which he was in the attitude of hurling against the monster, who turned furiously towards him.

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Fish-God, at Entrance
to small Temple (Nimroud.)

This group appears to represent the bad spirit driven out by a good deity; a fit subject for the entrance to a temple, dedicated to the god of war. The singular combination of forms by which the Assyrian sculptor portrayed the evil principle, so prominent an element in the Chaldæan, and afterwards in the Magian, religions system, cannot fail to strike the reader.

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On the slabs at right angles to these sculptures, forming the outer part of the entrance, were two colossal human figures, without wings, wearing garlands on their heads, and bearing branches ending in three flowers.

Within the temple, at right angles to the entrance, were sculptured fish-gods, somewhat different in form from those in the palace of Kouyunjik. The fish's head formed part of the three-horned cap usually worn by the winged figures. The tail only reached to the waist of the man, who was dressed in the tunic and long furred robe, commonly seen in the bas-reliefs of Nimroud.

To the right of this entrance, and apparently outside the walls of the temple, was discovered one of the finest specimens of Assyrian sculpture brought to this country. It represents the early Nimroud king in high relief, carved on a solid block of limestone, cut into the shape of an arched frame, in the form of the rock tablets of Bavian and the Nahr-el-Kelb. The monarch wears his sacrificial robes, and carries the sacred mace in his left hand. Round his neck are hung the four sacred signs, the crescent, the star or sun, the trident, and the cross. His waist is encircled by the knotted cord, and in his girdle are three daggers. Above his head are the mythic symbols of Assyrian worship, the winged globe, the crescent, the star, the bident, and the horned cap. The entire slab, 8 ft. 8 in. high, by 4 ft. 6 in. broad, and 1 ft. 3 in. thick, is covered, behind and before, except where the sculpture intervenes, with an inscription, in small and admirably formed arrow-headed characters.

Unfortunately, the heat of the fire which had consumed the building, had also broken this monument into two pieces. From the carelessness shown in its transport to England, this fine specimen of Assyrian sculpture sustained still further injury, and the lower part is now almost destroyed.

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The inscription must have contained when entire several hundred lines, and is divided on the back of the slabs into two columns. It commences with an invocation to the god Ashur, the supreme lord, the king of the circle of the twelve great gods. Then follow the names of these deities. The first-named is *Anu* (?), the last Ishtar, probably Astarte, or the moon, and not Venus, as some have believed.^[149]

After this invocation occurs the name of the founder of the north-west palace, read by Dr. Hincks, Assaracbal, and by Colonel Rawlinson, Sardanapalus, with a long exordium, apparently of a religious nature, which has not yet been satisfactorily deciphered. Then follows a full account of his various campaigns and wars.

The lion entrance led into a chamber 46 ft. by 19 ft. Nearly opposite to the entrance was a doorway panelled with slabs sculptured with winged figures carrying maces. The inner door led into a chamber 47 ft. by 31 ft., ending in a recess paved with one enormous alabaster slab, no less than 21 ft. by 16 ft. 7 in., and 1 ft. 1 in. thick. This monolith had been broken into several pieces probably by the falling in of the roof of the building, and had in several places been reduced to lime by the burning beams of the ceiling. The whole of its surface, as well as the side facing the chamber, was occupied by one inscription, 325 lines in length, divided into two parallel horizontal columns, and carved with the greatest sharpness and

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care. On subsequently raising the detached pieces, I found that the back of the slab, resting on a solid mass of sun-dried bricks, was also covered with cuneiform writing, occupying three columns. It is difficult to understand why so much labor should have been apparently thrown away upon an inscription which would remain unseen until the edifice itself was utterly destroyed. Still more curious is the fact, that whilst this inscription contains all the historical details of that on the opposite side, the records of two or three more years are added, and that the upper inscription stops abruptly in the middle of a sentence. It is possible that the builders of the temple, foreseeing its ruin, had determined that if their enemies should through malice deface their annals, there should yet remain another record, inaccessible and unknown, which would preserve the history of their greatness and glory unto all time.

The inscription on this great monolith appears to have been similar in its historical details to that on the king in the frame. I shall quote some specimens, translated by Dr. Hincks, to show the minuteness with which the Assyrian kings chronicled every event of their reign, and the consequent value of their historical records. It is to be remarked that, although these inscriptions are in the form of annals, the years are not mentioned. The king generally sets out on his campaigns in one particular month, the name of which is given; probably in the autumn, when the heats of summer were over. In the beginning of his reign he collected his army, and made his first expedition into the country of Nummi, or Nûmi, probably Elam or Susiana, subsequently, as we shall find, called Numaki or Nuvaki. He took many cities, towns, and districts whose names have not been identified. He slew their women, their slaves, and their children, and carried away their cattle and flocks. *Their fighting men escaped to a hill fort (?)*. "Their houses he burned like *stubble*" (?). Many other countries to the south and south-east of Assyria, some of which are mentioned on the obelisk, were conquered during this campaign. The city of *Nishtun* (?) is particularly described as one of considerable importance. He seized its king or governor, whose name reads Babou, the son of Baboua, and imprisoned him in Babylon. "At that time the cities of Nerib (their position is doubtful), their principal cities, he destroyed. From Nerib he departed to the city of Tushka.... A palace for his dwelling he made there, and placed *pillars* (?) at the gates, and put a statue of ... (probably some kind of stone) ... and set up tablets, and made a place for them in the citadel."

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An account follows of the building of the north-west palace of Nimroud, which, when deciphered, will be of considerable interest, and may enable us to restore that edifice. He also built two cities on the Euphrates, *one on each bank* (?), calling one after his own name, and the other after the name of the great god Ashur.

Numerous expeditions to countries to the north, west, and south of Assyria are then related in detail. Amongst them one to Carchemish, where he received the tribute of Sangara, king of the Khatti (the Hittites or people of Syria), including a great variety of gold and silver ornaments, some apparently to be recognised by their pure Hebrew names. As few of the cities and countries conquered and visited by this king have yet been identified, and a mere repetition of the same dry details would scarcely interest the reader, I will merely give literal versions, as far as they can be given, of the history of two of the most important campaigns. They will show the style of these remarkable chronicles, and the minuteness with which events were recorded.

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The first paragraph relates to the campaign of the king on the borders of the Euphrates.

"On the 22nd day of the month.... I departed from Calah (the quarter of Nineveh now called Nimroud). I crossed the Tigris. On the banks of the Tigris I received much tribute. In the city of Tabit I halted. I occupied the banks of the river Karma (? the Hermus, or eastern confluent of the Khabour). In the city of Megarice I halted. From the city of Megarice I departed. I occupied the banks of the Kabour (Chaboras). I halted at the city of *Sadikanni* (? or Kar-dikanni). I received the tribute of the city of Kedni. From Kedni I departed to the city of ...lemmi. In the city of ...lemmi I halted. From the city of ...lemmi I departed. In the city of Beth-Khilapi I halted. The tribute of Beth-Khilapi I received, gold, silver," and many other articles, amongst which are apparently objects of clothing, or embroidered stuffs. Then follow his marches day by day to the cities of Sirki, Tzufri, Naqua-rabani, and Kindani, from each of which he received tribute in gold, silver, several objects not identified, cattle, and sheep. The inscription goes on—"The city of Kindani stands on the right bank of the river Euphrates. From Kindani I departed: on the mountain, by the side of the Euphrates, I halted. From the mountain I departed. In Beth-Shebaiya, over against Karid, I halted. The city of Karid stands on the right bank of the river Euphrates. From Bath-Shebaiya I departed: on the top of (or above) Anat I halted. Anat stands in the middle of the Euphrates" (agreeing with the position of the modern town of Ana). He then attacked and took the principal city of *Shadu* (?), of the country of Suka, and the city of *Tzur* (?), the capital of *Shadu* (?), whose inhabitants were assisted by the soldiers of Bishi (a nation also alluded to in the second year of the annals of Sennacherib). Nebo-Baladan, king of Kar-Duniyas, is then mentioned, showing that the campaign was carried *down* the banks of the Euphrates far to the south of Babylon.

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The second extract is from the records of a campaign in northern Syria. Having first crossed the Euphrates:

"From Kunulua, the capital of Lubarna, the Sharutinian^[150], I departed. The Arantu

(Orontes) I crossed. On the banks of the Arantu I encamped. From the banks of the Arantu I departed. Between the countries of *Saraban* and *Tapan* (?) I occupied the country. By the seashore I encamped. To the city of *Ariboua* (?), a principal city of Lubarna, the Sharutianian, I returned... (undeciphered passage). *I caused some men of Assyria to dwell in his palace* (?). Whilst I was in Ariboua the cities of Lukuta I took. I slew many of their men. I overthrew and burned their cities. Their *fighting men* (or ? the deserters from my army) I laid hold of. On stakes over against their city I impaled them.[151] At that time the countries that are upon Lebanon I took possession of, to the great sea of the country of Akkari (the Mediterranean). On the great sea *I put* my servants (?). Sacrifices to the gods I offered. The tribute of the kings of the people who dwelt near the sea, of the Tyrians, the Sidonians, the Kubalians, the *Mahalatai* (?), the Ma...ai, the Kha..., and the Akkarians (all nations to the north of Tyre), and of the city of Arvad, which is in the middle of the sea—silver and gold pieces, rings (?) of copper, *ingots* (?) of copper, two kinds of *clothing* (?) (perhaps the dyed cloth of Tyre, or embroideries such as are frequently mentioned in the Bible), great '*yagouti*' and small '*pagouti*' (meaning not determined), some wooden objects, apparently of cedar, and *pearls* (?), from the rivers at or between the sea.[152] I went to the mountain of Kamana (the Camanus, in the north of Syria). I sacrificed to the gods. I made *bridges* (or beams), and *pillars* (?). From Kamana I brought them to Bithkara, for my own house, for the temple of San, for the temple of the sun. I went to the forests and cut them down, and made *bridges* (?) (or roofs or beams) of the wood, for Ishtar, mistress of the city of Nineveh, my protectress." [153]

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The chief events of the reign of this king are briefly alluded to in the standard and other inscriptions discovered in the north-west palace at Nimroud; but in the records just described we have a minuteness of geographical detail, which enables us to trace the course of his expeditions with great certainty.

Standing one day on a distant part of the mound, I smelt the sweet smell of burning cedar. The Arab workmen, excavating in the small temple, had dug out a beam, and, the weather being cold, had at once made a fire to warm themselves. The wood was cedar; probably one of the very beams mentioned in the inscription as brought from the forests of Lebanon by the king who built the edifice. After a lapse of nearly three thousand years, it had retained its original fragrance. It is likely that the whole superstructure, as well as the roof and floor of the building, like those of the temple and palace of Solomon, were of this precious material.

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In these ruins was also found a mass of lead melted by the fire, for embedded in it was the iron head of a hatchet. Amongst the various small objects collected were figures of winged deities, &c., of clay, colored in the mass with a blue derived from copper; eyes, beards, hair, and ornaments in enamel, probably belonging to figures of wood, metal, or ivory, resembling the cryselaphantine statues of the Greeks; eyes of black marble inlaid with ivory, with the eye-balls of a bright blue enamel, belonging to similar statues; and arms, legs, and other parts of figures in charred wood.

Fragments of porcelain (?), parts of a cup or vase, with carvings in low relief, several inscribed fragments of agate, lapis-lazuli, cornelian, and other precious materials, beads, cylinders, and one or two clay tablets with inscriptions and impressions of seals, complete the list of small objects discovered in this temple.

About one hundred feet to the east of the building last described, and on the very edge of the artificial platform, I discovered a second temple. Its principal entrance faced the south, and was on the same level as the north-west palace. This gateway was formed by two colossal lions with extended jaws, gathered up lips and nostrils, flowing manes, and ruffs of bristly hair. The heads, though to a certain extent conventional in form, were designed with that vigor so remarkably displayed by the Assyrian sculptor in the delineation of animals. The limbs conveyed the idea of strength and power, the veins and muscles were accurately portrayed, and the outline of the body was not deficient in grace and truth. But the front of the animal, which was in full, was narrow and cramped, and unequal in dignity to the side. The sculptor has given five legs to the animal for the same reason that he gave them to the sphinxes, that they might offer a complete front and side view.

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This gateway, about eight feet wide, was paved with one inscribed slab. The height of the lions was about eight feet, and their length thirteen. An inscription was carved across them. In front of them, in the corners formed by walls projecting at right angles with the entrance, were two altars, hollow at the top, and ornamented with gradines resembling the battlements of a castle. The exterior walls appeared to have been adorned with enamelled bricks, many of which still remained.

Unfortunately, one of these lions had been too much injured by fire to bear removal. The other, although cracked in several places when discovered, and consequently moved in pieces, has been preserved, and is now in the British Museum.

The Lion portal led into a chamber 57 feet by 25. At one end was a recess similar to that in the opposite temple, and also paved with one great alabaster slab, inscribed on both sides. This monolith, 19½ ft. by 12 ft., was likewise broken into several pieces, and had been injured in parts by fire.

The inscription on the upper side, divided into two columns, and containing 230 lines, was

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nearly the same as that on the king in the frame and on the monolith in the other temple. It was also a record of the wars and campaigns of the early Nimroud king.

The other rooms in the same building contained no inscriptions, sculptures, or other objects of interest.

In the earth above the great inscribed slab was found an interesting figure, 3 feet 4 inches high, and cut in a hard, compact limestone. It appeared to represent the king himself, attired as high priest in his sacrificial robes. In his right hand he held an instrument resembling a sickle, and in his left the sacred mace. Round his waist was the knotted girdle; and his left arm, like that of the king in the opposite temple, was partly concealed by an outer robe. His garments descended to his feet, the toes alone projecting from them. The beard and hair were elaborately curled, the features were majestic, and the general proportions of the statue not altogether incorrect, with the exception of a want of breadth in the side view peculiar to Assyrian works of art of this nature. It was, however, chiefly remarkable as being the only entire statue "in the round" of this period, hitherto discovered in the ruins of Nineveh.

On the breast is an inscription nearly in these words:—After the name and titles of the king, "The conqueror from the upper passage of the Tigris to Lebanon and the Great Sea, who all countries, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, has reduced under his authority." The statue was, therefore, probably raised after his return from the campaign in Syria described, as we have seen, on the monoliths, and alluded to in the standard inscription.

This statue originally stood on a pedestal of reddish limestone, which, with the figure itself, was found broken into several pieces. They have been restored, and are now in the British Museum.

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The two interesting buildings just described, the only undoubted remains of temples hitherto found at Nimroud, complete the discoveries at the northern extremity of the mound. They enable us, as will hereafter be seen, to restore part of the group of edifices raised on the grand platform in this quarter of Nineveh.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SUMMER.—ENCAMPMENT AT KOUYUNJIK.—VISITORS.—MODE OF LIFE.—DEPARTURE FOR THE MOUNTAINS.—AKRA.—ROCK-TABLETS AT GUNDUK.—DISTRICT OF ZIBARI.—NAMET AGHA.—DISTRICT OF SHIRWAN—OF BARADOST—OF GHERDI—OF SHEMDINA.—MOUSA BEY.—NESTORIAN BISHOP.—CONTENT OF MAR HANANISHO.—DIZZA.—AN ALBANIAN FRIEND.—BASH-KALAH.—IZZET PASHA.—A JEWISH ENCAMPMENT.—HIGH MOUNTAIN PASS.—MAHMOUDIYAH.—FIRST VIEW OF WAN.

The difficulties and delay in crossing the Tigris, now swollen by the melting of the mountain snows, induced me to pitch my tents on the mound of Kouyunjik, and to reside there with all my party, instead of daily passing to and fro in the rude ferry-boats to the ruins. The small European community at Mosul was increased in June by the arrival of a large party of travellers. Two English gentlemen and their wives, who passed through on their way to Baghdad: the Hon. Mr. Walpole, who has since published an account of his adventures in the East; the Rev. Mr. Malan, to whom I am indebted for many beautiful sketches; the Rev. Mr. Bowen, an English clergyman, on a tour of inspection to the Eastern churches, with whom I spent many agreeable and profitable hours amongst the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, and his companion, Mr. Sandresky, were our visitors, and were most of them my guests.

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Our tents were pitched at the northern corner of Kouyunjik. The spring was now fast passing away; the heat became daily greater; the corn was cut, and the plains and hills put on their summer clothing of dull parched yellow. "The pasture is withered, the tender herb faileth, the green herb is no more."^[154] It was the season, too, of the sherghis, or burning winds from the south, which occasionally sweep over the face of the country, driving, in their short-lived fury, everything before them. Their coming was foretold by a sudden fall in the barometer, which rose again as soon as they had passed.

At Nimroud the excavations had been almost stopped: at Kouyunjik they were still carried on as actively as my means would permit. I was now occupied in moving and packing sculptures from both ruins. From Nimroud the beautiful bas-relief of the king in the arched frame, described in the previous chapter, the good spirit driving out the evil principle, the fish-god,

the colossal lion from the small temple, and several other interesting sculptures, were taken to the river-bank, and sent on rafts to Busrah. At Kouyunjik none of the slabs could be removed entire. I could only pack in fragments several of the bas-reliefs. The cases were dragged in carts to the Tigris, unloaded below the piers of the ancient bridge, and there placed on rafts prepared to receive them.

During the day, when not otherwise occupied, I made drawings of the bas-reliefs discovered in the subterranean passages. My guests, choosing some convenient place underground near the parties who were at work, spread their carpets beneath the crumbling sculptures. We all went below soon after the sun had risen, and remained there, without again seeking the open air, until it was far down in the western horizon. The temperature in the dark tunnels was cool and agreeable, nearly twenty degrees of Fahrenheit lower than that in the shade above but I found it unwholesome, the sudden change in going in and out causing intermittent fever.

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After the sun had set we dined outside the tents, and afterwards reclined on our carpets to enjoy the cool balmy air of an Eastern night. We slept under the open sky, making our beds in the field.

July had set in, and we were now in "the eye of the summer." My companions had been unable to resist its heat. One by one we dropped off with fever. The Doctor, after long suffering, had gone with Mr. Walpole to the cooler regions of the Kurdish hills, there to wait until the state of the excavations might enable me to join them. Mr. Cooper, too, had so much declined in health that I sent him to the convent of Mar Metti, on the summit of the Gebel Makloub. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam and myself struggled on the longest, but at length we also gave way. Fortunately our ague attacks did not coincide. We were prostrate alternate days, and were, therefore, able to take charge alternately of the works. By the 11th of July I had sent to Busrah the first collection of sculptures from Kouyunjik, and on that day, in the middle of the hot stage of fever, and half delirious, I left Mosul for the mountains.

While necessarily absent, I determined to visit those parts of central Kurdistan not yet explored by European travellers, to devote some days to the examination of the ruins and cuneiform inscriptions in and near the city of Wan, and then to return to Mosul through the unexplored uplands to the south of the lake of Wan, and by such of the Nestorian valleys as I had not seen during my former journey in the mountains. I should then spend the hottest part of the summer in the cool regions of Kurdistan, and be again at Nineveh by September, when the heats begin to decline.

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As few European travellers can brave the perpendicular rays of an Assyrian sun, we struck our tents late in the afternoon, and got upon our horses at the foot of the mound of Kouyunjik as the sun went down. With me were Hormuzd, my old servants, and the faithful Bairakdar. Mr. Cooper was to join us on the following day, and we were to seek the Doctor and Mr. Walpole at Akra.

Five hours' ride over the plain brought us to the small Turcoman village of Bir Hillan (the well of stone), which stands on the south-eastern spur of the Makloub hills. After two hours' rest we continued our journey, and crossed this spur before morning dawned. Leaving the Gebel Makloub, we descended into a broad plain, stretching from it to the first Kurdish range, and soon found ourselves on the banks of the Ghazir, here a clear sparkling stream clothed with tall oleanders, now bending under their rosy blossoms. We sought the shade of some spreading walnut-trees, during the heat of the day, near the small Kurdish village of Kaimawa.

Here Mr. Cooper joined us, and we were again on our way in the afternoon. Instead of striking for the mountains by the direct path across the plain of Navkur, we rode along the foot of a range of low hills, forming its western boundary, to the large Kurdish village of Bardaresh. Having rested for a few hours, we descended in the middle of the night into a plain receiving the drainage of the surrounding highlands, and during the rainy season almost impassable from mud. Artificial mounds, the remains of ancient civilisation, but of small size when compared with the great ruins of Assyria, rise amongst the hovels of the Kurdish peasants.

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After we had crossed the parched and burning plain we entered a valley in the Kurdish hills, watered by a stream called Melik or Gherasin. We had to climb over much broken ground—rocky ridge and ravine—before reaching the slope of the mountain covered with the gardens and orchards of Akra. We tarried for a moment at a cool spring rising in a natural grotto, and collected into two large basins.

We had no difficulty in finding our European fellow-travellers. The first Kurd we met pointed towards a well-wooded garden; above its trees peered their white tents. As we rode into it, however, no one came out to welcome us. I entered the first tent, and there, stretched on their carpets, in a state of half-consciousness, the prey to countless flies, lay the Doctor and Mr. Walpole. It was with difficulty I could rouse them to learn the history of their fever. The whole party were in the same state; the servants prostrate like their masters. I lost no time in enforcing a system of diet, and placing my patients under a course of treatment for ague, with which long experience had given me some acquaintance.

Some days elapsed before my companions were able to journey. I took advantage of the

delay to visit some bas-reliefs near the neighbouring village of Gunduk. There are two sculptured tablets in the rocks above Gunduk. They have been carved at the mouth of a spacious natural cavern, whose roof is fretted with stalactites, and down whose sides trickles cool clear water, and hang dank ferns and creeping plants. It is called Guppa d'Mar Yohanna, or the cure of St. John, and near it is an ancient Nestorian church dedicated to Saint Audishio. The bas-reliefs are Assyrian. The upper represents a man slaying a wild goat with a spear. In the lower, as far as I could distinguish the sculpture, which is high on the rock and much injured, are two women facing each other, and seated on stools. Each holds a child above a kind of basin or circular vessel, as if in the act of baptizing it. Behind the seated female to the left, a figure bears a third child, and is followed by a woman. On the opposite side is a group of three persons, apparently sacrificing an animal. There are no traces of inscriptions on or near the tablets.

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On the 17th July my companions were able to move to the higher mountains. We all longed for a cooler climate, and we rejoiced as at sunrise we left our garden. A precipitous and difficult path leads up the mountain. From the summit of the pass, the eye wanders over the plains of Navkur and Sheikhan, the broken hill country around Arbil, and the windings of the Zab and the Ghazir. On the opposite side is a deep valley dividing the Akra hills from a second and loftier range. Through the valley ran a broad clear stream, one of the confluent of the Zab, called by the Kurds Durusho or Bairaisho.[155] We rode along its banks for nearly an hour, and then struck into a narrow gorge thickly wooded with oak. Another stony and precipitous pass was between us and the principal district of Zibari. Descending into the low country we rode by the village of Birikapra, the residence of Mustafa Agha, the former head of the Zibari tribes. The present chief, Namet Agha, dwells at Heren, about two miles beyond. He had lately been at Mosul to receive from the Pasha his cloak of investiture, and during his visit had been my guest. His abilities and acquirements were above the ordinary Kurdish standard, which indeed is low enough; for, as the Arab proverb declares, "Be the Kurd a Kurd or a prophet, he will still be a bear." He spoke Persian with fluency, and was not ignorant of Arabic. As he was well acquainted with the geography of Kurdistan, I learnt from him many interesting particulars relating to the less-known districts of the mountains.

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The chief welcomed me with friendly warmth; and, although forbidden to eat himself, he did not leave his guests uncared for. The breakfast brought to us from his harem comprised a variety of sweetmeats and savoury dishes, which did credit to the skill of the Kurdish ladies.

I was the bearer of a letter to him from the Pasha: no acceptable communication, however, as it treated of new taxes, a subject very generally disagreeable, upon tobacco, cotton, and fruit, which the Zibari Kurds were now called upon for the first time to pay. The salian, too, a kind of property tax, was raised from twenty-five to sixty thousand piastres (about 550*l.*). The late successful expeditions against the chiefs of Bohtan and Hakkari had encouraged the Porte to ask money of the previously independent tribes under Namet Agha; and although no Turkish troops had yet entered their mountains, the Kurds deemed it advisable to comply for the present with the demand rather than run the risk of an invasion, and a still more dreaded evil, the conscription.

Namet Agha's authority extended over Zibari, Shirwan, Gherdi, Baradost, and Shemdeena, from Akra to the Persian frontier. These districts are occupied by different Kurdish tribes, each having its own chief; but they had then submitted to the Agha of Zibari, and paid their tribute through him to the governor of Mosul. Namet placed me under the protection of his cousin, Mullah Agha, who was ordered to escort us to the borders of the pashalic of Hakkari, now occupied by the Turkish troops. Our guide was a tall sinewy mountaineer, dressed in the many-colored loose garments, and huge red and black turban folded round the high conical felt cap, which gives a peculiar and ungainly appearance to the inhabitants of central Kurdistan. He was accompanied by three attendants, and all were on foot, the precipitous and rocky pathways of the mountains being scarcely practicable for horses, which are rarely kept but by the chiefs. They carried their long rifles across their shoulders, and enormous daggers in their girdles.

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We left Heren early on the morning of the 19th, and soon reaching the Zab rode for two hours along its banks, to a spot where a small raft had been made ready for us to cross the stream. We had some difficulty in crossing, and were compelled to pass the night in the small village of Rizan, near the ferry, as one of the baggage-mules refused to swim the stream, and was not forced over until near dawn of the following morning.

We now entered the tract which has probably been followed for ages by the mountain clans in their periodical migrations. Besides the sedentary population of these districts, there are certain nomade Kurdish tribe called Kochers, who subsist entirely by their flocks. They are notorious petty thieves and robbers, and during their annual migrations commit serious depredations upon the settled inhabitants of the district on their way, and more especially upon the Christians. As they possess vast flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, their track has in most places the appearance of a beaten road, and is, consequently, well-fitted for beasts of burden.

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On the 21st July, crossing a high ridge, we left the district of Zibari, and entered that of Shirwan, whose chief, Miran Bey, came out to meet us at the head of his armed retainers. He led us to the large village of Bersiyah, situated beneath a bold and lofty peak called Piran. Most of the villages in these mountains have small mud forts, with either four or six

towers,—the places of refuge and defence of the numerous petty chiefs during their frequent broils and blood-feuds. We met a few Jewish families who wander from village to village. The men are pedlars and goldsmiths, and are not unwelcome guests, even in the intolerant families of the Kurds, as they make and refashion the ornaments of the ladies.

On one of the many towering peaks, is the large village of Khan-i-resh, with its orchards and gardens, the residence of the chief of the district of Baradost. We reached it by a very rapid ascent in an hour and a half.[156]

We were received by the Mir, Fezullah Bey,[157] in a spacious chamber, supported by wooden pillars, and completely open on the side facing the valley, over which it commanded an extensive and beautiful prospect. Though quite restive under the Turkish control, he received Mullah Agha with civility, and read the letters of introduction from Namet Agha, of which I was the bearer. Like most of the mountain chiefs, he spoke Persian, the language used in Kurdistan for all written communications, and in books, except the Koran and a few pious works, which are in Arabic. The Kurdish dialects are mere corruptions of the Persian, and are not, with rare exceptions, employed in writing.

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The Mir pressed me to pass the night with him as his guest; but after partaking of his breakfast, I continued my journey, and reached, by sunset, the small turreted stronghold of Beygishni.

The next morning we crossed one of the shoulders of the lofty peak of Ser-i-Resh, into the valley of Chappata. We were met on the way by a party of Nestorians, who had come out to see me, headed by the brother of the Bishop of Gherdi. He walked by me as far as Zernin, the castle of the Kurdish chief, and then left a relation to guide us to the dwelling of the Bishop of Shemesdin or Shemdeena. As usual, he complained of bitter oppression and injustice from the Kurdish Mirs, who had lately driven a large part of the Christian population across the frontiers into Persia.

After enjoying the hospitality of Iahya Bey, the Mir of Gherdi, at the village of Rua, we left the naked hills which skirt the Assyrian plains, and entered the wooded districts of Kurdistan. On the following day we journeyed through a valley thick with walnuts and other large trees, and followed the windings of a stream, called by the Kurds Shambo, one of the principal confluent of the Zab. We crossed it, backwards and forwards, by wicker suspension bridges, until we ascended, through a forest of orchards watered by innumerable streamlets, to Nera, the village of Mousa Bey, the chief of Shemdina. We pitched our tents near some springs on an open lawn, and waited the return of an aged servant who had been disturbed by the noise of our caravan, and had undertaken to announce our arrival to his master.

We had evidently to deal with a man of civilisation and luxury, for the old Kurd shortly returned followed by numerous attendants, bearing sherbets and various Persian delicacies, in china bowls. Mousa Bey himself came to us in the afternoon, and his manners and conversation confirmed the impression that his breakfast had produced. Intercourse with Persia, beyond whose frontiers his own tribe sometimes wandered, had taught him the manners and language of his neighbours. He told me that he was descended from one of the most ancient of Kurdish families, whose records for many hundred years still exist; and he boasted that Sheikh Tahar, the great saint, had deemed him the only chief worthy, from his independence of the infidel government of the Sultan, to receive so holy a personage as himself after the downfall of Beder Khan Bey. This Sheikh Tahar, who as the main instigator of many atrocious massacres of the Christians, and especially of the Nestorians, ought to have been pursued into the uttermost parts of the mountains by the Turkish troops, and hanged as a public example, was now suffering from fever. He sent to me for medicine; but as his sanctity would not permit him to see, face to face, an unbelieving Frank, and as he wished to have a remedy without going through the usual form of an interview with the Doctor, I declined giving him any help in the matter.

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Mousa Bey was at this time almost the only chief in Kurdistan who had not yet made a formal submission to the Turkish government. His territories were, therefore, a place of refuge for those fugitives who, less fortunate than himself, had been driven from their strongholds by the arms or intrigues of the Porte. He bewailed the discords which severed the tribes, and made them an easy prey to the Osmanli. The Turks, wise in their generation, have pursued their usual policy successfully in Kurdistan; the dissensions of the chiefs have been fomented, and, thus divided, they have fallen one by one victims to treachery or to force.

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We rose early on the following day, and left Nera long before the population was stirring, by a very steep pathway, winding over the face of a precipice, and completely overhanging the village. Reaching the top of the pass we came upon a natural carpet of Alpine flowers of every hue, spread over the eastern declivity of the mountain. Leaving the caravan to proceed to our night's resting-place, I turned down the valley with my companions to visit the bishop of Shemisden at his convent[158] of Mar Hananisho.

A ride of three quarters of an hour brought us to the episcopal residence.[159] Mar Isho, the bishop, met me at some distance from it. He was shabbily dressed, and not of prepossessing appearance; but he appeared to be good-natured, and to have a fair stock of common sense. After we had exchanged the common salutations, seated on a bank of wild thyme, he led the

way to the porch of the church. Ragged carpets and felts had been spread in the dark vestibule, in the midst of sacks of corn, bourghoul, and other provisions for the bishop's establishment. Various rude agricultural instruments, and spinning wheels, almost filled up the rest of the room; for these primitive Christians rely on the sanctity of their places of worship for the protection of their temporal stores. The title of the bishop is "Metropolitan of Roustak," a name of which I could not learn the origin. His jurisdiction extends over many Nestorian villages chiefly in the valley of Shemisden. Half of this district is within the Persian territories, and from the convent we could see the frontier dominions of the Shah. It is in the high road of the periodical migrations of the great tribe of Herki, who pass like a locust-cloud twice a year over the settlements of the unfortunate Christians, driving before them the flocks, spoiling the granaries, and carrying away even the miserable furniture of the hovels. It is in vain that the sufferers carry their complaints to their Kurdish master; *he* takes from them double the lawful taxes and tithes. The Turkish government has in this part of the mountains no power, if it had the inclination, to protect its Christian subjects.

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After we had partaken of the frugal breakfast of milk, honey, and fruit prepared for us by the bishop, we turned again into the high road to Bash-Kalah. We had another pass to cross before descending into the valley of Harouna, where our caravan had encamped for the night. On the mountain top were several Nestorian families crouching, half naked, for shelter beneath a projecting rock. They seized the bridles of our horses as we rode by, beseeching us to help them to recover their little property, which, but a few hours before, had been swept away by a party of Herki Kurds. I could do nothing for these poor people, who seemed in the last stage of misery.

From the summit of the pass we looked down into two deep and well-wooded valleys, hemmed in by mountains of singularly picturesque form. We descended into the more northern valley, and passing the miserable Nestorian hamlet of Sourasor, and the ruined church and deserted Christian village of Tellana, reached our tents about sunset. They were pitched near Harouna, whose Nestorian inhabitants were too poor to furnish us with even the common coarse black bread of barley.

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We had now quitted the semi-independent Kurdish valleys, and had entered the newly created province of Hakkari, governed by a Pasha, who resides at Bash-Kalah. The adjacent plain of Ghaour is, however, exposed to the depredations of the Herki Kurds, who, when pursued by the Turkish troops, seek a secure retreat in their rocky fastnesses, beyond the limits of the pashalic.

The district contains many villages, inhabited by a hardy and industrious race of Nestorian Christians. The American missionaries of Ooroomiyah have crossed the frontier since my visit, and have, I am informed, opened schools in them with encouraging prospects of success. Ghaour is a Nestorian bishopric.

A ride of six hours and a-half brought us to the large village of Dizza, the chief place of the district, and the residence of a Turkish Mudir, or petty governor. This office was filled by one Adel Bey, with whom I found my old friend Ismail Agha of Tepelin, who had shown me hospitality three years before in the ruined castle of Amadiyah.^[160] He was now in command of the Albanian troops forming part of the garrison. A change had come over him since we last met. The jacket and arms which had once glittered with gold, were now greasy and dull. His face was as worn as his garments. After a cordial greeting he made me a long speech on his fortunes, and on that of Albanian irregulars in general. "Ah! Bey," said he, "the power and wealth of the Osmanlis is at an end. The Sultan has no longer any authority. The accursed Tanzimat (Reform) has been the ruin of all good men. Why, see Bey, I am obliged to live upon my pay; I cannot eat from the treasury, nor can I squeeze a piastre—what do I say, a piastre? not a miserable half-starved fowl, out of the villagers, even though they be Christians. Forsooth they must talk to me about reform, and ask for money! The Albanian's occupation is gone. Even Tafil-Bousi (a celebrated Albanian condottiere) smokes his pipe, and becomes fat like a Turk. It is the will of God. I have forsworn raki, I believe in the Koran, and I keep Ramazan."

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The night was exceedingly cold. The change from the heat of the plains to the cool nights of the mountains had made havoc amongst our party. Nearly all our servants were laid up with fever, as well as the Doctor and Mr. Walpole, who had rarely been free from its attacks during the journey. I could not, however, delay, and on the following morning our sickly caravan was again toiling over the hills. We had now entered the Armenian districts. The Christian inhabitants of Dizza are of that race and faith. We encamped for the night at the Kurdish village of Perauniss.

Next day we forded a branch of the Zab, and entered the valley of this great confluent of the Tigris, its principal source being but a few miles to the north of us, near the frontiers of Persia. The land is so heavy, that the rude plough of the country requires frequently as many as eight pairs of oxen. The Armenian ploughmen sit on the yokes, and whilst guiding or urging the beasts with a long iron-pointed goad, chant a monotonous ditty to which the animals appear so well accustomed, that when the driver ceases from his dirge, they also stop from their labors.

A dell near our path was pointed out to me as the spot where the unfortunate traveller Schulz was murdered by Nur Ullah Bey, the Kurdish chief of Hakkari. Turning up a narrow valley towards the high mountains, we suddenly came in sight of the castle of Bash-Kalah,

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one of the ancient strongholds of Kurdistan. Its position is remarkably picturesque. It stands on a lofty rock, jutting out from the mountains which rise in a perpendicular wall behind it. At the foot are grouped the houses of a village. I found Izzet Pasha encamped at a considerable elevation in the rocky ravine^[161], which we reached, guided by cawasses carrying huge glass lanterns, by a very precipitous and difficult track. I remained with him until the night was far advanced, and then returned to our encampment. He informed me that there was a direct road from Bash-Kalah to Mosul of forty hours, through Beit-Shebbet, Daoudiyah, and Dohuk, which, with very little labor and expense, could be made practicable for guns.

Bash-Kalah was formerly the dwelling-place of Nur Ullah Bey, a Kurdish chief well-known for his rapacious and blood-thirsty character, and as the murderer of Schulz. He joined Beder Khan Bey in the great massacres of the Nestorians, and for many years sorely vexed those Christians who were within his rule. After a long resistance to the troops of the Sultan, he was captured about two years before my visit, and banished for life to the island of Candia.

My companions and servants being much in want of rest, I stopped a day at Bash-Kalah. On resuming our journey we took a direct though difficult track to Wan only open in the middle of summer. Following a small stream, we entered a ravine leading into the very heart of the mountains. Three hours' ride, always rapidly ascending along the banks of the rivulet, brought us to a large encampment. The features of the women and of the men, who came out of their tents as we rode up, as well as the tongue in which they addressed one another, showed at once that they were not Kurds. They were Jews, shepherds and wanderers, of the stock, may be, of those who, with their high priest, Hyrcanus, were carried away captive from Jerusalem by Tigranes in the second century of our era, and placed in the city and neighbourhood of Wan. Their descendants, two hundred years after, were already so numerous that Shapour (Sapores) II. destroyed no less than 10,000 families in Wan alone.

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We encamped near the Jewish nomades, and I visited their tents, but could learn nothing of their history. They fed their flocks, as their fathers had done before them, in these hills, and paid taxes to the governor of Bash-Kalah.

We had now reached the higher regions of Kurdistan.^[162] Next morning we soon left the narrow flowery valley and the brawling stream, and entered an undulating upland covered with deep snow, considerably more than ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. On all sides of us were towering peaks, and to the west a perfect sea of mountains, including the lofty ranges of Hakkiari and Bohtan. Far away to the north was the azure basin of Lake Wan, and beyond it rose the solitary white cone of the Subhan Dagh.

Descending rapidly, and passing, near the foot of the mountain, one or two miserable, half-deserted Kurdish hamlets, we entered a long narrow ravine, shut in by perpendicular cliffs of sandstone and conglomerate. This outlet of the mountain streams opens into the valley of Mahmoudiyah, in the centre of which rises an isolated rock crowned by the picturesque castle of Kosh-Ab.

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We pitched our tents on a green lawn, near the bank of the foaming stream which sweeps round the foot of the castellated rock. Soon after our arrival a Kurdish Bey, of venerable appearance, a descendant of the hereditary chiefs of Mahmoudiyah, called upon me. He had once been the owner of the castle, but it had been wrested from him by two brothers, named Khan Murad and Khan Abdal, mere mountain robbers. In this stronghold the brothers long defied the Turkish government, levying black-mail upon such caravans as ventured to pass through their territories, and oppressing with fines and forced conversions their Christian subjects. It was but the year before our visit that they had yielded to the troops sent against them, and had been sent into banishment, with the rest of the rebel chiefs, to Candia.

With the Kurdish Bey came one Ahmed Agha, a chief of the large border tribe of Mogri, an intelligent man, who conversed freely on the state of the country, and gave me some interesting information regarding the frontiers. The fear of the conscription has driven many families into Persia, and into the more independent districts of Kurdistan. On the whole, the wandering tribes are becoming less formidable to the Porte than they formerly were.

To the east of the district of Mahmoudiyah, and in that of Karasou, are many Yezidi villages and a considerable Jewish population.^[163] Both races are much oppressed by the Kurdish chiefs, who take their property, and even their lives, with perfect indifference, "the Cadis," as Ahmed Agha informed me, "having given *fetwahs* (decrees) that both were lawful to the true believer."

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We rose early next morning, and went up to the castle. It is falling into ruins, though its towers still rise boldly from the edge of the precipice, overhanging at a giddy height the valley below. In them, open to the cool breezes of the mountain, are the dwelling-rooms of the old Kurdish chiefs, adorned with tasteful lattice-work, and with the painted panellings and gilded cornices of Persia. They are now tenanted by the Turkish troops, whose bright arms and highly-polished kitchen utensils hang on the gaudy walls. After drinking coffee and smoking pipes with the captain of the guard, we walked down the narrow pathway leading to the valley, and, mounting our horses, joined the caravan, which had preceded us on the road to Wan.

On the following morning we crossed this valley to Nourtchouk, at the outskirts of which I

was met by the priest at the head of the inhabitants. A range of low hills now separated us from the plain and lake of Wan. We soon reached their crest, and a landscape of surpassing beauty was before us. At our feet, intensely blue and sparkling in the rays of the sun, was the inland sea, with the sublime peak of the Subhan Dagh, mirrored in its transparent waters. The city, with its castle-crowned rock and its embattled walls and towers, lay embowered in orchards and gardens. To our right a rugged snow-capped mountain opened midway into an amphitheatre, in which, amidst lofty trees, stood the Armenian convent of Yedi Klissia (the seven churches). To the west of the lake was the Nimroud Dagh, and the highlands nourishing the sources of the great rivers of Mesopotamia. The hills forming the foreground of our picture were carpeted with the brightest flowers, over which wandered the flocks, whilst the gaily dressed shepherds gathered around us as we halted to contemplate the enchanting scene.

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We now descended rapidly towards Wan, and as we issued into the plain, a party of horsemen galloped towards us. I soon recognised amongst them my friend Mr. Bowen; with him were the Cawass-Bashi and a troop of irregular cavalry, sent out by the Pasha to escort me into the city. Nor did the governor's kindness end with this display of welcome. After winding for nearly an hour through orchards and gardens, whose trees were bending under the weight of fruit, and then through the narrow and crowded streets, we were led to his serai or palace, which, such as it was, had been made ready for our use, and where his treasurer was waiting to receive us. Notwithstanding the fast, an abundant breakfast of various meats and sweet messes, cooked after the Turkish fashion, had been prepared for us, and we soon found repose upon a spacious divan, surrounded by all the luxuries of Eastern life.



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Kurds of Wan.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEHEMET PASHA.—DESCRIPTION OF WAN.—ITS HISTORY.—IMPROVEMENT IN ITS CONDITION.—THE ARMENIAN BISHOP.—THE CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS.—THE CAVES OF KHORKHOR.—THE MEHER KAPOUSI.—A TRADITION.—OBSERVATIONS ON THE INSCRIPTIONS.—THE BAIRAM.—AN ARMENIAN SCHOOL.—THE AMERICAN MISSIONS.—PROTESTANT MOVEMENT IN TURKEY.—AMIKH.—THE CONVENT OF YEDI KLISSIA.

Mehemet Pasha was living during the fast of Ramazan in a kiosk in one of the gardens outside the city walls. We had scarcely eaten, before he came himself to welcome us to Wan. He was the son of the last Bostandji-Bashi of Constantinople, and having been brought up from a child in the imperial palace, was a man of pleasing and dignified manners, and of considerable information. Although he had never left his native country, he was not ignorant

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of the habits and customs of Europe. He had long served the Sultan in difficult and responsible posts, and to his discretion and sagacity was chiefly to be attributed the subjugation of Beder-Khan Bey and the rebel Kurdish tribes. His rule was mild and conciliating, and he possessed those qualities so rare in a Turkish governor, yet so indispensable to the civilisation and well-being of the empire,—a strict honesty in the administration of the revenues of his province, and a sense of justice beyond the reach of bribes. From Christians and Kurds we had received during our journey through his pashalic, the highest testimony to his tolerance and integrity.

In the evening I returned his visit, and found him surrounded by the chiefs and elders of the city, and by the officers of his household. I sat with him till midnight, the time passing in that agreeable conversation which a well-educated Turk so well knows how to sustain.

I remained a week at Wan, chiefly engaged in copying the cuneiform inscriptions, and in examining its numerous remarkable monuments of antiquity.

The city is of very ancient date. It stands on the borders of a large and beautiful lake, a site eminently suited to a prosperous community. The lofty mountains bordering the inland sea to the east, here recede in the form of an amphitheatre, leaving a rich plain five or six miles in breadth, in the midst of which rises an isolated calcareous rock. To the summit of this natural stronghold, there is no approach, except on the western side, where a gradual but narrow ascent is defended by the walls and bastions. From the earliest ages it has consequently been the acropolis of the city, and no position could be stronger before the discovery of the engines of modern warfare. The fortifications and castle, of a comparatively recent date, are now in ruins, and are scarcely defensible, with their few rusty guns, against the attacks of the neighbouring Kurds.

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According to Armenian history, the Assyrian queen Semiramis founded the city; it having fallen to decay, it is said to have been rebuilt, shortly before the invasion of Alexander the Great, by an Armenian king named Wan, after whom it was subsequently called. It appears to have been again abandoned, for we find that it was once more raised from its foundations in the second century B. C. by Vagharschag, the first king of the Arsacian dynasty of Armenia, who made it the strongest city in the kingdom. In the eleventh century it was ceded by the royal family of the Ardz-rounis to the Greek emperors, from whom it was taken by the Seljuk Turks. It fell, in 1392, into the hands of Timourlane, who, according to his custom, gave the inhabitants over to the sword. Even in his day, the great monuments of solid stone, raised by the Assyrian queen, were still shown to the stranger.

Moses of Chorene, the early historian of Armenia, has faithfully described its position and its antiquities; the isolated hill, rising in the midst of a broad plain covered with flourishing villages, and watered by innumerable streams; the chapels, chambers, treasuries, and caverns cut in the living rock, and the great inscriptions written, as it were, on the face of the precipice, as pages are written with a pen on wax.

The first traveller who, in modern times, examined the remarkable remains of antiquity at Wan was the unfortunate Schulz. He visited the place in 1827. The cuneiform inscriptions carved on the rock were known to exist long before his day, but he was the first to copy them, and from his copies they have been published by the Asiatic Society of France. Since the time of Schulz, the city has undergone many changes. It was seized by the rebel Kurdish chief, Khan Mahmoud; but after many vain attempts made to recover the place, it finally yielded two years before my journey. Under the mild rule of Mehemet Pasha it was rapidly rising to prosperity. The protection he had given to the Armenians had encouraged that enterprising and industrious people to enlarge their commerce, and to build warehouses for trade. Two handsome khans, with bazars attached, were nearly finished. Shops for the sale of European articles of clothing and of luxury had been opened; and, what was of still more importance, several native schools had already been established. These improvements were chiefly due to one Sharân, an Armenian merchant and a man of liberal and enlightened views, who had seconded with energy and liberality the desire of the Pasha to ameliorate the social condition of the Christian population.^[164]

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Shortly after my arrival, the Armenian bishop called upon me. He was dressed in the peculiar costume of his order,—long black robes and a capacious black hood almost concealing his head,—and was accompanied by the priests and principal laymen of his diocese. On his breast he wore the rich diamond crescent and star of the Turkish order of merit, of which he was justly proud. Although he had been duly elected several years before to his episcopal dignity, he still wanted the formal consecration of the patriarch of his church, owing to difficulties connected with the political position of the patriarch; he was now, however, on the eve of his departure to receive that consecration which was essential to his due admission into the Armenian hierarchy.

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The modern town of Wan stands at the foot, and to the south of, the isolated rock. Its streets and bazars are small, narrow, and dirty; but its houses are not ill built. It is surrounded by fruitful gardens and orchards, irrigated by artificial rivulets derived from the streams rising in the Yedi Klissia mountains. It may contain between twelve and fifteen thousand inhabitants. The whole pashalic at the time of my visit paid an annual sum of six thousand purses (about 27,000*l.*) to the Turkish treasury. In the town there was a garrison of a thousand foot and five hundred horse, and the commander of the troops in the district and in the adjoining province of Hakkiari was at the head of five thousand men.^[165]

The old hereditary pashas of Wan, as well as the principal families, were of Turkish origin, and came, I was informed by some of their descendants, from Konia (Iconium), about three hundred years ago. The chiefs, however, of the surrounding districts are Kurds. Two families, named the Topchi-oglus and the Timour-oglus, divided the town into opposite factions, which were continually at war, and carried their bloody feuds almost daily into the streets. The Timour-oglus were the most powerful, and it was through their means that Khan Mahmoud possessed himself of the place.

The inscriptions of Wan are of two distinct periods, though all of the cuneiform writing. The most ancient are in a character identical with that on the oldest monuments of Assyria. The earliest inscriptions are found on two square stones built into a wall near the western gateway of the city, and immediately beneath the only entrance to the castle. The language of these inscriptions appears to be Assyrian, whilst that of all the others is peculiar to Wan. Nevertheless the names of the kings in them can be genealogically connected with those on the other monuments.

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But the most important records at Wan are carved on the southern face of the isolated rock, round the entrance to a set of excavated chambers, probably once serving as tombs. As those inscriptions record the victories and deeds of a monarch, it is highly probable that they were placed over royal sepulchres.

A flight of twenty narrow steps cut in the perpendicular face of the precipice, and partly destroyed, so as to be somewhat difficult and dangerous, leads to a narrow ledge, above which the rock has been carefully smoothed, and is still covered with inscriptions in the cuneiform character. Here an entrance, about 7 feet deep, opens into a hall, 34½ feet long, by nearly 21 wide and 12 high, leading by four doorways into as many distinct chambers. Around its walls are window-like recesses, and between them, and on each side of the doorways, are ornamental niches, with holes in the centre, which may have held metal lamps. The floor has been excavated in two places into squares a few inches deep; I cannot conjecture for what purpose.

The door to the left on entering leads into a small chamber, 11 ft. 8 in., by 9 ft. 8 in., surrounded by similar window-like recesses. In it is a second doorway opening upon a well or pit, filled to within a few feet of the mouth with stones and rubbish. There were no means of ascertaining its depth or original use without removing the contents. The three other doors in the entrance hall lead to square rooms, surrounded by niches, but without other ornament. The excavations are sometimes called by the Turks "Khorkhor Mugaralari," the caves of Khorkhor, from a garden of that name below them.

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The inscriptions on the face of the rock around the outer entrance to these chambers are contained in eight parallel columns, including in all above 300 lines and thirteen consecutive paragraphs. The letters are large and admirably carved, and the writing is divided by horizontal lines. These rock-tablets are the records of a king whose name, according to Dr. Hincks, is Arghistis. He invokes the gods of his nation, and celebrates the conquest of various peoples or tribes, whose names still require to be identified, but who probably inhabited countries to the north of Armenia; he describes the burning of their temples and palaces, and the carrying away of captives and of an immense spoil of horses, camels, cattle, and sheep, the numbers of each being given with apparent exactness. The name of the region in which these conquests were chiefly made, seems to read Mana.

The remaining inscriptions are on the northern face of the rock. They are five in number. The longest and most important contains twenty-nine lines, and is on the side wall to the left on entering an artificial vaulted recess. It has been partly destroyed by a rude cross cut by the Armenians across the tablet. The cave is called the "Khazana Kapousi," or the treasure gate, and is held to be a sacred spot by Christians and Mussulmans.

An inscription of seventeen lines is carved at the entrance to a second artificial chamber, and on tablets cut in the rock are three more, each of nineteen lines, word for word alike, but with orthographical variations in the royal name.

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Four of these inscriptions belong to the father of the king, who recorded his conquests on the southern face of the rock. His name, according to Dr. Hincks, may be read Minuas. They merely contain the royal titles and invocations to the gods. The long inscription in the vaulted recess is of the grandson of Minuas, the latest king mentioned on the monuments of Wan. It is of considerable interest as containing the name of a country, which Dr. Hincks identifies with Babylon, and as enumerating, first in detail, the amount of booty taken from three different countries, and afterwards giving the total amount of the whole. By this double account, the one checking the other, a clue was afforded to the signs representing numerals in the Assyrian inscriptions, as well as to their respective values, a discovery for which we are indebted to the sagacity of Dr. Hincks.

The Pasha had kindly placed the "Mimar Bashi," or architect in chief of the town, an honest Armenian, named Nikòos, under my orders during my researches at Wan. The excavations, however, which were made came to no result worth mentioning.

About a mile and a half to the east of the town, near a small village in the gardens of Wan, is a recess in the rock 15 feet 8 inches high, and 6 feet 7 inches broad, containing a long cuneiform inscription. The inscription is called Meher Kapousi, which, according to the

people of Wan, means the Shepherd's Gate, from a tradition that a shepherd, having fallen asleep beneath it, was told in a dream the magic word that opened the spell-bound portal. He awoke and straightway tried the talisman. The stone doors flew apart, disclosing to his wondering eyes a vast hall filled with inexhaustible treasures; but as he entered they shut again behind him. He filled with gold the bag in which, as he tended his flocks, he carried his daily food. After repeating the magic summons, he was permitted to issue into the open air. But he had left his crook, and must return for it. The doors were once more unclosed at his bidding. He sought to retrace his steps, but had forgotten the talisman. His faithful dog waited outside until nightfall. As its master did not come back, it then took up the bag of gold and carrying it to the shepherd's wife, led her to the gates of the cave. She could hear the cries of her husband, and they are heard to this day, but none can give him help.

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The inscription of the Meher Kapousi originally consisted of ninety-five lines, comprising the same record twice repeated. Only about sixty are now legible. Near the Shepherd's Gate the rocks are excavated into a vast number of caves. In some places long flights of steps lead nowhere, but finish abruptly in the face of the perpendicular precipice; in others the cliff is scarpd to a great height without any apparent object. A singular shaft, with stairs, leading into a cavern, is called Zimzim. It is difficult to account for the use and origin of these singular excavations; their height from the plain and their inaccessible position almost preclude the idea of their having been quarries.

Several slabs of black basalt, inscribed with cuneiform characters, have been built into the interior walls of two ancient Armenian churches within the town of Wan. In the church of St. Peter and St. Paul I found parts of four legends, which are historical, containing a record of the capture of many cities, and of the amount of spoil carried away from conquered countries. In the church of Surp Sahak I was able to transcribe two inscriptions, one under the altar, the other in the vestibule beneath the level of the floor, which had to be broken up and removed before I could reach the stone. The longest consists of forty lines, the other of twenty-seven. The beginning and ending of the lines in both are wanting.

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The only inscription at Wan that I could not copy was the trilingual tablet of Xerxes. It is on the most inaccessible part of the rock, about seventy or eighty feet above the plain. Not having a glass of sufficient power, I was unable to distinguish the characters from below. As it had been accurately transcribed by Schulz, and resembles those of the same king at Persepolis and Hamadan, I did not think it necessary to incur any risk or expense in reaching it by means of ropes or scaffolding.[166]

In the rock there are numerous excavated chambers, some even exceeding in dimensions those I have described; but, with the exception of a simple seat or bench of stone, about two and a half feet high on one side of them, they are perfectly plain and unornamented. They appear to have been used as tombs. Some are approached by flights of steps cut in the precipice; others are altogether inaccessible except by ropes from above.

It is yet doubtful to what family of languages the Wan inscriptions must be assigned. Some believe it to be a Tatar dialect; Dr. Hincks, on the contrary, is of opinion that it is Indo-Germanic. Two of the inscriptions, and the earliest in date, as I have already observed, are in pure Assyrian.

With regard to the date of the monuments there appears to be a clue which may enable us to fix it with some degree of certainty. In an inscription from Khorsabad, amongst the kings conquered by Sargon one is mentioned whose name corresponds with Arghistis, the fifth in the Wan dynasty. Supposing the two, therefore, to be the same, and there is no reason to doubt their being so, we may assume that the monarchs of the Wan records reigned from about the middle of the eighth century before Christ to the end of the seventh; and the evidence afforded by the forms of the characters leads to this conjecture.

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At sunrise, on the 8th August, the roaring of cannon, re-echoed by the lofty rock, announced the end of Ramazan, and the beginning of the periodical festivities of the Bairam. Early in the morning the Pasha, glittering with gold and jewels, and surrounded by the members of his household, the officers of the garrison, and the gaily-dressed chiefs of the irregular troops, rode in procession through the streets of the town. As it is customary he received in the palace the visits of the *cadi*, *mollahs*, and principal Mussulman inhabitants of Wan, as well as of the bishop, clergy, and elders of the Armenian church. The population, rejoicing at their release from a fast almost intolerable in summer, decked themselves in holiday garments, and made merry in the houses and highways. The sounds of music and revelry issued from the coffee-houses and places of public resort. The children repaired to swings, merry-go-rounds, and stalls of sweetmeats, which had been raised in the open spaces within the walls. The Christians add the feast to their own festivals, already too numerous,[167] and, like their Mussulman neighbours, pay visits of compliment and ceremony. Their women, who are said to be handsome, but are even more rigidly concealed than the Mohammedan ladies, crept through the streets in their long white veils.

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I called in the evening on the bishop, and next morning, at his invitation, visited the principal schools. Five have been established since the fall of the Kurdish Beys, and the enjoyment of comparative protection by the Christian population. Only one had been opened within the walls; the rest were in the gardens, which are thickly inhabited by Armenians, and form extensive suburbs to Wan. More than two hundred children of all ages were assembled. They went through their exercises and devotions at the sound of a bell with

great order and precision, alternately standing and squatting on their hams on small cushions placed in rows across the hall. An outer room held basins and towels for washing, and the cloaks and shoes taken off on entering. Books were scarce. There were not more than a score in the whole school. The first class, which had made some progress, had a few elementary works on astronomy and history, published by the Armenian press at Constantinople and Smyrna, but only one copy of each. The boys, at my request, sang and chanted their prayers, and repeated their simple lessons.

Such schools, imperfect though they be, are proofs of a great and increasing improvement in the Christian communities of Turkey.^[168] A change of considerable importance, and which, it is to be hoped, may lead to the most beneficial results, is now taking place in the Armenian Church. It is undoubtedly to be attributed to the judicious, earnest, and zealous exertions of the American missionaries; their establishments, scattered over nearly the whole Turkish empire, have awakened amongst the Christians, and principally amongst the Armenians, a spirit of inquiry and a desire for the reform of abuses, and for the cultivation of their minds, which must ultimately tend to raise their political, as well as their social, position in the human scale. It is scarcely fifteen years since the first institution for Christian instruction on Protestant (independent) principles was opened by those excellent men in Constantinople. By a wise selection of youths from different parts of the empire, who from their character and abilities were deemed worthy of the choice, they were shortly enabled to send into the provinces those who could sow the seeds of truth and knowledge, without incurring the suspicions attaching to strangers, and without laboring under that ignorance of the manners and languages of those amongst whom they mix, which must always prove so serious an obstacle to foreigners in their intercourse with the natives. A movement of this nature could scarcely escape persecution. The Armenian clergy, not unfavorable to the darkness and bigotry which had for centuries disgraced their Church, and exercising an uncontrolled power over an ignorant and simple people, soon raised a cry against the "Evangelists," as they were contemptuously called. By such misrepresentations and calumnies as are always ready at hand to the enemies of progress and reform, they were able to enlist in their favor the Turkish authorities at the capital and in the provinces. Unfortunately, four sects alone, the Roman Catholic, the Armenian, the Greek, and the Copt, were recognised by the Porte amongst their Christian subjects. The reformed Armenian Church was consequently without an acknowledged head, and unable, to communicate directly with the government, to make known its tenets, or to complain of the acts of injustice and persecution to which it was exposed. Many persons fell victims to their opinions. Some were cruelly tortured in the house of the Patriarch himself, and others were imprisoned or utterly ruined in Constantinople and the provinces. Through the exertions of the English minister at Constantinople, a firman was obtained from the Sultan, placing the new Protestant community on the same footing as the other Churches of the empire, assigning to it a head, or agent, through whom it could apply directly to the ministers, and extending to it other privileges enjoyed by the Roman Catholics and Greeks. Fortunately for the cause, many men of irreproachable character, and of undoubted sincerity from the Armenian nation have been associated with it, and its success has not been endangered, like that of so many other movements of the same kind, by interested, or hasty conversions.

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The influence of this spirit of inquiry, fostered by the American missions, has not been alone confined to those who have been cut off from their own community. The Armenian clergy have found it their true interest to promote reform in their own Church. Schools in opposition to the American establishments have been opened in the capital and in most of the large towns of Asia Minor; and elementary and theological works, of a far more liberal character than any hitherto published in Turkey, have been printed by Armenian printing-presses in Constantinople and Smyrna, or introduced into the country from Venice.

Whilst on this subject, and connected as I have been with the Nestorians, I must not omit a tribute of praise to the admirable establishments of the American missions amongst the Chaldæans of Ooroomiyah in Persia, under the able direction of the Rev. Mr. Perkins.^[169] It was with much regret that I was compelled to give up the plan I had formed of visiting that small colony from the New World. The Rev. Mr. Bowen, who crossed the frontiers from Wan, has in a true Christian spirit borne witness in the English Church to the enlightened and liberal spirit in which their labors are carried on. Forty or fifty schools have been opened in the town of Ooroomiyah and surrounding villages. The abuses that have crept into this primitive and highly interesting Church are being reformed, and the ignorance of its simple clergy gradually dispelled. A printing-press, for which type has been purposely cut, now publishes for general circulation the Scriptures and works of education in the dialect and character peculiar to the mountain tribes. The English language has been planted in the heart of Asia, and the benefits of knowledge are extended to a race which, a few years ago, was almost unknown even by name to Europe.

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The Armenian bishop of Wan was not wanting in intelligence and in liberal feeling; but, like most of his order, he was profoundly ignorant. The convents of Wan and of the neighbourhood, he said, were once rich in ancient manuscripts, but they had been carried away by camel-loads some two hundred years before by the Persians, and were believed still to be preserved in Isfahan. With the exception of a few printed copies of the Scriptures, and some religious works for the use of the churches, there are now no books in the city. He received with pleasure from Mr. Bowen a copy of the New Testament in the vulgar Armenian tongue, remarking that it would be a great advantage to the common people to have a

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version of the Scriptures in a language which they could understand. He was probably not aware that the head of his church had utterly condemned its use, and had anathematised all those who received it.

My companions had been compelled, from ill health, to leave the plain, and had taken refuge in the convent of Yedi Klissia, from the sultry heats of the plain. Before joining them, I visited the village of Amikh, where, according to my Armenian guide, Nikòos, an inscription was engraved on the rocks. I left the city on the 10th of August; but the time and labor bestowed resulted only in disappointment.

From Amikh I rode across the country in a direct line to the monastery of Yedi Klissia, whose gardens on the side of the lofty mountain of Wurrak are visible from most parts of the plain. I stopped for an hour at the church of Kormawor before ascending to the convent. An aged priest, with beard white as snow, and wearing a melon-shaped cap, and long black robes, was the guardian of the place. He led me into an arcade surrounding the inner court of the building. Seeing that I was a Frank, he fancied at once that I was searching for inscriptions, and pointed to a circular stone, the base of a wooden column, which, he said, he had shown many years before to a traveller, meaning Schulz. It bears three imperfect lines of cuneiform writing, part of an inscription belonging to one of the Wan kings, whose name Dr. Hincks read Minuas. It appears to record the foundation of a temple. A second inscription on a black stone, and several fragments with the same royal name, are built into the walls.

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Eight hours' ride from Amikh brought me to the large Armenian convent of Yedi Klissia, or the seven churches, built of substantial stone masonry, and inclosing a spacious courtyard planted with trees. It has more the appearance of a caravanserai than that of a place of religious retreat, and is beautifully situated near the mouth of a wooded ravine, half-way up a bold mountain, which ends in snowy peaks. Spread beneath it is a blue lake and a smiling plain, and the city, with its bold castellated rock, and its turreted walls half hid in gardens and orchards.

The church, a substantial modern edifice, stands within the courtyard. Its walls are covered with pictures as primitive in design as in execution. There is a victorious St. George blowing out the brains of a formidable dragon with a bright brass blunderbuss, and saints, attired in the traditionary garments of Europe, performing extravagant miracles. The intelligence of the good priest at the head of the convent was pretty well on a par with his illustrated church history. He was a specimen of the Armenian clergy of Asia Minor. As he described each subject to me, he spoke of the Nestorians as heretics, because they were allowed, by the canons of their church, to marry their mothers and grandmothers; of the Protestants as freemasons or atheists; and of the great nations of Europe as the Portuguese, the Inglese, the Muscovs, and the Abbash (Abyssinians).

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I found two short cuneiform inscriptions; one on a stone amongst the ruins of the old church, the other built into the walls of the new. They also belong to Minuas, and merely contain the name and titles of the king.

CHAPTER XIX.

LEAVE WAN.—THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCH.—THE ISLAND OF AKHTAMAR.—AN ARMENIAN CHURCH.—HISTORY OF THE CONVENT.—PASS INTO MUKUS.—THE DISTRICT OF MUKUS.—OF SHATTAK.—OF NOURDOOZ.—A NESTORIAN VILLAGE.—ENCAMPMENTS.—MOUNT ARARAT.—MAR SHAMOUN.—JULAMERIK.—VALLEY OF DIZ.—PASS INTO JELU.—NESTORIAN DISTRICT OF JELU.—AN ANCIENT CHURCH.—THE BISHOP.—DISTRICT OF BAZ.—OF TKHOMA.—RETURN TO MOSUL.

Sickness had overcome both Dr. Sandwith and Mr. Cooper. A return to the burning plains of Assyria might have proved fatal, and I advised them to seek, without further delay, the cooler climate of Europe. Mr. Walpole, too, who had been long suffering from fever, now determined upon quitting my party and taking the direct road to Erzeroom.

In the afternoon of the 12th August I left the gates of the convent of Yedi Klissia with Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. Once more I was alone with my faithful friend, and we trod together the winding pathway which led down the mountain side. We had both been suffering from fever, but we still had strength to meet its attacks, and to bear cheerfully, now unhindered, the difficulties and anxieties of our wandering life.

We made a short journey of three and a half hours to the pleasant village of Artamit or

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Adremit, and encamped beneath its fruit trees in a garden near the lake. Our path on the following day led through a hilly district, sometimes edging a deep bay, then again winding over a rocky promontory. We crossed by a bridge the large stream which we had seen at Mahmoudiyah, and which here discharges itself into the lake.

On the shores of the lake we found many encampments of gipsies; the men to be distinguished by their swarthy countenances, the women and children by their taste for begging.

We passed through Vastan; in the eleventh century the residence of the royal Armenian family of Ardzrouni, but now a mere village. The convent boat was on the beach, three miles above the usual landing-place. Four sturdy monks were about to row it back to the island. As they offered to take me with them, I left the caravan to journey onwards to our night's encamping place, and with Mr. Rassam and the Bairakdar, we were soon gliding over the calm surface of the lake. Not a breeze rippled the blue expanse. The burning rays of the sun were still full upon us, and the panting boatmen were nearly two hours before they reached the convent.

In the absence of the Patriarch we were received by an intelligent and courteous monk named Kirikor. His hair, as well as his beard, had never known the scissors, and fell in long luxuriant curls over his shoulders. It was of jetty black, for he was still a young man, although he had already passed twenty years of a monastic life. He led us through an arched doorway into the spacious courtyard of the convent, and thence into an upper room furnished with comfortable divans for the reception of guests. Tea was brought to us after the Persian fashion, and afterwards a more substantial breakfast, in which the dried fish of the lake formed the principal dish. Kirikor had visited Jerusalem and Constantinople, had read many of the works issued by the Venetian press, and was a man of superior acquirements for an Armenian monk of the orthodox faith.

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The church, which is within the convent walls, is built of the sandstone of a rich deep red color that has been quarried for the turbehs of Akhlat. Like other religious edifices of the same period and of the same nation, it is in the form of a cross, with a small hexagonal tower, ending in a conical roof, rising above the centre. The interior is simple. A few rude pictures of saints and miracles adorn the walls, and a gilded throne for the Patriarch stands near the altar. The exterior, however, is elaborately ornamented with friezes and broad bands of sculptured figures and scroll work, the upper part being almost covered with bas-reliefs, giving to the whole building a very striking and original appearance. I know of no similar specimen of Armenian architecture, and I regret that time would not allow me to make detailed drawings of the edifice.

In a grave-yard outside the church are several most elaborately carved tombstones belonging to the early Armenian patriarchs. That of Zachariah, who died in the fourteenth century, and who was for one year patriarch at Echmiadsin and for nine years at Akhtamar, is especially worthy of notice for the richness and elegance of its ornaments.

The convent and church are built on a small rocky island about five miles from the shore. On an adjacent islet are the ruined walls of a castle partly covered by the rising waters of the lake. Intercourse with the main land is carried on by the one crank boat which, whenever the weather permits, goes backwards and forwards daily for such provisions as are required by the inmates of the monastery. Khan Mahmoud took the place by collecting together the vessels belonging to Wan for the transport of his troops.

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Late in the afternoon, accompanied by the monk Kirikor, I was rowed to the farm and garden belonging to the convent, near the village of Ashayansk. A few monks live on the farm, and tend the property of the convent, supplying the Patriarch with the produce of the dairy and orchards. They received us very hospitably. Kirikor rode with me on the following morning as far as the large Armenian village of Narek, in which there is a church dedicated to St. George, much frequented in pilgrimage by the Christians of Wan and the surrounding country. It is a strong solid building, of the same red sandstone as the tombs of Akhlat.

We had now left the lake of Wan, and our track led up a deep ravine, which gradually became more narrow as we drew nigh to the high mountains that separated us from the unexplored districts of Mukus and Bohtan. We passed a large Armenian village named Pagwantz, near which, on the summit of a precipitous rock, stands the ruined castle of Khan Mahmoud, the rebel chief. He was the eldest of seven brothers, all of whom governed under him different districts on the borders of the lake, and sorely oppressed the Christian inhabitants. Five were captured and are in banishment.

Ere long we entered a rocky barren tract, patched here and there with fragrant Alpine flowers. After climbing up a steep declivity of loose stones like the moraine of a Swiss glacier, and dragging our horses with much difficulty after us, we found ourselves amidst eternal snow, over which we toiled for nearly two hours, until we reached the crest of the mountain, and looked down into the deep valley of Mukus. This is considered one of the highest passes in Kurdistan, and one of the most difficult for beasts of burden. The descent was even more rapid and precipitous than the ascent, and we could scarcely prevent our weary horses from rolling down into the ravine with the stones which we put into motion at every step. At the foot of the pass is a small Armenian church called Khorous Klissia, or "the church of the cock," because a black cock is said to warn the traveller when the snowdrifts

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hide the mountain tracks.

A ride of eight hours brought us to the large scattered village of Mukus, the principal place of the district of the same name. We were met, as we drew near, by the Mudir or governor, an active bustling Turk, who had already chosen, with the usual taste of an Eastern, the prettiest spot, a lawn on the banks of the river, for our tents, and had collected provisions for ourselves and our horses. The good Pasha of Wan had sent to the different chiefs on our way, and had ordered preparation to be everywhere made for our reception. The Tigris is here a deep stream, and is crossed by a stone bridge.

The district of Mukus, anciently Mogkh, and one of the provinces of the Armenian kingdom, had only lately been brought under the authority of the Sultan. Of its sixty villages forty are inhabited by Christian Armenians. The revenues amounted the year of my visit to little more than 100,000 piastres (about 910*l.*), of which the village of Mukus contributed 42,000. The garrison consisted of only forty regular soldiers and forty Albanians, so completely had the seizure of their chiefs discouraged the wild Kurdish tribes who dwell in the mountains, and were formerly in open rebellion against the Porte. This nomade race forms the principal part of the Mussulman population, and is the most fierce and independent in Kurdistan.

The Mudir showed the greatest anxiety for our welfare during the night, continually visiting our tents to see that the Albanians he had placed as guards over our property did not sleep, as the village swarmed with Bohtan thieves.

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The principal Armenians of Mukus with their priests spent a morning with me. They knew of no ruins or inscriptions in the district, and I found them even more ignorant than their fellow-countrymen of the districts around Wan, whose stupidity has passed into a Turkish proverb.

We left Mukus early in the afternoon, accompanied by the Mudir. The path following the course of the river, leads to Sert Jezireh and the Assyrian plains. Next day we crossed a high mountain ridge covered in some places with snow, separating the district of Mukus from that of Shattak. Its northern and western slopes are the summer pastures of the Miran Kurds, whose flocks were still feeding on the green lawns and in the flowery glens. On the opposite side of the pass we found an encampment of Hartushi Kurds, under one Omar Agha, a noble old chieftain, who welcomed us with unbounded hospitality, and set before me every luxury that he possessed. Shattak, the Mudir of which village had prepared for our reception, is a small town, rather than a village. It is chiefly inhabited by Armenians, an industrious and hardy race, cultivating the sides of the mountains, on which are built their villages, and weaving in considerable quantities the gay-colored woollen stuffs so much esteemed by the Kurds. In nearly every house was a loom, and the rattle of the shuttle came from almost every door. The mountains produce galls, wool (some of which has the same silky texture as that of Angora), the small under-wool of the goat called *teftik* (a valuable article of export), and minerals. In the bazar at Shattak I saw a few English prints, and other European wares brought for sale from Wan.

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The priests and principal Armenians of the place came to me soon after my arrival, and I learnt from them that efforts had already been made to improve the condition of the Christian community, now that the oppressive rule of the Kurdish hereditary chiefs had been succeeded by the more tolerant government of the Sultan. A school had been opened, chiefly by the help of Sheran, the active and liberal Armenian banker of Wan.

The town itself is called by the Armenians Tauk, by the Kurds Shokh, and when spoken of together with the numerous villages that surround it, Shattak. It stands near the junction of two considerable streams, forming one of the head-waters of the eastern Tigris, and uniting with the Bohtan-Su. The largest comes from the district of Albagh. These streams, as well as that of Mukus, abound in trout of the most delicious flavor. The entire district contains fifty villages and numerous *mezras* or hamlets. The revenues are about the same as those of Mukus.

We left Shokh on the 17th August by a bridge crossing the principal stream. The Mudir rode with us up a steep mountain, rising on the very outskirts of the town. After a long and difficult ascent we came to a broad green platform called Tagu, the pastures of the people of Shattak, and now covered with their tents and flocks. This high ground overlooked the deep valleys, through which wound the two streams, and on whose sides were many smiling gardens and villages.

Crossing a high mountain pass, on which snow still lingered, we descended into a deep valley like that of Shattak, chiefly cultivated by Armenians. We crossed a small stream, and ascended on the opposite side to Ashkaun, whose inhabitants were outside the village, near a clear spring, washing and shearing their sheep. We had now entered Nourdooz, a district under a Mudir appointed by the Pasha of Wan, and living at a large village called Pir-bedelan.

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Our ride on the following day was over upland pastures of great richness, and through narrow valleys watered by numerous streams. Here and there were villages inhabited by Kurds and Armenians. We were now approaching the Nestorian districts. The first man of the tribe we met was an aged buffalo-keeper, who, in answer to a question in Kurdish, spoke to me in the Chaldee dialect of the mountains. Hormuzd and my servants rejoiced at the

prospect of leaving the Armenian settlements, whose inhabitants, they declared, were for stupidity worse than Kurds, and for rapacity worse than Jews. Chilghiri was the first Nestorian village on our way. The men, with their handsome wives and healthful children, came out to meet us. We did not stop there, but continued our journey to Merwanen, which we found deserted by its inhabitants for the Zomas, or summer pastures. Although poor and needy, the people of Merwanen were not less hospitable than other Nestorians I had met with. They brought us as the sun went down smoking messes of millet boiled in sour milk and mixed with mountain herbs.

The next day we came to a large encampment of Hartushi Kurds, near the outlet of a green valley, watered by many streams, forming the most easterly sources of the Tigris.[170] Abdur-Rahman, the chief, was absent from his tents collecting the annual salian or revenue of the tribe. In his absence we were very hospitably treated, and were witnesses of the activity and industry of the Kurdish community.

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The mountain rising above us was the boundary between the pashalics of Wan and Hakkari and the watershed of the Tigris and Zab. On the opposite side the streams uniting their waters flowed towards the latter river. The first district we entered was that of Lewen, inhabited chiefly by Nestorians. The whole population with their flocks had deserted their villages for the Zomas. We ascended to the encampment of the people of Billi, a wretched assemblage of dirty hovels, half tent and half cabin, built of stones and black canvas. Behind it towered, amidst eternal snows, a bold and majestic peak, called Karnessa-ou-Daoleh.[171] Round the base of this mountain, over loose stones and sharp rocks, and through ravines deep in snow, we dragged our weary horses next day. The Kurdish shepherds that wander there, a wild and hardy race, have no tents, but, during the summer months, live in the open fields with their flocks, without any covering whatever.

After a wearisome and indeed dangerous ride, we found ourselves on a snowy platform variegated with Alpine plants. The tiny streams which trickled through the ice were edged with forget-me-nots of the tenderest blue, and with many well-remembered European flowers. I climbed up a solitary rock to take bearings of the principal peaks around us. A sight as magnificent as unexpected awaited me. Far to the north, and high above the dark mountain ranges which spread like a troubled sea beneath my feet, rose one solitary cone of unspotted white sparkling in the rays of the sun. Its form could not be mistaken; it was Mount Ararat. My Nestorian guide knew no more of this stately mountain, to him a kind of mythic land far beyond the reach of human travel, than that it was within the territories of the Muscovites, and that the Christians called it Bashut-tama-hamda. From this point alone was it visible, and we saw it no more during our journey.[172]

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We descended rapidly by a difficult track, passing here and there encampments of Kurds and the tents and flocks of the people of Julamerik. To the green pastures succeeded the region of cultivated fields, and we seemed to approach more settled habitations. Following a precipitous pathway, and mounted on a tall and sturdy mule, we spied an aged man with long robes, black turban, and a white beard which fell almost to his girdle. We at once recognised the features of Mar Shamoun, the Patriarch of the Nestorians, or, as he proudly terms himself, "of the Chaldæans of the East." He had not known of our coming, and he shed tears of joy as he embraced us. Kochhannes, his residence, was not far distant, and he turned back with us to the village. Since I had seen him misfortune and grief, more than age, had worn deep furrows in his brow, and had turned his hair and beard to silvery grey.

The garments of the Patriarch were worn and ragged. Even the miserable allowance of 300 piastres (about 2*l.* 10*s.*), which the Porte had promised to pay him monthly on his return to the mountains, was long in arrears, and he was supported entirely by the contributions of his faithful but poverty-stricken flock. Kochhannes was, moreover, still a heap of ruins. At the time of the massacre Mar Shamoun sacredly saved himself by a precipitous flight before the ferocious Kurds of Beder Khan Bey entered the village and slew those who still lingered in it, and were from age or infirmities unable to escape.

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Mar Shamoun, at the time of my visit, had no less cause to bewail the misfortunes of his people than his personal sufferings. The latter were perhaps partly to be attributed to his own want of prudence and foresight. Old influences, which I could not but deeply deplore, and to which I do not in Christian charity wish further to allude[173], had been at work, and I found him even more bitter in his speech against the American missionaries than against his Turkish or Kurdish oppressors. He had been taught, and it is to be regretted that his teachers were of the Church of England, that those who were endeavoring to civilise and instruct his flock were seceders from the orthodox community of Christians, heretical in doctrine, rejecting all the sacraments and ordinances of the true faith, and intent upon reducing the Nestorians to their own hopeless condition of infidelity. His fears were worked on by the assurance that, ere long, through their means and teaching, his spiritual as well as his temporal authority would be entirely destroyed. I found him bent upon deeds of violence and intolerant persecution, which might have endangered, for the second time, the safety of this people as well as his own. I strove, and I trust not without success, to set before the old man his true interest in regard to educating his clergy and people, circulating the Scriptures, reforming abuses, &c.

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The Nestorian community had greater wrongs to complain of than their Patriarch. The Turkish government, so far from fulfilling the pledges given to the British embassy, had sent

officers to the mountains who had grievously ill-treated and oppressed the Christian inhabitants; and they had suffered all kinds of outrage and oppression which the rapacious Turks could inflict. There was no tribunal to which they could apply for redress. A deputation sent to the Pasha had been ill-treated, and some of its members were still in prison. There was no one in authority to plead for them. They had even suffered less under the sway of their old oppressors, for, as a priest touchingly remarked to me, "The Kurds took away our lives, but the Turks take away wherewith we have to live."

We remained a day with the Patriarch, and then took the road to Julamerik, three caravan hours distant from Kochhannes. This town has been more than once visited and described by English travellers.

Near Julamerik we met many poor Nestorians flying, with their wives and children, they knew not whither, from the oppression of the Turkish governors.

The direct road by Tiyari to Mosul is carried along the river Zab, through ravines scarcely practicable to beasts of burden. It issues into the lower valleys near the village of Lizan. On the banks of the Zab, I found the remains of an ancient road, cut in many places in the solid rock. It probably led from the Assyrian plains into the upper provinces of Armenia. There are no inscriptions or ruins to show the period of its construction; but, from the greatness of the work, I am inclined to attribute it to the Assyrians.

We picked our way over the slippery pavement as long as we could find some footing for ourselves and our beasts, but in many places, where it had been entirely destroyed, we were compelled to drag our horses by main force over the steep rocks and loose detritus, which sloped to the very edge of the river. Before reaching the first Nestorian village in the valley of Diz, we had to ford an impetuous torrent boiling and foaming over smooth rocks, and reaching above our saddle-girths. One of the baggage mules lost its footing. The eddying waters hurried it along and soon hurled it into the midst of the Zab. The animal having, at length, relieved itself from its burden, swam to the bank. Unfortunately it bore my own trunks; my notes and inscriptions, the fruits of my labors at Wan, together with the little property I possessed, were carried far away by the stream. After the men from the village had long searched in vain, the lost load was found about midnight, stopped by a rock some miles down the river.

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We passed the night in the miserable village of Rabban Audishio. On the opposite side of the valley, but high in the mountains, was the village of Seramus. The pathway to it being precipitous, and inaccessible even to mules, we turned to Madis, the residence of the Melek, or chief, of the district of Diz. The villages of Diz, like those of the Nestorian valleys in general, stand in the midst of orchards and cultivated terraces. They were laid waste, and the houses burnt, during the first massacre. Diz was the first Christian district attacked by Beder Khan Bey. The inhabitants made a long and determined resistance, but were at length overpowered by numbers.

We continued our journey through a deep and narrow valley hemmed in by high mountains and by perpendicular cliffs. The Melek met us on the road near the village of Cherichereh, or Klissa. The old man had the too common tale to tell us, of oppression and wrong on the part of the Turks. Melek Beniamen implored me to help him in his difficulties; but I could do no more than offer words of sympathy and consolation. Leaving the Melek to pursue his tax-gathering, we rode through a magnificent valley, now narrowing into a wild gorge walled with precipitous cliffs, then opening into an amphitheatre of rocks encircling a village imbedded in trees. The valley at length was abruptly closed by the towering peaks and precipices of the Jelu mountain. At its foot is the village of Khouresin, where we encamped for the night. The inhabitants were, for the most part, like the other people of Diz, in the Zomas, or summer pastures.

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Not far from the Zomas of Diz were the tents of the villagers of Jelu. They also had encamped on the very verge of eternal snow, but within the boundaries of Diz, as there were no pastures on the other side of the pass in their own district. They were better clothed, and showed more signs of comfort, if not of wealth, than their unfortunate neighbours. Many of the men spoke a little Arabic, and even Turkish, learnt during their yearly visits as basket-makers to the low country.

We were still separated from the valley of Jelu by a shoulder jutting from the lofty Soppa-Durek mountain. Before reaching this rocky ridge, we had to cross a broad tract of deep snow, over which we had much difficulty in dragging our heavily laden mules. When on the crest of the pass we found ourselves surrounded on all sides by rugged peaks, the highest being that known as the Toura Jelu, of which we had scarcely lost sight from the day we had left Mosul. It is probably the highest mountain in central Kurdistan, and cannot be under, if it be not indeed above, 15,000 feet. The pass we crossed before descending into the valley of Jelu is considered the highest in the Nestorian country, and is probably more than 11,000 feet above the level of the sea.

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From the top of the pass we looked down into a deep abyss. The pathway was fearfully dangerous, and over steep and slippery rocks. Down this terrible descent we had to drag our jaded horses, leaving our track marked in blood. I have had some experience in bad mountain roads, but I do not remember to have seen any much worse than that leading into Jelu. After numerous accidents and great labor we left a rocky gully, and found ourselves on

a slope ending, at a dizzy depth, in a torrent scarcely visible from our path. The yielding soil offered even a more difficult footing for our beasts than the polished rocks.

The wild mountain ravine was now changed for the smiling valley of Jelu. Villages, embowered in trees, filled every nook and sheltered place. We descended to Zerín or Zerayni, the principal settlement, and the residence of the Melek. To our left were two other villages, Alzan and Meedee.

As my large caravan descended the hill-side, the inhabitants of Zerín took us at once for Turks, whose appearance is the signal for a general panic. The women hide in the innermost recesses to save themselves from insult; the men slink into their houses, and offer a vain protest against the seizure of their property. When, at last, we had satisfied the trembling people of Zerín that we were not Mussulmans, they insisted upon our being Americans, of whom they had, at that moment, for certain religious reasons, almost as great a distrust. At length they made out that I was the Balios^[174] of Mosul, and the Melek arriving at this crisis, we were received with due hospitality. Our baggage was carried to the roof of a house, and provisions were brought to us without delay.

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Although, during his expedition into Tiyari, Beder Khan Bey had seized the flocks of the people of Jelu, and had compelled them, moreover, to pay large contributions in money and in kind, he had not been able to enter their deep and well-guarded valleys.

The Nestorians of Jelu have no trade to add to their wealth. Many of the men, however, wander during the winter into Asia Minor, and even into Syria and Palestine, following the trade of basket-making, in which they are very expert; but their travels, and their intercourse with the rest of the Christian world have not improved their morals, their habits, or their faith.

The district of Jelu is under a bishop whose spiritual jurisdiction also extends over Baz. He resides at Martha d'Umra (the village of the church) separated by a bold rocky ridge from Zerín. It was Sunday as we descended through orchards, by a precipitous pathway, to his dwelling. The bishop was away. He had gone lower down the valley to celebrate divine service for a distant congregation. The inhabitants of the village were gathered round the church in their holiday attire, and received us kindly and hospitably. From a belfry issued the silvery tones of a bell, which echoed through the valley, and gave an inexpressible charm to the scene. It is not often that such sounds break upon the traveller's ear in the far East, to awaken a thousand pleasant thoughts, and to recall to memory many a happy hour.

This church is said to be the oldest in the Nestorian mountains, and is a plain, substantial, square building, with a very small entrance. To me it was peculiarly interesting, as having been the only one that had escaped the ravages of the Kurds, and as containing therefore its ancient furniture and ornaments. Both the church and the dark vestibule were so thickly hung with relics of the most singular and motley description, that the ceiling was completely concealed by them. Notwithstanding the undoubted antiquity of the church and its escape from plunder, I searched in vain for ancient manuscripts.

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We followed the valley to the village of Nara, where the bishop was resting after his morning duties. A young man of lofty stature and handsome countenance, dressed in the red-striped loose garments of the Kurds, and only distinguished by a turban of black silk from those around him, came out to meet us. A less episcopal figure could scarcely be imagined; but, although he seemed some Kurdish hunter or warrior, he gave us his benediction as he drew near.

It was difficult to determine whom the poor bishop feared most, the Turks or the American missionaries; the first, he declared, threatened his temporal, the others his spiritual, authority. I gave him the best advice I was able on both subjects, and urged him not to reject the offer that had been made to instruct his people, but identify himself with a progress on which might be founded the only reasonable hope for the regeneration of his creed and race. Unfortunately, as in the case of Mar Shamoun, strange influences had been at work to prejudice the mind of the bishop.

We were now in the track I had followed during my former visit to the mountains.^[175] Crossing the precipitous pass to the west of Baz, which, since my first visit, had been the scene of one of the bloodiest episodes of the Nestorian massacre, we entered the long narrow ravine leading into the valley of Tkhoma. We stopped at Gunduktha, where, four years before, I had taken leave of the good priest Bodaka, who had been amongst the first victims of the fury of the Kurdish invaders. The Kasha, who now ministered to the spiritual wants of the people, the Rais of the village, and the principal inhabitants, came to us as we stopped in the churchyard. But they were no longer the gaily dressed and well-armed men who had welcomed me on my first journey. Their garments were tattered and worn, and their countenances haggard and wan. The church, too, was in ruins; around were the charred remains of the burnt cottages, and the neglected orchards overgrown with weeds. A body of Turkish troops had lately visited the village, and had destroyed the little that had been restored since the Kurdish invasion. The same taxes had been collected three times, and even four times, over. The relations of those who had ran away to escape from these exactions had been compelled to pay for the fugitives. The chief had been thrown, with his arms tied behind his back, on a heap of burning straw, and compelled to disclose where a little money that had been saved by the villagers had been buried. The priest had been torn

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from the altar, and beaten before his congregation. Men showed me the marks of torture on their body, and of iron fetters round their limbs. For the sake of wringing a few piastres from this poverty-stricken people, all these deeds of violence had been committed by officers sent by the Porte to protect the Christian subjects of the Sultan, whom they pretended to have released from the misrule of the Kurdish chiefs.

The smiling villages described in the account of my previous journey were now a heap of ruins. From four of them alone 770 persons had been slain. Beder Khan Bey had driven off, according to the returns made by the Meleks, 24,000 sheep, 300 mules, and 10,000 head of cattle; and the confederate chiefs had each taken a proportionate share of the property of the Christians. No flocks were left by which they might raise money wherewith to pay the taxes now levied upon them, and even the beasts of burden, which could have carried to the markets of more wealthy districts the produce of their valley, had been taken away.[176]

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We remained a night in Tkhoma to see the Meleks who came to us from Tkhoma Gowaia. Leaving the valley, we crossed the high mountain inclosing Tkhoma to the south, and passed through Pinianish into Chaal, a district inhabited by Mussulmans, and which had consequently not suffered from the ravages of the Kurdish chiefs. It presented, with its still flourishing villages surrounded by gardens and vineyards, a vivid contrast to the unfortunate Christian valley we had just left.

A rapid descent through a rocky gorge brought us to the Zab, over which there were still the remains of a bridge, consisting of two poles fastened together by osier bands placed across the stone piers. It almost required the steady foot and practised head of a mountaineer to cross the roaring stream by this perilous structure. The horses and mules were with much trouble and delay driven into the river, and after buffeting with the whirlpools and eddies reached, almost exhausted, the opposite bank.

We now entered the valley of Berwari, and, crossing the pass of Amadiyah, took the road to Mosul, through a country I had already more than once visited. Leaving the caravan and our jaded horses, I hastened onwards with Hormuzd, and travelling through a night reached Mosul in the afternoon of the 30th of August, after an absence of seven weeks.

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CHAPTER XX.

DISCOVERIES AT KOUYUNJIK DURING THE SUMMER.—DESCRIPTION OF THE SCULPTURES.—CAPTURE OF CITIES ON A GREAT RIVER.—POMP OF ASSYRIAN KING.—ALABASTER PAVEMENT.—CONQUEST OF TRIBES INHABITING A MARSH.—THEIR WEALTH.—CHAMBERS WITH SCULPTURES BELONGING TO A NEW KING.—DESCRIPTION OF THE SCULPTURES.—CONQUEST OF THE PEOPLE OF SUSIANA.—PORTRAIT OF THE KING.—HIS GUARDS AND ATTENDANTS.—THE CITY OF SHUSHAN.—CAPTIVE PRINCE.—MUSICIANS.—CAPTIVES PUT TO THE TORTURE.—ARTISTIC CHARACTER OF THE SCULPTURES.—AN INCLINED PASSAGE.—TWO SMALL CHAMBERS.—COLOSSAL FIGURES.—MORE SCULPTURES.

Whilst I had been absent in the mountains the excavations had been continued at Kouyunjik, notwithstanding the summer heats. Nearly all the Arabs employed in the spring at Nimroud had been removed to these ruins, and considerable progress had consequently been made in clearing the earth from them. Several chambers, discovered before I left Mosul, had been emptied, and new rooms with interesting sculptures had been explored.

It has been seen that the narrow passage leading out of the south-west corner of the great hall containing the bas-reliefs representing the moving of the winged bulls turned to the left, and by another gallery connected this part of the edifice with a second hall of even larger proportions than that first discovered.

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The sculptures panelling the western wall were for the most part still entire. They recorded, as usual, a campaign and a victory, and were probably but a portion of one continuous subject carried round the entire hall. The conquered country appeared to have been traversed by a great river, the representation of which took up a third of the bas-relief.

Next came the siege and capture of a city standing on the opposite bank of the same great river, and surrounded by a ditch edged with lofty reeds. The Assyrian footmen and cavalry had already crossed this dike, and were closely pressing the besieged, who, no longer

seeking to defend themselves, were asking for quarter. On the other side of the river, Sennacherib in his gorgeous war chariot, and surrounded by his guards, received the captives and the spoil. It is remarkable that this was almost the only figure of the king which had not been wantonly mutilated, probably by those who overthrew the Assyrian empire, burned its palaces, and levelled its cities with the dust.[177]

In this bas-relief the furniture of the horses was particularly rich and elaborate. Above the yoke rose a semicircular ornament, set round with stars, and containing the image of a deity. The chariot of the Assyrian monarch, his retinue, and his attire, accurately corresponded with the descriptions given by Xenophon of those of Cyrus, when he marched out of his palace in procession, and by Quintus Curtius of those of Darius, when he went to battle in the midst of his army. The Greek general had seen the pomp of the Persian kings, and could describe it as an eye-witness.[178] The description of Quintus Curtius is no less illustrative of the Assyrian monuments. "The doryphori (a chosen body of spearmen) preceded the chariot, on either side of which were the effigies of the gods in gold and silver. The yoke was inlaid with the rarest jewels. *From it projected two golden figures of Ninus and Belus*, each a cubit in length.... The king was distinguished from all those who surrounded him, by the magnificence of his robes, and by the cidaris or mitre upon his head. By his side walked two hundred of his relations. Ten thousand warriors bearing spears, whose staffs were of silver and heads of gold, followed the royal chariot. The king's led horses, forty in number, concluded the procession." [179] Allowing for a little exaggeration on the part of the historian, and for the conventional numbers used by the Assyrian sculptor to represent large bodies of footmen and cavalry, we might suppose that Quintus Curtius had seen the very bas-reliefs I am describing, so completely do they tally with his description of the appearance and retinue of the Persian king.

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The captives, bearing skins probably containing water and flour to nourish them during a long and harassing march, were fettered in pairs, and urged onwards by their guards. The women were partly on foot, and partly with their children on mules and in carts drawn by oxen. Mothers were represented holding the water-skins for their young ones to quench their thirst, whilst in some instances fathers had placed their weary children on their shoulders, for they were marching during the heat of a Mesopotamian summer, as the sculptor had shown by introducing large clusters of dates on the palms. Thus were driven the inhabitants of Samaria through the Desert to Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan and the cities of the Medes,[180] and we may see in these bas-reliefs a picture of the hardships and sufferings to which the captive people of Israel were exposed when their cities fell into the hands of the Assyrian king, and their inhabitants were sent to colonise the distant provinces of his empire.

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On the south side of the hall, parts of four slabs only had been preserved; the sculpture upon the others had been so completely destroyed, that even the subject could no longer be ascertained. The fragments still remaining, graphically depicted the passage of the river by the great king. The bas-reliefs represented very accurately a scene that may be daily witnessed, without the royal warrior, on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates.

Not a fragment of inscription remained to identify the country represented in the bas-reliefs I have just described. From the size of the river, far exceeding that of any other seen in the sculptures of Kouyunjik, I am inclined to believe that it must have been the combined waters of the Euphrates and Tigris, now known as the Shat-el-Arab.

In the south side of the hall a centre portal flanked by winged bulls, and two small entrances, formed by gigantic figures, opened into a long chamber, whose sculptured walls had been burnt to lime. To judge from the fragments that remained of this series of sculptures, the most skilful artist of the day must have been employed in its execution. At both ends of the chamber, doors, guarded by colossal figures, led into smaller apartments, in which the bas-reliefs had been almost entirely destroyed.

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Returning to the great hall we found an entrance formed by colossal figures leading into a long narrow chamber, about 70 feet by 12, whose walls had partly escaped the general wreck. It appeared to be the remains of an entrance into the palace, like that on the western face, or a gallery leading to the outer terrace, which probably surrounded the building. On its alabaster panels were sculptured the conquest of some of those tribes which inhabited, from the remotest period, the vast marshes formed by the Euphrates and Tigris in Chaldæa Babylonia.

Although the people represented in these bas-reliefs dwelt in the swampy districts of Chaldæa, unless, indeed, they had only taken refuge in them to escape the vengeance of the Assyrian king, they appear to have been as rich, if not richer, than any others conquered by Sennacherib. With the exception of three slabs and part of a fourth, containing the battle in the marsh, the entire walls of the chamber were sculptured with the captives and spoil brought by the victorious troops to their king. Unfortunately the image of Sennacherib himself in his chariot, which, to judge from a fragment or two found in the rubbish, must have exceeded all others in the palace, both in size and in the finish and richness of the details, had been entirely destroyed.

Returning to the great hall, from which this gallery led, I found on its western side three other entrances, corresponding with those on the southern, the centre formed by a pair of winged bulls in a fossiliferous limestone. They led into a chamber 58 feet by 34, panelled

with unsculptured slabs of the same material as the colossi at the principal portal. Three similar doorways opened into a parallel chamber of the same length, though rather narrower. Its walls had been ornamented with carved alabaster slabs, of which a few fragments remained.

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Three doorways on the western side of this chamber, similar to those on the eastern, led into as many distinct rooms, unconnected with each other. There were thus three magnificent portals, one behind the other, each formed by winged bulls facing the same way, and all looking towards the great hall; the largest colossi, those in front, being above 18 feet high, and the smallest, those leading into the inner chamber, about 12. It would be difficult to conceive any interior architectural arrangement more imposing than this triple group of gigantic forms, as seen in perspective by those who stood in the centre of the hall, dimly lighted from above, and harmoniously colored or overlaid, like the cherubims in the temple of Solomon, with gold.

At the upper or southern ends of the two parallel chambers just described, were entrances opening into a room 82 feet by 24, whose walls were of the same unsculptured limestone. From it a portal formed by winged lions in the same material, led into an apartment 76 feet by 26, standing on the edge of the mound, and consequently one of the last on this side of the palace. Only six slabs, neither of them entire, remained against its walls; the rest had been purposely destroyed and the fragments used for the foundations of a building raised over the Assyrian ruins. They were covered from top to bottom with small figures, most elaborately carved, and designed with great spirit. Although bearing a general resemblance to the bas-reliefs of Kouyunjik, there was sufficient in the style of art and in the details, to show that they were not of exactly the same period. Fortunately several epigraphs still remained over the principal groups, and enable us to determine to what monarch the sculptures belong, and to identify the events and incidents they portray.

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The three slabs to the right of the winged lions on entering, were occupied by a highly curious representation of a battle. The subject was incomplete, and could not be restored; and from the number of figures introduced, and the complicated nature of the action, it is difficult to describe these important bas-reliefs intelligibly. Above one of the groups of figures was an epigraph, unfortunately much mutilated, which recorded the slaughter of a king, whose name was (? Tiranish), and who, we learn from other inscriptions on the same sculptures, reigned over Elam, or Susiana. The lines being incomplete, the meaning of the whole inscription is not quite clear.

Behind the cart with the Assyrian warriors, was the tent of the registrar, to which had been led a captive chief and his two attendants. Within were collected a heap of human heads, whilst warriors were bringing more of these bloody trophies to the appointed scribes. Several of the captives were apparently about to undergo some dreadful torture; with their hands manacled in iron fetters, they knelt over an object which might be a chafing-dish with hot coals or a vessel to receive their blood. One of the torturers held his victim by a collar round his neck; whilst a second, seizing the unfortunate prisoner by the hair, was about to strike him with an iron-headed mace.

The epigraphs declare that the war recorded by these sculptures was undertaken by an Assyrian king, whose image was represented on a slab not yet described, against the people of Elam or Susiana. It is of considerable importance thus to identify the conquered people, and to be able to ascertain the costume, the arms, and the mode of warfare of a nation well known in ancient history.

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Amongst the captives were men clothed in fringed robes and a short under-tunic: these were probably the lords of the land. The women wore their hair in curls, falling on their shoulders, and bound above the temples by a band or fillet. Some had one long ringlet on each side of the face. Their children were either naked or clothed in simple shirts.

The Assyrian troops were divided into cavalry and foot. The horsemen carried the bow and spear, and wore coats of mail, high greaves, and the pointed helmet, that characteristic part of the Assyrian military costume from the earliest period. Their horses were covered with clothes, and even, it would seem, with a kind of leather armour, reaching from the head to the tail, to protect them from the arrows of the enemy.^[181] The costumes of the footmen, as in the bas-reliefs of Sennacherib, varied according to their arms. The archers, probably auxiliaries from different tribes in alliance with the Assyrians, were dressed in very short tunics scarcely covering the thigh. A broad belt, with the fringed ornament peculiar to the later Assyrian period, encircled their waist, and over their shoulders they wore a cross belt, of chequered cloth, resembling a Scottish plaid, to support the quiver. Their hair, confined by a plain fillet, was rolled up behind in one large curl. All the spearmen had the pointed helmet; but some wore coats of mail and metal greaves, and others a simple tunic, without any covering to their legs. Their shields protected nearly the whole person, and were rounded at the top and straight at the bottom. Some appear to have been faced with small square pieces of leather, others to have been made entirely of metal, with embossed edges. For the first time we see in these bas-reliefs, the Assyrians using the battle-axe and the mace in battle.

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On the opposite side of the lion-entrance were also three slabs, but better preserved than those I have just described. They formed part of the same subject, which had evidently been carried round the four walls of the chamber. They represented the triumph of the Assyrian

king, and, like the battle scenes, were divided by horizontal lines into several bands or friezes. The monarch stood in his chariot, surrounded by his body-guard. Unfortunately his face, with those of the charioteer and the eunuch bearing the parasol, had been purposely defaced, like that of Sennacherib on his monuments, probably when the united armies of the Medes and Babylonians destroyed the palace. The royal robes were profusely adorned with rosettes and fringes.

In front of the chariot were two warriors or guards in embroidered robes and greaves. Their long hair was bound by a fillet, whose tasselled ends fell loose behind. They were preceded by two remarkable figures, both eunuchs, and probably intended for portraits of some well-known officers of the royal household. One was old and corpulent; his forehead was high and ample; his nose curved and small, and his chin round and double. The wrinkles of the brow, the shaggy eyebrows, and the bloated cheeks, with the stubble beard peculiar to beings of his class, were very faithfully represented. His short hair was tied with a fillet. His companion was younger, and had not the same marked features. He carried before him a square object resembling a closed box or book, perhaps a clay tablet containing some decree or register, such as were discovered in the ruins. Both wore long plain shirts, and round their waists a simple cord, in which was fixed a whip, probably a sign of their office.

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Above this remarkable group was an inscription in eight lines fortunately almost entire. From it we learn the name of the king, whose deeds were thus recorded. He was the son of Essarhaddon, and the grandson of Sennacherib, and the conqueror of Susiana. He was the Assordanes of the chronological tables, and his name begins with the monogram for the Assyrian deity, Asshur.

These bas-reliefs record his conquest of the country of (Nuvaki ?), a name by which Susiana or Elymais was anciently known; as we also find from the inscriptions at Khorsabad, as well as from those of Bisutun.

It is highly probable that we have, in the bas-relief, a representation of the city of Susa or Shusan. Its position between two rivers well agrees with that of existing ruins generally believed to mark its site. The smaller stream would be the Shapour, and the larger the Eulæus or river of Dizful. The city was surrounded by a wall, with equidistant towers and gateways. The houses were flat roofed, and some had one tower or upper chamber, and others two. They had no windows, and their doors were square. Thus, in general form, and probably in the interior arrangements, they closely resembled the common dwellings of the Egyptians, of which a very interesting model is now in the British Museum.^[182] Nor were they unlike the meaner houses of the modern town of Shushter, the representative of ancient Susa.

The adjoining slab was divided into eight bands or friezes, by parallel lines, and the next slab into seven. On both were represented the Assyrian army returning from its victorious campaign, and bringing to the king the captives and the spoil. The prisoners, who were probably considered rather rebels to his authority than enemies, were being cruelly tortured in his presence. The principal group was that of the eunuch general, or Tartan, leading a chief or prince of the conquered people. Above him was an inscription unfortunately much mutilated. It appears to have declared that he was one of the sons or chiefs of the Susianian monarch, defeated and slain in battle near the district of Madaktu (the name over the city on the adjoining slab), and near the city of Shushan; and that the Assyrian king had placed one of his own generals on the conquered throne.^[183]

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Before the captive prince were gathered a number of the Susianians, probably the subjects of the slaughtered king, who had come to surrender to the Assyrian general, for they still carried their arms, and were not led by the victorious warriors. Some of them knelt, some bowed to the ground, and others, stretched at full length, rubbed their heads in the dust, all signs of grief and submission still practised in the East. The Assyrian generals were welcomed by bands of men and women, dancing, singing, and playing on instruments of music. Thus, "when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing to meet Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music."^[184] We find from various passages in the Scriptures, that the instruments of music chiefly used on such triumphant occasions were the harp, one with ten strings (rendered viol or lyre in some versions, but probably a kind of dulcimer), the tabor and the pipe^[185], precisely those represented in the bas-reliefs.

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The whole scene was curiously illustrative of modern Eastern customs. The musicians portrayed in the bas-reliefs were probably of that class of public performers who appear in Turkey and Egypt at marriages, and on other occasions of rejoicing.

Above the Assyrian warriors were the captives and their torturers. The former differed in costume from the Susianian fighting-men represented in the adjoining bas-reliefs. They were distinguished by the smallness of their stature, and by a very marked Jewish countenance—a sharp, hooked nose, short bushy beard, and long narrow eyes. Could they have belonged to the Hebrew tribes which were carried away from Samaria and Jerusalem, and placed by Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, or Essarhaddon, as colonists in the distant regions of Elam, and who, having become powerful in their new settlements, had revolted against their Assyrian rulers, and were once again subdued? Some in iron fetters were being led before the king, for judgment or pardon. Others had been condemned to the torture, and were already in the hands of the executioners. Two were stretched naked at full length on the ground, and

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whilst their limbs were held apart by pegs and cords they were being flayed alive. Beneath them were other unfortunate victims, undergoing abominable punishments. The brains of one were apparently being beaten out with an iron mace, whilst an officer held him by the beard. A torturer was wrenching the tongue out of the mouth of a second wretch who had been pinioned to the ground. The bleeding heads of the slain were tied round the necks of the living, who seemed reserved for still more barbarous tortures.

Above these groups was a short epigraph, commencing by two determinative signs of proper names, each followed by a blank space, which the sculptor probably left to be filled up with the names of the principal victims. It then declares that these men, having spoken blasphemies (?) against Asshur, the great god of the Assyrians, their tongues had been pulled out (*Lishaneshunu eshlup*, both words being almost purely Hebrew), and that they had afterwards been put to death (or tortured). The inscription, therefore, corresponds with the sculpture beneath. It is by such confirmatory evidence that the accuracy of the translations of the cuneiform characters may be tested.

These highly interesting bas-reliefs had been exposed, like all the other sculptures of Kouyunjik, to the fire which had destroyed the palace. Although each slab was cracked into many pieces, the sculptures themselves had suffered less injury than any others discovered in the same ruins, the hard fossiliferous limestone not having become calcined by the heat like the alabaster. The outline was still sharp, and the details perfectly preserved. Considerable care was required to move them. But the pieces were at length packed, and since their arrival in England have been admirably restored.

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Some bas-reliefs sculptured by order of the son and successor of Essarhaddon, have been discovered at Kouyunjik and Nebbi Yunus. These bas-reliefs prove that many changes had taken place in the arts and dress of the people of Assyria between the reign of Sennacherib and that of his grandson. The later sculptures are principally distinguished by their minute finish, the sharpness of the outline, and the very correct delineation of the animals, and especially of the horses. We now approach the period of the fall of the Assyrian empire and of the rise of the kingdoms of Babylon and Persia. The arts passed from Assyria to the sister nations and to Ionia. There is much in the bas-reliefs I have just described to remind us of the early works of the Greeks immediately after the Persian war, and to illustrate a remark of the illustrious Niebuhr, that "a critical history of Greek art would show how late the Greeks commenced to practise the arts. After the Persian war a new world opens at once, and from that time they advanced with great strides. But everything that was produced before the Persian war—a few of those works are still extant—was, if we judge of it without prejudice, altogether barbarous."^[186]

The chamber containing these sculptures had an entrance opening upon the edge of the mound. Of this doorway there only remained, on each side, a block of plain limestone, which may, however, have been the base of a sphinx or other figure. The outer walls to which it led had been panelled with the usual alabaster slabs, with bas-reliefs of a campaign in a country already represented in another part of the palace, and distinguished by the same deep valley watered by a river, the vineyards and wooded mountains. Over one of the castles captured and destroyed by the Assyrians was written, "Sennacherib, King of Assyria. The city of Bit-Kubitalmi I took, the spoil I carried away, (the city) I burned."

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Whether these walls belonged to a chamber or formed part of the southern face of the palace could not now be determined, as they were on the very brink of the platform. At right angles to them, to the west, a pair of winged bulls opened upon another wall, of which there were scarcely any remains, and midway between the two entrances was a deep doorway, flanked on both sides by four colossal mythic figures, amongst which were the fish god and the deity with the lion's head and eagle's feet. It led to an inclined or ascending passage, nine feet wide in the narrowest part and ten in the broadest, and forty-four feet in length to where it turned at right angles to the left. It was paved with hard lime or plaster about an inch and a half thick. The walls were built of the finest sundried bricks, admirably fitted together, and still perfectly preserved.

This inclined way probably led to the upper chambers of the palace, or to the galleries which may have been carried round the principal chambers and halls.

I have only to describe two more rooms discovered in this part of the ruins during the summer. They opened into the chamber parallel with that containing the sculptured records of the son of Essarhaddon. The entrances to both were formed by two pairs of colossal figures, each pair consisting of a man wearing the horned cap surmounted by a fleur-de-lis, and a lion-headed and eagle-footed human figure raising a dagger in one hand, and holding a mace in the other. These sculptures were remarkable for the boldness of the relief and their high finish.

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The bas-reliefs on the walls of the two chambers recorded the same campaign against a nation dwelling amidst a wooded and mountainous country, and in strongly fortified cities, which the Assyrians took by assault, using battering rams to make breaches in the walls and scaling ladders to mount to the assault. The besieged defended themselves with arrows and stones, but their strongholds were captured, and a vast amount of spoil and captives fell into the hands of the conquerors. The men had short, bushy hair and beards, and wore an inner garment reaching to the knee, an outer cloak of skins or fur, and gaiters laced in front. The robes of the women were short; their hair hung low down their backs, and was then

gathered up into one large curl.

Such were the discoveries made at Kouyunjik during the summer. At Nimroud the excavations had been almost suspended. I have already described those parts of the high mound or tower, and of the adjoining small temples which were explored by the few workmen who still remained amongst the ruins, rather to retain possession of the place than to carry on extensive operations.

I was engaged until the middle of October in moving and packing bas-reliefs from Kouyunjik; a task of considerable trouble, and demanding much time and labor, as the slabs, split into a thousand fragments by the fire, had to be taken completely to pieces, and then arranged and numbered, with a view to their future restoration. Nearly a hundred cases containing these remains were at length dragged to the river side, to wait the rafts by which they were to be forwarded to Busrah, where a vessel was shortly expected to transport them to England.

CHAPTER XXI.

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PREPARATIONS FOR LEAVING NINEVEH.—
DEPARTURE FOR BABYLON.—DESCENT OF THE
RIVER.—TEKRIT.—THE STATE OF THE RIVERS
OF MESOPOTAMIA.—COMMERCE UPON THEM.
—TURKISH ROADS.—THE PLAIN OF DURA.—THE
NAHARWAN.—SAMARRAH.—KADESIA.—PALM
GROVES.—KATHIMAIN.—APPROACH TO
BAGHDAD.—THE CITY.—ARRIVAL.—DR. ROSS.—A
BRITISH STEAMER.—MODERN BAGHDAD.—TEL
MOHAMMED.—DEPARTURE FOR BABYLON.—A
PERSIAN PRINCE.—ABDE PASHA'S CAMP.—
EASTERN FALCONRY.—HAWKING THE GAZELLE.
—APPROACH TO BABYLON.—THE RUINS.—
ARRIVAL AT HILLAH.

The winter was now drawing near, and the season was favorable for examining the remains of ancient cities in Babylonia. The Trustees of the British Museum had partly sanctioned a plan submitted to them for excavations amongst ruins, no less important and vast, and of no less biblical and historical interest than those of Nineveh. I had included, in my original scheme, many remarkable sites both in Chaldæa and Susiana, but, as I have before observed, my limited means did not permit me to carry out my plan to its fullest extent. As the operations at Nimroud were now, however, suspended, I determined to employ fewer men at Kouyunjik, and to devote myself, during the cold weather, to researches amongst the great mounds of Southern Mesopotamia.

My Jebours were now so skilled and experienced in excavating, that I deemed it more economical to take a party of them with me than to engage new workmen on the various sites that I might visit. At the same time, having thus my own men, I should be independent of the people of the country, who might either be unwilling to labor, or might require exorbitant pay. I accordingly selected about thirty of the best Arabs employed in the excavations at Nineveh, to accompany me on the rafts which bore the sculptures.

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Having again entrusted Toma Shisman with the superintendence of the excavations, and given him all necessary directions for carrying on the work, I quitted Mosul on the 18th of October, accompanied by Hormuzd and Mr. Romaine, an English traveller, on his way to India. There were cases enough containing sculptures from Kouyunjik to load a raft of considerable size. Hormuzd, who had met with a severe accident, was placed in a bed on a small *kellek*; Mr. Romaine occupied with me another of the same size. The servants and cooking apparatus were on the large raft, and we all kept close company for convenience and mutual protection.

There were still some arrangements connected with the excavations to be made at Nimroud, and it was not until the 20th that we fairly began our voyage. The navigation of the river as far as Kalah Sherghat was so insecure, that I deemed it prudent, in order to avoid a collision with the Arabs, to engage a Bedouin chief to accompany us. We engaged one Awaythe, a Sheikh of the Fedagha Shammar, to give us his protection until we had passed the danger. Placing one of his sons on his mare, and ordering him to follow us along the banks of the river, he stepped upon my raft, where he spent his time in giving us accounts of wars and ghazous, smoking his pipe and pounding coffee.

We reached Tekrit in three days without accident or adventure. Bedouin tents and moving swarms of men and animals were occasionally seen on the river banks, but under the protection of our Sheikh we met with no hindrance. Tekrit is almost the only permanent settlement of any importance between Mosul and Baghdad. It is now a small town, but was

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once a place of some size and strength. Tekrit is chiefly famous as the birthplace of the celebrated Saleh-ed-din, better known to the English reader as Saladin, the hero of the crusades, and the magnanimous enemy of our Richard Cœur-de-Lion. His father, Ayub, a chief of a Kurdish tribe of Rahwanduz, was governor of its castle for the Seljukian monarchs of Persia. Mosul itself sustained a siege from Saladin, who was repulsed by its Atabeg, or hereditary prince. Military expeditions into the Sinjar and other parts of Mesopotamia were amongst the exploits of this great Mussulman hero.

Tekrit is now inhabited by a few Arabs, who carry on, as raftsmen, the traffic of the river between Mosul and Baghdad.

Nothing marks more completely the results of the unjust and injurious system pursued by the Porte in its Arabian territories than the almost entire absence of permanent settlements and of commercial intercourse on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris. Two of the finest rivers of Asia, reaching into the very heart of the Turkish dominions, spreading fertility through districts almost unequalled for the richness of their soil and for the varied nature of their produce, and navigable one for nearly 850 miles from the sea, the other for nearly 600 miles, are of no account whatever to the State upon which nature has conferred such eminent advantages. The depredations of the Arabs, unchecked by the government, and the rapacity and dishonesty of the Turkish authorities, who levy illegal and exorbitant taxes upon every mode of transit whether by land or water, and who make monopolies of all articles of produce and of merchandise, effectually check the efforts of the natives themselves, by no means deficient in commercial activity and enterprise, to engage in trade, or to navigate the rivers. Even the European merchant, with privileges secured by treaties, and protection afforded by consuls and diplomatic agency, is scarcely able to struggle against the insecurity of the country through which he must convey his goods, and against the black-mail exacted by Arab Sheikhs, secretly encouraged or abetted by the Turkish governors. From the most wanton and disgraceful neglect, the Tigris and Euphrates, in the lower part of their course, are breaking from their natural beds, forming vast marshes, turning fertile districts into a wilderness, and becoming unnavigable to vessels of even the smallest burden.

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The very high-way from Mosul, and, consequently, from the capital, to Baghdad, in order to avoid the restless Bedouin, is carried along the foot of the Kurdish hills, leaving the river, adding many days to the journey, and exposing caravans to long delays from swollen streams. Even this road is no longer secure, for the utter negligence and dishonesty that have of late marked the conduct of the Turkish authorities in Southern Turkey have led to the interruption of this channel of commerce.

The direct road to Baghdad from the north would be across Mesopotamia, and along the banks of the Tigris, through a country uninterrupted by a single stream of any size, or by a single hill. Whilst caravans are now frequently nearly six weeks on their way from Mosul to Baghdad, they would scarcely be as many days by the Desert. A few military posts on the river, a proper system of police, encouragement to the cultivating tribes to settle in villages, and the construction of a common cart-road, would soon lead to perfect security and to the establishment of considerable trade. This is not the place to discuss the relative merits of the various routes to India, but it may be observed that the time is probably not far distant, when a more direct and speedy communication than hitherto exists with that empire, will be sought by the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, where railways and steam navigation can both be advantageously brought into operation. The navigation of the Persian Gulf is, at all times, open and safe; and a glance at the map will show that a line through the Mediterranean, the port of Suedia, Aleppo, Mosul, Baghdad, Busrah, and the Indian Ocean to Bombay is as direct as can well be desired. This must be the second Indian route before extended civilisation and Christianity can afford a reasonable basis for those gigantic schemes which would carry a line of iron through countries almost unknown, and scarcely yet visited by a solitary European traveller.

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Between Tekrit and Baghdad there is much to interest the traveller who for the first time floats down a river winding through the great alluvial plains of Chaldæa. The country has, however, been so frequently described^[187], that I will not detain the reader with more than a general sketch of it. Our rafts glided noiselessly onwards, without furrowing with a ripple the quiet surface of the stream. Leaving Tekrit, we first passed a small whitewashed Mussulman tomb, rising on the left or eastern bank, in a plain that still bears the name of Dura. It was here, as some believe, that "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits and breadth six cubits, and called together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces to its dedication, and that certain Jews would not serve his gods, nor fall down and worship the golden image that he had set up."^[188] It is now a wilderness, with here and there a shapeless mound, the remains of some ancient habitation. The place is not otherwise unknown to history, for it was here that, after the death of the Emperor Julian, his successor Jovian concluded a disgraceful peace with the Persian king Sapore (Shapour), and saved the Roman army by yielding to the enemy the five great provinces to the east of the Tigris. It was here, too, that he crossed the Tigris, a broad and deep stream, and commenced his disastrous retreat through Mesopotamia.

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Not far below, and on the same side of the river, the great canal of the Naharwan, the wonder of Arab geographers, robbed the Tigris of a large portion of its waters.

Below the Naharwan, ruins, walls, and dwellings, built chiefly of large pebbles, united by a strong cement, a mode of construction peculiar to the Sassanian and early Arab periods, stand on the alluvial cliffs. They are called Eski, or old, Baghdad; the Arabs, as usual, assigning a more ancient site to the modern city.

A tower, about two hundred feet high, now rises above the eastern bank of the river. An ascending way winds round it on the outside like the spiral of a screw, reminding the traveller of the common ideal pictures of the Tower of Babel. It marks the site of the ancient city of Samarra, where the Roman army under Jovian rested after marching and fighting a long summer's day. It subsequently became the capital of Motassem Billah, the eighth caliph of the Abbasside dynasty. Weary of the frequent seditions of the turbulent inhabitants of Baghdad, he resolved to change the seat of government, and chose Samarra as his residence. If he did not build, he beautified, the city, and displayed in it great magnificence. The modern town, inhabited by Arabs, consists of a few falling houses surrounded by a mud wall, defended by bastions and towers.

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On both sides of the river, as the raft is carried gently along by the now sluggish current, the traveller sees huge masses of brick work jutting out from the falling banks, or overhanging the precipice of earth which hems in the stream. Here and there one sees the remains of the palaces and castles of the last Persian kings and of the first Caliphs. The place is still called Gadesia or Kadesia, and near it was fought that great battle which gave to the new nation issuing from the wilds of Arabia the dominion of the Eastern world.

Remains of an earlier period are not wanting. A huge mound abutting on the west bank of the river, and still within sight of Samarra, is known to the Arabs as the Sidd-ul-Nimroud, the wall or rampart of Nimroud. The current becomes more gentle at every broad reach, until the raft scarcely glides past the low banks. The water has lost its clearness and its purity; tinged by the alluvial soil it has turned to a pale yellow color. The river at length widens into a noble stream. Groups of half-naked Arabs gather together on the banks to gaze at the travellers. A solitary raft of firewood for Baghdad floats, like ourselves, almost imperceptibly along.

We are now amidst the date groves. If it be autumn, clusters of golden fruit hang beneath the fan-like leaves; if spring, the odor of orange blossoms fills the air. The cooing of the doves that flutter amongst the branches, begets a pleasing melancholy, and a feeling of listlessness and repose.

The raft creeps round a projecting bank and two gilded domes and four stately minarets, all glittering in the rays of an eastern sun, suddenly rise high above the dense bed of palms. They are of the mosque of Kathimain, which covers the tombs of two of the Imaams or holy saints of the Sheeah sect.

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The low banks swarm with Arabs,—men, women, and naked children. Mud hovels screened by yellow mats, and groaning water-wheels worked by the patient ox, are seen beneath the palms. The Tigris becomes wider and wider, and the stream is almost motionless. Circular boats, of reeds coated with bitumen, skim over the water. Horsemen, and riders on white asses,^[189] hurry along the river side. Turks in flowing robes and white turbans, Persians in high black caps and close-fitting tunics, the Bokhara pilgrim in his white head-dress and way-worn garments, the Bedouin chief in his tasseled keffieh and striped aba, Baghdad ladies with their scarlet and white draperies fretted with threads of gold, and their black horsehair veils, concealing even their wanton eyes, Persian women wrapped in their sightless garments, and Arab girls in their simple blue shirts, are all mingled together in one motley crowd. A busy stream of travellers flows without ceasing from the gates of the western suburb of Baghdad to the sacred precincts of Kathimain.

A pine-shaped cone of snowy whiteness rises to the right; near it are one or two drooping palms, that seem fast falling to decay, like the building over which they can no longer throw their shade. This is the tomb of Zobeide, the lovely queen of Haroun-al-Reshid, a name that raises many a pleasant association, and recalls to memory a thousand romantic dreams of early youth.

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We pass the palace of the governor, an edifice of mean materials and proportions. At its windows the pasha himself and the various officers of his household may be seen reclining on their divans, amidst wreaths of smoke. A crazy bridge of boats crosses the stream, and appears to bar all further progress. At length the chains are loosened, two or three of the rude vessels are withdrawn, and the rafts glide gently through. A few minutes more, and we are anchored beneath the spreading folds of the British flag, opposite a handsome building, not crumbling into ruins like its neighbours, but kept in repair with European neatness. A small iron steamer floats motionless before it. We have arrived at the dwelling of the English Consul-general and political agent of the East India Company at Baghdad.

It was early in the morning of the 26th October that I landed at the well-remembered quay of the British residency. In the absence of Colonel Rawlinson, then in England, his political duties had been confided to Captain Kemball, now the East India Company's Resident at Bushire. He received me with great kindness, and I acknowledge with gratitude the hospitality and effective assistance I invariably experienced from him during my sojourn at Baghdad, and my researches in Babylonia.

More than ten years had passed since my first visit to the city. Time had worked its changes amongst those who then formed the happy and hospitable English society of Baghdad. Dr. Ross was no more. In him Arab as well as European, rich as well as poor, Mohammedan as well as Christian, had lost a generous and faithful friend.

Twelve years ago four steamers floated on the Tigris, and were engaged in exploring the then almost unknown rivers of Mesopotamia and Susiana. Their officers formed a small English colony in Baghdad. Three of those vessels had long been withdrawn, one alone having been left to keep up a monthly communication between this city and Busrah. It is to be regretted, however, that a vessel better suited to the navigation of the rivers has not been selected.

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The expedition under Col. Chesney, and the subsequent ascent of the Euphrates, by far the most arduous undertaking connected with its navigation, but accomplished with great skill by Captain Campbell of the East India Company's service, have proved that for ordinary purposes this river in its present condition is not navigable even in the lower part of its course. The neglect to keep up the embankments has increased the obstacles, and it is doubtful whether a steamer of even the smallest useful size, could now find its way through the great marshes that absorb the waters of the Euphrates for nearly 200 miles above its confluence with the Tigris at Korna. The latter river is, for the present, navigable from the Persian Gulf to vessels drawing from three to four feet water almost as far as Tekrit, and probably, for vessels purposely constructed, as far as Nimroud. The usual negligence and indifference of the Turkish government are, however, bringing about the same changes in the course and condition of this stream as in those of the Euphrates.

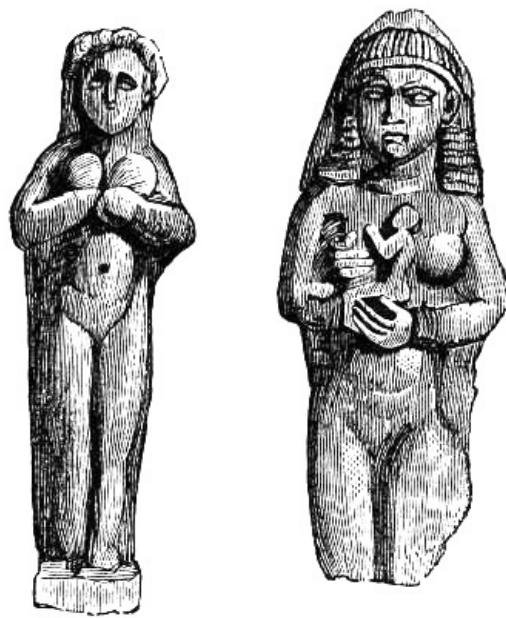
Baghdad, with its long vaulted bazars rich with the produce and merchandise of every clime, its mixed population of Turks, Arabs, Persians, Indians, and men of all Eastern nations, its palm groves and gardens, its painted palaces and unsightly hovels, its present misery and its former magnificence, have been so frequently described, that I will not detain the reader with any minute account of this celebrated city. Tyranny, disease, and inundations have brought it very low. Nearly half of the space inclosed within its walls is now covered by heaps of ruins, and the population is daily decreasing, without the hope of change. During my residence in Baghdad no one could go far beyond the gates without the risk of falling into the hands of wandering Arabs, who prowled unchecked over the plains, keeping the city itself almost in a continual state of siege. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the importance of its position is so great that Baghdad must at all times command a considerable trade. It is a link between the East and the West; it is the store-house from which the tribes of the Desert obtain their clothing and their supplies, and it is the key to the holy places annually sought by thousands upon thousands of Persian pilgrims of the Sheeah sect.[190]

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The only remains of the Babylonian period hitherto discovered within the city walls are the ruins of an enormous drain or subterranean passage, built of large square bricks bearing the name of Nebuchadnezzar; the lofty pile of sundried bricks, intermixed with layers of reeds, called Akker-Kuf, which now rises in the midst of a marsh to the west of the Tigris, about four or five miles from the city gates, has frequently been described. During my visit to Baghdad it was not easy to reach this ruin on account of the swamp, and as it is merely a solid mass of mud masonry, excavations in it would scarcely have led to results of any interest or importance.

I found the country around Baghdad so overrun with Bedouins and other tribes in open revolt against the government, that it was some time before I could venture to leave the city for the ruins of Babylon. Not to lose time, I employed the Jebours who had accompanied me from Mosul in excavating some mounds not far from the gates of the city, on the eastern bank of the Tigris. The largest was called Tel Mohammed, and was about four miles from Baghdad, near the Arab village of Gherara. The only objects of any interest discovered there were several hollow bronze balls, with the name of a king engraved upon them in Babylonian cuneiform characters; a few rude images of the Assyrian Venus in baked clay, such as are found in most ruins of the same period; a pair of bronze ankle-rings, some terracotta vases, and other relics of the same nature. Foundations in brick masonry were also uncovered, but there were no traces of sculpture or inscriptions.

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Figures of Assyrian Venus in baked Clay.

It was not until the 5th of December that I was able to leave Baghdad. I had been struggling with my old enemy, intermittent fever, and the surrounding country was still in the hands of the Arabs, two reasons for remaining within the gates. At length Abde Pasha, the governor of the province, placed himself at the head of his troops, and marched against the rebellious tribes. Before beginning his campaign, however, he had to dam the mouth of a large canal called the Hindiyah, in order to drain the vast marshes to the west of Babylon. Into these inaccessible swamps the Arabs had driven their buffaloes, and there they defied the Turkish troops.

Before going to Hillah I determined to visit the governor, and to make acquaintance with several Sheikhs of the southern tribes friendly to the Turkish government who were in his camp. I accordingly left Baghdad, accompanied by M. Aristarki, an accomplished Greek gentleman in the service of the Porte, and by one Ahmed-al-Khod, a highly intelligent, active and faithful Arab of the tribe of the Agayl, who had long been in the service of Captain Jones. His acquaintance with the country, and his connection by marriage with Ferhan the Shammar chief, rendered him a very useful guide and companion in a journey through the Desert.

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Leaving Baghdad, after fording ditches and wading through water and deep mud, in three hours' time we came to the caravanserai of Khan-i-Zad, where we found Timour Mirza, one of the exiled Persian princes. He was surrounded by hawks of various kinds standing on perches fixed in the ground, and by numerous attendants, each bearing a falcon on his wrist. Amongst his own countrymen and the Arabs the prince held the first place as a sportsman; his gun was unerring in its aim, his falcons were unequalled for their training, and he knew every hunting-ground within many days' journey of Baghdad. He was no less famed for courage in war than for skill in the chase, and his exploits in both are equally notorious among the tribes of Mesopotamia.

The plains between Khan-i-Zad and the Euphrates are covered with a perfect network of ancient canals and watercourses; but "a drought is upon the waters of Babylon, and they were dried."^[191] Their lofty embankments, stretching on every side in long lines until they are lost in the hazy distance, or magnified by the mirage into mountains, still defy the hand of time, and seem rather the work of nature than of man. The face of the country, too, is dotted with mounds and shapeless heaps, the remains of ancient towns and villages. A long ride of ten hours through this scene of solitude and desolation brought us to the tents of the Pasha of Baghdad, pitched on the western bank of the Euphrates, below the village of Musseyiyib, and on the inlet of the Hindiyah canal. A string of boats had been placed across the river to connect the camp of the governor with Baghdad. As we approached we heard a loud hum of human voices; but the whole encampment was concealed by dense clouds of dust. Once over the bridge we found ourselves in the midst of a crowd of Turkish soldiers, Arabs, and workmen of every kind hurrying to and fro in wild disorder; some bearing earth and mud in baskets, or in their cloaks, others bending under the weight of bundles of brushwood, mats, and ropes. Women and girls were mingled with the men, and as they labored they chanted in a monotonous tone verses on the Pasha and their chiefs, improvised for the occasion.

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This busy throng was building up the dam which was to shut out the waters of the Euphrates from the canal, dry the marshes, and bring the rebellious tribes to obedience. The nature of the materials and of the work did not, however, promise a very favorable or speedy result. They had indeed no sooner raised half their frail barrier of earth and fascines, than the impetuous current washed away in a night the fruits of a month's toil. The Pasha had

summoned to his aid all the tribes that still owned his authority; his tents were crowded with Arab Sheikhs from the plains, and Kurdish Beys from the mountains. About two thousand regular troops and a large body of irregular horse and foot completed the motley army he had gathered round him at the Hindiyah.

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I spent the following day with Abde Pasha, who was an ardent sportsman, and entertained me with hawking. The Arab and Kurdish chiefs, who were in his camp, were summoned at dawn to accompany him. We formed altogether a very gay and goodly company. Bustards, hares, gazelles, francolins, and several wild animals abounded in the jungle and the plains, and before we returned in the afternoon scarcely a horseman was without some trophy of the chase dangling from his saddle.

The hawk most valued by Eastern sportsmen is the *Shaheen*, a variety of the northern peregrine falcon, and esteemed the most noble of the race. Although the smallest in size, it is celebrated for its courage and daring, and is constantly the theme of Persian verse. Those from the Gebel Shammar, in Nedjd, are the most prized, but being only brought by occasional pilgrims from Mecca, are very rare. The next best are said to come from Tokat, in Asia Minor. The Shaheen should be caught and trained when young. It strikes its quarry in the air, and may be taught to attack even the largest eagle.

The next in value is the *Balaban*, which can be trained to strike its quarry either in the air or on the ground. It is found in the neighbourhood of Baghdad and in other parts of Mesopotamia; is caught and trained when full grown, and is flown at gazelles, hares, cranes, bustards, partridges, and francolins.

The *Baz* and *Shah Baz* (? *Astur palumbarius*, the goshawk, and the *Falco lanarius*) is remarkable for the beauty of its speckled plumage and for its size. It strikes in the air and on the ground, and, if well trained, may take cranes and other large game.

The *Chark* (? *Falco cervicalis*), the usual falcon of the Bedouins, always strikes its quarry on the ground, except the eagle, which it may be trained to fly at in the air. It is chiefly used for gazelles and bustards, but will also take hares and other game.

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The bird usually hawked by the Arabs is the middle-sized bustard, or houbara. It is almost always captured on the ground, and defends itself vigorously with wings and beak against its assailant, which is often disabled in the encounter. The falcon is generally trained to this quarry with a fowl. The method pursued is very simple. It is first taught to take its raw meat from a man, or from the ground, the distance being daily increased by the falconer. When the habit is acquired, the flesh is tied to the back of a fowl; the falcon will at once seize its usual food, and receives also the liver of the fowl, which is immediately killed. A bustard is then, if possible, captured alive, and used in the same way. In a few days the training is complete, and the hawk may be flown at any large bird on the ground.

The falconry, however, in which Easterns take most delight, is that of the gazelle. For this very noble and exciting sport, the falcon and greyhound must be trained to hunt together by a process unfortunately somewhat cruel. In the first place, the bird is taught to eat its daily ration of raw meat fastened on the stuffed head of a gazelle. The next step is to accustom it to look for its food between the horns of a tame gazelle. The distance between the animal and the falconer is daily increased, until the hawk will seek its meat when about half a mile off. A greyhound is now loosed upon the gazelle, the falcon being flown at the same. When the animal is seized, which of course soon takes place, its throat is cut, and the hawk is fed with a part of its flesh. After thus sacrificing three gazelles, the education of the falcon and greyhound is declared to be complete. The chief art in training is to teach the two to single out the same gazelle, and the dog not to injure the falcon when struggling on the ground with the quarry. The greyhound, however, soon learns to watch the movements of its companion, without whose assistance it could not capture its prey.

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The falcon, when loosed from its jesses, flies steadily and near the ground towards the retreating gazelles, and marking one, soon separates it from the herd. It then darts at the head of the affrighted animal, throws it to the ground, or only checks it in its rapid course. The greyhound rarely comes up before the blow has been more than once repeated. The falconer then hastens to secure the quarry. Should the dog not succeed in capturing the gazelle after it has been struck for the third or fourth time, the hawk will generally sulk and refuse to hunt any longer. I once saw a very powerful falcon belonging to Abde Pasha hold a gazelle until the horsemen succeeded in spearing the animal. The fleetness of the gazelle is so great, that, without the aid of the hawk, very few dogs can overtake it, unless the ground be heavy after rain.

The pursuit of the gazelle with the falcon and hound over the boundless plains of Assyria and Babylonia is one of the most exhilarating and graceful of sports, displaying equally the noble qualities of the horse, the dog, and the bird.

The time of day best suited for hawking is very early in the morning, before the eagles and kites are soaring in the sky. The falcon should not be fed for several hours before it is taken to the chase. When not hunting, the Arabs give it meat only once a day. Some hawks require to be hooded, such as the Chark and the Shaheen; others need no covering for the eyes. The hood is generally made of colored leather, with eyes worked on it in beads, and gold and variegated threads. Tassels and ornaments of various kinds are added, and the great chiefs

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frequently adorn a favourite bird with pearls and precious stones. To the legs are sometimes fastened small bells. Few hawks will return to the falconer without the lure, which consists of the wing of a bustard or fowl, or of a piece of meat attached to a string, and swung round in the air. The Eastern huntsman has a different call for each variety of falcon. A good chark will sometimes take as many as eight or ten bustards or five or six gazelles in the course of a morning.

I have introduced these remarks on falconry, founded on personal experience, as this noble science is probably of the greatest antiquity, and is still the favorite pursuit of the Eastern warrior.

Before leaving the camp I obtained letters to the principal chiefs of the southern tribes from the Pasha as well as from Wadi, the Sheikh of the Zobeide, and other influential Sheikhs. After riding about four hours we perceived a huge hill to the south. As we drew nearer, its flat table-like top and perpendicular sides, rising abruptly from an alluvial plain, showed that it was the work of man, and not a natural elevation. At length we could plainly distinguish around it great embankments, the remains of walls and canals. Gradually, as the caravan slowly advanced, the ruin assumed a definite shape. It was the mound of Babel, better known to travellers as the Mujelibé, a name not now given to it by the Arab inhabitants of the surrounding country.

This is the first great ruin seen on approaching ancient Babylon from the north. Beyond it long lines of palms hem in the Euphrates, which now winds through the midst of the ancient city. To the vast mound of Babel succeed long undulating heaps of earth, bricks, and pottery. A solitary mass of brickwork, rising from the summit of the largest mound, marks the remains known to the Arabs as the "Mujelibé," or the "overturned."^[192]

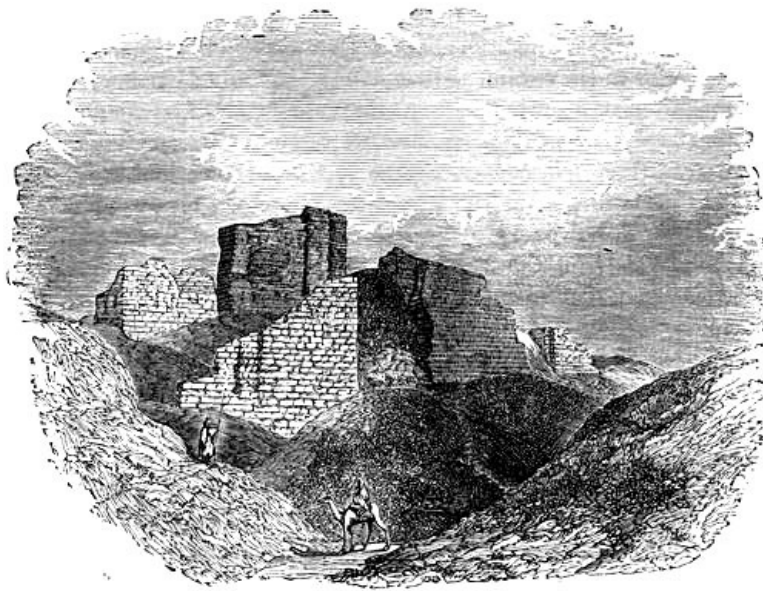
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Other shapeless heaps of rubbish cover for many an acre the face of the land. On all sides, fragments of glass, marble, pottery, and inscribed brick are mingled with that peculiar nitrous and blanched soil, which, bred from the remains of ancient habitations, checks or destroys vegetation, and renders the site of Babylon a naked and hideous waste. Owls start from the scanty thickets, and the foul jackal skulks through the furrows. Truly "the glory of kingdoms and the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency is as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. Wild beasts of the desert lie there; and their houses are full of doleful creatures; and owls dwell there, and satyrs dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces," for her day has come.^[193]

A few black tents and flocks of sheep and camels were scattered over the yellow plain. They belonged chiefly to the Zobeide, an ancient tribe, renowned in the history of the conquering Arabs under their first caliphs, and now pasturing their flocks in the wilds of Babylonia.^[194] From Amran, the last of the great mounds, a broad and well-trodden track winds through thick groves of palms. About an hour's ride beneath a pleasant shade brings the traveller to the falling gateway of the town of Hillah. A mean bazar, crowded with Arabs, camels, and asses, leads to a bridge of boats across the Euphrates. The principal part of the town, containing the fort and the residence of the governor, is on the opposite side of the river. We turned off, however, to the left, as our quarters had been made ready on the western bank. A party of irregular troops sent out to meet me, conducted my caravan to a spacious house standing on the very edge of the stream, and belonging to one of the principal families of the place. It had once contained rich furniture, and handsomely decorated rooms in the Persian style, but was now fast falling into utter ruin. The cold wind whistled through the rotten wooden panels of the windows, for there was no glass, and the crumbling ceiling and floor threatened to give way together. In this frail dwelling we prepared to pass a part of our winter in Babylonia.

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The Mujelibé or Kasr (from Rich).

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHIEFS OF HILLAH.—PRESENT OF LIONS.—THE SON OF THE GOVERNOR.—DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN.—ZAID.—THE RUINS OF BABYLON.—CHANGES IN THE COURSE OF THE EUPHRATES.—THE WALLS.—VISIT TO THE BIRS NIMROUD.—DESCRIPTION OF THE RUIN.—VIEW FROM IT.—EXCAVATIONS AND DISCOVERIES IN THE MOUND OF BABEL.—IN THE MUJELIBÉ OR KASR.—THE TREE ATHELÉ.—EXCAVATIONS IN THE RUIN OF AMRAN.—BOWLS, WITH INSCRIPTIONS IN HEBREW AND SYRIAC CHARACTERS.—THE JEWS OF BABYLONIA.

My first care on arriving at Hillah was to establish friendly relations with the principal inhabitants of the town as well as with the Turkish officer in command of the small garrison that guarded its mud fort. Osman Pasha, the general, received me with courtesy and kindness, and during the remainder of my stay gave me all the help I could require. On my first visit he presented me with two lions. One was nearly of full size, and was well known in the bazars and thoroughfares of Hillah, through which he was allowed to wander unrestrained. He was accustomed to help himself at the stalls of the butchers, and from the wicker boats of the fishermen; and when full, he allowed the boys to play their pranks upon him. He was taller and larger than a St. Bernard dog, and, like the lion, generally found on the banks of the rivers of Mesopotamia, was without the dark and shaggy mane of the African species. The other lion was but a cub, and had recently been found by an Arab in the Hindiyah marshes. Unfortunately it fell ill of the mange, to which the animal when confined is very liable, and soon after died. The other was too old to be sent to England by land, and I was thus unable to procure specimens for this country of the Babylonian lion, which has not, I believe, been seen in Europe.

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The Mudir, or governor of Hillah, was Shabib Agha, the head of one of the principal families of the town. He claimed a kind of hereditary right to this office. He was aged and infirm, suffering from asthma, and little able to manage public affairs, which were chiefly confided to his youngest and favorite son, a boy of about twelve years old. It was with this child that, in common with the inhabitants of Hillah, I transacted business. He received and paid visits with wonderful dignity and decorum. His notes and his inquiries after my health and wants were couched in the most eloquent and suitable terms. He showed a warm and affectionate interest in my welfare and in the success of my undertakings which was quite touching. Every morning he crossed the river with a crowd of secretaries, slaves, and attendants, to ascertain by personal inspection whether I needed any help. He was a noble boy, with black sparkling eyes, and a bright olive complexion. He wore the long silken robes of a town Arab, with the fringed keffieh or striped headkerchief of the Bedouin falling over his shoulders. On the whole, he made as good and active a governor as I have often met with in an Eastern town, and was an instance of that precocity which is frequently seen in Eastern children. A cordial friendship was soon established between us, and, during my stay at Hillah, Azeez Agha, for such was his name, was my constant guest.

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From the principal people of Hillah, as well as from Shabib Agha (the father of Azeez), I received every help. Like most towns in this part of Turkey, it is peopled by Arabs, once

belonging to different tribes, but now forgetting their clanships in a sedentary life. They maintain, however, a friendly intercourse with the Bedouins and with the wild inhabitants of the marshes, being always ready to unite with them in throwing off their obedience to the Sultan, and frequently maintaining for some time their independence.

At the time of my visit, its inhabitants were anxiously waiting the result of the expedition of Abde Pasha against the rebellious tribes. Their allegiance to the Turkish governor and the consequent payment of taxes depended upon its success. If the Pasha were beaten they would declare openly in favor of the Arabs, with whom, it was suspected, they were already in communication. The Hindiyah marshes are within sight of the town, and the Kazail (the tribe that dwell in them) ravaged the country to its gates. I was consequently unable to do more than visit the celebrated ruin of the Birs Nimroud. To excavate in it in the then disturbed state of the country was impossible.

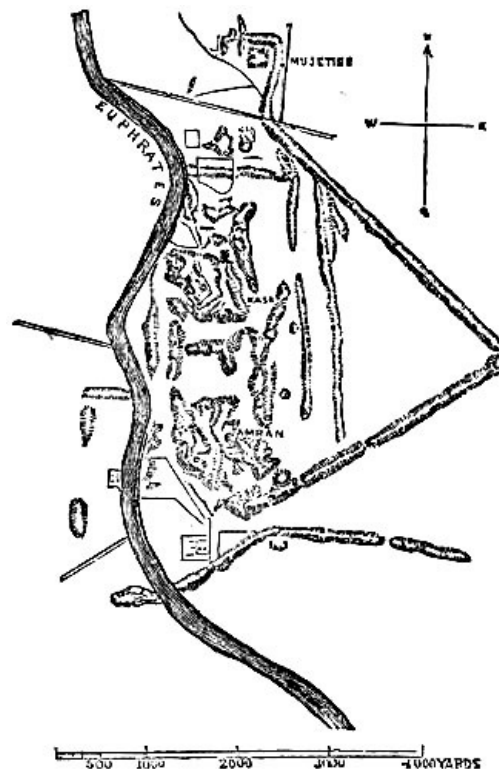
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Hillah may contain about eight or nine thousand inhabitants. The Euphrates flows through the town, and is about two hundred yards wide and fifteen feet deep; a noble stream, with a gentle current, admirably fitted for steam navigation. The houses, chiefly built of bricks taken from the ruins of ancient Babylon, are small and mean. Around the town, and above and below it for some miles, are groves of palm trees, forming a broad belt on both sides of the river. In the plain beyond them a few canals bear water to plots cultivated with wheat, barley and rice.

Amongst the inhabitants of Hillah with whom I became acquainted was one Zaid, a Sheikh of the Agayl, a very worthy, hospitable fellow. He lived in Hillah, where his house, open to every traveller, was a place of meeting for the Arabs of the Desert from Nejd to the Sinjar. To keep up this unbounded hospitality he had a date grove and a few sheep, and cultivated a little land outside the walls of the town. He was thus supplied with nearly all that was necessary for an Arab entertainment.[195] He usually accompanied me in my expeditions, and proved an invaluable guide. With one Ali, also a chief of the Agayl, a man of wit and anecdote, though somewhat of a buffoon, and with other Sheikhs, he usually spent the evening with me, relating Arab stories, and describing distant regions and tribes, until the night was far spent.

Having thus established relations with the principal inhabitants of the town, who could assist or interrupt me, as they were well or ill disposed, I could venture to commence excavations in the most important ruins on the site of Babylon. Half concealed among the palm trees on the eastern banks of the Euphrates above Hillah, are a few hamlets belonging to Arabs, who till the soil. From them I was able to procure workmen, and thus to make up, with the addition of my Jebours, several parties of excavators. They were placed under the superintendence of Latiff Agha and an intelligent Chaldæan Christian of Baghdad, who had entered my service.

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Plan of Part of the Ruins of Babylon on the Eastern Bank of the Euphrates.

The ruins of Babylon have been frequently described[196], so that I shall here only give a

general sketch of them, without entering into accurate details of measurements and distances; at the same time referring my reader to the accompanying plan, which will enable him to understand the position of the principal mounds.

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The road from Baghdad to Hillah crosses, near the village of Mohawill, a wide and deep canal still carrying water to distant gardens. On the southern bank of this artificial stream is a line of earthen ramparts, which are generally believed to be the most northern remains of the ancient city of Babylon. From their summit the traveller scans a boundless plain, through which winds the Euphrates, with its dark belt of evergreen palms. Rising in the distance, high above all surrounding objects, is the one square mound, in form and size more like a natural hill than the work of men's hands. This is the first great ruin to the east of the river, and the Arab, as I have said, names it "Babel."

The traveller, before reaching this ruin, still about four miles distant, follows a beaten track winding amidst low mounds, and crossing the embankments of canals long since dry, or avoiding the heaps of drifted earth which cover the walls and foundations of buildings. Some have here traced the lines of the streets, and the divisions between the inhabited quarters of ancient Babylon. As yet no traces whatever have been discovered of that great wall of earth rising, according to Herodotus, to the height of 200 royal cubits, and no less than fifty cubits broad; nor of the ditch that encompassed it. The mounds seem to be scattered without order, and to be gradually lost in the vast plains to the eastward.

But southward of Babel, for the distance of nearly three miles, there is almost an uninterrupted line of mounds, the ruins of vast edifices, collected together as in the heart of a great city. They are inclosed by earthen ramparts, the remains of a line of walls which, leaving the foot of Babel, stretched inland about two miles and a half from the present bed of the Euphrates, and then turning nearly at right angles completed the defences on the southern side of the principal buildings that mark the site of Babylon, on the eastern bank of the river. Between its most southern point and Hillah, as between Mohawill and Babel, can only be traced low heaps and embankments, scattered irregularly over the plain.

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It is evident that the space inclosed within this continuous rampart, could not have contained the whole of that mighty city, whose magnificence and extent were the wonder of the ancient world. The walls of Babylon, according to Herodotus, measured 120 stadia on each side, and formed a perfect square of 480 stadia, or nearly sixty miles. Several later writers have repeated his statement. Strabo and Diodorus Siculus have however reduced the circuit of the city to 385 and 360 stadia; and such, according to Clitarchus, were its dimensions when it yielded to Alexander.

The existing remains within the rampart agree as little in form as in size with the descriptions of Babylon; for the city was a perfect square. Mr. Rich, in order to explain these difficulties, was the first to suggest that the vast ruin to the west of the Euphrates, called the Birs Nimroud, should be included within the limits of Babylon. There is no doubt that, by imagining a square large enough to include the smaller mounds scattered over the plains from Mohawill to below Hillah on one side of the river, and the Birs Nimroud at its south-western angle on the other, the site of a city of the dimensions attributed to Babylon might be satisfactorily determined. But then it must be assumed, that neither the outer wall nor the ditch so minutely described by Herodotus ever existed.

According to the united testimony of ancient authors, the city was divided by the Euphrates into two parts. The principal existing ruins are to the east side of the river; there are very few remains to the west, between Hillah and the Birs Nimroud. Indeed, in some parts of the plain, there are none at all. This fact might, to a certain extent, be explained in the following manner. To this day the Euphrates has a tendency to change its course and to lose itself in marshes *to the west* of its actual bed. We find that the low country on that side was subject to continual inundations from the earliest periods, and that, according to a tradition, Semiramis built embankments to restrain the river.

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The changes in its course to which the Euphrates was thus liable, appear only to have taken place *to the west* of its present bed. After the most careful examination of the country, I could find no traces whatever of its having at any time flowed much further than it now does to the east, although during unusual floods it occasionally spreads over the plain on that side. The great mounds still rising on the eastern bank prove this. Supposing, therefore, the river from different causes to have advanced and receded during many centuries, between the Hindiyah marshes and its present channel, it will easily be understood how the ruins, which may once have stood on the western bank, have gradually been washed away, and how the existing flat alluvial plain has taken their place. In this manner the complete disappearance of the principal part of the western division of the city may, I think, be accounted for.

It is more difficult to explain the total absence of all traces of the external wall and ditch so fully and minutely described by Herodotus and other ancient writers, and, according to their concurrent accounts, of such enormous dimensions. If a vast line of fortifications, with its gates, and equidistant towers, all of stupendous height and thickness, did once exist, it is scarcely to be believed that no part whatever of it should now remain. Darius and other conquerors, it is true, are said to have pulled down and destroyed these defences; but it is surely impossible that any human labor could have obliterated their very traces. Even supposing that the ruins around Hillah do not represent the site of ancient Babylon, there

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are no remains elsewhere in Mesopotamia to correspond with those great ramparts. If there had been, they could not have escaped the researches of modern travellers.

But Herodotus states that, in the midst of each division of the city, there was a circular space surrounded by a lofty wall: one contained the royal palace; the other, the temple of Belus. There can be little difficulty in admitting that the mounds within the earthen rampart on the eastern bank of the river might represent the first of these fortified inclosures, which we know to have been on that side of the Euphrates. It is not impossible, as Rich has suggested, that the Birs Nimroud—around which—as it will be seen—there are still the traces of a regular wall, may be the remains of the second; or that the gradual changes in the course of the river just described, may have completely destroyed all traces of it.

It may be inferred, I think, from the descriptions of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, that Babylon was built on the same general plan as Nineveh. It must not be forgotten, also, that the outer walls of Nineveh as well as those of Babylon have entirely disappeared. Are we to suppose that the historians in their descriptions confounded them with those surrounding the temples and palaces; and that these exterior fortifications were mere ramparts of mud and brushwood, such as are still raised round modern Eastern cities? Such defences, when once neglected, would soon fall to dust, and leave no traces behind. I confess that I can see no other way of accounting for the entire disappearance of these exterior walls.[197]

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I will now describe the results of my researches amongst the ruins near Hillah. Parties of workmen were placed at once on the two most important mounds, the Babel of the Arabs (the Mujelibé of Rich) and the Mujelibé (the Kasr of the same traveller). I was compelled, as I have stated, to abandon my plan of excavating in the Birs Nimroud. This great pile of masonry is about six miles to the south-west of Hillah. It stands on the very edge of the vast marsh, formed by the waters of the Hindiyah canal, and by the periodical floods of the Euphrates. The plain between it and the town is, in times of quiet, under cultivation, and is irrigated by a canal derived from the Euphrates near the village of Anana.

Shortly after my arrival at Hillah I visited the Birs Nimroud, accompanied by Zaid, and a party of well-armed Agayls. This was unfortunately the only opportunity I had of examining these remarkable ruins during my residence in Babylonia.[198] The country became daily more disturbed, and no Arabs could be induced to pitch their tents near the mounds, or to work there.

The Birs Nimroud, “the palace of Nimrod” of the Arabs, and “the prison of Nebuchadnezzar” of the Jews; by old travellers believed to be the very ruins of the tower of Babel; by some, again, supposed to represent the temple of Belus, the wonder of the ancient world; and, by others, to mark the site of Borsippa, a city celebrated as the highplace of the Chaldean worship, is a vast heap of bricks, slag, and broken pottery. The dry nitrous earth of the parched plain, driven before the furious south wind, has thrown over the huge mass a thin covering of soil in which no herb or green thing can find nourishment or take root. Thus, unlike the grass-clothed mounds of the more fertile districts of Assyria, the Birs Nimroud is ever a bare and yellow heap. It rises to the height of 198 feet, and has on its summit a compact mass of brickwork, 37 feet high by 28 broad,[199] the whole being thus 235 in perpendicular height. Neither the original form or object of the edifice, of which it is the ruin, have hitherto been determined. It is too solid for the walls of a building, and its shape is not that of the remains of a tower. It is pierced by square holes, apparently made to admit air through the compact structure. On one side of it, beneath the crowning masonry, lie huge fragments torn from the pile itself. The calcined and vitreous surface of the bricks fused into rock-like masses, show that their fall may have been caused by lighting; and, as the ruin is rent almost from top to bottom, early Christian travellers, as well as some of more recent date, have not hesitated to recognise in them proofs of that divine vengeance, which, according to tradition, arrested by fire from heaven the impious attempt of the first descendants of Noah. Even the Jews, as it would appear, from Benjamin of Tudela, at one time identified the Birs Nimroud with the Tower of Babel.

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Whatever may have been the original edifice, of which the Birs Nimroud is the ruin, or whoever its founder, it is certain that as yet no remains have been discovered there more ancient than of the time of Nebuchadnezzar. Every inscribed brick taken from it—and there are thousands and tens of thousands—bear the name of this king. It must, however, be remembered, that this fact is no proof that he actually founded the building. He may have merely added to, or rebuilt an earlier edifice. Thus, although it would appear by the inscriptions from Nimroud, that the north-west palace was originally raised by a king who lived long before him whose name occurs on the walls of that monument, yet not one fragment has been found of the time of that earlier monarch. Such is the case in other Assyrian ruins. It is, therefore, not impossible that at some future time more ancient remains may be discovered at the Birs.

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I will now describe the ruins. It must be first observed, that they are divided into two distinct parts, undoubtedly the remains of two different buildings. A rampart or wall, the remains of which are marked by mounds of earth, appears to have inclosed both of them. To the west of the high mound, topped by the tower-like pile of masonry, is a second, which is larger but lower, and in shape more like the ruins on the eastern bank of the Euphrates. It is traversed by ravines and water-courses, and strewn over it are the usual fragments of stone, brick, and pottery. Upon its summit are two small Mohammedan chapels, one of

which, the Arabs declare, is built over the spot where Nimroud cast the patriarch Abraham into the fiery furnace, according to the common Eastern tradition. Not having been able to excavate in this mound, I could not ascertain whether it covers the remains of any ancient building.

Travellers, as far as I am aware, have hitherto failed in suggesting any satisfactory restoration of the Birs. It is generally represented, without sufficient accuracy, as a mere shapeless mass. But if examined from the summit of the adjoining mound, its outline would at once strike any one acquainted with the ruins to the west of Mosul, described in a former of this work.^[200] The similarity between them will be recognised, and it will be seen that they are all the remains of edifices built upon very nearly, if not precisely, the same plan. The best published representations of the Birs Nimroud appear to me to be those contained in a memoir of that accurate and observing traveller, the late Mr. Rich.

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The mound rises abruptly from the plain on one face, the western, and falls to its level by a series of gradations on the opposite. Such is precisely the case with the ruins of Mokhamour, Abou-Khameera, and Tel Ermah. The brickwork still visible in the lower parts of the mound, as well as in the upper, shows the sides of several distinct stages or terraces. I believe the isolated mass of masonry to be the remains of one of the highest terraces, if not the highest, and the whole edifice to have consisted, on the eastern or south-eastern side, of a series of stages rising one above the other, and, on the western or north-western, of one solid perpendicular wall. The back of the building may have been painted, as, according to Diodorus Siculus,^[201] were the palaces of Babylon, with hunting or sacred scenes, and may have been decorated with cornices or other architectural ornaments. There were no means of ascent to it. Nor was it accessible in any part unless narrow galleries were carried round it at different elevations.

It is probable that the ascents from terrace to terrace consisted of broad flights of steps, or of inclined ways, carried up the centre of each stage. Such we may judge, from the descriptions of Diodorus, was the form of some of the great buildings at Babylon. The ascents to the different terraces of the hanging gardens, he says, were like the gradines of a theatre.^[202] There are certainly traces of them in the mounds in the Desert west of Mosul, if not in the Birs Nimroud. Herodotus states that the temple of Belus at Babylon consisted of a series of towers. His description is not very clear, but it may be inferred that the various parts of the structure were nearly square. The base was undoubtedly so, and so also may have been the upper stories, although generally represented as round. There is nothing in the word used by Herodotus (πύργος) to show that they were circular, and that they were solid masses of masonry appears to me to be evident, for upon the upper one, was constructed the temple of the god. The ascent, too, was on the outside. Without, however, venturing to identify the Birs Nimroud with the ruins of this temple, it may be observed that it is highly probable one uniform system of building was adopted in the East, for sacred purposes, and that these ascending and receding platforms formed the general type of the Chaldæan and Assyrian temples.

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The edifice, of which this remarkable ruin is the remains, was built of kiln-burnt bricks. Fragments of stone, marble, and basalt, scattered amongst the rubbish, show that it was adorned with other materials. The cement by which the bricks were united is of so tenacious a quality, that it is almost impossible to detach one from the mass entire. The ruin is a specimen of the perfection of the Babylonian masonry.

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I will not enter into the many disputed questions connected with the topography of Babylon, nor will I endeavor to identify the various existing ruins with the magnificent edifices described by ancient authors. The subject was fully investigated by the late Mr. Rich, and the published controversy between him and Major Rennell, has left little to be added. A theory, first I believe put forward by Col. Rawlinson, that the ruins around Hillah do not mark the site of the first Babylon, which must be sought for further to the south, as far even as Niffer, has, I presume, been abandoned. There cannot, however, be a doubt that Nebuchadnezzar almost entirely rebuilt the city, and perhaps not exactly on the ancient site; a conjecture, as I have shown, perfectly in accordance with Scripture and with Eastern customs.^[203] An accurate survey of the ruins is now chiefly required. Recent travellers are of opinion that the Birs Nimroud cannot be identified, as conjectured by Rich, with the temple of Belus, but that it marks the site of the celebrated Chaldæan city of Borsippa, which Rich traced four leagues to the south of Hillah, in some mounds called Bursa by the Arabs. Until more authentic information be obtained from inscriptions and actual remains, the question cannot, I think, be considered as settled.

From the summit of the Birs Nimroud I gazed over a vast marsh, for Babylon is made "a possession for the bittern and pools of water."^[204] In the midst of the swamps could be faintly distinguished the Arab settlements which showed the activity of a hive of bees. Light boats were skimming to and fro over the shallow water, whilst men and women urged onwards their flocks and laden cattle. The booming of the cannons of the Turkish army, directed against the fort of Hawaina, resounded in the distance; and the inhabitants of the marsh were already hurrying with their property to safer retreats in anticipation of the fall of their stronghold.

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To the south-west, in the extreme distance, rose the palm-trees of Kifil, casting their scanty shade over a small dome, the tomb of Ezekiel. To this spot annually flock in crowds, as their

forefathers have done for centuries, the Jews of Baghdad, Hillah, and other cities of Chaldæa, the descendants of the captives of Jerusalem, who still linger in the land of their exile. Although tradition alone may place in the neighbourhood of Babylon the tomb of the prophet, yet from a very early period the spot appears to have been sought in pilgrimage by the pious Hebrew. I visited the edifice some years ago. It is now but a plain building, despoiled of the ornaments and manuscripts which it once appears to have contained. Benjamin of Tudela, gives a curious and interesting description of it, which the reader will find well worth examining.[205]

We galloped back from the Birs Nimroud to Hillah, crossing the dreary and deserted plain without meeting any of those marauders who were wandering over the face of the country.

I remained in Hillah until the 19th December, riding every day to the ruins on the eastern bank of the river, and personally superintending the excavations. The first trenches were opened in the great mound of Babel, about five miles from the gate of Hillah, and three quarters of a mile from the river. I sought the subterranean passage opened and described by Mr. Rich, and on removing the rubbish I soon came to "the quadrangular funnel, about thirteen feet square, of burnt brick and bitumen," which he had discovered. After the lapse of forty years, it had been once more completely filled with earth. The workmen again entered the underground chamber in which Mr. Rich found a coffin of wood, containing a skeleton still well preserved.

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Beneath this masonry were found several entire coffins, precisely similar to that discovered by Mr. Rich. They still held skeletons, more or less entire, which fell to pieces as soon as exposed to the air. No relic or ornament had been buried with the bodies. The wood of the coffins was in the last stage of decay, and could only be taken out piecemeal. A foul and unbearable stench issued from these loathsome remains, and from the passages which had become the dens of wild beasts, who had worked their way into them from above. It was almost impossible to stay for many minutes under ground. Even the Arabs were compelled to leave their work after a few days.

On the northern side of the mound, above these places of sepulture, are the remains of a massive wall of sun-dried brick. The masonry is not united by bituminous cement, as in the vaults, but apparently by simple mud, as in modern Arab buildings, and between each course of bricks are spread thin layers of reeds still perfectly preserved.

The coffins discovered at Babel are of a comparatively recent period, and are not pure Babylonian. At the very earliest they may be of the time of the Seleucidæ, but I am inclined to think that they are even of a still later date. It is evident that they were buried after the destruction of the edifice covered by the mound.

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Numerous deep trenches opened on the surface of the mound, and several tunnels carried into its sides at different levels, led to no other discovery than that of numerous relics of a doubtful period, such as are found in large numbers, in a more or less perfect state, amongst all Babylonian ruins, especially after heavy rains have washed away the loose soil, or have deepened the ravines. The most interesting were arrowheads in bronze and iron, small glass bottles, some colored, others ribbed and otherwise ornamented, and vases of earthenware of various forms and sizes, sometimes glazed with a rich blue color. These, and in general what travellers have found, may be set down as of the time of the Greek occupation, and some as late as the sixth or seventh century of the Christian era.



Jug of Soapstone, from the Mound of Babel.

At Babel was also found, at some depth below the surface, a curious jug, which I should have been inclined to believe altogether modern, had there not been one nearly similar in form, and of the same substance, in Mr. Rich's collection in the British Museum, and consequently, it may be presumed, obtained from the same ruins. It is of soapstone, rudely carved and ornamented, and resembles in shape the vessels still used by the Arabs for ablutions.

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Scattered over the mound, and at a little depth beneath the surface, were numerous bricks, bearing the usual superscription of Nebuchadnezzar. No ancient masonry was, however, discovered, from which these bricks had been detached.

It was thus evident that the remains of the original edifice, if any still existed, were to be sought far beneath the surface, and I accordingly opened tunnels at the very foot of the mound nearly on a level with the plain. A few days labor enabled me to ascertain that we had at last found the ancient building. On the eastern side the workmen soon reached solid piers and walls of brick masonry, buried under an enormous mass of loose bricks, earth, and rubbish. We uncovered eight or ten piers and several walls branching in various directions, but I failed to trace any plan, or to discover any remains whatever of sculptured stone or painted plaster.

During the remainder of my stay in Babylonia, workmen continued to excavate in this part of the mound, uncovering a confused heap of ruins and standing masonry. The enormous accumulation of loose rubbish above them, not a hard compact mass, as at Nineveh, but continually crumbling and falling in, exposed the men to a risk scarcely warranted by the results of their labors. I much doubt whether even more extensive excavations would lead to any important discoveries. It is possible, however, that detached inscriptions or sculptured slabs might be obtained.

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On the western and southern sides of the mound were also discovered, at the very base, remains of solid masonry. The bricks bore the usual superscription of Nebuchadnezzar, and were firmly cemented together with fine white mortar. It is thus evident that a vast edifice once stood either on the level of the plain, or raised upon enormous piers and buttresses of brickwork, and that the tombs, and any traces of building that may exist on or near the present surface of the mound, are of a more recent period. I will not attempt to decide whether Babel be the remains of a great palace of Nebuchadnezzar, of the celebrated hanging gardens, or of a temple.

The only remains of building not covered by soil and sand, but still standing above ground, on the site of Babylon, and part of the ancient city, are about one mile to the south of the mound last described. It is the Kasr, or Palace, of Rich, a name by which it is now generally known to travellers, but the Arabs call it the Mujelibé, or the "overturned." It rises on the river bank, and is about seven hundred yards square. The principal part of this great ruin consists of loose bricks, tiles, and fragments of stone; but nearly in the centre a solid mass of masonry, still entire, and even retaining traces of architectural ornament, protrudes from the confused heap of rubbish. Piers, buttresses, and pilasters may be traced; but the work of destruction has been too complete to allow us to determine whether they belong to the interior or exterior of a palace. I sought in vain for some clue to the general plan of the edifice. Upon nearly every brick is clearly and deeply stamped the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar, and the inscribed face is always placed downwards. This wonderful piece of masonry is so perfect, and of so fresh a pale yellow color, that it seems but the work of yesterday, although it is undoubtedly part of a building which stood in the midst of old Babylon.

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This ruin has for ages been the mine from which the builders of cities rising after the fall of Babylon have obtained their materials. To this day there are men who have no other trade than that of gathering bricks from this vast heap and taking them for sale to the neighbouring towns and villages, and even to Baghdad. There is scarcely a house in Hillah which is not almost entirely built with them; and as the traveller passes through the narrow streets, he sees in the walls of every hovel a record of the glory and power of Nebuchadnezzar.

A large number of the fragments of brick found in this ruin are covered with a thick enamel or glaze. The colors have resisted the effects of time, and preserve their original brightness. Parts of figures and ornaments may still be traced on many specimens. The principal colors are a brilliant blue, red, a deep yellow, white, and black. We learn from ancient authors that the walls of the palaces of Babylon were painted with the figures of men and animals, and there can be no doubt that these enamelled bricks are from the walls of an edifice. Fragments of glass, Babylonian gems and cylinders, small bronze figures, and other relics of this nature are occasionally found on the mound by the Arabs, and are bought by the Jews of Hillah, who sell them again to European travellers.

The huge lion described by Rich still exists half buried in the rubbish. The animal stands over a man with outstretched arms, which has led some imaginative travellers to see in the group a representation of Daniel in the lions' den. The figures are in black basalt, either so barbarously executed as to show very little progress in art, or left unfinished by the sculptor. It would scarcely be worth removal.

Near the northern edge of the ruin is the solitary tree Athelé, well-known to the Arabs, and

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the source of various traditions. It is said to have stood in the hanging gardens of Babylon, and to have been saved by God from the general destruction which overwhelmed the impious city, that Ali might tie his horse to its trunk after the defeat of the enemies of the Prophet in the great battle of Hillah. No other tree of the same kind exists, according to the same tradition, in the whole world. It is, however, I believe, a species of tamarisk, whose long feathery branches tremble in the breeze with a melancholy murmur well suited to the desolate heap over which it may have waved for a thousand years.

It was a hopeless task to excavate in a shapeless heap of rubbish of such vast extent, which had already been explored in every direction. With the exception of the solitary pile of masonry rising in the centre, the ruin consisted of little else than of shattered brickwork. I continued, however, a few of the tunnels already opened, but the falling rubbish, which had more than once overwhelmed the seekers after bricks, soon compelled me to desist. The only relic of any interest I was fortunate enough to discover was a fragment of limestone, on which were parts of two figures, undoubtedly those of gods. The name of one deity is added in Babylonian characters to its sculptured image. It is probably only a small portion of a slab or frieze containing a series of similar figures; but I was unable, after a careful and prolonged search, to find any other pieces. The fragment, however, is interesting, as showing that the Babylonians portrayed their divinities in the same manner as the Assyrians. They wear the same high head-dress ornamented with feathers and rosettes, the long curled hair and beard, and the embroidered garments, and they hold the same staff with a ring as the gods in the rock sculptures of Bavaria.

With the exception of a few rudely engraved gems and enamelled bricks, this was the only relic I obtained from the Mujelibé. [Pg 414]

Excavations were carried on for some days in the smaller mounds scattered over the plain between Babel and the ruin last described, but without any results, except the discovery of the remains of brick masonry, of a few earthen vases, and of some fragments of glass.

The last ruin I examined was a mound of great extent, sometimes called by the Arabs Jumjuma, from a neighbouring village of that name, and sometimes, as stated by Rich, Amran ben Ali, from a Koubbé, or small domed tomb, of a Mohammedan saint on its summit. No masonry is here seen as in the Mujelibé. All remains of buildings, if there be any still existing, are deeply buried beneath the loose nitrous earth. It is traversed by innumerable ravines, and its form and level are equally irregular. I opened trenches in various parts, but could find no traces of an edifice of any kind. Some small objects of considerable interest, were, however, discovered. Although not of the true Babylonian epoch, they are, on more than one account, highly important.

The mound of Amran, as well as nearly all those in Babylonia, had been used as a place of burial for the dead long after the destruction of the great edifices whose ruins it covers. Some specimens of glass, and several terracotta figures, lamps, and jars, dug out of it, are evidently of the time of the Seleucidæ or of the Greek occupation. With these relics were five cups or bowls of earthenware, and fragments of others, covered on the inner surface with letters written in a kind of ink. Similar objects had already been found in other Babylonian ruins. Two from the collection of the late Mr. Stewart had been deposited in the British Museum, and amongst the antiquities recently purchased by the Trustees from Colonel Rawlinson are eight specimens, obtained at Baghdad, where they are sometimes offered for sale by the Arabs; but it is not known from what sites they were brought. The characters upon them are in form not unlike the Hebrew, and on some they resembled the Sabæan and Syriac. These bowls had not attracted notice, nor had the inscriptions upon them been fully examined before they were placed in the hands of Mr. Thomas Ellis, of the manuscript department in the British Museum, a gentleman of great learning and ingenuity as a Hebrew scholar. Mr. E. has succeeded, after much labor, in deciphering the inscriptions. [206] [Pg 415]

Little doubt can, I think, exist as to the Jewish origin of these bowls: and such being the case, there is no reason to question their having belonged to the descendants of those Jews who were carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon and the surrounding cities. These strangers appear to have clung with a tenacity peculiar to their race to the land of their exile. We can trace them about Babylon from almost the time of their deportation down to the twelfth century of the Christian era, when the Hebrew traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, wandered over the regions of the East and among the cities of the captivity to seek the remnant of his ancient nation. During the Persian dominion in Mesopotamia we find them enduring tortures and persecutions rather than help to rebuild a temple dedicated to a false god. [207] In the time of the Roman supremacy in the East they appear to have been a turbulent race, rebelling against their rulers and waging civil war amongst themselves. They had celebrated schools in many cities of Assyria and Chaldæa. [Pg 416]

As early as the third century Hebrew travellers visited Babylon, and some of them have left records of the state of their countrymen. The Babylonian Talmud, compiled in the beginning of the sixth century, contains many valuable notices of the condition of the Jewish colonies in Babylonia, and enumerates more than two hundred Babylonian towns then under the Persian rule, inhabited by Jewish families. In manuscripts of the eighth and ninth centuries we have further mention of these colonies.

In the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela found no less than twenty thousand Jews dwelling

within twenty miles of Babylon, and worshipping in the synagogue, built, according to tradition, by the prophet Daniel himself. In Hillah alone were ten thousand persons and four synagogues, and he gives the number of families and of their places of worship, in every town he visited, keeping during his journey an exact daily itinerary, which includes nearly all the stations on the modern caravan routes. Allowing for some exaggeration on the part of this traveller, it is still evident that a very considerable Jewish population lived in the cities of Babylonia. It has greatly diminished, and in some places has entirely disappeared. A few families still linger at Hillah, and in Baghdad the principal native trade and money transactions are carried on by Jews, who are the bankers and brokers of the governors of the city, as they no doubt anciently were of the Abasside Caliphs.

According to their own tradition these Hebrew families were descended from the Jews of the captivity. They still preserved their pedigrees, and traced their lineage to the princes and prophets of Judah. Their chief resided at Baghdad, and his title was "Lord Prince of the Captivity." He was lineally descended, according to his people, from king David himself. Even Mohammedans acknowledged his claim to this noble birth, and called him "Our Lord, the Son of David." His authority extended over the countries of the East as far as Thibet and Hisdostan. He was treated on all occasions with the greatest honor and respect, and when he appeared in public he wore robes of embroidered silk, and a white turban encircled by a diadem of gold.[208]

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We may then safely conclude, that these earthen bowls belonged to Jews of Babylonia and Chaldæa. Similar relics have been found as I have stated in many ruins near Babylon. I discovered an entire bowl, as well as many fragments, at Niffer. Nearly at the same time, several were dug out of a mound about half-way between Baghdad and Hillah, but they were unfortunately dispersed or destroyed before I could obtain possession of them. On all these sites during the first centuries of the Christian era, dwelt Jewish families.

As no date whatever is found in the inscriptions, it is difficult to determine the exact time when they were written. We must endeavour to form some opinion upon such internal evidence as they may afford. Mr. Ellis remarks, that, "as this is the first time anything of the kind has been examined in Europe, he can only hazard a conjecture from the forms of the letters, which are, certainly, the most ancient known specimens of the Chaldæan, and appear to have been invented for the purpose of writing the cuneiform character in a more cursive and expeditious manner." [209] In support of this conjecture he cites the language of the Assyrian inscriptions as closely resembling that on the bowls. The relics, however, are evidently of different dates. The most ancient might be referred to the second or third century before Christ, but may be of a later period. Others are undoubtedly of a more recent date, and might even have been written as late as the fifth century of our era. The Syriac characters on the latter bowl appear to have marks of a Sabæan or Mendeian origin, and on a bowl from Mr. Stewart's collection there is an inscription, unfortunately almost destroyed and no longer decipherable, in that peculiar character still used by the Sabæans of Susiana.

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In the forms of expression and in the names of the angels, these inscriptions bear a striking analogy to the apocryphal book of Enoch, which is supposed to have been written by a Jew of the captivity, shortly before the Christian era. That singular rhapsody also mentions the "sorceries, incantations, and dividing of roots and trees," which appear to have been practised by the Jews at that period, and to be alluded to on the bowls.[210]

As to the original use of these vessels it is not improbable, as conjectured by Mr. Ellis, that the writing was to be dissolved in water, to be drunk as a cure against disease, or a precaution against the arts of witchcraft and magic. Similar remedies are still resorted to in the East in cases of obstinate illness, and there are Mullahs who make the preparation of such charms their peculiar profession. The modern inscriptions generally consist of sentences from the Koran, interspersed with various mystic signs and letters. But if such was their object, it is evident that they could not have been used for that purpose, as the writing upon them is perfectly fresh, and it is essential that it should be entirely washed into the water to make the remedy efficacious. As they were found at a considerable depth beneath the surface in mounds which had undoubtedly been used as places of sepulture, I am rather inclined to believe that they were charms buried with the dead, or employed for some purpose at funeral ceremonies, and afterwards placed in the grave.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

STATE OF THE RUINS OF BABYLON.—CAUSE OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF BUILDINGS.—NATURE OF ORIGINAL EDIFICES.—BABYLONIAN BRICKS.—THE HISTORY OF BABYLON.—ITS FALL.—ITS REMARKABLE POSITION.—COMMERCE.—CANALS AND ROADS.—SKILL OF BABYLONIANS

IN THE ARTS.—ENGRAVED GEMS.—
CORRUPTION OF MANNERS, AND CONSEQUENT
FALL OF THE CITY.—THE MECCA PILGRIMAGE.
—SHEIKH IBN RESHID.—THE GEBEL SHAMMAR.
—THE MOUNDS OF EL HYMER.—OF ANANA.

Such then were the discoveries amongst the ruins of ancient Babylon. They were far less numerous and important than I could have anticipated, nor did they tend to prove that there were remains beneath the heaps of earth and rubbish which would reward more extensive excavations. It was not even possible to trace the general plan of any one edifice; only shapeless piles of masonry, and isolated walls and piers, were brought to light—giving no clue whatever to the original form of the buildings to which they belonged. If the tradition be true that Xerxes, to punish the Babylonians and humiliate their priests, ordered them utterly to destroy their temples and other great public edifices, and that Alexander the Great employed 10,000 men in vain to clear away the rubbish from the temple of Belus alone,[211] it is not surprising that with a small band of Arabs little progress should have been made in uncovering any part of the ancient buildings.

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No sculptures or inscribed slabs, the panelling of the walls of palaces, have been discovered amongst the ruins of Babylon as in those of Nineveh. Scarcely a detached figure in stone, or a solitary tablet, has been dug out of the vast heaps of rubbish. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground." [212]

The complete absence of such remains is to be explained by the nature of the materials used in the erection of even the most costly edifices. In the immediate vicinity of Babylon there were no quarries of alabaster, or of limestone, such as existed near Nineveh. The city was built in the midst of an alluvial country, far removed from the hills. Consequently stone for building purposes could only be obtained from a distance. The black basalt, a favorite material amongst the Babylonians for carving detached figures, and for architectural ornaments, as appears from numerous fragments found amongst the ruins, came from the Kurdish mountains, or from the north of Mesopotamia. It was probably floated down the Euphrates and Tigris on rafts from those districts. The Assyrian alabaster could have been brought from Nineveh, and the water communication by the rivers and canals offered great facilities for transport; yet enormous labor and expense would have been required to supply such materials in sufficient quantities to construct an entire edifice, or even to panel the walls of its chambers.

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The Babylonians were, therefore, content to avail themselves of the building materials which they found on the spot. With the tenacious mud of their alluvial plains, mixed with chopped straw, they made bricks, whilst bitumen and other substances collected from the immediate neighborhood furnished them with an excellent cement. A knowledge of the art of manufacturing glaze, and of compounding colors, enabled them to cover their bricks with a rich enamel, thereby rendering them equally ornamental for the exterior and interior of their edifices. The walls of their palaces and temples were also coated, as we learn from several passages in the Bible, with mortar and plaster, which, judging from their cement, must have been of very fine quality. The fingers of the man's hand wrote the words of condemnation of the Babylonian empire "upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace." [213] Upon those walls were painted historical and religious subjects, and various ornaments, and, according to Diodorus Siculus, the bricks were enamelled with the figures of men and animals. Images of stone were no doubt introduced into the buildings. We learn from the Bible that figures of the gods in this material, as well as in metal, were kept in the Babylonian temples. But such sculptures were not common, otherwise more remains of them must have been discovered in the ruins.

On one of the most important Babylonian relics brought to this country we have some highly curious notices of the architecture of the Babylonians. They are contained in tablets inscribed upon a black stone, and divided into ten columns. The inscription commences according to Dr. Hincks, with the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar the Great, whose reign began, it may be inferred from Ptolemy's Canon, B. C. 604. He is called "Nabukodurruchur, king of Babylon, son of Nabubaluchun, king of Babylon." We may infer that his grandfather was not a king from the omission of his name. The subsequent part of the inscription contains no notice of any foreign conquests, but speaks of the building of various temples and palaces in addition to the walls of Babylon and Borsippa. If the tablets could be completely deciphered, and the meaning of many doubtful words accurately ascertained, much information would be obtained relating to Babylonian architecture. The walls were built of burned bricks and bitumen lined with gypsum and other materials. Some seem to have been wainscotted. Over these walls was woodwork, and on the top an awning sustained by poles, like "the white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble," in Ahasuerus' palace at Shushan. [214] Some of the woodwork is said to have been gilt, other parts silvered: and a large portion of it was brought from Lebanon.

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Marduk appears in this inscription as the principal deity of Babylon, holding the place that Ashur does on the monuments of Nineveh. He is called "the great Lord," "Lord of Lord," "Elder of the Gods," &c. Nebu seems to hold the second rank. The king offers him thanksgiving for what he has already done, and prays for his blessing on himself and his house. [215]

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It may be conjectured that in their general plan the Babylonian palaces and temples resembled those of Assyria. We know that the arts, the religion, the customs, and the laws of the two kindred people were nearly identical. They spoke, also, the same language, and used, very nearly, the same written characters. One appears to have borrowed from the other; and, without attempting to decide the question of priority of independent existence as a nation and of civilisation, it can be admitted that they had to a certain extent a common origin, and that they maintained for many centuries an intimate connection. We find no remains of columns at Babylon, as none have been found at Nineveh. If such architectural ornaments were used, they must have been either of wood or of brick. The massy pillars, with Egyptian-like capitals, usually chosen by artists for the restoration of Belshazzar's palaces and temples, are the mere creations of fancy, and are not warranted by any existing remains whatever. The Babylonian column more probably resembled, in form and proportions, that of Nineveh and Persepolis. It may have been a modification of the Assyrian which afterwards gave birth to the Persian, for it was through Babylon that the arts appear to have penetrated partly, if not entirely, into Persia.

Although the building materials thus used in the great edifices of Babylon may seem extremely mean when compared with those employed in the stupendous palace temples of Egypt, and even in the less massive edifices of Assyria, yet the Babylonians appear to have raised, with them alone, structures which excited the wonder and admiration of the most famous travellers of antiquity. The profuse use of color, and the taste displayed in its combination, and in the ornamental designs, together with the solidity and vastness of the immense substructure upon which the buildings proudly stood, may have chiefly contributed to produce this effect upon the minds of strangers. The palaces and temples, like those of Nineveh, were erected upon lofty platforms of brickwork. The origin of Assyrian architecture, which I have elsewhere described,^[216] was especially that of Babylon. The bricks, as in Assyria, were either simply baked in the sun, or were burnt in the kiln. The latter are of more than one shape and quality. Some are square; others are oblong.^[217] Those from the Birs Nimroud are generally of a dark red color, whilst those from the Mujelibé are mostly of a light yellow. Specimens have been frequently brought to this country, and are to be found in many public and private collections. The Babylonian inscribed bricks long excited the curiosity of the learned, and gave rise to a variety of ingenious speculations as to their use and meaning. By some they were believed to be public documents; others saw in the writing dedications to the gods, or registers of gifts to temples. The question has now been entirely set at rest by the discovery made by Dr. Hincks, that almost every brick hitherto obtained from the ruins of Babylon bears the same inscription, with the exception of one or two unimportant words, and that they record the building of the city of Nebuchadnezzar the son of Nabubaluchun (?)

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A few inscribed tablets of stone and baked clay, figures in bronze and terracotta, metal objects of various kinds, and engraved cylinders and gems, have been almost the only undoubted Babylonian antiquities hitherto brought to Europe. Such relics are preserved in many cabinets. The small original collection in the British Museum belonged partly to Sir Robert Ker Porter, and partly to Mr. Rich.

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It may not be out of place to add a few remarks upon the history of Babylon. The time of the foundation of this celebrated city is still a question which does not admit of a satisfactory determination, and into which I will not enter. Some believe it to have taken place at a comparatively recent date; but if, as Egyptian scholars assert, the name of Babylon is found on monuments of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, we have positive evidence of its existence at least in the fifteenth century before Christ.^[218] After the rise of the Assyrian empire, it appears to have been at one time under the direct rule of the kings of Nineveh, and at another to have been governed by its own independent chiefs. Expeditions against Babylonia are recorded in the earliest inscriptions yet discovered in Assyria; and, as it has been seen, even in the time of Sennacherib and his immediate predecessors, large armies were still frequently sent against its rebellious inhabitants. The Babylonian kingdom was, however, almost absorbed in that of Assyria, the dominant power of the East. When this great empire began to decline, Babylon rose for the last time. Media and Persia were equally ready to throw off the Assyrian yoke, and at length the allied armies of Cyaxares and the father of Nebuchadnezzar captured and destroyed the capital of the Eastern world.

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Babylon now rapidly succeeded to that proud position so long held by Nineveh. Under Nebuchadnezzar she acquired the power forfeited by her rival. The bounds of the city were extended; buildings of extraordinary size and magnificence were erected; her victorious armies conquered Syria and Palestine, and penetrated into Egypt. Her commerce, too, had now spread far and wide, from the east to the west, and she became "a land of traffic and a city of merchants."^[219]

But her greatness as an independent nation was short-lived. The neighbouring kingdoms of Media and Persia, united under one monarch, had profited, no less than Babylon, by the ruin of the Assyrian empire, and were ready to dispute with her the dominion of Asia. Scarcely half a century had elapsed from the fall of Nineveh, when "Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldæans, was slain, and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom."^[220] From that time Babylonia sank into a mere province of Persia.

After the defeat of Darius and the overthrow of the Persian supremacy, Babylon opened its gates to Alexander, who deemed the city not unworthy to become the capital of his mighty

empire. On his return from India he wished to rebuild the temple of Belus, which had fallen into ruins, and in that great work he had intended to employ his army, now no longer needed for war. The priests, however, who had appropriated the revenues of this sacred shrine, and feared lest they would have again to apply them to their rightful purposes, appear to have prevented him from carrying out his design.[221]

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The last blow to the prosperity and even existence of Babylon was given by Seleucus when he laid the foundation of his new capital on the banks of the Tigris (B. C. 322). Already Patrocles, his general, had compelled a large number of the inhabitants to abandon their homes, and to take refuge in the Desert, and in the province of Susiana. The city, exhausted by the neighbourhood of Seleucia, returned to its ancient solitude. According to some authors, neither the walls nor the temple of Belus existed any longer, and only a few Chaldeans continued to dwell around the ruins of their sacred edifices.

Still, however, a part of the population appears to have returned to their former seats, for in the early part of the second century of the Christian era we find the Parthian king, Evemerus, sending numerous families from Babylon into Media to be sold as slaves, and burning many great and beautiful edifices still standing in the city.

In the time of Augustus, the city is said to have been entirely deserted, except by a few Jews who still lingered amongst the ruins. St. Cyril, of Alexandria, declares, that in his day, about the beginning of the fifth century, in consequence of the choking up of the great canals derived from the Euphrates, Babylon had become a vast marsh: and fifty years later the river is described as having changed its course, leaving only a small channel to mark its ancient bed. Then were verified the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, that the mighty Babylon should be but "pools of water," "that the sea should come upon her, and that she should be covered with the multitude of the waves thereof." [222]

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In the beginning of the seventh century, at the time of the Arab invasion, the ancient cities of Babylonia were "a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness." Amidst the heaps that marked the site of Babylon herself there rose the small town of Hillah.[223]

Long before Babylon had overcome her rival Nineveh she was famous for the extent and importance of her commerce. No position could have then been more favourable than hers for carrying on a trade with all the regions of the known world. Even only moderate skill and enterprise could scarcely fail to make Babylon, not only the emporium of the Eastern world, but the main link of commercial intercourse between the East and the West.

The inhabitants did not neglect the advantages bestowed upon them by nature. A system of navigable canals that may excite the admiration of even the modern engineer, connected together the Euphrates and Tigris, those great arteries of her commerce. With a skill, showing no common knowledge of the art of surveying, and of the principles of hydraulics, the Babylonians took advantage of the different levels in the plains, and of the periodical rises in the two rivers, to complete the water communication between all parts of the province, and to fertilise by artificial irrigation an otherwise barren and unproductive soil. Alexander, after he had transferred the seat of his empire to the East, so fully understood the importance of these great works, that he ordered them to be cleansed and repaired, and superintended the work in person, steering his boat with his own hand through the channels.

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High-roads and causeways across the Desert united Syria and Palestine with Babylonia. Fortified stations protected the merchant from the wandering tribes of Arabia, walled cities served as resting-places and store-houses, and wells at regular intervals gave an abundant supply of water during the hottest season of the year. One of those highways was carried through the centre of Mesopotamia, and crossing the Euphrates near the town of Anthemusia led into central Syria. A second appears to have left Babylon by the western quarter of the city, and entered Idumæa, after passing through the country of the Nabathæans. Others branched off to Tadmor, and to cities which were built in the midst of the Desert almost solely for purposes of trade.

To the east of Babylonia was the celebrated military and commercial road described by Herodotus. It led from Sardis to Susa in ninety days journey, and was furnished, at intervals of about fifteen miles, with stations and public hostelries, probably resembling the modern caravanserais of Persia.

Merchandise and travellers descended the rivers upon rafts of skins, as well as in boats built of reeds coated with bitumen, or of more solid materials. The land trade was no doubt principally carried on, as at the present day, by caravans of merchants, who loaded their goods on the backs of camels, horses, and asses.

It is difficult to determine to how far the Babylonians may have navigated in vessels the Indian Ocean. Of the various articles of merchandise stored in Babylon, the produce of the islands and shores of the Persian Gulf, and even of India, formed no inconsiderable part. Pearls, from the fisheries of Bahrein, which still supply Arabia, Persia, and Turkey, and perhaps even from Ceylon; cotton, spices, frankincense, precious stones, ivory, ebony, silks, and dyes, were amongst the objects of trade brought to her markets. They could only have been obtained from the southern coasts of Arabia, and directly or indirectly from the Indian peninsula. We learn from the Kouyunjik inscriptions that the people inhabiting the country

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at the mouths of the united waters of the Tigris and Euphrates possessed vessels in which, when defeated by the Assyrians, they took refuge on the sea. The prophet Isaiah also alludes to the ships of the Chaldæans.[224] Timber for shipbuilding could have been floated with ease from the mountains of Armenia to the very quays of Babylon, or to her ports at the head of the Persian Gulf.

A race of dogs, much prized by the Babylonians, was brought from India. A satrap of Babylon is declared to have devoted the revenues of four cities, to the support of a number of these animals. On a small terracotta tablet in the British Museum, from Col. Rawlinson's collection, obtained, I believe, at Baghdad, but probably found in some ancient ruin in the neighbourhood, is the figure of a man leading a large and powerful dog, which has been identified with a species still existing in Thibet.

Tin, cedar-wood, and various articles, were brought from Phœnicia and other parts of Syria, which were in return supplied with the produce of India and the Persian Gulf, through Babylon.[225]

Whilst the Babylonians thus imported the produce of the East and West, they also supplied foreign countries with many valuable articles of trade. Corn, which according to tradition first grew wild in Mesopotamia, and was there first eaten by man, was cultivated to a great extent, and was sent to distant provinces. The Babylonian carpets, silks, and woollen fabrics, woven or embroidered with figures of mythic animals and with exquisite designs, were not less famous for the beauty of their texture and workmanship, than for the richness and variety of their colors. The much-prized Sindones, or flowing garments, were the work of the looms of Babylon even long after she had ceased to be a city.[226]

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The engraved gems and cylinders discovered in the ruins bear ample witness to the skill of the Babylonian lapidaries. Many of these relics exist in European collections, and, during my residence at Hillah, I was able to obtain several interesting specimens from the Arabs, who usually pick them up on the mounds after rain. The most remarkable of them is a cylinder of spotted sienite, upon which are incised seven figures, and a few Babylonian characters. The letters of the inscription are rudely formed, and have not yet been deciphered.

Another interesting gem obtained by me at Babylon is an agate cone, upon the base of which is engraved a winged priest or deity, standing in an attitude of prayer before a cock on an altar. Above this group is the crescent moon. The Hebrew commentators conjecture that Nergal, the idol of the men of Cuth, had the form of a cock.[227]

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The vast trade, that rendered Babylon the gathering-place of men from all parts of the known world, and supplied her with luxuries from the remotest climes, had at the same time the effect of corrupting the manners of her people, and producing that general profligacy and those effeminate customs which mainly contributed to her fall. The description given by Herodotus of the state of the population of the city when under the dominion of the Persian kings, is fully sufficient to explain the cause of her speedy decay and ultimate ruin. The account of the Greek historian fully tallies with the denunciations of the Hebrew prophets against the sin and wickedness of Babylon. Her inhabitants had gradually lost their warlike character. When the Persians broke into their city they were revelling in debauchery and lust; and when the Macedonian conqueror appeared at their gates, they received with indifference the yoke of a new master.

It is not difficult to account for the rapid decay of the country around Babylon. As the inhabitants deserted the city, the canals were neglected. When once those great sources of fertility were choked up, the plains became a wilderness. Upon the waters conveyed by their channels to the innermost parts of Mesopotamia depended not only the harvests, the gardens, and the palm groves, but the very existence of the numerous towns and villages far removed from the river banks. They soon turned to mere heaps of earth and rubbish. Vegetation ceased, and the plains, parched by the burning heat of the sun, were ere long once again a vast arid waste.

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Such has been the history of Babylon. Her career was equally short and splendid; and although she has thus perished from the face of the earth, her ruins are still classic, indeed sacred, ground. The traveller visits, with no common emotion, those shapeless heaps, the scene of so many great and solemn events. In this plain, according to tradition, the primitive families of our race first found a resting-place. Here Nebuchadnezzar boasted of the glories of his city, and was punished for his pride. To these deserted halls were brought the captives of Judæa. In them Daniel, undazzled by the glories around him, remained steadfast to his faith, rose to be a governor amongst his rulers, and prophesied the downfall of the kingdom. There was held Belshazzar's feast, and was seen the writing upon the wall. Between those crumbling mounds Cyrus entered the neglected gates. Those massive ruins cover the spot where Alexander died.

Soon after my arrival at Hillah, the caravan of the Hadj, or annual pilgrimage to Mecca, passed through the town on its way to Baghdad. The holy places had this year been visited by the cholera, and of the many who had crossed the Desert few had survived. In the crowd that had assembled on the high road were mingled scenes of grief and joy. The mournful wail of the women was heard above the merry laugh of those who had again found their friends. The wild Bedouins of Nejd, who had guided and protected the pilgrims during their arduous journey, passed through the throng on their weary dromedaries.

After a lapse of some years the annual hadj from the south of Turkey and Persia had been able to follow the direct road to Mecca across the desert of Nejd and the interior of Arabia. Since, Ibn Reshid, a chief of the Gebel Shammar, has by his courage and abilities acquired the whole of that district; and has rendered himself sufficiently powerful to hold in check the various tribes which surround it. Pilgrims under his protection could, therefore, again venture to take the shortest road to Mecca. He undertook to furnish them with camels, and to answer for their safety from Hillah to the holy cities and back.

The chief punctually fulfilled his engagement, and the caravan I have described was the first that had crossed the Desert for many years without accident or molestation. It was under the charge of Abd-ur-Rahman, a relation of Ibn Reshid. I frequently saw this Sheikh during his short residence at Hillah, and he urged me to return with him to the Gebel Shammar. Zaid and several other Agayls offered to accompany me; and it was with great regret that I felt unable, on various accounts, to undertake a journey into a country so little known, and so interesting, as central Arabia. A better opportunity could scarcely have occurred for entering Nedjd.

Sheikh Abd-ur-Rahman described the Gebel Shammar as abounding in fertile valleys, where the Arabs had villages and cultivated lands. The inhabitants are of the same great tribe of Shammar as those who wander over the plains of Mesopotamia. Suttum told me that his family still possessed their gardens in the hills; and although, from long absence, their produce had been gathered by strangers, yet that he could by law at any time return and claim them.

Ibn Reshid was described to me as a powerful, and for an Arab, an enlightened chief, who had restored security to the country, and who desired to encourage trade and the passage of caravans through his territories. His mares and horses, collected from the tribes of central Arabia, were declared to excel all those of the Desert in beauty and in blood. Hawking and hunting are his favorite amusements, and game abounds in the hills and plains. Amongst the wild animals are lions, leopards, deer, and a kind of ox or large antelope, I could not learn exactly which, called Wothaiyah, said to have long spiral horns, and to be exceedingly fierce and dangerous.

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I was assured that in the Gebel Shammar there are ruins of large cities, attributed by the Arabs to the Jews. Inscriptions in an unknown character are also said to exist on slabs of stone and on rocks. They may be that class called Himyari, found in other parts of the Arabian peninsula.

About two hours and a half, or eight miles to the north-east of Hillah, a mound, scarcely inferior in size to those of Babylon, rises in the plain. It is called El Hymer, meaning, according to the Arabs, the red, from its color. The ruin has assumed a pyramidal form, but it is evidently the remains of a solid square structure, consisting, like the Birs Nimroud, of a series of terraces or platforms. It may be conjectured, therefore, that it was a sacred edifice built upon the same general plan as all the temples of Babylonia and Assyria. The basement or substructure appears to have been of sun-dried brick; the upper part, and probably the casing of the lower, of bricks burnt in the kiln. Many of the latter are inscribed with the name and titles of Nebuchadnezzar. Although the masonry is solid and firmly bound together, it is not united by a white cement like that of the Mujelibé. The same tenacious mud that was used for making the bricks has been daubed, as far as I could ascertain, between each layer. The ruin is traversed like the Birs by square holes to admit air.

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Around the centre structure are scattered smaller mounds and heaps of rubbish, covered with the usual fragments of pottery, glass and bricks.

Opposite to the Mujelibé (or Kasr), on the western bank of the Euphrates, is a village called Anana, and near it a quadrangle of earthen ramparts, like the remains of a fortified inclosure. A large mass of brick masonry is still seen in the river bed when the stream is low. The inhabitants of the village brought me a fragment of black stone with a rosette ornament upon it, very Assyrian in character. With the exception of these remains, and the Birs Nimroud, there are scarcely any ruins of ancient buildings on the Arabian side of the Euphrates.

On the eastern bank low mounds covered with broken pottery and glass are found in almost every direction. One resembles another, and there is nothing either in their appearance or in their contents, as far as they have hitherto been ascertained, deserving of particular description. They only prove how vast and thriving the population of this part of Mesopotamia must at one time have been, and how complete is the destruction that has fallen upon this devoted land.

RUINS IN SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIA.—DEPARTURE FROM HILLAH.—SAND-HILLS.—VILLAGES IN THE JEZIREH.—SHEIKH KARBOUL.—RUINS.—FIRST VIEW OF NIFFER.—THE MARSHES.—ARAB BOATS.—ARRIVE AT SOUK-EL-AFAIJ.—SHEIKH AGAB.—TOWN OF THE AFAIJ.—DESCRIPTION OF THE RUINS OF NIFFER.—EXCAVATIONS IN THE MOUNDS.—DISCOVERY OF COFFINS.—OF VARIOUS RELICS.—MR. LOFTUS' DISCOVERIES AT WURKA.—THE ARAB TRIBES.—WILD BEASTS.—LIONS.—CUSTOMS OF THE AFAIJ.—LEAVE THE MARSHES.—RETURN TO BAGHDAD.—A MIRAGE.

The south of Mesopotamia abounds in extensive and important ruins, of which little is known. The country around them is inhabited by Arabs of the tribes of Rubbiyah and Ahl Maidan, notorious for their lawlessness, and scarcely more intelligent or human than the buffaloes which they tend. One or two travellers have passed these remains of ancient civilisation when journeying through the Jezireh, or have received descriptions of them from natives of the country. Mr. Loftus was the first to explore the most important. Being attached, as geologist, to the mission for the settlement of the boundaries between Persia and Turkey, he went by land from Baghdad to Busrah to join its other members. As he was accompanied by an escort of troops he was able to visit the principal ruins on the way without risk. He found the tribes well-disposed towards Europeans, though very hostile to the Turks. Taking advantage of this favorable feeling, and relying upon the protection of the Arab Sheikhs, Mr. Loftus returned a second time alone, and was able to excavate in some of the larger mounds. He obtained during this expedition the highly interesting collection of antiquities from Wurka, now in the British Museum.

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All these ruins are best reached from Hillah. The Sheikhs of the Arab tribes living near them are usually in friendly communication with the principal people of that town. Owing, however, to the present disturbed state of the country, I was compelled to ask for safe conduct from Agab, the Sheikh of the Afaij.

The Afaij dwell in the midst of extensive marshes formed by the Euphrates, about fifty miles below Hillah. On the eastern border of these swamps rise the great ruins of Niffer, which I was first desirous of examining. After some discussion, it was finally settled that we were to go by land, keeping as much as possible in the centre of Mesopotamia, and thus avoiding the neighbourhood of the Euphrates, as the Arabs were now congregated along the banks of the river. Zaid, with an Agayl of his acquaintance, agreed to accompany me. My own Jebours were, of course, of the party. Having hired mules and laid in a proper stock of provisions, tools, and packing cases to hold any antiquities that might be discovered, we began our journey on Wednesday, the 15th of January.

The weather was bright and intensely cold. The sky was cloudless, but a biting north wind swept across the plain. It was the middle of the Babylonian winter, and a hard frost daily whitened the ground. We left Hillah by the Baghdad gate. The Bairakdar was with me, and the rest of my Mosul servants. My huntsman, old Seyyid Jasim, wrapt up in his thick Arab cloak, bore his favorite hawk on his wrist. He was followed, as usual, by the greyhounds. The Jebours went partly on foot, riding by turns on the baggage horses. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam was wanting to complete our party. He had been kept in Baghdad by severe illness almost since our arrival, and for the first time during my wanderings in Mesopotamia he was not with me.

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We followed a track leading towards the centre of the Mesopotamian Desert. Our course was nearly due east. About six miles from the town we found ourselves amidst moving sand-hills, extending far and wide on all sides. The fine sand shifts with every breeze, and the wrinkled heaps are like the rippled surface of a lake. When the furious southerly wind sweeps over them, it raises a dense suffocating dust, blinding the wayfaring Arab, and leaving him to perish in the trackless labyrinth.

After four hours' ride we left the sand-heaps, and again came in sight of the black belt of palm trees. After stopping to drink water we proceeded to a small hamlet called Allak, and took up our quarters for the night in the museef of its Sheikh, who, notwithstanding his poverty, received us very hospitably. He related to me how from the numerous artificial mounds in the surrounding plains were frequently taken, after rain had washed away the soil, earthen jars and coffins containing ornaments of gold and silver.

As we continued our journey during the following day, still keeping in the Desert, we passed one or two small encampments of the Zobeide tribe. The Arabs, alarmed at the approach of so large a party, and believing us to be horsemen on a foray, sallied forth to meet us at some distance from their tents, flourishing their weapons and chanting their wild war-cry. The plain, although now without any stationary population, was once thickly inhabited. The lion, the hyena, the wolf, the jackal, the wild boar, the fox, and the porcupine now alone break the solitude of a wilderness once the seat of the most luxurious and civilised nation of the East.

It would be needless to describe the few deserted villages we passed during our day's journey; their mud walls, once a protection against the wandering Arab, are unable to resist the encroaching sand, which has already overwhelmed the empty dwellings. In this region

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the habitations of men are turned almost in a day to mere heaps of earth. The district is called Shomali.

After a ride of six hours we reached an ancient mound of considerable size, called Haroun. On its summit was a ruined Imaum-zadeh (Mussulman oratory). It was a sacred place to the Arab, and on this account had been used as a burying-place. The grave of the wandering Arab is rarely far beneath the surface of the soil, and the wild beasts of the Desert soon scrape away the scanty earth. Human skulls and remains, scarcely yet bleached by the sun, were scattered over the ruins, mingled with bricks, pottery, broken glass, and other relics of ancient population.

We had scarcely passed Haroun when a party of Arabs on horseback and on foot suddenly came forth from behind the lofty banks of a dry canal. They had seen our caravan from afar, and had waylaid us. After they had followed us for some distance they turned back to their tribe, deeming it prudent not to venture an attack, as we were fully prepared for them.

Shortly after their departure, a gazelle rose from a thicket, and bounded across the plain. Seyyid Jasim unloosed his hawk, and I pursued with the dogs. The sight of horsemen galloping to and fro alarmed an Arab settlement gathered round a small mud fort belonging to a chief called Karboul. The men armed themselves and came out against us. Our Afajj guides, however, soon made themselves known to them, and they then escorted our caravan to their tents, dancing a wild dance, shouting their war-cries, singing war-songs, and firing their matchlocks. Most of them had no other clothing than the shirt taken off their shoulders and tied round their loins. Their countenances were singularly ferocious, their bright eyes and white teeth making them even more hideous. Long black matted hair was scattered over their heads in horrid confusion, and their bodies were tanned by the burning sun to the color and substance of old leather.

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Their Sheikh, Karboul, was scarcely less savage in his appearance, though somewhat better clothed. However ill-disposed he might have been towards Europeans, or travellers in general, he acknowledged the protection that had been extended to us by the Afajj chief, and led me with words of welcome to his spacious tent. His followers, excited by the late alarm, and now full of warlike enthusiasm, were not, however, to be dismissed until they had satisfied themselves by performing various warlike dances. They did so in circles before the tent, raising a few tattered flags, and deafening me by their shouts and barbarous songs.

These wild beings, little better than mere beasts, lived in hovels made of mats and brushwood. They fed large herds of buffaloes; but the greater part of their sheep and cattle had been driven away by the Bedouins. Their tribe was the Shabaneh, a branch of the Ahl Ukra.

Next morning Karboul sent his son and a party of horsemen to escort us for some distance on our road. We had to make a considerable circuit to the east to encompass the marsh, which has now spread over the lower part of the Mesopotamian plain. We passed numerous artificial mounds, covered with fragments of bricks, pottery, glazed tiles, richly-colored glass and other relics that mark the site of Babylonian ruins. Canals, too, no longer fed by the Euphrates, everywhere crossed our path, and limited our view. The parched soil outside the swamp has become fine sand, amidst which small tufts of the hardy tamarisk form the only vegetation.

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After two hours' ride, we emerged from the labyrinth of dry canals, and ascending a heap of rubbish covering some ancient ruin, we beheld, looming on the horizon like a distant mountain, the principal object of my journey—the mounds of Niffer. They were still nearly ten miles from us. Magnified as they were by the mirage they appeared far to exceed in size and height any artificial elevation that I had hitherto seen.

To the east of us rose another great ruin, called Zibbliyah, a lofty, square mass, apparently of sundried brick. It resembled in form, and was scarcely less in size than the well-known remains of Akkerkuf, near Baghdad.

Between us and Niffer were still many mounds and ancient canals. The largest of the former, covered with bricks and pottery, was called by our Arab guides El Hamra, "the red." The principal canal, whose waters had once been confined between two enormous embankments, ran in a direct line towards the ruins. It is now dry, but appears to have once supplied the city.

After a journey of five hours we reached the ruins of Niffer. They differ in general form from the great mounds of Assyria, with which my descriptions may have familiarised the reader. Although at their north-east corner is a cone similar to those of Nimroud and Kalah-Sherghat, yet, in their broken outline and in their division into several distinct parts, they have more the appearance of the remains of different buildings than that of one regular platform surrounded by walls. In this respect they are not unlike the Mujelibé (Kasr) and the Amran of Babylon. The mounds cover altogether a very considerable area of ground, and stand on the edge of the marsh, which is gradually encroaching upon them, and which occasionally during high floods of the Euphrates completely surrounds them. They are strewn with the usual fragments of brick, glazed and unglazed pottery, and glass. A loose nitrous soil, into which the feet sink above the ankles, forms a coating about a yard deep over a harder and more compact soil. In the ravines large earthen jars and portions of brick

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masonry are occasionally uncovered by the rains. Commencing my search after antiquities as soon as we had reached the summit of the principal mound, it was not long before I discovered, in one of these newly-formed ruts, a perfect vase, about five feet high, containing human remains. Other objects of the same kind were found by the Arabs who were with me. But I left more careful researches to the time when I could commence excavations below the surface. Leaving, therefore, the ruins, I hastened to the place where my tents were pitched about two miles beyond the ruins on the margin of the marsh. In front of the encampment was a small lake or pond, from which the reeds seemed to have been carefully cleared.

We had sent one of our Afaj guides to inform Sheikh Agab of our approach. I had not been long seated in my tent when suddenly a number of black boats, each bearing a party of Arabs, darted from the reeds and approached the shore. They were of various sizes. In the bottom of some, eight or ten persons sat crouched on their hams; in others, only one or two. Men standing at the head and stern with long bamboo poles of great lightness guided and impelled them. The largest were built of teakwood, but the others consisted simply of a very narrow frame-work of rushes covered with bitumen, resembling probably "the vessels of bulrushes" mentioned by Isaiah.^[228] They skimmed over the surface of the water with great rapidity.

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The tiradas, for so these boats are called by the Arabs, drew up along the bank in the open basin before our tents. The largest evidently contained three chiefs, who landed and advanced towards me. They were the sons of the Sheikh of the Afaj. Their father had sent them to welcome me to his territories. They brought with them provisions for my caravan, as their village, they said, was still far distant, and it would be impossible to transport our baggage and lead our horses thither before nightfall. The young men were handsome, well-dressed and well-armed, and very courteous. The complexion of these marsh Arabs, from constant exposure to the intense heat of the sun, is almost black, with the usual contrast of eyes of extraordinary brilliancy, and teeth of the whiteness of pearls. They wear their hair in long, well-greased plaits.

The young Sheikhs had been ordered by their father to remain with me during the night, and to place a proper guard round the tents, as the outskirts of the marsh were infested, we were assured, by roving Bedouins and midnight thieves. I gained, as other travellers had done before me, some credit for wisdom and superhuman knowledge by predicting, through the aid of an almanack, a partial eclipse of the moon. It duly took place to the great dismay of my guests, who well nigh knocked out the bottoms of all my kitchen utensils in their endeavor to frighten away the Jins who had thus laid hold of the planet.^[229]

Soon after sunrise the Sheikh's own tirada issued from the reeds into the open space. It had been spread with carpets and silken cushions for my reception. The baggage was placed in other boats, but the unfortunate horses, under the guidance of a party of naked Arabs, had to swim the stream, and to struggle through the swamp as they best could. The armed men entered their various vessels, and we all left the shore together.

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The tirada in which I sat was skilfully managed by two Arabs with long bamboo poles. It skimmed rapidly over the small lake, and then turned into a broad street cut through green reeds rising fourteen or fifteen feet on both sides of us. The current, where the vegetation had thus been cleared away, ran at the rate of about two miles an hour, and, as we were going towards the Euphrates, was against us. We passed the entrances to many lanes branching off to the right and to the left. From them came black boats filled with Arab men and women carrying the produce of their buffalo herds to the Souk or market.

Herds of buffaloes here and there struggled and splashed amongst the rushes, their unwieldy bodies completely concealed under water, and their hideous heads just visible upon the surface. Occasionally a small plot of ground, scarcely an inch above the level of the marsh, and itself half a swamp, was covered with huts built of reeds, canes, and bright yellow mats. These were the dwellings of the Afaj, and, as we passed by, troops of half-naked men, women, and children issued from them, and stood on the bank to gaze at the strangers.

The lanes now became more crowded with tiradas. The boatmen, however, darted by the heavier vessels, turned the sharp corners, and managed their frail barks with great skill and ease. The openings in the reeds began to be more numerous, and it required a perfect knowledge of the various windings and streets to follow the right way. This singular scene recalled vividly to my mind the sculptures of Kouyunjik representing the Assyrian wars in marshes of the same nature, and probably formed by the waters of the same river. The streets through the reeds, and the tiradas or boats of rushes smeared with bitumen, are faithfully delineated in the bas-reliefs, showing how little the barbarous inhabitants of these great swamps have changed after the lapse of nearly three thousand years. If we may judge, however, from the spoil of furniture and of vessels of metal, probably of gold and silver, carried away from them by the conquerors, the ancient tribes appear to have been more wealthy and more ingenious than their descendants.

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Soon after entering a narrow canal, we stopped near some larger and better built huts than any we had yet seen. Before them, at the water's edge, and waiting to receive us, were drawn up a number of armed men, at the head of whom stood a tall, handsome Arab. He was attired in a long robe of scarlet silk of Damascus, over which he wore one of those cloaks

richly embroidered in gold thread down the back and one arm, peculiar to Baghdad. This was Agab, Sheikh of the Afaij. As I stepped out of the tirada he threw his arms round my neck, and gave me the usual embrace of welcome.

The chief led us at once to the museef. The guesthouse was built of the same materials as the smaller cabins, but they were far more tastefully put together. It resembled in shape the boiler of some enormous steam-engine. Reeds bound together, were bent into arches at regular intervals, and formed a series of ribs, upon which were stretched the choicest mats. About fifty persons could conveniently sit in this hut. In the centre was the usual array of bright pots and tiny cups ranged in circular trays, round a smouldering fire. A hideous black slave, crouching upon his haunches, was roasting coffee and pounding the fragrant beans in an iron mortar. Down both sides were spread carpets and mats; soft cushions of figured silk were specially prepared for the European guest.

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The museef stood at a short distance from the other huts, and in a corner formed by two water-streets branching off at right angles. In front of it was the harem of the Sheikh. It consisted of several cabins in an enclosure formed entirely by walls of reeds and mats. Beyond was a great collection of huts, and in the middle of them the bazars, consisting of double rows of shops, all of the same frail materials. So that this Arab town was built entirely of mats and reeds.

Agab received me in the most friendly manner, and entered at once into my plans for excavating, describing the ruins existing in the neighbourhood. He ordered his people to raise a hut for my servants and the Jebour workmen, and to pitch my tents in the open space opposite the museef. Building is not a lengthy or difficult process where the materials are so simple. Within an hour the mats had been dragged from the harem, the bundles of reeds turned into graceful arches, and the cabin duly covered in. As a dwelling-place, however, the small island on which the Sheikh of the Afaij had thought fit to erect his moveable capital was not perhaps the most desirable in the world. Had the Euphrates risen by any sudden flood we should have been completely under water. My proposition to encamp on the mounds of Niffer was negatived by Agab, on account of the dangers from the Bedouins, evil spirits, beasts of prey, and the like. So I made up my mind to remain at the Souk.

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The Sheikh believing I was in search of gold, was always my attendant with his followers. He knew so many authentic instances of enormous wealth having been dug up at Niffer, that it was useless to argue with him upon the subject. He related to me in the usual expressive manner of the Arabs, the following story:—In the time of Hatab, the uncle of Wadi, Sheikh of the Zobeide, a cameleer of that tribe chanced to be at Damascus with his camels. As he was walking one day in the bazar, an aged man accosted him. "O Sheikh of the Caravan," said he, "I know that thou art from the southern Jezireh, and from the land of the Zobeide. God be praised for sending thee to me! Now there is in that country a great mound, that marks the site of an ancient city of the Unbelievers, called Niffer. Go, dig in the dry bed of the Shat-el-Neel, in the midst of the ruins, and thou wilt find a stone white as milk; bring it to me, and thou shalt have for a reward double the usual hire for thy camels both there and back." The cameleer was at a loss to guess how the old man knew of the stone, but he did as he had been asked, and in the place described to him he found the white stone, which was just a camel's burden. He took it to Damascus, and gave it to the Sheikh, who first paid him his just reward, and then broke the stone into pieces before him. It was, of course, full of gold, and the philosopher had learned where it was to be found in the books of the Infidels.

Being thus compelled to remain at the Souk, I fitted up my tent and cabins as well as I was able. The weather was intensely cold, and it was the middle of the rainy season. By the help of mats we were able to keep out the water to a certain extent. The excavations were carried on until the 3rd of February, and I will describe at once their general results.

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Niffer, as I have already observed, consists rather of a collection of mounds of unequal height, and irregular form, than of one compact platform, like the principal ruins of Assyria. They may be divided into four distinct groups, each surrounded, and separated from the others, by deep ravines, which have the appearance of ancient streets. The high cone at the north-east corner is probably the remains of a square tower constructed entirely of large sundried bricks. Beneath the cone masonry of sundried and kiln-burnt bricks protrudes from the sides of the ravines. The bricks are generally smaller in dimensions than those from Babylon, and long and narrow in shape. Many of them are stamped with inscriptions in the Babylonian character, containing the name of a king and of the city.

My workmen were divided into gangs, or karkhanehs, as they are called by the Arabs, and were placed in different parts of the ruins. On the first day some cells or recesses containing human remains were discovered.

During the two subsequent days we found many vases and jars of earthenware, some glazed and others plain. With these relics was a bowl, unfortunately much broken, covered with ancient Hebrew characters, similar to those discovered at Babylon. Fragments of similar vessels were afterwards dug out of the ruins.

On the mound of Niffer, as on other ruins of the same period in this part of Mesopotamia, are found numerous fragments of highly-glazed pottery, of a rich blue color, but very coarse and fragile in texture. I was at a loss to conjecture the nature of the objects of which they had originally formed part, until, on the fourth day of the excavations, a party of workmen

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uncovered a coffin or sarcophagus, of precisely the same material. Within it were human remains, which crumbled to dust almost as soon as exposed to the air. The earthenware was so ill-burnt, and had suffered so much from age, that I was unable to remove this coffin entire. It fell to pieces as soon as I endeavored to detach it from the soil by which it was surrounded. But beneath it was found a second, and subsequently scarcely a day elapsed without the discovery of four or five similar coffins. The largest were about six feet long; some, containing the remains of children, scarcely exceeded three. They were all of nearly the same shape; an oval, about two feet wide, for the head and shoulders of the corpse, joined to a narrow box for the legs and feet. The oval was closed by a detached flat lid; the rest of the coffin was covered, and there was a small hole at the very end. The body must, consequently, have been forced into the sarcophagus from the top or open part.

All these coffins were covered with bright greenish, blue glaze-colored with copper, like that on pottery and bricks from the ruins of Babylon. Some were ornamented with scroll work and other designs; others, with rude figures of men and animals in relief. They were all of the same fragile material. The clay, moreover, having been only partially burnt, had been exposed to the action of the nitre so abundant in the soil. Without considerable care it was impossible to remove any entire, although the surrounding earth was easily detached from them.

Human remains, more or less perfect, were found in all these sarcophagi. Sometimes, as the lid was carefully removed, I could almost distinguish the body, wrapped in its grave clothes, and still lying in its narrow resting-place. But no sooner did the outer air reach the empty crust of humanity than it fell away into dust, leaving only the skull and great bones of the arms and legs to show what these now empty cases had once contained. One or two small cups or vases in the same glazed pottery, and a few beads and engraved gems, were occasionally gathered from the crumbling remains; but no ornaments of gold or silver were discovered at Niffer, though it appears that the Arabs frequently find them in similar coffins from other ruins in southern Mesopotamia. It is remarkable, however, that there were no ornaments whatever in metal in nearly a hundred coffins which I opened at Niffer.

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It is impossible to estimate the number of these earthen coffins; the upper part of the mound in some places appeared to consist almost entirely of them. They generally rested one upon the other, but in some cases were separated by a layer of flat bricks or tiles. As fast as the fragments of one were removed a second appeared beneath it; and notwithstanding the number thus taken away, I did not penetrate many feet beneath the surface. In the lower part of Mesopotamia are many ruins in which similar remains are equally abundant. Fragments of glazed pottery, broken from them, are seen on every ancient site to the south of Babylon. According to Mr. Loftus, the vast mound of Wurka is built almost entirely of such coffins, piled one above the other, and consequently many thousands, or rather hundreds of thousands must exist in it alone.

It is difficult to arrive at a very satisfactory conclusion as to the precise date of these remains. My own impression is that they are comparatively modern; that is, that they are to be attributed to a period subsequent to the fall of the Babylonian empire, extending from the second or first century before the Christian era to even the time of the Arab invasion. Colonel Rawlinson entertains, I believe, a different opinion, and would attribute them to a much earlier period. If the great mounds of Niffer be the remains of a Babylonian city, as they probably are, it is evident that that city must have been completely destroyed, and its ruins covered with earth long before a people, afterwards inhabiting the country, could have buried their dead above them.

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In one part of the mound, in a kind of recess or small chamber of brick masonry, was discovered a heap of pottery of a yellow color, very thin and fragile, much resembling that still made at Baghdad to hold water in hot weather. Many vases and cups were still entire. With them were fragments of glass bottles, jars, and other vessels; and several highly glazed or enamelled dishes. These relics appeared to be of the same period as the sarcophagi. A large number of coarse jars or urns, some nearly six feet high, were dug out of various parts of the mound. They contained bones of men and animals, and their mouths had been carefully closed by a tile or brick plastered with bitumen.

Although many deep trenches were opened in the ruins, and in the conical mound at the north-east corner, no other remains or relics were discovered. With the exception of a few massive foundations, and the bricks bearing a cuneiform superscription, I much doubt whether anything found at Niffer was of the true Babylonian period. The Arabs have a story that a great black stone exists somewhere in the ruins. I had once conjectured that it might be the identical obelisk said to have been brought by Semiramis from Armenia to Babylon. [230] After I had searched in vain for it, I was assured that it was near some mounds several miles to the east of Niffer. I sent a party of workmen to the spot, but with no better success. On the whole, I am much inclined to question whether extensive excavations carried on at Niffer would produce any very important or interesting results.

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In the Afajj bazar I was able to purchase a few relics from the Arabs; they consisted chiefly of cylinders and engraved gems. But even such remains were far more scarce than I had anticipated. A ram in baked clay, with three holes for holding colors or ointments, apparently Babylonian, and a pebble of white marble, on which are rudely engraved two goats before the sacred tree, and a few cuneiform characters, were brought to me from

some neighboring ruin. Such were all the antiquities I obtained during my visit to Niffer. With the pottery collected at the mound they are now in the British Museum.

One of my principal objects in journeying into these wild tracts of southern Mesopotamia, was to visit and explore the great mound of Wurka. These remains had already been partly examined, as I have stated, by Mr. Loftus. A highly interesting collection of relics, comprising inscribed clay tablets, glazed pottery, ornaments in metal, and engraved gems, had been obtained by that gentleman during his short residence among the ruins. They are now in the British Museum. Amongst them, and deserving particular notice, are the fragments of a shell, on which are engraved the heads of two horses, apparently part of a subject representing a warrior in his chariot. The outline upon them is not without spirit, but they are principally remarkable for being almost identical with a similar engraved shell found in an Etruscan tomb, and now in the British Museum. This is not the only instance, as it has been seen, of relics from Assyria and Etruria being of the same character,—showing a close connection between the two countries either direct, or by mutual intercourse with some intermediate nation.

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Unfortunately the state of the country to the south of the marshes was such that I was unable even to make an attempt to reach the remarkable ruins of Wurka. The great Arab tribe of Montefik, dwelling on the banks of the lower Euphrates, and exercising a certain control over all the smaller tribes inhabiting the southern part of Mesopotamia, was split into opposite factions on account of the rival pretensions of two chiefs. Much blood had already been spilt, and the war was now extending to the Afajj. The surrounding tribes taking advantage of the general confusion and of the unsuccessful attempt of the Pasha to subdue the Maidan Arabs, had openly rebelled against the government, and were laying waste the province and plundering each other. It was, indeed, scarcely possible even to leave the Afajj territory, and Agab, who, like all other Arab Sheikhs, was not without his rival, began to fear an outbreak amongst his own people. He had already been summoned to take part in the war between the two Montefik chiefs, and he was anxious that I should be on safe ground before his troubles commenced. He, therefore, seriously urged me to return to Baghdad.

The Sheikh, with other chiefs of his tribe, was accustomed to pass the evening in my tent. He would on those occasions describe the unsettled and dangerous state of the country, and lament the insecurity caused by the misrule of the Turkish authorities.

At the same time he would entertain me with accounts of the districts to the south of the Afajj, their productions, and the manners of the curious populations inhabiting those vast marshes.

The greater part of the country below ancient Babylon has now been for centuries one great swamp. It is, indeed, what the prophet foretold it should be, "a desert of the sea."^[231] The embankments of the rivers, utterly neglected, have broken away, and the waters have spread over the face of the land. The best known of these marshes are the Lemlud, formed by the Euphrates above its confluence with the Tigris at Korna. But they now only form a part of those which are yearly increasing, and threaten to cover the whole of southern Mesopotamia.

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The Arab tribes inhabiting them are, as I have already observed, amongst the most wild and ignorant that can be found in this part of Asia. The relations between them and the Porte have generally consisted of little more than a trial of treachery and deceit; and, whilst the Turk looks upon these Arabs as mere wild beasts, they in return have lost all confidence in the faith and honor of the Ottoman government. But it is not so with respect to the English, who have always treated them honorably and kindly, and whom consequently they have allowed to pass to and fro without harm. This respect for the British name is mainly to be attributed to the admirable conduct and management of Captain Jones during the time he has commanded the steamer on the Tigris.

These Arabs are of the Sheeah sect of Mussulmans, and belong to the great tribes of Rubbiyah and Ahl Maidan. Each tribe has innumerable subdivisions, with distinct names and separate and independent Sheikhs. They live in mat huts and in small black tents. Their chief wealth consists in vast herds of buffaloes, and they are, on the whole, notwithstanding the wretched appearance of their dwellings and the scanty clothing of both men and women, richer than most Arab tribes. This is to be attributed to their having hitherto been able, in their almost inaccessible retreats, to defy the Turkish authorities.

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Their buffaloes supply them with large quantities of butter and milk; the former is exported, and is a considerable article of trade. These hideous animals appear to thrive in the marshy lands, and some districts actually swarm with them. They are generally inoffensive and easily managed.

These tribes have also flocks of sheep and goats, but the animals are small, and their wool thin, and generally too coarse to form an article of commerce. They raise very little corn and barley; rice, of an inferior quality, forms their principal food.

The marshes and the jungles near the rivers are the retreats of many kinds of wild animals. Lions abound. I have seen them frequently, and during the excavations at Niffer we found fresh traces of their footsteps almost daily amongst the ruins. The Maidan Arabs boast of

capturing them in the following manner, and trustworthy persons have assured me that they have seen the feat performed. A man, having bound his right arm with strips of tamarisk, and holding in his hand a strong piece of the same wood, about a foot or more in length, hardened in the fire and sharpened at both ends, will advance boldly into the animal's lair. When the lion springs upon him, he forces the wood into the animal's extended jaws, which will then be held open whilst he can dispatch the astonished beast at his leisure with the pistol that he holds in his left hand.

In the jungles are also found leopards, lynxes, wild cats, wolves, hyenas, jackals, deer, porcupines, boars in vast numbers, and other animals. Wild fowl, cranes, and bustards abound, and that beautiful game-bird the francolin, or black partridge, swarms in the low brushwood. The Arabs shoot them with ball. The marshes are full of fish, which attain a considerable size. They are chiefly, I believe, a kind of barbel. Their flesh is coarse and full of bones, but they afford the Arabs a constant supply of food. They are generally taken by the spear.

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Although the inhabitants of the marshes recognise some of the laws of the Bedouins, they are wanting in many of the virtues of the Arabs of the Desert. They have, however, several customs relating to the duties of hospitality, which are rigidly adhered to. To say of a Maidan "that he has sold bread," is to offer him the greatest of insults. To part with a loaf for money is accounted an act bringing disgrace not only upon the perpetrator, but upon his whole family. I found this peculiar custom exceedingly inconvenient during my residence amongst the Afaij. Sheikh Agab insisted upon giving daily to my large party their supplies of bread; and it was impossible to obtain it in any other manner. Even its sale in the public market was forbidden. I was, at length, compelled to send to a considerable distance for flour, and then to employ my own workmen in baking it. The same scruples do not exist with regard to other articles of food. They are sold in the bazar, as in all Eastern towns.

In the souk or bazar, of the Afaij tribe, were exposed for sale a few common Manchester prints—those world-wide evidences of the extent of British trade—English stuffs (printed and dyed at Baghdad called tangebs), keffiehs, Damascus silks, striped abas, dates, rice, coffee, spices, powder and arms, the usual stores of an Eastern market. A few Christian jewellers fashion gold and silver ornaments for the women, and an occasional pedlar from Hillah or Baghdad excites the admiration of the Arabs by the display of a stock of coarse knives, and common European hardware.

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The dampness of the soil upon which my tent was pitched, and the unwholesome air of the surrounding marshes, brought on a severe attack of pleurisy and fever. I was soon unable to move from my bed, and was reduced at length to a state of extreme weakness. Fortunately it occurred to me to use a blistering fluid given to me for an injured horse, or I should probably not again have left the Afaij swamps. Notwithstanding the severity of the remedy it gave me immediate relief, and when Hormuzd joined me on the 28th of January, I resolved to make an attempt, without further delay, to reach Baghdad, where I could obtain medical aid. To add to our misfortunes, the rain fell in unceasing torrents for four days, and of course soon made its way through our tents. The waters of the marsh began to rise perceptibly, and the Afaij were preparing to abandon their mat huts, and to seek, in their light tiradas, a safer retreat.

Some days elapsed, however, before I could rise from my carpet. The state of affairs was daily getting worse. Abde Pasha had been suddenly deprived of his government by the Porte on account of the failure of his expedition against the Kazail Arabs, and his fall had increased the general anarchy. It was only by joining a large party of horsemen on their way to the seat of war in the south that Hormuzd had been able to reach Niffer. I found that it was quite impossible to penetrate further into Mesopotamia, and that by remaining much longer amongst the Afaij we ran the risk of being cut off from Baghdad altogether. I determined, therefore, to strike once more into the Desert, where we were less likely to meet with hostile Arabs than in the beaten tracks, and to make a forced march to some village in the neighbourhood of Hillah.

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Fortunately I had my own riding horse with me, and his easy paces enabled me to undertake the journey although in a state of complete exhaustion. On the 2d of February, I took leave of Agab, and pitched my tents for the night beneath the mounds of Niffer. Before dawn on the following morning we were urging our horses over the desert plains of the centre of Mesopotamia. Two armed adherents of the Sheikh were with us, rather to act as guides than to protect us from enemies. We travelled without any cause for alarm as far as the great ruin of Zibbliyah. A large body of horsemen then suddenly appeared in the distance. We ascended the mound, and prepared to defend ourselves from this elevated position. But either the Arabs did not perceive us, or were bent upon some warlike expedition which did not admit of delay, for they passed onwards, and left us to continue our journey.

Zibbliyah closely resembles the celebrated ruin of Akkerkuf near Baghdad. It rises from a heap of rubbish in the centre of the Desert, and consists of a solid mass of large, crumbling, sundried bricks, between the courses of which, at certain intervals, are layers of reeds as in many of the Babylonian buildings.

We saw no human habitation until long after nightfall, when we reached the small Arab hamlet of Bashayi. It was surrounded, for defence, by a low mud wall, and some time was spent in a parley and explanation before the timid inhabitants would open their gates to so

large a company of strangers. I could hardly remain in my saddle until their fears were set at rest, and we were admitted within the inclosure. At length I tottered into a hovel, thick with smoke, and sank down exhausted, after a ride of fourteen hours and a fortnight's complete abstinence from food.

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My poor Jebour workmen being on foot had been unable to keep up with the caravan during our forced march. They did not reach the village until daybreak, and then in a very sorry plight, for they were stript to the skin. They had approached, in search of water, the tents of some Arabs, and falling in with a plundering party had been robbed of every thing, and left naked in the Desert.

Next morning I had scarcely strength to mount my horse. Hormuzd turned off to Hillah to put a stop to the excavations at Babylon. With the caravan I made another forced march in the beaten track to Baghdad, and reached the khan of Iskanderiyah.

We were now within a few hours of the end of our journey, and leaving the servants and baggage to follow at leisure, I quitted the khan with the Bairakdar before dawn to canter into Baghdad. As the sun rose from the sea-like plain, the great ruin of Ctesiphon appeared above the eastern horizon.

This ruin, with a few mounds and heaps of rubbish scattered around it, is all that now remains of the capital of the Parthian empire. On the opposite bank of the Tigris long lines of earthen ramparts, forming a quadrangle and inclosing the usual signs of former habitations, mark the site of the city built by Seleucus after the last fall of Babylon.

The victorious Arabs, under Saad, the general of the Caliph Omar, pillaged Ctesiphon after they had overthrown the Persian armies in the decisive battle of Cadesia, in the sixteenth year of the Hegira. They found in the palace the throne, the crown, and the standard of the Persian kings, together with a carpet which covered the floor of the great hall, and was of such extraordinary beauty and value that it excited the wonder of the conquerors, and was considered amongst the most precious spoil taken from their enemies.

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Ctesiphon and Seleucia received from the Arabs the name of Al Madain, or the twin cities. When Baghdad was founded on the Tigris, a few miles above them, the Caliph Al Mansour wished to pull down the palace of Chosroes for materials to build his own capital. His vizir, who had recently turned from the Magian religion, endeavored to dissuade him. The caliph upbraided him for being but an insincere convert to Islam, and for sympathising with those who still professed his former faith, and whose monuments he therefore wished to preserve. The attempt to destroy the vast edifice was fruitless; but when it was about to be abandoned, the vizir urged his master to persevere, exclaiming, "that if he now ceased to pull down the palace, history would say that Al Mansour with all his power was unable to overthrow that which another prince had built."

I did not visit Ctesiphon on this occasion; the river separated me from the ruins, and I only mention them in this place to describe a remarkable effect of mirage which I witnessed as I rode towards Baghdad. As the quivering sun rose in unclouded splendor, the palace was transformed into a vast arcade of enormous arches resting upon columns and masses of masonry. Gradually this arcade was, as it were, compressed like the slides of a telescope, but the building gained in height what it lost in length, and one arch slowly appeared above the other, until the ruin assumed the shape of a tower reaching to the sky, and pierced from the base to the summit by innumerable arches. In a few minutes this strange edifice began to melt away into the air, and I saw a magnified, though perfect image of the palace; but upon it was its exact counterpart upside down. Other equally singular changes succeeded until the sun was high in the heavens, and the ruin at length disappeared in the distance. The small bushes of camel-thorn scattered over the Desert were during this time turned into forest trees, and a transparent lake imaged for a fleeting hour in its counterfeit waters the varying forms of the unsubstantial edifice. Although I have seen many extraordinary effects of mirage during my wanderings in the East, I scarcely remember to have witnessed one more striking or more beautiful than that near the ruins of Ctesiphon.

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I had just strength left me to reach the gates of Baghdad. Once in the city, under the friendly care of Dr. Hyslop, I soon recovered my health, and was ready to start on fresh adventures.

CHAPTER XXV.

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PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE.—SAHIMAN.—
PLUNDER OF HIS CAMELS.—LEAVE BAGHDAD.—
JOURNEY THROUGH MESOPOTAMIA.—EARLY
ARAB REMAINS.—THE MEDIAN WALL.—TEKRIT.
—HORSES STOLEN.—INSTANCES OF BEDOUIN
HONESTY.—EXCAVATIONS AT KALAH

SHERGHAT.—REACH MOSUL.—DISCOVERIES DURING ABSENCE.—NEW CHAMBERS AT KOUYUNJIK.—DESCRIPTION OF BAS-RELIEFS.—EXTENT OF THE RUINS EXPLORED.—BASES OF PILLARS.—SMALL OBJECTS.—ROMAN COINS STRUCK AT NINEVEH.—HOARD OF DENARII.—GREEK RELICS.—ABSENCE OF ASSYRIAN TOMBS.—FRAGMENT WITH EGYPTIAN CHARACTERS.—ASSYRIAN RELICS.—REMAINS BENEATH THE TOMB OF JONAH.—DISCOVERIES AT SHEREEF-KHAN—AT NIMROUD.—ASSYRIAN WEIGHTS.—ENGRAVED CYLINDERS.

There was no hope of improvement in the state of the country round Baghdad. The Pasha had left the dam of the Hindiyah, which shortly after again gave way, and afforded fresh retreats to the Arabs. Under these circumstances, and for other reasons, I deemed it prudent to give up for the time the excavations in the ruins of Babylonia. When tranquillity had been to some extent restored in the pashalic, an expedition might be undertaken either by myself, or by some other traveller, with better prospects of success.

The Shammar Bedouins were now moving northwards towards their spring and summer pastures. I had been in continual communication with the sons of Rishwan. Suttum, whose wife's imperious temper still kept him apart from his family, had encamped during the winter with another branch of the tribe in the neighbourhood of Tekrit. It was suspected that he had been privy to more than one successful attack on the Turkish post, and on certain treasure convoys belonging to the government. The roads between Baghdad and Mosul were completely closed by bands of Bedouins, who plundered every caravan that came within their reach. Sahiman and Mijwell had accompanied their father to the plains of southern Babylonia. The latter had been severely wounded in some affray.

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As Sahiman was journeying northwards with the rest of his tribe, I thought this a good opportunity of following under his protection the direct track to Mosul through the Desert and along the western bank of the Tigris. He at once consented to escort me, only stipulating that I should obtain permission from the Pasha for his camels and flocks to pass through the suburbs of Baghdad, instead of following the longer and more difficult road through the marshes, like those of the rest of the tribe. The request was granted, and a guarantee was given to me by the governor and the commander in chief of the troops, that my Bedouin friend, with his family and property, should cross the city in safety. They had no sooner, however, entered the gates, than they were fallen upon by the inhabitants of the quarter, aided by a body of irregular troops and Agayls. Abandoning nearly eight hundred camels, Sahiman and his brother Arabs fled into the Desert.

Warmly supported by Capt. Kemball, I remonstrated indignantly against this act of treachery. The Turkish authorities declared that it was an accident beyond their control, and at length adopted means to recover the stolen camels. It was, however, with some difficulty, that I was able to find Sahiman, and then to induce him to return to Baghdad. Eventually the greater part of his property was restored to him. It is thus that the Bedouins are encouraged in continual enmity to the Porte, and that their reliance on the good faith of the Turks and of the inhabitants of towns has been completely destroyed.

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This untimely occurrence, as well as repeated attacks of fever, delayed my departure for some days, and it was not until the 27th of February that, bidding adieu to my good friends of Baghdad, I crossed the Tigris by the crazy bridge of boats, and took the crowded road to Kathimain. There I passed the night beneath the hospitable roof of the Nawab of Oude. At daybreak on the following morning, under the guidance of Sahiman, and accompanied by Hormuzd, the Jebours, and my servants, I left the sacred suburb, and followed a beaten track leading to the Desert. In order to avoid the windings of the river, we struck across the barren plain. The low houses of Kathimain soon disappeared from our sight, but for some miles we watched the gilded domes and minarets of the tombs of the Imaums, rising above the dark belt of palms, and glittering in the rays of the morning sun. At last they too vanished, and I had looked for the last time upon Baghdad. We were now in as complete a wilderness as if we had been wandering in the midst of Arabia, and not within a few miles of a great city. Not a living creature broke the solitude. Here and there we saw the sites of former encampments, but the Arabs had long since left them, either to move further into the Desert, or to seek security from an enemy amongst the date groves on the banks of the river.

We travelled with speed over the plain. After a ride of nine hours we found ourselves in the midst of the palm trees of a village called Summaichah, formerly a town of some importance, and still watered by the Dujail, a wide and deep canal of the time of the Caliphs, derived from the Tigris. The inhabitants seeing horsemen in the distance mistook us for enemies; but finding that we were travellers and friends they escorted us to the house of their Sheikh, Hashem, who immediately slew a sheep, and made other hospitable preparations for our entertainment. This chief, although now ruling over a stationary tribe who till the soil, is of Shammar descent, and is married to a Bedouin lady. As his wife, however, will not condescend to live within four walls, he is obliged to compromise matters by passing one half of the year under her tent, and the other in his hovel amongst his own people. As we expected to fall in with her tribe during our journey northwards, he entrusted me with a

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bundle of embroidered cloaks and colored kerchiefs as presents to her and her kin. His museef was crowded with Bedouins, for amongst the Arabs the hospitality of Hashem had become a proverb. Summaichah, too, being on the edge of the Desert, is convenient for hearing news from the town, and as a place of meeting before or after plundering expeditions, although a Turkish mudir, with a garrison of a dozen half-starved Albanians, resides within the walls of its ruined serai.

The plain on all sides is intersected by the remains of innumerable canals and watercourses, derived from the Tigris and the Dujail. Their lofty banks narrow the view, and it was only as we passed over them, after quitting Summaichah, that we saw the distant palm groves of the large village of Belled. We left the village to the right, and passed through the ruins of an Arab town of the time of the Caliphs. Beyond it we crossed the Dujail, by a falling bridge of four large arches, with a small arch between each. The beauty of the masonry, the ornamental inscriptions, and rich tracery of this ruin, showed that it was of the best period of Arab architecture.

To the north of the Dujail we wound through a perfect maze of ancient canals now dry. It required the practised eye of the Bedouin to follow the sand-covered track. About eight miles beyond the bridge the embankments suddenly ceased. A high rampart of earth then stretched as far as the eye could see, to the right and to the left. At certain distances were mounds, forming square inclosures, like ruined outworks. A few hundred yards in advance was a second rampart, much lower and narrower than the first. We had reached what some believe to be the famous Median wall, one of the many wonders of Babylonia, built by the Babylonians from river to river across Mesopotamia, to guard their wealthy city and thickly peopled provinces against invasion from the north. Captain Jones, however, who has examined these remains with more care and for a greater distance than any other traveller, or than I could do during a hasty journey, is of opinion that they are not those of a wall of defence, but merely of an embankment, stretching for miles inland, and originally raised to protect the lower country from inundations, and to regulate its irrigation. I confess that my own impression, even after this explanation, was in favor of the rampart. At any rate, if this be not the Median wall, no traces of which have been as yet found in any other part of Mesopotamia, it appeared to me to be a regular line of fortification. It is called by the Arabs, at the place we crossed it, Farriyah; elsewhere, the Sidr al Nimroud, or the rampart of Nimrod.

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Beyond the Median wall we entered upon undulating gravelly downs, furrowed by deep ravines, and occasionally rising into low hills. With the rich alluvial soil of Babylonia, we had left the boundaries of the ancient province. The banks of the Tigris are here, in general, too high, and the face of the country too unequal, to admit of artificial irrigation being carried far inland by watercourses derived from the river.

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The spiral tower, the dome, and the minarets of Samarrah at length appeared above the eastern horizon, and we rode towards them. After nine hours and a half's journey we encamped for the night on the Tigris opposite to the town. As the sun went down we watched the women who, on the other side of the river, came to fetch their evening supplies of water, and gracefully bearing their pitchers on their heads returned to the gates. But on our bank the solitude was only broken by a lonely hyæna coming to drink at the stream, and the hungry jackals that prowled round our tents. The ruins of an early Arab town, called Ashik, stood on a hill in the distance, and near our camping place were the deserted walls of a more recent settlement.

On the third day of our journey another ride of nine hours and a half, along the banks of the Tigris, brought us to Tekrit. The Arabs were keeping the small town of Tekrit in a state of siege, and its supplies having been cut off, we had some difficulty in getting provisions for ourselves and our horses. We were not sorry to leave Tekrit, whose inhabitants did not belie a notoriously bad character. Next morning we struck inland, in order to avoid the precipitous hills of Makhoul, at whose very feet sweeps the Tigris. They form part of a long isolated limestone range which commences with the Sinjar, runs through the centre of Mesopotamia, crosses the river near Khan Karnaineh, then takes the name of Hamrin, and approaching the mountains of Luristan continues parallel with them to the Persian province of Fars. In the Makhoul hills are several ruins. Some falling walls and towers hanging over the Tigris, and once, probably, the stronghold of a freebooter, who levied blackmail on travellers, are called by the Arabs the "Castle of the Giants," and are said to be the dwelling-place of jins and various other supernatural beings.

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Our track led through a perfect wilderness. We found no water, nor saw any moving thing. When, after a long ride of about eleven hours, we reached some brackish springs, called Belaliss, the complete solitude lulled us into a feeling of security, and we all slept without keeping the accustomed watch. I was awake in the middle of the night by an unusual noise close to my tent. I immediately gave the alarm, but it was too late. Two of our horses had been stolen, and in the darkness we could not pursue the thieves. Sahiman broke out in reproaches of himself as the cause of our mishap, and wandered about until dawn in search of some clue to the authors of the theft. At length he tracked them, declared unhesitatingly that they were of the Shammar, pointed out, from marks almost imperceptible to any eye but to that of a Bedouin, that they were four in number, had left their delouls at some distance from our tents, and had already journeyed far before they had been drawn by our fires to the encampment. These indications were enough. He swore an oath that he would follow and

bring back our stolen horses wherever they might be, for it was a shame upon him and his tribe that, whilst under his protection in the Desert, we had lost anything belonging to us. And he religiously kept his oath. When we parted at the end of our journey, he began at once to trace the animals. After six weeks' search, during which he went as far as Ana on the Euphrates, where one had been sold to an Arab of the town, he brought them to Mosul. I was away at the time, but he left them with Mr. Rassam, and returned to the Desert without asking a reward for performing an act of duty imperative on a Bedouin. Such instances of honesty and good faith are not uncommon amongst the wandering Arabs, as I can bear witness, from personal experience.

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Mr. Rassam frequently sent Suttum across the Desert with as much as five or six hundred pounds in money, and always with the most complete confidence. His only reward was an occasional silk dress, or one or two camel loads of corn for his family, the whole of the value of a few shillings.[232] Of late years the wool of the Bedouin sheep has been in considerable demand in the European markets, and a large trade in this article has already been opened with the Shammar. Money is generally advanced some months before the sheep are sheared, to enable the Arabs to buy their winter stock of provisions. Mr. Rassam has thus paid beforehand several thousand pounds without any written or other guarantee whatever. The tribes leave the neighbourhood of the town, and are not again heard of until their long strings of camels are seen bringing the promised wool. I remember a Bedouin coming all the way alone from the neighbourhood of Baghdad to pay Mr. Rassam a trifling sum, I think between three and four shillings, the balance of a wool account between them.

A youth of the great tribe of the Aneyza having quarrelled with his parents, ran away and came to Mosul, when he entered as a student in a college. He became a Mullah, and had almost forgotten his early friends, when the tribe, driven by a famine from the Syrian desert, crossed the Euphrates, and encamped near the town to buy corn. Ibn Gayshish, their Sheikh, hearing by chance that the fugitive was still alive, and now a member of the priesthood, sent a messenger to him to say, that since he had quitted his tents his father had died, and had left a certain number of camels, which had been divided according to the law amongst his family. Those allotted to him had been in the safe keeping of the tribe, and had increased yearly. The chief was now ready to do with them as their rightful owner might direct.

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Mr. Rassam had, at my request, sent a party of Jebours to renew the excavations at Kalah Sherghat, which had been very imperfectly examined. The springs of Belaliss are separated from the shoulder of the Gebel Makhoul, which overhangs the ruins, by a wild rocky valley, called Wadi Jehannem, the Valley of Hell. We crossed it and the hills in about three hours and a half, and came suddenly upon the workmen, who, of course, took us for Bedouin plunderers, and prepared to defend themselves. They had opened trenches in various parts of the great mound, but had made no discoveries of any importance, and I am inclined to doubt whether an edifice containing any number of sculptures or inscriptions ever existed on the platform. Fragments of a winged bull in the alabaster of the Nineveh palaces, part of a statue in black stone with a few cuneiform characters, and pieces of a large inscribed slab of copper, were found in the ruins; I collected also the fragments of a large inscribed cylinder in baked clay[233], and a copper cup, a few vases in common pottery, and some beads.

We encamped in the jungle to the north of the ruins, and were visited by fifteen men of the Albou Mohammed, who frankly confessed that they were thieves, out on their vocation. As the tribe does not bear a very good character for honesty, and as it might have struck our guests that they had no need of going further to fulfil the object of their journey, we violated the duties of hospitality, and put some of them in irons for the night, as a guarantee for the good conduct of the rest.

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I ordered the Jebours to leave Kalah Sherghat, and to return with us to Mosul, which we reached the following day. Mr. Bell, who had been sent to Assyria by the Trustees of the British Museum to succeed Mr. Cooper as artist to the expedition, had arrived in the town two days before. I rode with him without delay to Kouyunjik, to examine the excavations made during my absence. I will now describe the sculptures uncovered whilst I was at Baghdad and after my return to Mosul, previous to my departure for England.

To the north of the great centre hall four new chambers had been discovered. The first was 96 feet by 23. On its walls were represented the return of an Assyrian army from war, with their spoil of captives and cattle. The prisoners were distinguished by a cap turned back at the top, not unlike the Phrygian bonnet reversed, short tunics, and a broad belt. The women had long curls falling over their shoulders, and were clothed in fringed robes. The fighting-men of the conquered tribe wore a simple fillet round their short hair; a tunic, falling in front to the knee, and behind, to the calf of the leg; a wavy girdle, and a cross-belt round their breasts, ending in two large tassels. A kneeling camel, receiving its load, was designed with considerable truth and spirit. The legs bent under, the tail raised, the foot of the man on the neck of the animal to keep it from rising, whilst a second adjusts the burden from behind, form a group seen every day in the Desert and in an Eastern town. The camel saddle, too, nearly resembled that still used by the Arabs.

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This chamber opened at one end into a small room, 23 feet by 13. On its walls were represented a captive tribe, dressed in short tunics, a skin falling from their shoulders, boots laced up in front, and cross-bands round their legs; they had short, bushy hair and beards.

In the outer chamber two doorways opposite the grand entrances into the great hall, led into a parallel apartment, 62 feet by 16 feet. On its walls was represented the conquest of the same people, wearing the reversed Phrygian bonnet. There were long lines of prisoners; some in carts, others on foot. The fighting-men, armed with bows and quivers, were made to bear part of the spoil. In the costumes of the warriors and captives, and in the forms of the waggons and war-carts, these bas-reliefs bore a striking resemblance to the sculptures of the son of Essarhaddon, described in a previous chapter.[234] It may, therefore, be inferred that the conquest of the same nation was celebrated in both, and that on these walls we have recorded the successful wars of Sennacherib in the country of Susiana or Elam.

This chamber, like the one parallel to it, led at one end into a small room 17 feet square. On its walls, the campaign recorded in the adjoining chamber had been continued. These rooms completed the discoveries on the southern side of the palace. On the northern side of the same edifice, and on the river-face of the platform, one wall of a third great hall had been uncovered; the other walls had not been excavated at the time of my departure from Mosul. From the very ruinous state of this part of the building, and from the small accumulation of earth above the level of the foundations, it is doubtful whether any sculptures still exist in it. The standing wall had three entrances, the centre formed by winged lions, and the others by fish gods. Of the bas-reliefs only fragments now remained. In one set was depicted the conquest of another tribe dwelling in the marshes of southern Mesopotamia. The Assyrians pursued their enemies in wicker boats, such as I have described in my account of the Afajj Arabs; and on the islands formed by the small streams flowing through the morass, were Assyrian warriors on horseback.

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On the same side of the hall was represented the conquest of a second nation, whose men were clothed in long garments, and whose women wore turbans, with veils falling to their feet. The Assyrians had plundered their temples, and were seen carrying away their idols. "Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them." [235] Unfortunately the bas-reliefs were so much injured that the nature of these images could not be satisfactorily ascertained. The figures appeared to be beardless, with the exception of one, which is that of a man raising his right arm, and bearing a mace.

The three entrances led into one chamber 86 feet by 24. On its calcined walls were only the faint traces of bas-reliefs. I could distinguish a line of chariots in a ravine between mountains, warriors throwing logs on a great burning pile of wood, castles on the tops of hills, Assyrians carrying away spoil, amongst which was a royal umbrella, and the king on his throne receiving his army on their return from battle with the captives and booty.

Opposite to and corresponding with the three entrances from the hall were three other doorways leading into a parallel chamber of somewhat smaller dimensions. Parts of four slabs were the only sculptures sufficiently well preserved to be drawn: they represented the siege of a great city, whose many-towered walls were defended by slingers, archers, and spearmen. The king himself in his chariot was present at the attack. Around him were his warriors and his led-horses.

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Three more chambers were discovered in this part of the building. They were on the very edge of the river-face of the mound. The walls of the outer room had been almost entirely destroyed. An entrance, formed by colossal winged figures, led from it into a second chamber, about 24 feet square, in which the sculptures were still partly preserved. Amongst the bas-reliefs was another battle in a marsh. The Assyrian warriors were seen fighting in boats, and bringing their captives to the shore, one of the vessels being towed by a man swimming on an inflated skin. Sennacherib himself, in his chariot, in the midst of a grove of palm-trees, received the prisoners, and the heads of the slain. Above him was a short epigraph, which appears to read, "Sennacherib, king of the country of Assyria, the spoil of the river Agammi, from the city of Sakrina" (the last line not interpreted). Although the name of this city has not yet been found, as far as I know, in the records on the bulls and on other monuments of the same king, yet the mention of the river enables us to recognise in the bas-reliefs a representation of part of the campaign, undertaken by Sennacherib, in the fourth year of his reign, against Susubira the Chaldæan: whose capital was Bittul, on the same stream. Although the river itself has not as yet been identified, it is evidently either a part of the Tigris or Euphrates, or one of their confluents, near the Persian Gulf. We have no difficulty, indeed, in determining the site of the country whose conquest is depicted. The marshes and palm-trees show that it must have been in southern Mesopotamia, or in the districts watered by the Shat el Arab.

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A great retinue of charioteers and horsemen appear to have followed Sennacherib to this war. Large circular shields were fixed to the sides of the chariots represented in the sculptures.

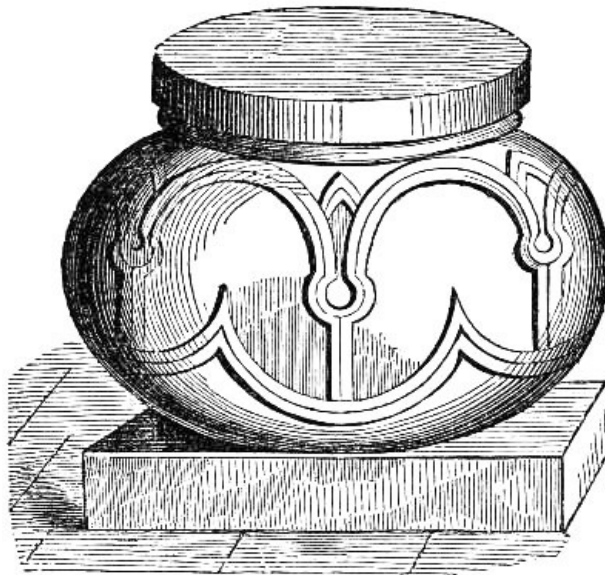
The third chamber, entered from that last described through a doorway guarded by colossal eagle-footed figures, contained the sculptured records of the conquest of part of Babylonia, or of some other district to the south of it. Long lines of chariots, horsemen and warriors, divided into companies according to their arms and their costume, accompanied the king. The Assyrians having taken the principal city of the invaded country, cut down the palm-trees within and without its walls. Men beating drums, such as are still seen in the same

country, and women clapping their hands in cadence to their song, came out to greet the conquerors. Beneath the walls was represented a great caldron, which appears to have been supported upon metal images of oxen; perhaps a vessel resembling the brazen sea of the temple of Solomon.[236]

Such were the discoveries in the ruined palace of Sennacherib at the time of my departure for Europe. In this magnificent edifice I had opened no less than seventy-one halls, chambers, and passages, whose walls, almost without an exception, had been panelled with slabs of sculptured alabaster recording the wars, the triumphs, and the great deeds of the Assyrian king. By a rough calculation, about 9880 feet, or nearly two miles, of bas-reliefs, with twenty-seven portals, formed by colossal winged bulls and lion-sphinxes, were uncovered in that part alone of the building explored during my researches. The greatest length of the excavations was about 720 feet, the greatest breadth about 600 feet.[237] The pavement of the chambers was from 20 to 35 feet below the surface of the mound.

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Only a part, however, of the palace has been explored, and much still remains underground of this enormous structure. Since my return to Europe other rooms and sculptures have been discovered.



Assyrian Pedestal, from Kouyunjik.

The excavations were not limited to the corner of Kouyunjik containing the palace. Deep trenches and tunnels were opened, and experimental shafts sunk in various parts of the mound. Enormous walls and foundations of brick masonry, fragments of sculptured and unsculptured alabaster, inscribed bricks, numerous small objects, and various other remains, were discovered.[238] To the north of the ruins on the same level, and resting upon a pavement of limestone slabs, were found four circular pedestals. They appeared to form a part of a double line of similar objects, extending from the edge of the platform to an entrance to the palace, and may have supported the wooden columns of a covered way, or have served as bases to an avenue of statues.[239] The earth not having been sufficiently cleared away around them, I was unable to ascertain whether there was more than a double row. They were amongst the very few architectural remains dug out at Nineveh. The ornament upon them is not inelegant, and is somewhat Saracenic in its character.

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I will now describe some of the most interesting small objects discovered in the earth and rubbish during the excavations at Kouyunjik. It must be borne in mind that the mound within which was the buried palace, was used more than once, and by more than one distinct people, for the site of a castle, if not of a town. We know that Nineveh was utterly destroyed by the united armies of the Medes and Babylonians; yet we find Meherdates taking the castle of Ninos, and the same place is mentioned by several later authors.[240]

Coins of more than one Roman emperor were, according to the superscription, struck at Nineveh. One bears the head of Trajan, and, on the reverse, the legend AUG. FELI. NINI. CLAV. (col.), round an eagle with expanded wings between two military standards. Another has on one side the head of the Emperor Maximinus, and on the reverse a naked figure holding an object resembling a bull's head in one hand, with the legend COL. NINIVA CLAVD. It would appear from these coins that Claudius, who established many colonies in the East, was the founder of one called after him Niniva Claudiopolis.

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As buildings thus appear to have been erected at various times on the mound, we accordingly find in the rubbish remains of various periods. Amongst the relics occasionally brought to me by the workmen were a few fragments of pottery, and coins, and ill-cut gems with inscriptions in the Pehlevi character, of the time of the Sassanian kings of Persia, that

is, from the first half of the third to the seventh century after Christ. Of the Roman period we have terracotta figures and lamps, and a hoard of eighty-nine silver denarii of the Emperors Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, Commodus, and Septimius Severus, according to the dates on the coins themselves, from A. D. 74 to A. D. 201. Mr. R. Stuart Poole, of the British Museum,—to whom I am indebted for a list and description of these coins,—conjectures, with much probability, that they were buried by a Roman soldier during the second expedition undertaken by Severus against the Arabs of Mesopotamia (A. D. 202), or during the Parthian war, carried on by the same emperor. The number of coins of Commodus, and the fact that there are none of any emperor after Severus, lead to the belief that the hoard was buried about this time. It is worthy of remark, too, that the latest have few, if any, marks of having been in circulation. Unfortunately there are no coins amongst them actually struck at Nineveh, although they mostly belong to Eastern cities.

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Of the time of the Seleucidæ and of the Greek occupation of Assyria and Babylonia, we have several relics: amongst them a small head of Hercules, with the eyes inlaid in ivory, one or two figures in terracotta, some copper and glass vessels, and various objects in pottery and bronze. To this period I am now inclined to attribute the earthen sarcophagi, the great jars, and other sepulchral remains found at Nimroud, Kalah Sherghat, Kouyunjik, and in other Assyrian mounds, which, when my former work was written, I believed to belong to a much earlier epoch. Since my return to England, Mr. Vice-consul Rassam has discovered at Kouyunjik several tombs built of slabs of stone, and apparently of even a later date, for in one of them, I understand, was found a gold coin of the Emperor Maximinus. They contained, however, very interesting relics in the same precious metal and in glass.

It is remarkable that, notwithstanding the most careful search, in all parts of the country around Mosul, I have been unable to find one undoubted Assyrian tomb, nor can I conjecture how or where the people of Nineveh buried their dead. The sepulchral chambers in the hills, so frequently described in these pages, are unquestionably of a comparatively late period. The rocky gullies outside and between the inclosure walls of Kouyunjik have been examined over and over again with the greatest care for traces of tombs, but in vain. In the numerous isolated conical mounds scattered over the face of the country, I have detected nothing to show that they were places of sepulture. It must, however, be confessed that they have not yet been sufficiently excavated. Further experiments should be made in them, and tunnels opened into their very foundations. The only Assyrian sepulchre hitherto discovered is probably the vaulted chamber in the high mound of Nimroud, which may have once contained the remains of the royal builder of the north-west palace. Did the Assyrians, like the fire-worshippers of Persia, expose their dead until nought remained but the bleached bones, or did they burn them and then scatter their ashes to the winds? Not a clue is given to their customs in this matter by any bas-relief or monument hitherto discovered. The Assyrians appear to have avoided all allusions to their dead and to their funeral rites; unlike the Egyptians, who portrayed the ceremonies observed after death, and even the events of a future state, upon the walls of almost every temple and tomb.

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The only relics found at Kouyunjik which I can refer to the Achæmenian Persian period, are the remains of several dishes and vases in serpentine and marble. One fragment of this nature is inscribed with Egyptian hieroglyphs, characteristic, according to Mr. Birch, of the time of the Ptolemies.



Part of Colossal Head, from Kouyunjik.

Of Assyrian relics obtained from the ruins, the most interesting are

A colossal beardless head in limestone, remarkable for the boldness of the style. It is, probably, part of a lion-sphinx.

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Handles in the form of the heads of lions, and other fragments of vases and dishes.

A fragment of striped marble, carved with figures in relief, and bearing an inscription with the genealogy and titles of Essarhaddon.

A gold ear-ring adorned with pearls, resembling those still in common use amongst Arab women.

A rude circular vessel in limestone, ornamented on the outside with figures in relief of the Assyrian Hercules struggling with the lion.

Moulds for casting ear-rings and other ornaments in gold and silver. The forms upon them are all purely Assyrian, as the lion-headed deity, the cone, the bull's head, and the sacred signs seen in the Nimroud sculptures round the neck of the king. The largest mould is in limestone, the others in serpentine. They are precisely such as are used to this day by Arab goldsmiths.

Various copper instruments (one in the shape of a sickle), a key,^[241] a comb, and other objects, such as the heads of spears and arrows, in iron; glass bottles, pottery, fragments of terracotta, and marble with inscriptions, and many other relics, all of which, with those above enumerated, are now in the British Museum.

I had long been desirous of making some experiments in the mound on which stands the so-called tomb of the prophet Jonah. It forms part of the great group of ruins opposite Mosul, and is, like Kouyunjik, in the line of the inclosure walls. Some have believed it to represent the real site of ancient Nineveh, Kouyunjik being the remains of a palace added to the city at a later period. It was important, therefore, to ascertain the nature and probable date of the edifice covered by the mound. The sanctity of the place prevented any attempt to excavate openly, and it was necessary to carry on my researches without exciting the suspicion of the Mussulman inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

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A village has risen round the mosque containing the tomb. The rest of the mound is occupied by a burying ground, thickly set with Mussulman gravestones. True believers from the surrounding country bring their dead to this sacred spot, and to disturb a grave on Nebbi Yunus would cause a tumult which might lead to no agreeable results. The pretended tomb itself is in a dark inner room. None but Mussulmans should be admitted within the holy precincts, but I have more than once visited the shrine, with the sanction of my good friend, Mullah Sultan, a guardian of the mosque. A square plaster or wooden sarcophagus, entirely concealed by a green cloth embroidered with sentences from the Koran, stands in the centre of an apartment spread with a common European carpet. A few ostrich eggs and colored tassels, such as are seen in similar Mohammedan buildings, hang from the ceiling. A small grated window looks into the hall, where the true believers assemble for prayer. A staircase leads into the holy chamber. It is needless to repeat that the tradition which places the tomb on this spot is a mere fable.^[242]

The village of Nebbi Yunus is inhabited by Turcoman families. Some of their dwellings occupy a considerable space. Hearing that the owner of one of the largest wished to make serdaubs, or underground apartments for summer, I offered, through my agent, Toma Shishman, to dig them for him, on condition that I should have all the relics and sculptures discovered during the excavations. By these means I was able to examine a small part of the mound.

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After a few days' labor, the workmen came to the walls of a chamber. They were panelled with inscribed, but unsculptured, alabaster slabs. The inscriptions merely contained the name, titles, and genealogy of Essarhaddon, such as were found on the bulls and sphinxes of the south-west palace at Nimroud. Several bricks and fragments of stone were also obtained from the ruins, but they all bore the same inscription. No remains whatever of more ancient building, and no relics of an earlier period were discovered during my residence at Mosul in the mound of the Prophet Jonah.

Since my return to England an inhabitant of the village, whilst digging the foundations of his house, uncovered a pair of colossal human-headed bulls, and two figures of the Assyrian Hercules slaying the lion, similar to those in the Louvre. He communicated his discovery at once to the English Vice-consul, who informed Mr. Hodder, the artist sent out by the Trustees of the British Museum. Through some neglect these interesting specimens were not visited and secured before others became acquainted with their existence, and endeavored to obtain possession of them. The Turkish authorities, of course, settled the claims of the rival antiquaries by seizing the sculptures for themselves. On several grounds this is much to be regretted. These remains will, however, probably prove to be of the time of Essarhaddon.

Three miles to the north of the inclosure of Kouyunjik, and on the bank of the Tigris, is a village called Shereef-Khan. Near it are several mounds. The largest, though much inferior in size to the great ruins of Assyria, is distinguished, like those of Nimroud and Khorsabad,

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by a conical heap at one corner. For some time excavations were carried on in this mound under my superintendence, and discoveries of interest were made in it. At a small depth beneath the surface of the soil are the remains of a building. The walls of the chambers are of sun-dried bricks, but several slabs of alabaster, and painted and inscribed bricks were found in the ruins. A broad flight of alabaster steps appeared to connect an upper with a lower part of the edifice.

The inscriptions upon the bricks contain the names of Sargon and Sennacherib. Those of the former king read, "Sargon, king of Assyria, the city (or place) of the mound of the fort of Sargon I called it; a temple of the sun ... near it I built." Other bricks mention a temple dedicated to Mars, or some other Assyrian deity.^[243] There are several smaller mounds in the neighbourhood, which have not been explored.

At Nimroud the excavations had been almost suspended. A few Arabs, still working in the centre of the mound, had found the remains of sculptured walls, forming part of the edifice previously discovered there. The lower half of several colossal figures, amongst them winged men struggling with lions and mythic animals, had been preserved.

A few small objects of interest were discovered in different parts of the ruins, and some additional rooms were explored in the north-west and south-east palaces. In none of them, however, were there sculptures, or even inscriptions, except such as were impressed on bricks. The bricks found amongst its ruins prove that it was built by the grandson of Essarhaddon, who must consequently have been one of the last of the Assyrian kings.

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Several tombs containing vases, beads and ornaments, were discovered above the centre palace. A few large earthen jars from different parts of the mound, a number of small cups of peculiar shape from the ruins of the upper chambers, other pottery of various kinds, and some rude figures in baked clay, were the principal relics found during the excavations at Nimroud.

In the north-west palace was also discovered a duck, with its head turned upon its back, in greenstone, similar to that in white marble engraved in the first series of the Monuments of Nineveh. These two objects are of considerable interest, as we learn from short inscriptions upon them, deciphered by Dr. Hincks, that they are weights of thirty mana, or half a Babylonian talent.

They have been examined at the mint, and are found to weigh 40 lb. 4 oz. 4 dwt. 4 gr. and 39 lb. 1 oz. 1 dwt. 6 gr. The difference between them is owing to the head of one having been broken off.^[244]

It may be inferred that two similar figures in baked clay, inscribed with Assyrian numerals, from the same ruins, and others of small size in agate, onyx, and other hard materials, are likewise weights, probably parts of the talent or of the mana. It is also highly probable that the curious series of bronze lions discovered at Nimroud during my first researches were used for a like purpose. Since the coating of green rust has been removed from them, they are found in several instances to bear two short inscriptions, one in cuneiform characters with the name of Sennacherib, the other in Phœnician, or cursive Semetic letters, accompanied by parallel lines or notches cut in the bronze. Dr. Lepsius has recently published a bas-relief from an Egyptian tomb, representing a man weighing rings of gold or silver, with weights in the form of a bull's head, and of a seated lion with a ring on its back, precisely similar to those from Nineveh, now in the British Museum.

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The engraved cylinders or gems, of which a large collection was brought by me to England, form an important as well as an interesting class of Assyrian and Babylonian antiquities. They vary in size, from about two inches to a quarter of an inch, and are either circular, or barrel-shaped, or slightly curved inwards. They are usually of lapis-lazuli, rock-crystal, cornelian, amethyst, chalcedony, agate, onyx, jasper, quartz, serpentine, sienite, oriental alabaster, green felspar, and hæmatite. The workmanship varies in different specimens, that of some being of considerable sharpness and delicacy, and that of others so coarse as scarcely to enable us to recognise the objects engraved upon them. The subjects are generally either religious or historical, usually the former, and on many are short inscriptions in the cuneiform character. These cylinders belong to several distinct periods. The most ancient with which I am acquainted are those of the time of the kings who built the oldest edifices hitherto discovered at Nineveh. The subjects are usually the king in his chariot discharging his arrows against a lion or wild bull, warriors in battle, the monarch or priests in adoration before the emblem of the deity, the eagle-headed god, winged bulls and lions, and other mythic animals, accompanied by the common Assyrian symbols, the sun, the moon, the seven stars, the winged globe, the sacred tree, and the wedge or cuneatic element.

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The next in order of date are those of the time of Sargon and his successors. To this period belong the cylinder with the fish-god, and that which I believe to be the signet of Sennacherib himself, described in a previous part of this work.^[245] A very fine specimen, cut in agate, represents an Assyrian goddess, perhaps Astarte, or the Moon, surrounded by ten stars, with a dog seated before her. In front of her is the moon's crescent, and a priest in an attitude of adoration. A tree and a rampant goat, both common Assyrian symbols, complete the group. On others of the same age we find the gods represented under various forms, the king and priests worshipping before them, altars and various signs peculiar to the period,

and the usual mythic emblems.

The pure Babylonian cylinders are more commonly found in European collections than the Assyrian. They are usually engraved with sacred figures, accompanied by a short inscription in the Babylonian cuneiform character, containing the names of the owner of the seal and of the divinity, under whose particular protection he had probably placed himself. They are usually cut in a red iron ore or hæmatite, which appears to have been a favorite material for such objects. Many specimens, however, are in agate, jasper, and other hard substances.

A class of cylinders of very rude workmanship, and usually in hæmatite, are probably of the latest Babylonian period. Upon them are usually found the figures of various deities, and especially of Venus, sometimes represented with the waters of life flowing from her breasts.

A few cylinders and gems, Assyrian in character, are inscribed with Semetic letters, resembling the Phœnician and cursive Babylonian. They are rare, and have chiefly been found, I believe, in ruins on the banks of the Euphrates to the north of Babylon, near Hit and Ana. I would attribute them, therefore, to the Semetic population which inhabited the districts on the eastern borders of the Syrian desert. They appear to belong to various periods, from the time of the lower Assyrian dynasty (of which three fine specimens are in possession of Captain Jones of Baghdad) to that of the Persian occupation of Babylonia.

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Persian cylinders frequently bear an inscription in the cuneiform character peculiar to the monuments of the Achæmenian dynasty. The most interesting specimen of this class is the well-known gem of green chalcedony in the British Museum, on which is engraved king Darius in his chariot, with his name and that of his father. This was probably a royal signet. Another, in the same collection, bears the name of one Arsaces, who appears to have been a chamberlain, or to have held some other office in the Persian court. A very fine cylinder in rock crystal, brought by me to this country, and now also in the British Museum, has the god Ormuzd represented as at Persepolis, raised by two winged bulls with human heads, above an oval, containing the image of a king. The engraving on this gem is remarkable for its delicacy and minuteness.

Persian cylinders are recognised at once by the draperies of the figures, gathered up into folds, as in the sculptures of the Achæmenian dynasty, a peculiarity never found on pure Assyrian or Babylonian monuments; by the crown of the king; by the form of the supreme deity, or Ormuzd and by the monstrous animals, resembling the sculptures on the walls of Persepolis.

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It has been conjectured that these cylinders were amulets engraved with a kind of horoscope of the owner, or with the figures of the deities who were supposed to preside over his nativity and fortunes. But it is evident from the specimens above described, that they were seals or signets to be impressed on clay and other materials on which public and private documents were written. Herodotus states that the Babylonians were accustomed to have their signets constantly with them, as a modern Eastern always carries his seal.[246]

The seal was evidently rolled on the moist clay, at the same time as the letters were impressed.[247] The tablet was then placed in the furnace and baked. All these cylinders have been pierced, and one specimen, found by my workmen in a mound in the desert near the Sinjar, still retained its copper setting. They revolved upon a metal axis, like a garden rolling-stone.

Such then were the objects of sculpture and the smaller relics found at Nimroud and Kouyunjik. I will now endeavour to convey to the reader, in conclusion, a general idea of the results of the excavations, as far as they may tend to increase our acquaintance with the history of Assyria, and to illustrate the religion, the arts, and the manners of her inhabitants.

CHAPTER XXVI.

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RESULTS OF THE DISCOVERIES TO CHRONOLOGY AND HISTORY.—NAMES OF ASSYRIAN KINGS IN THE INSCRIPTIONS.—A DATE FIXED.—THE NAME OF JEHU.—THE OBELISK KING.—THE EARLIER KINGS.—SARDANAPALUS.—HIS SUCCESSORS.—PUL, OR TIGLATH PILESER.—SARGON.—SENNACHERIR.—ESSARHADDON.—THE LAST ASSYRIAN KINGS.—TABLES OF PROPER NAMES IN THE ASSYRIAN INSCRIPTIONS.—ANTIQUITY OF NINEVEH.—OF THE NAME OF ASSYRIA.—ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.—STATE OF JUDÆA AND ASSYRIA COMPARED.—POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE

EMPIRE.—ASSYRIAN COLONIES.—PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY.—RELIGION.—EXTENT OF NINEVEH.—ASSYRIAN ARCHITECTURE.—COMPARED WITH JEWISH.—PALACE OF KOUYUNJIK RESTORED.—PLATFORM AT NIMROUD RESTORED.—THE ASSYRIAN FORTIFIED INCLOSURES.—DESCRIPTION OF KOUYUNJIK.—CONCLUSION.

Although ten years have barely elapsed since the first discovery of ruins on the site of the great city of Nineveh, a mass of information, scarcely to be overrated for its importance and interest, has already been added to our previous knowledge of the early history and comparative geography of the East. When in 1849 I published the narrative of my first researches in Assyria, the numerous inscriptions recovered from the remains of the buried palaces were still almost a sealed book; for although an interpretation of some had been hazarded, it was rather upon mere conjecture than upon any well-established philological basis. I then, however, expressed my belief, that ere long their contents would be known with almost certainty, and that they would be found to furnish a history, previously almost unknown, of one of the earliest and most powerful empires of the ancient world. Since that time the labors of English scholars, and especially of Col. Rawlinson and Dr. Hincks, and of M. de Saulcy, and other eminent investigators on the Continent, have nearly led to the fulfilment of those anticipations; and my present work would be incomplete were I not to give a general sketch of the results of their investigations, as well as of my own researches.

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I will not detain the reader by any account of the various processes adopted in deciphering, and of the steps gradually made in the investigation; nor will I recapitulate the curious corroborative evidence which has led in many instances to the verification of the interpretations. Such details, philologically of the highest interest, and very creditable to the sagacity and learning of those pursuing this difficult inquiry, will be found in the several treatises published by the investigators themselves. The results, however, are still very incomplete. It is, indeed, a matter of astonishment that, considering the time which has elapsed since the discovery of the monuments, so much progress has been already made. But there is every prospect of our being able, ere long, to ascertain the general contents of almost every Assyrian record. The Babylonian column of the Bisutun inscription, that invaluable key to the various branches of cuneiform writing, has at length been published by Col. Rawlinson, and will enable others to carry on the investigation upon sure grounds.

I will proceed, therefore, to give a slight sketch of the contents of the inscriptions as far as they have been examined. The earliest king of whose reign we have any detailed account was the builder of the north-west palace at Nimroud, the most ancient edifice hitherto discovered in Assyria. His records, however, with other inscriptions, furnish the names of five, if not seven, of his predecessors, some of whom, there is reason to believe, erected palaces at Nineveh, and originally founded those which were only rebuilt by subsequent monarchs. It is consequently important to ascertain the period of the accession of this early Assyrian king, and we apparently have the means of fixing it with sufficient accuracy. His son, we know, built the centre palace at Nimroud, and raised the obelisk, now in the British Museum, inscribing upon it the principal events of his reign. He was a great conqueror, and subdued many distant nations. The names of the subject kings who paid him tribute are duly recorded on the obelisk, in some instances with sculptured representations of the various objects sent. Amongst those kings was one whose name reads "Jehu, the son of Khumri (Omri)," and who has been identified by Dr. Hincks and Col. Rawlinson with Jehu, king of Israel. This monarch was certainly not the son, although one of the successors of Omri, but the term "son of" appears to have been used throughout the East in those days, as it still is, to denote connection generally, either by descent or by succession. Thus we find in Scripture the same person called "the son of Nimshi," and "the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi."^[248] An identification connected with this word Khumri or Omri is one of the most interesting instances of corroborative evidence that can be adduced of the accuracy of the interpretations of the cuneiform character. It was observed that the name of a city resembling Samaria was connected, and that in inscriptions containing very different texts, with one reading Beth Khumri or Omri.^[249] This fact was unexplained until Col. Rawlinson perceived that the names were, in fact, applied to the same place, or one to the district, and the other to the town. Samaria having been built by Omri, nothing is more probable than that—in accordance with a common Eastern custom—it should have been called, after its founder, Beth Khumri, or the house of Omri. As a further proof of the identity of the Jehu mentioned on the obelisk with the king of Israel, Dr. Hincks, to whom we owe this important discovery, has found on the same monument the name of Hazael, whom Elijah was ordered by the Almighty to anoint king of Syria.^[250]

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Supposing, therefore, these names to be correctly identified,—and our Assyrian chronology for this period rests as yet, it must be admitted, almost entirely upon this supposition,—we can fix an approximate date for the reign of the obelisk king. Jehu ascended the throne about 885 B. C.; the accession of the Assyrian monarch must, consequently, be placed somewhere between that time and the commencement of the ninth century B. C., and that of his father in the latter part of the tenth.^[251]

In his records the builder of the north-west palace mentions, amongst his predecessors, a

king whose name is identical with the one from whom, according to the inscriptions at Bavian, were taken certain idols of Assyria 418 years before the first or second year of the reign of Sennacherib. According to Dr. Hincks, Sennacherib ascended the throne in 703 B. C. We have, therefore, 1121 B. C. for the date of the reign of this early king.

There are still two kings mentioned by name in the inscriptions from the north-west palace at Nimroud, as ancestors of its builder, who have not yet been satisfactorily placed. It is probable that the earliest reigned somewhere about the middle of the twelfth century B. C. Colonel Rawlinson calls him *the founder* of Nineveh; but there is no proof whatever, as far as I am aware, in support of this conjecture. It is possible, however, that he may have been the first of a dynasty which *extended* the bounds of the Assyrian empire, and was founded, according to Herodotus, about five centuries before the Median invasion, or in the twelfth century B. C.; but there appears to be evidence to show that a city bearing the name of Nineveh stood on the banks of the Tigris long before that period.[252]

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The second king, whose name is unplaced, appears to be mentioned in the inscriptions as the original *founder* of the north-west palace at Nimroud. According to the views just expressed, he must have reigned about the end of the twelfth century B. C.

The father and grandfather of the *builder* of the north-west palace are mentioned in nearly every inscription from that edifice. Their names, according to Colonel Rawlinson, are Adrammelech and Anáku-Merodach. They must have reigned in the middle of the tenth century B. C. We have no records of either of them.

The first king of whom we have any connected historical chronicle was the builder of the well-known edifice at Nimroud from which were obtained the most perfect and interesting bas-reliefs brought to this country. In my former work I stated that Colonel Rawlinson believed his name to be Ninus, and had identified him with that ancient king, according to Greek history, the founder of the Assyrian empire. He has since given up this reading, and has suggested that of Assardanbal, agreeing with the historic Sardanapalus. Dr. Hincks, however, assigning a different value to the middle character (the name being usually written with three), reads Ashurakhbal. It is certain that the first monogram stands both for the name of the country of Assyria and for that of its protecting deity. We might consequently assume, even were other proof wanting, that it should be read Assur or Ashur.

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I have elsewhere given a description of the various great monumental records of this king, with extracts from their contents. He appears to have carried his arms to the west of Nineveh across Syria to the Mediterranean Sea, to the south into Chaldæa, probably beyond Babylon (the name of this city does not, however, as far as I am aware, occur in the inscriptions), and to the north into Asia Minor and Armenia.

Of his son, whose name Colonel Rawlinson reads Temenbar and Divanubara, and Dr. Hincks Divanubar, we have full and important historical annals, including the principal events of thirty-one years of his reign. They are engraved upon the black obelisk, and upon the backs of the bulls in the centre of the mound of Nimroud. This king, like his father, was a great conqueror. He waged war, either in person or by his generals, in Syria, Armenia, Babylonia, Chaldæa, Media, and Persia.

The two royal names next in order occur on the pavement slabs of the upper chambers, on the west face of the mound of Nimroud.[253] They may belong to the son and grandson, and immediate successors, of the obelisk king. The two names, however, have not been satisfactorily deciphered. Colonel Rawlinson reads them Shamas-Adar and Adrammelech II.; Dr. Hincks only ventures to suggest Shamsiyav for the first.

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On the Assyrian tablet from the tunnel of Negoub[254], are apparently two royal names, which may be placed next in order. They are merely mentioned as those of ancestors or predecessors of the king who caused the record to be engraved. Dr. Hincks reads them Baldasi and Ashurkish. As the inscription is much mutilated, some doubt may exist as to the correctness of its interpretation.

The next king of whom we have any actual records appears to have rebuilt or added to the palace in the centre of the mound of Nimroud. The edifice was destroyed by a subsequent monarch, who carried away its sculptures to decorate a palace of his own. All the remains found amongst its ruins, with the exception of the great bulls and the obelisk, belong to a king whose name occurs on a pavement-slab discovered in the south-west palace. The walls and chambers of this building were, it will be remembered, decorated with bas-reliefs brought from elsewhere. By comparing the inscriptions upon them, and upon a pavement-slab of the same period, with the sculptures in the ruins of the centre palace, we find that they all belong to the same king, and we are able to identify him through a most important discovery, for which we are also indebted to Dr. Hincks. In an inscription on a bas-relief representing part of a line of war-chariots, he has detected the name of Menahem, the king of Israel, amongst those of other monarchs paying tribute to the king of Assyria, in the eighth year of his reign.[255] This Assyrian king, must, consequently, have been either the immediate predecessor of Pul, Pul himself, or Tiglath Pileser, the name on the pavement-slab not having yet been deciphered.[256]

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The bas-reliefs adorning his palace, like those at Khorsabad, appear to have been accompanied by a complete series of his annals. Unfortunately only fragments of them

remain. His first campaign seems to have been in Chaldæa, and during his reign he carried his arms into the remotest parts of Armenia, and across the Euphrates into Syria as far as Tyre and Sidon. There is a passage in one of his inscriptions still unpublished, which reads, "as far as the river Oukarish," that might lead us to believe that his conquests were even extended to the central provinces of Asia and to the Oxus. His annals contain very ample lists of conquered towns and tribes. Amongst the former are Harran and Ur. He rebuilt many cities, and placed his subjects to dwell in them.

The next monarch, whose name is found on Assyrian monuments, was the builder of the palace of Khorsabad, now so well known from M. Botta's excavations and the engravings of its sculptures published by the French government. His name, though read with slight variations by different interpreters, is admitted by all to be that of Sargon, the Assyrian king mentioned by Isaiah. The names of his father and grandfather are said to have been found on a clay tablet discovered at Kouyunjik, but they do not appear to have been monarchs of Assyria. The ruins of Khorsabad furnish us with the most detailed and ample annals of his reign. Unfortunately an inscription, containing an account of a campaign against Samaria in his first or second year, has been almost entirely destroyed. But, in one still preserved, 27,280 Israelites are described as having been carried into captivity by him from Samaria and the several districts or provincial towns dependent upon that city. Sargon, like his predecessors, was a great warrior. He even extended his conquests beyond Syria to the islands of the Mediterranean Sea, and a tablet set up by him has been found in Cyprus. He warred also in Babylonia, Susiana, Armenia, and Media, and apparently received tribute from the kings of Egypt.

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Colonel Rawlinson believed that the names "Tiglath Pileser" and "Shalmaneser," were found on the monuments of Khorsabad as epithets of Sargon, and that they were applied in the Old Testament to the same king. He has now changed his opinion with regard to the first, and Dr. Hincks contends that the second is not a name of this king, but of his predecessor,—of whom, however, it must be observed, we have hitherto been unable to trace any mention on the monuments, unless, as that scholar suggests, he is alluded to in an inscription of Sargon from Khorsabad.

From the reign of Sargon we have a complete list of kings to the fall of the empire, or to a period not far distant from that event. He was succeeded by Sennacherib, whose annals have been given in a former part of this volume. His name was identified, as I have before stated, by Dr. Hincks, and this great discovery furnished the first satisfactory starting-point, from which the various events recorded in the inscriptions have been linked with Scripture history. Colonel Rawlinson places the accession of Sennacherib to the throne in 716, Dr. Hincks in 703, which appears to be more in accordance with the canon of Ptolemy. The events of his reign, as recorded in the inscriptions on the walls of his palace, are mostly related or alluded to in sacred and profane history. I have already described his wars in Judæa, and have compared his own account with that contained in Holy Writ. His second campaign in Babylonia is mentioned in a fragment of Polyhistor, preserved by Eusebius, in which the name given to Sennacherib's son, and the general history of the war appear to be nearly the same as those on the monuments. The fragment is highly interesting as corroborating the accuracy of the interpretation of the inscriptions. I was not aware of its existence when the translation given in the sixth chapter of this volume was printed. "After the reign of the brother of Sennacherib, Acises reigned over the Babylonians, and when he had governed for the space of thirty days he was slain by Merodach Baladan, who held the empire by force during six months; and he was slain and succeeded by a person named Elibus (Belib). But in the third year of his (Elibus) reign Sennacherib, king of the Assyrians, levied an army against the Babylonians; and in a battle, in which they were engaged, routed and took him prisoner with his adherents, and commanded them to be carried into the land of the Assyrians. Having taken upon himself the government of the Babylonians, he appointed his son, Asordanius, their king, and he himself retired again into Assyria." This son, however, was not Essarhaddon, his successor on the throne of Assyria. The two names are distinguished by a distinct orthography in the cuneiform inscriptions. Sennacherib raised monuments and caused tablets recording his victories to be carved in many countries which he visited and subdued. His image and inscriptions at the mouth of the Nahr-el-Kelb in Syria are well known. During my journey to Europe I found one of his tablets near the village of Hasana (or Hasan Agha), chiefly remarkable from being at the foot of Gebel Judi, the mountain upon which, according to a widespread Eastern tradition, the ark of Noah rested after the deluge.[257]

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Essarhaddon, his son, was his successor, as we know from the Bible. He built the south-west palace at Nimroud, and an edifice whose ruins are now covered by the mound of the tomb of Jonah opposite Mosul. Like his father he was a great warrior, and he styles himself in his inscriptions "King of Egypt, conqueror of Æthiopia." It was probably this king who carried Manasseh, king of Jerusalem, captive to Babylon.[258]

The name of the son and successor of Essarhaddon was the same as that of the builder of the north-west palace at Nimroud. His father had erected a dwelling for him in the suburbs or on the outskirts of Nineveh. His principal campaign appears to have been in Susiana or Elam. As the great number of the inscribed tablets found in the ruins of the palace of Sennacherib, at Kouyunjik, are of his time, many of them bearing his name, we may hope to obtain some record of the principal events of his reign.

His son built the south-east palace on the mound of Nimroud, probably over the remains of an earlier edifice. Bricks from its ruins give his name, which has not yet been deciphered, and those of his father and grandfather. We know nothing of his history from cotemporaneous records. He was one of the last, if not the last, king of the second dynasty; and may, indeed, as I have already suggested, have been that monarch, Sardanapalus, or Saracus, who was conquered by the combined armies of the Medes and Babylonians under Cyaxares in B. C. 606, and who made of his palace, his wealth, and his wives one great funeral pile.^[259]

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For convenience of reference I give a table of the royal names, according to the versions of Dr. Hincks and Col. Rawlinson, the principal monuments on which they are found, and the approximate date of the reigns of the several kings. In a second table will be found the most important proper and geographical names in the Assyrian inscriptions which have been identified with those in the Bible. A third table contains the names of the thirteen great gods of Assyria, according to the version of Dr. Hincks.

TABLE I.—NAMES of ASSYRIAN KINGS in the Inscriptions from Nineveh.

Conjectural reading.	Where found.	Approximate Date of reign.
1. Derceto (R ^[260]) Divanurish (H)	Pavement Slab, (B. M. Series, p. 70, l. 25)	1250 B. C.
2. Divanukha (R)	Standard Inscription, Nimroud, &c.	1200 B. C.
3. Anakbar-beth-hira (R) Shimish-bal-Bithkhira (H)	Slabs from Temples in North of Mound of Nimroud; Bavian tablets, &c.	1130 B. C.
Mardokempad (?) (R) Mesessimordacus (?) (R)	A cylinder from Shereef-Khan	
4. Adrammelech I. (R)	Standard Inscription, Bricks, &c., from N. W. Palace, Nimroud	1000 B. C.
5. Anaku Merodak (R) Shimish Bar (H) (Son of preceding)	Idem	960 B. C.
6. Sardanapalus I. (R) Ashurakhhbal (H) (Son of preceding)	Standard Inscription, Bricks, &c., from N. W. Palace, Nimroud, Abou Maria, &c., &c.	930 B. C.
7. Divanubara (R) Divanubar (H) (Son of preceding)	Centre Palace, Nimroud; Obelisk; Bricks; Kalah-Sherghat; Baashiekha	900 B. C.
8. Shamas Adar (R) Shamsiyav (H)	Pavement Slab, Upper Chambers, Nimroud	870 B. C.
9. Adrammelech II. (R)	Idem	840 B. C.
10. Baldasi (?) (H)	Slab from the tunnel of Negoub	
11. Ashurkish (?) (H)	Idem	
12. ? Pul or Tiglath-Pileser	Pavement Slab, and Slabs built into the S. W. Palace, Nimroud	750 B. C.
13. Sargon	Khorsabad; Nimroud; Karamless, &c., &c.	722 B. C.
14. Sennacherib (Son of preceding)	Kouyunjik, &c.	703 B. C.
15. Essarhaddon (Son of preceding)	S. W. Palace, Nimroud; Nebbi Yunus; Shereef-Khan	690 B. C.?

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16. Sardanapalus III. (R) Ashurakhbal (H) (Son of preceding)	Kouyunjik; Shereef-Khan
17. (Son of preceding)	S. E. Edifice, Nimroud
18. Shamishakhadon (?) (H)	Black Stone, in possession of Lord Aberdeen

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TABLE II.—NAMES OF KINGS, COUNTRIES, CITIES, &c., mentioned in the Old Testament, which occur in the A Inscriptions.

Jehu,	Hittites (the),	Nineveh,
Omri,	Tyre,	Babylon,
Menahem,	Sidon,	Elam,
Hezekiah,	Gaza,	Shushan,
Hazael,	Ekron,	Media,
Merodach Baladan,	Askelon,	Persia,
Pharoah,	Arvad,	Yavan,
Sargon,	Gubal (the people of),	Ararat,
Sennacherib,	Lebanon,	Hagarenes,
Essarhaddon,	Egypt,	Nabathæans,
Dagon,	Euphrates,	Aramæans,
Nebo,	Carchemish,	Chaldæans,
Judæa,	Hebar or Chebar (river),	Meshek,
Jerusalem,	Harran,	Tubal,
Samaria,	Ur,	Assyria,
Ashdod,	Gozan (the people of),	Assyrians,
Lachish,	Mesopotamia,	Pethor,
Damascus,	Children of Eden,	Telassar.
Hamath,	Tigris,	

TABLE III.—Names of THIRTEEN GREAT GODS OF ASSYRIA, as they occur on the upright tablet of the King, discovered at Nimroud.

1. ASSHUR, the King of the Circle of the Great Gods.
2. ANU, the Lord of the Mountains, or of Foreign Countries.
- 3.(?) [Not yet deciphered.]
4. SAN.
5. MERODACH (? Mars).
6. YAV (? Jupiter).
7. BAR.
8. NEBO (? Mercury).
9. (?) Mylit (or Gula), called the Consort of Bel and the Mother of the Great Gods (? Venus).
10. (?) Dagon.
11. BEL (? Saturn) Father of the Gods.
12. SHAMASH (the Sun).
13. ISHTAR (the Moon).

Although no mention appears to be made in the Assyrian inscriptions of kings who reigned before the twelfth century B. C., this is by no means a proof that the empire, and its capital Nineveh, did not exist long before that time. I cannot agree with those who would limit the foundation of both to that period. The supposition seems to me quite at variance with the testimony of sacred and profane history. The existence of the name of Nineveh on monuments of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty is still considered almost certain by Egyptian scholars. I have in my former work quoted an instance of it on a tablet of the time of Thothmes III., or of the beginning of the fourteenth century B. C.[261] Mr. Birch has since pointed out to me three interesting cartouches copied by Dr. Lepsius in Egypt, which completely remove any doubt as to the name of Assyria having been also known as early as the eighteenth dynasty. They occur at the foot of one of the columns of Soleb, and are of the age of Amenophis III., or about the middle of the fourteenth century before Christ. The three figures, with their arms bound behind, represent Asiatic captives, as is proved by their

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peculiar features and head-dress, a knotted fillet round the temples, corresponding with that seen in the Nineveh sculptures. Each cartouche contains the name of the country from which the prisoner was brought. The first is Patana, or Padan-Aram; the second is written A-su-ru, or Assyria; and the third, Ka-ru-ka-mishi, Carchemish. On another column are Saenkar (? Shinar or Sinjar); Naharaina, or Mesopotamia; and the Khita, or Hittites. The mention in succession of these Asiatic nations, contiguous one to the other, proves the correctness of the reading of the word Assyria, which might have been doubted had the name of that country stood alone.

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Mr. Birch has detected a still earlier notice of Assyria in the statistical tablet of Karnak. The king of that country is there stated to have sent to Thothmes III., in his fortieth year, a tribute of fifty pounds nine ounces of some article called chesbit, supposed to be a stone for coloring blue. It would appear, therefore, that in the fifteenth century a kingdom, known by the name of Assyria, with Nineveh for its capital, had been established on the borders of the Tigris. Supposing the date now assigned by Col. Rawlinson to the monuments at Nimroud to be correct, no sculptures or relics have yet been found which we can safely attribute to that period; future researches and a more complete examination of the ancient sites may, however, hereafter lead to the discovery of earlier remains.

As I have thus given a general sketch of the contents of the inscriptions, it may not be out of place to make a few observations upon the nature of the Assyrian records, and their importance to the study of Scripture and profane history. In the first place, the care with which the events of each king's reign were chronicled is worthy of remark. They were usually written in the form of regular annals, and in some cases, as on the great monoliths at Nimroud, the royal progress during a campaign appears to have been described almost day by day. We are thus furnished with an interesting illustration of the historical books of the Jews. There is, however, this marked difference between them, that whilst the Assyrian records are nothing but a dry narrative, or rather register, of military campaigns, spoliations, and cruelties, events of little importance but to those immediately concerned in them, the historical books of the Old Testament, apart from the deeds of war and blood which they chronicle, contain the most interesting of private episodes, and the most sublime of moral lessons. It need scarcely be added, that this distinction is precisely what we might have expected to find between them, and that the Christian will not fail to give to it a due weight.

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The monuments of Nineveh, as well as the testimony of history, tend to prove that the Assyrian monarch was a thorough Eastern despot, unchecked by popular opinion, and having complete power over the lives and property of his subjects—rather adored as a god than feared as a man, and yet himself claiming that authority and general obedience in virtue of his reverence for the national deities and the national religion. It was only when the gods themselves seemed to interpose that any check was placed upon the royal pride and lust; and it is probable that when Jonah entered Nineveh crying to the people to repent, the king, believing him to be a special minister from the supreme deity of the nation, “arose from his throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.”^[262] The Hebrew state, on the contrary, was, to a certain extent, a limited monarchy. The Jewish kings were amenable to, and even guided by, the opinion of their subjects. The prophets boldly upbraided and threatened them; their warnings and menaces were usually received with respect and fear. “Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken,” exclaimed Hezekiah to Isaiah, when the prophet reproved him for his pride, and foretold the captivity of his sons and the destruction of his kingdom;^[263] a prophecy which none would have dared utter in the presence of the Assyrian king, except, as it would appear by the story of Jonah, he were a stranger. It can scarcely, therefore, be expected that any history other than bare chronicles of the victories and triumphs of the kings, omitting all allusion to their reverses and defeats, could be found in Assyria, even were portable rolls or books still to exist, as in Egypt, beneath the ruins.

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It is remarkable that the Assyrian records should, on the whole, be so free from the exaggerated forms of expression, and the magniloquent royal titles, which are found in Egyptian documents of the same nature, and even in those of modern Eastern sovereigns. I have already pointed out the internal evidence of their truthfulness so far as they go. We are further led to place confidence in the statements contained in the inscriptions by the very minuteness with which they even give the amount of the spoil; the two registrars, “the scribes of the host,” as they are called in the Bible,^[264] being seen in almost every bas-relief, writing down the various objects brought to them by the victorious warriors,—the heads of the slain, the prisoners, the cattle, the sheep,^[265] the furniture, and the vessels of metal.

The next reflection arising from an examination of the Assyrian records relates to the political condition and constitution of the empire, which appear to have been of a very peculiar nature. The king, we may infer, exercised but little direct authority beyond the immediate districts around Nineveh. The Assyrian dominions, as far as we can yet learn from the inscriptions, did not extend much further than the central provinces of Asia Minor and Armenia to the north, not reaching to the Black Sea, though probably to the Caspian. To the east they included the western provinces of Persia; to the south, Susiana, Babylonia, and the northern part of Arabia. To the west the Assyrians may have penetrated into Lycia, and perhaps Lydia; and Syria was considered within the territories of the great king; Egypt and

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Meroe (Æthiopia) were the farthest limits reached by the Assyrian armies. According to Greek history, however, a much greater extent must be assigned to Assyrian influence, if not to the actual Assyrian empire, and we may hereafter find that such was in fact the case. I am here merely referring to the evidence afforded by actual records as far as they have been deciphered.

The empire appears to have been at all times a kind of confederation formed by many tributary states, whose kings were so far independent, that they were only bound to furnish troops to the supreme lord in time of war, and to pay him yearly a certain tribute. Hence we find successive Assyrian kings fighting with exactly the same nations and tribes, some of which were scarcely more than four or five days' march from the gates of Nineveh.

The Jewish tribes, as it had long been suspected by biblical scholars, can now be proved to have held their dependent position upon the Assyrian king, from a very early period, indeed, long before the time inferred by any passage in Scripture. Whenever an expedition against the kings of Judah or Israel is mentioned in the Assyrian records, it is stated to have been undertaken on the ground that they had not paid their customary tribute.[266]

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The political state of the Jewish kingdom under Solomon appears to have been very nearly the same as that of the Assyrian empire. The inscriptions in this instance again furnish us with an interesting illustration of the Bible. The scriptural account of the power of the Hebrew king resembles, almost word for word, some of the paragraphs in the great inscriptions at Nimroud. "Solomon reigned over the kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life... He had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tipsah even unto the Azzah, *over all the kings* on this side the river." [267]

In the custom, frequently alluded to in the inscriptions, of removing the inhabitants of conquered cities and districts to distant parts of the empire, and of replacing them by colonists from Nineveh or from other subdued countries, we have another interesting illustration of Scripture history. It has generally been inferred that there was but one carrying away, or at the most two, of the people of Samaria, although three, at least, appear to be distinctly alluded to in the Bible; the first, by Pul; [268] the second, by Tiglath-Pileser [269]; the third, by Shalmaneser. [270] It was not until the time of the last king that Samaria was destroyed as an independent kingdom. On former occasions only the inhabitants of the surrounding towns and villages seem to have been taken as captives. Such we find to have been the case with many other nations who were subdued or punished for rebellion by the Assyrians. The conquerors, too, as we also learn from the inscriptions, established the worship of their own gods in the conquered cities, raising altars and temples, and appointing priests for their service. So after the fall of Samaria, the strangers who were placed in its cities, "made gods of their own and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made." [271]

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The vast number of families thus sent to dwell in distant countries, must have wrought great changes in the physical condition, language, and religion of the people with which they were intermixed. When the Assyrian records are with more certainty interpreted, we may, perhaps, be able to explain many of the anomalies of ancient Eastern philology and comparative geography.

We further gather from the records of the campaigns of the Assyrian kings, that the country, both in Mesopotamia and to the west of the Euphrates, now included in the general term of "the Desert," was at that remote period, teeming with a dense population both sedentary and nomade; that cities, towns, and villages arose on all sides; and that, consequently, the soil brought forth produce for the support of this great congregation of human beings. All those settlements depended almost exclusively upon artificial irrigation. Hence the dry beds of enormous canals and countless watercourses, which are spread like a network over the face of the country. Even the traveller, accustomed to the triumphs of modern science and civilization, gazes with wonder and awe upon these gigantic works, and reflects with admiration upon the industry, the skill, and the power of those who made them. And may not the waters be again turned into the empty channels, and may not life be again spread over those parched and arid wastes? Upon them no other curse has alighted than that of a false religion and a listless race.

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Of the information as to the religious system of the Assyrians which may be derived from the inscriptions, I am still unwilling to treat in the present state of our knowledge of their contents. A far more intimate acquaintance with the character than we yet possess is required before the translation of such documents can be fully relied on. All we can now venture to infer is, that the Assyrians worshipped one supreme God, as the great national deity under whose immediate and special protection they lived, and their empire existed. The name of this god appears to have been Asshur, as nearly as can be determined, at present, from the inscriptions. It was identified with that of the empire itself, always called "the country of Asshur;" it entered into those of both kings and private persons, and was also applied to particular cities. With Asshur, but apparently far inferior to him in the celestial hierarchy, although called the great gods, were associated twelve other deities, whose names I have given in table No. 3. Some of them may possibly be identified with the divinities of the Greek Pantheon, although it is scarcely wise to hazard conjectures which must ere long be again abandoned. These twelve gods may also have presided over the

twelve months of the year, and the vast number of still inferior gods, in one inscription, I believe, stated to be no less than 4000, over the days of the year, various phenomena and productions of nature, and the celestial bodies. It is difficult to understand such a system of polytheism, unless we suppose that whilst there was but one supreme god, represented sometimes under a triune form, all the so-called inferior gods were originally mere names for events and outward things, or symbols and myths. Although at one time generally accepted as such even by the common people, their true meaning was only known in a corrupted age to the priests, by whom they were turned into a mystery and a trade. It may, indeed, be inferred from many passages in the Scriptures, that a system of theology not far differing from the Assyrian prevailed at times amongst the Jews themselves. Asshur is generally, if not always, typified by the winged figure in the circle.[272]

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The question as to the space occupied by the city of Nineveh at the time of its greatest prosperity is still far from being set at rest. Col. Rawlinson, founding his opinion upon the names on bricks from the several sites, believes the inclosures of Nimroud, Kouyunjik, and Khorsabad, and the small mounds of Shereef-Khan, scarcely three miles from Kouyunjik, as well as others in the immediate neighbourhood, to be the remains of distinct cities. He would even separate the mound of Nebbi Yunus from Kouyunjik, identifying the former with Nineveh, and making the latter a mere suburb. A glance at the plan of the ruins will show this conjecture to be quite untenable. Discoveries in both mounds prove that they belong to nearly the same period, and that Nebbi Yunus is the more recent of the two. The supposition that any of these groups of mounds represent alone the city of Nineveh can in no way be reconciled with the accounts in Scripture and in the Greek authors, which so remarkably coincide as to its extent; a difficulty which leads Col. Rawlinson to say, that all these ruins "formed one of that group of cities which, in the time of the prophet Jonah, were known by the common name of Nineveh." It is indeed true, that, on bricks from different mounds, distinct names appear to be given to each locality, and that those from Kouyunjik are inscribed with the name of Nineveh, whilst those from Nimroud and Khorsabad bear others which have not yet been satisfactorily deciphered. These names are preceded by a determinative monogram assumed to signify a city, but which undoubtedly also applies to a fort or fortified palace. Nahum describes Nineveh as a city of many strongholds and gates, [273] and such I believe it to have been, each fort or stronghold having a different name. The most important, as it was the best defended, may at one time have been the palace at Kouyunjik, which being especially called Nineveh, gave its name to the whole city. By no other supposition can we reconcile the united testimony of ancient writers as to the great size of Nineveh with the present remains.

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It is very doubtful whether these fortified inclosures contained many buildings beside the royal palaces, and such temples and public edifices as were attached to them. At Nimroud, excavations were made in various parts of the inclosed space, and it was carefully examined with a view to ascertain whether any foundations or remains of houses still existed. None were discovered except at the south-eastern corner, where the height of the earth above the usual level at once showed the existence of ruins. In most parts of the inclosure, the natural soil seems never to have been disturbed, and in some places the conglomerate rock is almost denuded of earth.

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Such is also the case opposite Mosul. The remains of one or two buildings appear to exist within the inclosure; but in the greater part there are no indications whatever of ancient edifices, and the conglomerate rock is, as at Nimroud, on a level with the surrounding soil.

At Khorsabad, the greater part of the inclosed space is so much *below* the surrounding country, that it is covered with a marsh formed by the small river Khauser, which flows near the ruins. Within the walls, which are scarcely more than a mile square, can only be traced the remains of one or two buildings, and of a propylæum, standing below the platform, and above two hundred yards from the ascent to the palace[274], but they are at once perceived by well-defined inequalities in the soil.

If the walls forming the inclosures of Khorsabad and other Assyrian ruins were the outer defences of a city, abruptly facing the open country, it is difficult to account for the fact of the palace having been built in the same line, and actually forming part of them. All access to it must have been strongly fortified, and even the view over the surrounding country, the chief object of such a position, must have been shut out.

After several careful excavations of the ruins and of the spaces inclosed by the ramparts of earth, I am still inclined to the opinion that they were royal dwellings with their dependent buildings, and parks or paradises, fortified like the palace-temples of Egypt, capable of standing a prolonged siege, and a place of refuge for the inhabitants in case of invasion. They may have been called by different names, but they were all included within the area of that great city known to the Jews and to the Greeks as Nineveh. I will not pretend to say that the whole of this vast space was thickly inhabited or built upon. As I have elsewhere observed, we must not judge of Eastern cities by those of Europe.[275] In Asia, gardens and orchards, containing suburbs and even distinct villages, collected round a walled city are all included by the natives under one general name. Such is the case with Isfahan and Damascus, and such I believe it to have been with ancient Nineveh.

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A few remarks are necessary on the additional information afforded by recent discoveries as to the architecture and architectural decorations, external and internal, of the Assyrian

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palaces. The inscriptions on their walls, especially on those of Kouyunjik and Khorsabad, appear to contain important and even minute details, not only as to their general plan and mode of construction, but even as to the materials employed for their different parts, and for the objects of sculpture and ornaments placed in them. This fact furnishes another remarkable analogy between the records of the Jewish and the Assyrian kings. To the history of their monarchs and of their nation, the Hebrew chroniclers have added a full account of the building and adornments of the temple and palaces of Solomon. In both cases, from the use of technical words, we can scarcely hope to understand, with any degree of certainty, all the details. It is impossible to comprehend, by the help of the descriptions alone, the plan or appearance of the temple of Solomon. This arises not only from our being unacquainted with the exact meaning of various Hebrew architectural terms, but also from the difficulty experienced even in ordinary cases, of restoring from mere description an edifice of any kind. In the Assyrian inscriptions we labor, of course, under still greater disadvantages. The language in which they are written is as yet but very imperfectly known, and although we may be able to explain with some confidence the general meaning of the historical paragraphs, yet when we come to technical words relating to architecture, even with a very intimate acquaintance with the Assyrian tongue, we could scarcely hope to ascertain their precise signification. On the other hand, the materials, and the general plan of the Assyrian palaces are still preserved, whilst of the great edifices of the Jews, not a fragment of masonry, nor the smallest remains are left to guide us. The architecture of the one people, however, may be illustrated by that of the other. With the help of the sacred books, and of the ruins of the palaces of Nineveh, together with that of cotemporary and later remains, as well as from customs still existing in the East, we may, to a certain extent, restore the principal buildings of both nations.

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Before suggesting a general restoration of the royal edifices of Nineveh, I shall endeavor to point out the analogies which appear to exist between their actual remains and what is recorded of the temple and palaces of Solomon. In the first place, as Sennacherib in his inscriptions declares himself to have done, the Jewish king sent the bearers of burdens and the hewers into the mountains to bring great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones^[276], to lay the foundations, which were probably artificial platforms, resembling the Assyrian mounds, though constructed of more solid materials. We have the remains of such a terrace or stage of stone masonry, perhaps built by king Solomon himself, at Baalbec. The enormous size of some of the hewn stones existing in that structure, and of those still seen in the quarries, some being more than sixty feet long, has excited the wonder of modern travellers. The dimensions of the temple of Jerusalem, threescore cubits long^[277], twenty broad, and thirty high, were much smaller than those of the great edifices explored in Assyria. Solomon's own palace, however, appears to have been considerably larger, and to have more nearly approached in its proportions those of the kings of Nineveh, for it was one hundred cubits long, fifty broad, and thirty high. "The porch before the temple," twenty cubits by ten,^[278] may have been a propylæum, such as was discovered at Khorsabad in front of the palace. The chambers, with the exception of the oracle, were exceedingly small, the largest being only seven cubits broad, "for without, *in the wall* of the house, he made numerous rests round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house." The words in italics are inserted in our version to make good the sense, and may consequently not convey the exact meaning, which may be, that these chambers were thus narrow that the beams might be supported without the use of pillars, a reason already suggested for the narrowness of the greater number of chambers in the Assyrian palaces. These smaller rooms appear to have been built round a large central chamber, called the oracle, the whole arrangement thus corresponding with the halls and surrounding rooms at Nimroud, Khorsabad, and Kouyunjik. The oracle itself was twenty cubits square, smaller far in dimensions than the Nineveh halls; but it was twenty cubits *high*—an important fact, illustrative of Assyrian architecture, for as the building was thirty cubits in height, the oracle must not only have been much loftier than the adjoining chambers, but must have had an upper structure of ten cubits.^[279] Within it were the two cherubim of olive wood ten cubits high, with wings each five cubits long, "and he carved all the house around with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees, and open flowers, within and without." The cherubim have been described by Biblical commentators as mythic figures, uniting the human head with the body of a lion, or an ox, and the wings of an eagle.^[280] If for the palm trees we substitute the sacred tree of the Nineveh sculptures, and for the open flowers the Assyrian tulip-shaped ornament—objects most probably very nearly resembling each other—we find that the oracle of the temple was almost identical, in general form and in its ornaments, with some of the chambers of Nimroud and Khorsabad. In the Assyrian halls, too, the winged human-headed bulls were on the side of the wall, and their wings, like those of the cherubim, "touched one another in the midst of the house."^[281] The dimensions of these figures were in some cases nearly the same, namely, fifteen feet square. The doors were also carved with cherubim and palm trees, and open flowers, and thus, with the other parts of the building, corresponded with those of the Assyrian palaces. On the walls at Nineveh the only addition appears to have been the introduction of the human form and the image of the king, which were an abomination to the Jews. The pomegranates and lilies of Solomon's temple must have been nearly identical with the usual Assyrian ornament, in which, and particularly at Khorsabad, the pomegranate frequently takes the place of the tulip and the cone.

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But the description given by Josephus of the interior of one of Solomon's houses, already

quoted by Mr. Fergusson in support of his ingenious arguments, even more completely corresponds with, and illustrates the chambers in the palaces of Nineveh. "Solomon built some of these (houses) with stones of ten cubits, and *wainscoted the walls with other stones that were sawed*, and were of great value, such as were dug out of the bowels of the earth, for ornaments of temples, &c. The arrangement of the curious workmanship of these stones was in three rows; but the fourth was pre-eminent for the beauty of its sculpture, for on it were represented trees, and all sorts of plants, with the shadows caused by their branches and the leaves that hung down from them. These trees and plants covered the stone that was beneath them, and their leaves were wrought so wonderfully thin and subtile, that they appeared almost in motion; but the rest of the wall, up to the roof, was plastered over, and, as it were, wrought over with various colors and pictures."[\[282\]](#)

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To complete the analogy between the two edifices, it would appear that Solomon was seven years building the temple, and Sennacherib about the same time building his great palace at Kouyunjik.[\[283\]](#)

The ceiling, roof, and beams of the temple were of cedar wood. The discoveries in the ruins at Nimroud show that the same precious wood was used in the Assyrian edifices; and the king of Nineveh, as we learn from the inscriptions, employed men, precisely as Solomon had done, to cut it in Mount Lebanon. Fir was also employed in the Jewish buildings, and probably in those of Assyria.[\[284\]](#)

In the proposed restoration of the palace at Kouyunjik from the existing remains, the building does not face the cardinal points of the compass. I will, however, assume, for convenience sake, that it stands due north and south. To the west, therefore, it immediately overlooked the Tigris; and on that side was one of its principal façades. The edifice must have risen on the very edge of the platform, the foot of which was at that time washed by the river. If, therefore, there were any access to the palace on the river front, it must necessarily have been by a flight of steps, or an inclined way leading down to the water's edge, and there might have been great stairs parallel to the basement wall as at Persepolis. Although from the fact of there having been a grand entrance to the palace on this side, it is highly probable that some such approach once existed, no remains whatever of it have been discovered. The western façade, like the eastern, was formed by five pairs of human-headed bulls, and numerous colossal figures[\[285\]](#), forming three distinct gateways.

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The principal approach to the palace appears, however, to have been on the eastern side, where the great bulls bearing the annals of Sennacherib still stand. In the frontispiece I have been able, by the assistance of Mr. Fergusson, to give a restoration of this magnificent façade and entrance. Inclined ways, or broad flights of steps, appear to have led up to it from the foot of the platform, and the remains of them, consisting of huge squared stones, are still seen in the ravines, which are but the ancient ascents, deepened by the winter rains of centuries. From this grand entrance direct access could be had to all the principal halls and chambers in the palace; that on the western face, as appears from the ruins, only opened into a set of eight rooms.

The chambers hitherto explored appear to have been grouped round three great halls. It must be borne in mind, however, that the palace extended considerably to the north-east of the grand entrance, and that there may have been another hall, and similar dependent chambers in that part of the edifice. Only a part of the palace has been hitherto excavated, and we are not in possession of a perfect ground-plan of it.

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The general arrangement of the chambers at Kouyunjik is similar to that of Khorsabad, though the extent of the building is very much greater. It is also to be remarked that the Khorsabad mound falls gradually to the level of the plain, apparently showing the remains of a succession of broad terraces, and that parts of the palace, such as the propylæa, were actually beneath the platform, and removed some distance from it in the midst of the walled inclosure. At Kouyunjik, however, the whole of the royal edifice, with its dependent buildings, appears to have stood on the summit of the artificial basement[\[286\]](#), whose lofty perpendicular sides could only have been accessible by steps, or inclined ways. No propylæa, or other edifices connected with the palace, have as yet been discovered below the platform.

The inscriptions appear to refer to four distinct parts of the palace, three of which, inhabited by the women, seem subsequently to have been reduced to one. It is not clear whether they were all on the ground-floor, or whether they formed different stories. Mr. Fergusson, in his ingenious work on the restoration of the palaces of Nineveh, in which he has, with great learning and research, fully examined the subject of the architecture of the Assyrians and ancient Persians, availing himself of the facts then furnished by the discoveries, endeavors to divide the Khorsabad palace, after the manner of modern Mussulman houses, into the Salamlik or apartments of the men, and the Harem or those of the women. The division he suggests, must, of course, depend upon conjecture; but it may, I think, be considered as highly probable, until fuller and more accurate translations of the inscriptions than can yet be made may furnish us with some positive data on the subject. In the ruins of Kouyunjik there is nothing, as far as I am aware, to mark the distinction between the male and female apartments. Of a temple no remains have as yet been found at Kouyunjik, nor is there any high conical mound as at Nimroud and Khorsabad.

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In all the Assyrian edifices hitherto explored, we have the same general interior plan. On the

four sides of the great halls are two or three narrow parallel chambers opening one into the other. Most of them have doorways at each and leading into smaller rooms, which have no other outlet. It seems highly probable that this uniform plan was adopted with reference to the peculiar architectural arrangements required by the building, and I agree with Mr. Fergusson in attributing it to the mode resorted to for lighting the apartments.

In my former work I expressed a belief that the chambers received light through an opening in the roof. Although this may have been the case in some instances, yet recent discoveries now prove that the Assyrian palaces had more than one story. Such being the fact, it is evident that other means must have been adopted to admit daylight to the inner rooms on the ground-floor. Mr. Fergusson's suggestion, that the upper part of the halls and principal chambers was formed by a row of pillars supporting the ceiling and admitting a free circulation of light and air, appears to me to meet, to a certain extent, the difficulty. It has, moreover, been borne out by subsequent discoveries, and by the representation of a large building, apparently a palace, on one of the bas-reliefs discovered at Kouyunjik. In the restoration of the exterior of the Kouyunjik palace forming the frontispiece to this volume, a somewhat similar capital has been adopted in preference to that taken by Mr. Fergusson from Persepolis, which, although undoubtedly like the other architectural details of those celebrated ruins, Assyrian in character, are not authorised by any known Assyrian remains.

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A row of pillars, or of alternate pillars and masonry, would answer the purpose intended, if they opened into a well-lighted hall. Yet inner chambers, such as are found in the ruins of Kouyunjik, must have remained in almost entire darkness. And it is not improbable that such was the case, to judge from modern Eastern houses, in which the absence of light is considered essential to secure a cool temperature. The sculptures and decorations in them could then only be seen by torchlight. The great halls were probably in some cases entirely open to the air, like the court-yards of the modern houses of Mosul, whose walls are still adorned with sculptured alabaster. When they were covered in the roof was borne by enormous pillars of wood or brickwork, and rose so far above the surrounding part of the building, that light was admitted by columns and buttresses immediately beneath the ceiling. It is most probable that there were two or three stories of chambers opening into them, either by columns or by windows. Such appears to have been the case in Solomon's temple; for Josephus tells us that the great inner sanctuary was surrounded by small rooms, "over these rooms were other rooms, and others above them, equal both in their measure and numbers, and that these reached to a height equal to the *lower part* of the house, for the upper had no buildings about it." We have also an illustration of this arrangement of chambers in the modern houses of some parts of Persia, in which a great central hall, called an Iwan, rises to the top of the building, and has small rooms in two or three separate stories, opening by windows into it, whilst the inner chambers, having no windows at all, have no more light than that which reaches them through the door. Sometimes these side chambers open into a centre court, as I have suggested may have been the case in the Nineveh palaces, then a projecting roof of woodwork protects the carved and painted walls from injury by the weather. Curtains and awnings were also suspended above the windows and entrances, to ward off the rays of the sun.

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Although no remains or even traces of pillars have hitherto been discovered in the Assyrian ruins, I now think it highly probable, as suggested by Mr. Fergusson, that they were used to support the roof. It is curious, however, that no stone pedestals, upon which wooden columns may have rested, have been found in the ruins, nor are there marks of them on the pavement. I can scarcely account for the entire absence of all such traces. However, unless some support of this kind were resorted to, it is impossible that even the large chambers at Kouyunjik, without including the central halls, could have been covered in. The great hall, or house as it is rendered in the Bible,^[287] of the forest of Lebanon was thirty cubits high, upon four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams upon the pillars. The Assyrian kings, we have seen, cut wood in the same forests as King Solomon; and probably used it for the same purposes, namely, for pillars, beams, and ceilings. The dimensions of this hall, 100 cubits (about 150 feet) by 50 cubits (75 feet), very much resemble those of the centre halls of the palaces of Nineveh. "The porch of pillars" was fifty cubits in length; equal, therefore, to the breadth of the hall, of which I presume it to have been an inclosed space at the upper end, whilst "the porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment ... covered with cedar wood from one side of the floor to the other," was probably a raised place beneath it, corresponding with a similar platform where the host and guests of honor are seated in a modern Eastern house. Supposing the three parts of the building to have been arranged as I have suggested, we should have an exact counterpart of them in the hall of audience of the Persian palaces. The upper part of the room in which I have frequently seen the governor of Isfahan, was divided from the rest of a magnificent hall by columns, and his throne was a raised place of carved woodwork adorned with rich stuffs, ivory, and other precious materials. Suppliants and attendants stood outside the line of pillars, and the officers of the court within. Such also may have been the interior arrangement of the great halls in the Assyrian edifices.

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That the Ninevite palaces had more than one story, at least in some parts if not in all, can now no longer be doubted. The inscriptions appear to describe distinctly the upper rooms, and at Kouyunjik, as it has been seen, an inclined way was discovered leading to them. Without there had been an upper structure, it would be impossible to account for the enormous accumulation of rubbish, consisting chiefly of remains of buildings, over the ruins

of Kouyunjik and Khorsabad. These upper rooms were probably built of sundried bricks and wood, but principally of the latter material, and may have been connected with the lower by winding staircases, as in the temple of Solomon, as well as by inclined ways. The roofs were flat, as those of all Eastern houses are to this day; and, as suggested by Mr. Fergusson,[288] they may have been crowned by a wooden talar, or platform, and altars upon which sacrifices were offered,—“The houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink-offerings to other gods.”[289]

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I have already described the internal decorations of the Assyrian palaces,[290] and have little more to add upon the subject. The walls of Kouyunjik were more elaborately decorated than those of Nimroud and Khorsabad. Almost every chamber explored, and they amount to above seventy, was panelled with alabaster slabs carved with numerous figures and with the minutest details. Each room appears to have been dedicated to some particular event, and in each, apparently, was the image of the king himself. In fact, the walls recorded in sculpture what the inscriptions did in writing,—the whole history of Sennacherib’s reign, his great deeds in peace as well as in war. It will be remarked that whilst in other Assyrian edifices the king is frequently represented taking an active part in war, slaying his enemies, and fighting beneath a besieged city, he is never represented at Kouyunjik otherwise than in an attitude of triumph, in his chariot or on his throne, receiving the captives and the spoil. Nor is he ever seen torturing his prisoners, or putting them to death with his own hand.

There were chambers, however, in the palace of Sennacherib, as well as in those of Nimroud and Khorsabad, whose walls were simply coated with plaster, like the walls of Belshazzar’s palace at Babylon.[291] They may have been richly ornamented in color with figures of men and animals, as well as with elegant designs; or they may have been panelled with cedar wainscoting, as the chambers in the temple and palaces of Solomon, and in the great edifices of Babylon. Gilding, too, appears to have been extensively used in decoration, and some of the great sphinxes may have been overlaid with gold, like the cherubim in Solomon’s temple.[292]

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At Kouyunjik, the pavement slabs were not inscribed as at Nimroud; but those between the winged bulls at some of the entrances, were carved with an elaborate and very elegant pattern. The doors were probably of wood, gilt and adorned with precious materials, like the gates of the temple of Jerusalem, and they appear to have turned in stone sockets, for amongst the ruins were found many black stones hollowed in the centre, and bearing an inscription in these words: “Sennacherib, the great king, king of Assyria, brought this stone from the distant mountains, and used it for the sockets of the pillars of the doors of his palace.”

To ward off the glare of an Eastern sun hangings or curtains of gay colors and of rich materials were probably suspended to the pillars supporting the ceiling, or to wooden poles raised for the purpose, as in the palaces of Babylon and Shushan. Such hangings, as we have seen, appear to be described in the tablets of king Nebuchadnezzar. The frontispiece to this volume will enable the reader to understand how they were used. This engraving from a beautiful water-color drawing, made by Mr. Baynes under the superintendence of Mr. Fergusson, represents the Eastern façade and the great entrance to the palace of Sennacherib, as they are supposed originally to have been. The lower part of the building actually exists, and is drawn to scale; the upper part of course is mainly founded upon conjecture; but the preceding remarks may show that we are not altogether without materials to authorise some such restoration. The edifice represented in the bas-relief discovered at Kouyunjik has furnished some of the architectural details, the battlemented finish to the walls is still seen at Kouyunjik and Nimroud, and the various decorations introduced in other places are all taken from Assyrian monuments. The two poles with streamers in the foreground, are from a bas-relief at Khorsabad. The sculptures at the sides of the steps are those from the descending passage at Kouyunjik. The stone facing of the platform is that of the basement of the tower at Nimroud. The lions, Assyrian in character, are placed on the steps conjecturally, and the steps themselves are restored. The design upon the pavement is found on slabs at the entrances at Kouyunjik.

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The excavations carried on at Nimroud during the last expedition have enabled me to restore, to a certain extent, the several buildings on the platform, and to obtain some idea of their original appearance. On the artificial platform, built of regular layers of sundried bricks in some parts, and entirely of rubbish in others, but cased on all sides with solid stone masonry, stood at one time at least nine distinct buildings. Between each was a terrace, paved with stone, or with large kiln-burnt bricks, from one and a half to two feet square. At the north-western corner rose the great tower, the tomb of the founder of the principal palace. Its basement was encased with massive masonry of stone, relieved by recesses and other architectural ornaments. The upper part built of brick, was most probably painted, like the palaces of Babylon, with figures and mythic emblems. Its summit, I conjecture, to have consisted of several receding gradines like the top of the black obelisk, and I would venture to crown it with an altar on which may have burnt the eternal fire. Adjoining this tower were, two small temples, dedicated to Assyrian gods. One actually abutted on it, although there was no communication whatever, as far as I could discover, between the interior of the two buildings; the other was about 100 feet to the east. They were both adorned with sculptures, and had evidently been more than one story high, and their beams and ceilings were of cedar wood. They contained statues of the gods, and the fullest records of the reign

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of the king their founder, engraved on immense monoliths. Between them was a way up to the platform from the north.

Between the small temples and the north-west palace were two great flights of steps, or inclined ways, leading up from the margin of the river. Their sites are still marked by deep ravines. They opened upon a broad paved terrace. The north-west palace having been so fully described in my former work, I need only add that I have now been able to ascertain the position of its principal façade and entrance. It was to the north, facing the tower, and nearly resembled the grand approaches to Kouyunjik and Khorsabad. The two gateways formed by the sphinxes with the human form to the waist, appear to have flanked a grand centre portal to which they were united on both sides, as in Sennacherib's palace, by colossal figures of human-headed bulls and lions and winged priests. The remains of no other great entrance to the palace have yet been discovered, but I have little doubt from several indications in the ruins, that there was a similar façade on the river side, and that a terrace, ascended by broad flights of steps, overlooked the Tigris.

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To the south of the north-west palace was a third ascent to the summit of the platform, also marked by a ravine in the side of the mound. Beyond it were the upper chambers, built by the fourth king in succession from Sardanapalus, probably over the remains of an earlier edifice. Excavations made in different parts of the small mound covering their ruins, show that they consisted of three distinct groups, built round a solid central mass of sundried bricks. The great accumulation of earth above them, proves that this building must have had more than one story.

The upper chambers were separated from the palace of Essarhaddon, the most southern on this side of the platform, by a fourth grand approach to the terraces. Remains of great blocks of stone, of winged bulls, and of colossal figures in yellow limestone, were found in the ravine.

Essarhaddon's palace was raised some feet above the north-west and centre edifices. It has been so entirely destroyed by fire, and by the removal of the slabs from its walls, that a complete ground-plan of it cannot be restored. In the arrangement of its chambers, as far as we are able to judge from the ruins, it differed from other Assyrian buildings with which we are acquainted. The hall, above 220 feet long, and 100 broad, opening at the northern end by a gateway of winged bulls on a terrace, which overlooked the grand approach and the principal palaces, and at the opposite end having a triple portal guarded by three pairs of colossal sphinxes, which commanded the open country and the Tigris winding through the plain, must have been a truly magnificent feature in this palace. It occupied the corner of the platform, and an approach of which considerable remains still exist led up from the plain to its southern face. Around the grand hall appear to have been built a number of small chambers; and this Assyrian building probably answers in its general plan, more than any other yet discovered, to the descriptions in the Bible of the palace of Solomon, especially if we assume that the antechamber, divided into two parts, corresponds with the portico of the Jewish structures.

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The palace of Essarhaddon was considerably below the level of that of his grandson, and was separated from it by what appears, from a very deep and wide ravine, to have been the principal approach to the platform. The south-east edifice was very inferior, both in the size of its apartments and in the materials employed in its construction, to the other royal buildings. It was probably built when the empire was fast falling to decay, and, as is usual in such cases, the arts seem to have declined with the power of the people.

Returning northwards, we come to the only traces of an approach on the eastern side of the platform, and consequently from the interior of the walled inclosure. It is remarkable that there should have been but one on this face; and it is even more curious, that the only sides of the mound on which there are any remains of walls or fortifications, are the eastern and northern, where the royal residences would have overlooked the city, supposing it to have been contained within the existing ramparts of earth. The edifices facing what would, in that case, have been the open country, were left apparently defenceless.

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On the west side of the platform no actual ruins have been discovered, although there are undoubtedly traces of building in several places, and I think it not improbable that a temple, or some similar edifice, stood there.

It only remains for me to mention the palace in the centre of the platform, founded by the king whose name is believed to read Divanubar or Divanubra, but rebuilt almost entirely by Pul or Tiglath-Pileser. Excavations carried on during the second expedition, brought to light the walls of a few additional chambers and numerous fragments of interesting sculptures. But the edifice was so utterly destroyed by Essarhaddon, who used the materials in the construction of his own dwelling-place, that it is impossible to ascertain its general plan, or even the arrangement of any of its rooms. The great inscribed bulls and the obelisk, we know to have been of the time of the older king; and the bas-reliefs of battles and sieges, heaped up together as if ready for removal, to have belonged to the later.

In the ramparts of earth, marking the inclosure wall of Nimroud to the north, fifty-eight towers can still be distinctly traced. To the east there were about fifty, but all traces of some of them are entirely gone. To the south the wall has almost disappeared, so that it could not have been of great size or thickness on that side. The level of the inclosure is here, however,

considerably above the plain, and it is not improbable that the Tigris actually flowed beneath part of it, and that the remainder was defended by a wide and deep ditch, either supplied by the small stream still running near the ruins, or by the river.

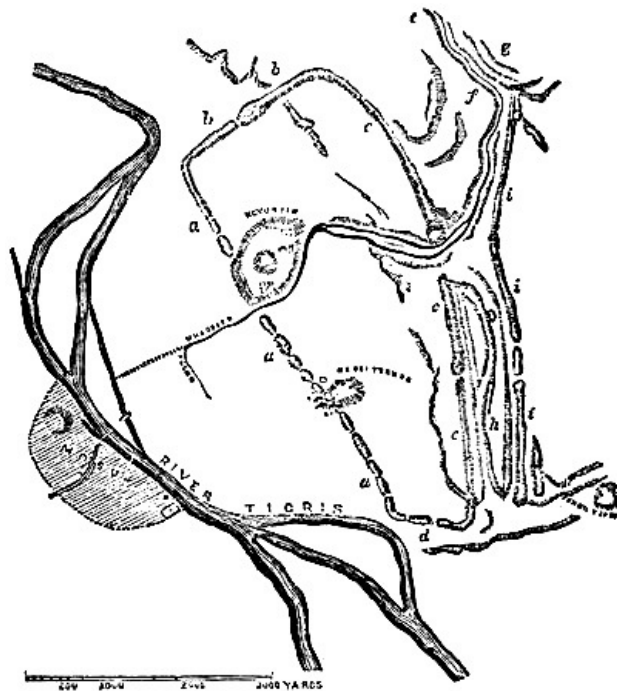
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At the south-eastern corner of the inclosure, is a mound of considerable height, and the remains of a square edifice; they may have been a fort or castle. I searched in vain for traces of gates in the walls on the northern side. A high double mound, which probably marks the ruins of an entrance, was excavated; but no stone masonry or sculptured figures were discovered, as in a similar mound in the inclosure of Kouyunjik. I conclude, therefore, that the gateways of the quarter of Nineveh represented by Nimroud were not, like those of the more northern divisions of the city, adorned with sculptures, but were built of the same materials as the walls, and were either arched or square, being formed, like the gates of modern Arab cities, by simple beams of wood.

It is evident that the inclosure of Nimroud was regularly fortified, and defended by walls built for the purpose of resisting an enemy, and sustaining a prolonged siege. That of Khorsabad was precisely similar. There also the platform, on which the great palace stood, formed part of the walls,—a fact for which I can scarcely offer any satisfactory explanation. It would seem more consistent with security that the dwelling of the king, the temples of the gods, and the edifices containing the archives and treasures of the kingdom, should have been in the centre of the fortifications, equally protected on all sides. The palaces of Nimroud and Kouyunjik, built on a platform, washed by a deep and broad river, were, to a certain extent, guarded from the approach of an enemy. But at Khorsabad such was not the case. The royal residence overlooked the plain country, and was accessible from it, unless the summit of the platform were strongly fortified on the western side, of which there is no trace.

Of the fortified inclosures still existing, that surrounding Kouyunjik is the most remarkable, and was best calculated to withstand the attack of a powerful and numerous army. I give a plan of the ruins from Mr. Rich's survey, which will enable the reader to understand the following description.[\[293\]](#)

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Plan of the Inclosure Walls and Ditches at Kouyunjik.

Its form, it will be perceived, was irregular. The side facing the river, including the mounds of Kouyunjik and Nebbi-Yunus (*a*), and the northern (or north-western) (*b*), are at right angles to each other, and in nearly a straight line. From the eastern corner of the northern face, the inner wall (*c*) forms the segment of a circle towards the southern end of the western, the two being only 873 yards apart at their extremities (*d*).[\[294\]](#) On the four sides are the remains of towers and curtains, and the walls appear to have consisted of a basement of stone and an upper structure of sundried bricks. The top of the stone masonry was ornamented with gradines, as at Nimroud.

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The western wall (*a*) was washed by the river, and needed no other defence.[\[295\]](#) A deep ditch, of which traces still exist, appears to have been dug beneath the northern (*b*). That to the south (*d*) was also protected by a dyke and the Tigris. The side most accessible to an enemy was that to the east (*c*), and it was accordingly fortified with extraordinary care and strength. The small river Khauser flows nearly in a direct line from the hills to the north-eastern corner of the inclosure, makes a sweep to the south (at *e*) before reaching it, and

after running for some distance beneath a perpendicular bank formed by conglomerate hills (*g*) parallel to the walls, but about three quarters of a mile from them, again turns to the westward (at *f*), and enters the inclosure almost in the centre. It then traverses this quarter of the city, winds round the base of Kouyunjik, and falls into the Tigris. Nearly one half of the eastern wall was, consequently, provided with natural defences. The Khauser served as a ditch; and the conglomerate ridge, slightly increased by artificial means, as a strong line of fortification. The remains of one or more ramparts of earth are still to be traced between the stream and the inner wall, but they could not have been of very considerable size. The north-eastern extremity of these outer defences appears to have joined the ditch which was carried along the northern face of the inclosure, thus completing the fortification in this part.

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Below, or to the south of, the entry of the Khauser into the inclosure, the inner wall was defended by a complete system of outworks. In the first place a deep ditch, about one hundred and fifty feet wide, was cut immediately beneath it, and was divided for half its length into two separate parts, between which was a rampart. A parallel wall (*h*) was then carried from the banks of the Khauser to the dyke on the southern side of the inclosure. A second ditch, about one hundred and eight feet wide, and of considerable depth, probably supplied by the Khauser, extended from the point at which that stream turns to the westward, as far as the southern line of defences. A third wall (*i*), the remains of which are above one hundred feet high on the inner face, abutted to the north on the ridge of conglomerate hills (*g*), and completed the outer defences. A few mounds rising in the level country beyond, the principal of which, near the southern extremity of the lines, is called Tel-ez-zambil (the Mound of the Basket), appear to have been fortified outposts, probably detached towers, such as are represented in the bas-reliefs of Kouyunjik.

An enemy coming from the east, the side on which the inclosure was most open to attack, had consequently first to force a stupendous wall strengthened by detached forts. Two deep ditches and two more walls, the inner being scarcely inferior in size to the outer, had then to be passed before the city could be taken.[296] The remains still existing of these fortifications almost confirm the statements of Diodorus Siculus, that the walls were a hundred feet high, and that three chariots could drive upon them abreast; and lead to the conclusion that in describing the ramparts forming the circuit round the whole city, ancient historians were confounding them with those which inclosed only a separate quarter or a royal residence, as they have also done in speaking of Babylon. Whilst the inner walls were constructed of stone and brick masonry, the outer appear to have consisted of little else than of the earth, loose pebbles, and rubble dug out from the ditches, which were cut with enormous labor into the solid conglomerate rock.[297]

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The walls and ditches around Kouyunjik were a favourite ride during my residence among the ruins. The summit of the outer ramparts commands an extensive and beautiful prospect over all the great mounds, the plains bounded by the several mountain ranges of Kurdistan, the windings of the river, and the town of Mosul. "Niniue (that which God himself calleth that Great Citie) hath not one stone standing, which may giue memorie of the being of a towne: one English mile from it is a place called Mosul, a small thing, rather to be a witnesse of the other's mightnesse, and God's judgement, than of any fashion of magnificence in itselfe." [298] Such are the simple though impressive words of an old English traveller, who probably looked down upon the site of Nineveh from the same spot two centuries and a half ago.

Beaten tracks from the neighbouring villages have for ages led, and still lead, through the ruins. Along them Arabs and Kurds with their camels and laden beasts may be seen slowly wending their way to the town. But the space between the walls is deserted except by the timid gazelle and the jackals and hyenas which make their dens in the holes and caves in the sides of the mounds and in the rocky banks of the ancient ditches.

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The spring called by the Arabs Damlamajeh, and described by Mr. Rich,[299] is a small pool of cool and refreshing water in a natural cavern, the fore part of which is adorned with an arch, cornice, and stonework, evidently of Roman or Greek construction. Upon the masonry are still to be traced the names of Mrs. Rich, and of the companions of the distinguished traveller.

CONCLUSION.

The time was drawing near for my departure. Once more I was about to leave the ruins amidst which I had spent so many happy hours, and to which I was bound by so many pleasant and solemn ties; and probably to return no more.

I only waited the arrival of Abde, the late Pasha of Baghdad, who was now on his way to his new government of Diarbekir. He was travelling with a large company of attendants, and

without a strong escort it was scarcely prudent to venture on a journey. It was doubly necessary for me to have proper protection, as I took with me the valuable collection of bronzes and other small objects discovered in the ruins. I gladly, therefore, availed myself of this opportunity of joining so numerous and powerful a caravan.

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At length, after the usual Eastern delays, the Pasha arrived at Mosul. He remained encamped outside the town for two or three days, and during that time visited the excavations, his curiosity having been excited by the description he had received of the wondrous idols dug out of the ruins. He marvelled at what he saw, as a Turk marvels at strange things which he can neither understand nor explain. It would be in vain to speak to him of the true objects of such researches, the knowledge they impart, the lessons they teach, or the thoughts they beget.

In these pages I have occasionally indulged in reflections suggested by the scenes I have had to describe, and have ventured to point out the moral of the strange tale I have had to relate. I cannot better conclude than by showing the spirit in which Eastern philosophy and Mussulman resignation contemplate the evidences of ancient greatness and civilization, suddenly rising up in the midst of modern ignorance and decay. A letter in my possession contained so true and characteristic a picture of the feelings that such an event excites in the mind of a good Mohammedan, that I here give a literal translation of its contents. It was written to a friend of mine by a Turkish Cadi, in reply to some inquiries as to the commerce, population, and remains of antiquity of an ancient city, in which dwelt the head of the law. These are its words:—

“My Illustrious Friend, and Joy of my Liver!

“The thing you ask of me is both difficult and useless. Although I have passed all my days in this place, I have neither counted the houses nor have I inquired into the number of the inhabitants; and as to what one person loads on his mules and the other stows away in the bottom of his ship, that is no business of mine. But, above all, as to the previous history of this city, God only knows the amount of dirt and confusion that the infidels may have eaten before the coming of the sword of Islam. It were unprofitable for us to inquire into it.

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“Oh, my soul! oh, my lamb! seek not after the things which concern thee not. Thou camest unto us, and we welcomed thee: go in peace.

“Of a truth, thou hast spoken many words; and there is no harm done, for the speaker is one and the listener is another. After the fashion of thy people thou hast wandered from one place to another until thou art happy and content in none. We (praise be to God) were born here, and never desire to quit it. Is it possible then that the idea of a general intercourse between mankind should make any impression on our understandings? God forbid!

“Listen, oh my son! There is no wisdom equal unto the belief in God! He created the world, and shall we liken ourselves unto him in seeking to penetrate into the mysteries of his creation? Shall we say, behold this star spinneth round that star, and this other star with a tail goeth and cometh in so many years! Let it go! He from whose hand it came will guide and direct it.

“But thou wilt say unto me, Stand aside, oh man, for I am more learned than thou art, and have seen more things. If thou thinkest that thou art in this respect better than I am, thou art welcome. I praise God that I seek not that which I require not. Thou art learned in the things I care not for; and as for that which thou hast seen I defile it. Will much knowledge create thee a double belly, or wilt thou seek Paradise with thine eyes?

“Oh, my friend! If thou wilt be happy, say, There is no God but God! Do no evil, and thus wilt thou fear neither man nor death; for surely thine hour will come!

“The meek in spirit (El Fakir),
“IMAUM ALI ZADE.”

On the 28th of April I bid a last farewell to my faithful Arab friends, and with a heavy heart turned from the ruins of ancient Nineveh.

THE END.



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Footnotes:

[1] The most unobservant and hasty traveller in Turkey would soon become acquainted with this fact, could he read the modest and pious inscription, carved in relief on a small marble tablet of the purest white, adorning almost every half-ruined fountain at which he stops to refresh himself by the wayside.

[2] *Anabasis*, lib. iv. c. 5.

[3] The small building which sometimes covers a Mohammedan tomb is so called.

[4] Shah Armen, *i. e.*, King of Armenia, was a title assumed by a dynasty, reigning at Akhlat, founded by Sokman Kothby, a slave of the Seljuk Prince, Kothbedin Ismail, who established an independent principality at Akhlat in A. D. 1100, which lasted eighty years.

[5] The lowest order of the Yezidi priesthood.

[6] A large drum beaten at both ends, and a kind of oboe or pipe.

[7] *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. i. p. 245.

[8] *Anab.* book iv. c. 3.

[9] It was at the foot of this steep descent that Xenophon was compelled to turn off, as caravans still are, from the river, and to brave the difficulties of a mountain pass, defended by the warlike Carduchi or Kurds.

[10] The custom of assembling and transacting business in the gate is continually referred to in the Bible. See 2 Sam. xix. 8., where king David is represented as sitting in the gate; comp. 2 Chron. xviii. 9., and Dan. ii. 49. The gates of Jewish houses were probably similar to that described in the text. Such entrances are also found in Persia. Frequently in the gates of cities, as at Mosul, these recesses are used as shops for the sale of wheat and barley, bread and grocery. Elisha prophesies that a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, *in the gate* of Samaria. 2 Kings, vii. 1. and 18.

[11] Mr. Ainsworth would take the Greeks up to the modern ferry, where there could never have been a ford, and which would have been some miles out of their route. (Travels in the Track of the Ten Thousand.)

[12] In Chapter X. will be found some farther remarks on this subject.

[13] He probably took the more difficult road over the pass, and not that round the spur, in order to cross the Khabour by a bridge or ferry. It must be remembered that it was winter, and that the rivers were consequently swollen.

[14] This halt, after so short a day's march, may have been occasioned by the Hazel. The distance corresponds with sufficient accuracy.

[15] It is a matter of surprise that Cyrus should have chosen the very middle of summer for his expedition into Babylonia, and still more wonderful that the Greeks, unused to the intense heats of Mesopotamia, and encumbered with their heavy arms and armour, should have been able to brave the climate. No Turkish or Persian commander would in these days venture to undertake a campaign against the Arabs in this season of the year; for, besides the heat, the want of water would be almost an insurmountable obstacle. During their retreat, the Greeks had to encounter all the rigor of an Armenian winter; so that, during the few months they were under arms, they went through the most trying extremes of climate. The expedition of Alexander was also undertaken in the middle of summer. It must, however, be borne in mind, that Mesopotamia was probably then thickly peopled and well cultivated, and that canals and wells of water must have abounded.

[16] Had he seen this large inland sea, he would probably have mentioned it.

[17] In no way, however, would a *direct* line of march between these two rivers, nor between any other two rivers which can possibly answer to his description, tally with the distances given by Xenophon.

[18] See Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 112.

[19] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 107.

[20] The long lines of variously armed troops, described in my former work (vol. ii. p. 107), as covering several slabs from top to bottom, form the army of the king marching to this campaign.

[21] It is still the custom in Persia, and was so until lately in Turkey, for soldiers to bring the heads of the slain to their officers after a battle, and to claim a small pecuniary reward.

[22] For an account of these mounds represented in the Assyrian sculptures, and the manner in which they illustrate various passages in Scripture see my Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 281 and *note*.

[23] Such is the costume of the women in ships in a bas-relief discovered during my former researches (see Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 116), and which, I have conjectured, may represent the capture of Tyre and Sidon.

[24] See Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 131, for a description of the discoveries previously made in this mound.

[25] "The little sheep." Kouyunjik is, however, generally known to the Arabs by the name of Armousheeyah.

[26] The river Tigris flows in this part of its course, and until it reaches Saimarrah, on the confines of Babylonia, through a valley varying from one to two miles in width, bounded on both sides by low limestone and conglomerate hills. Its bed has been undergoing a continual and regular change. When it reaches the hills on one side, it is thrown back by this barrier, and creeps gradually to the opposite side, leaving a rich alluvial soil quickly covered with jungle. This process it has been repeating, backwards and forwards, for countless ages, and will continue to repeat as long as it drains the great highlands of Armenia. At Nimroud it is now gradually returning to the base of the mound, which it deserted some three thousand years ago; but centuries must elapse before it can work its way that far.

[27] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. ch. ix.

[28] A mixture of bruised wheat, chopped meat, milk and curds, boiled into a thick pulpy mass, over which melted butter is poured. It is a favorite dish in Syria and Mesopotamia,

and is cooked by families on great festivals, or on certain days of the year, in consequence of vows made during sickness or in travel.

[29] For a translation of this singular poem, see the larger work, of which the present volume is an abridgment.

[30] This reminds me of the Bedouins, who, when they come into a town in a party, send one of their number to the mosque to pray for his companions as well as himself.

[31] At Mosul, a bullock, very small certainly when compared with our high-fed cattle, is sold for forty or fifty piastres, 8*s.* or 10*s.*; a fat sheep for about 4*s.*; a lamb for 2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* Other articles of food are proportionably cheap. The camel-load of barley was selling at my departure for ten or twelve piastres (2*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*). A common horse is worth from 3*l.* to 5*l.*; a donkey about 10*s.*; a camel about the same as a horse.

[32] See p. 64.

[33] It will be borne in mind that it was necessary to carry tunnels round the chambers, and along the walls, leaving the centre buried in earth and rubbish, a very laborious and tedious operation with no more means at command than those afforded by the country.

[34] All these entrances were formed in the same way as that in the south-eastern side, described p. 66., namely, by a pair of human-headed bulls, flanked on each side by a winged giant, and two smaller figures one above the other.

[35] P. 67.

[36] P. 66. I assume the building to be due north and south, although it is not so. It faces nearly north-east and south-west.

[37] In my former work I had stated that *all* the Assyrian sculptures were carved in their places against the walls of the building.

[38] I have described the mode of irrigation now generally employed by the Mesopotamian Arabs, in my "Nineveh and its Remains," vol. ii. p. 321.

[39] It may be remarked, that precisely the same framework was used for moving the great sculptures in the British Museum.

[40] See woodcut, p. 92.

[41] Although in these bas-reliefs, as in other Assyrian sculptures, no regard is paid to perspective, the proportions are very well kept.

[42] 1 Kings, vi. 23. I shall hereafter compare the edifices built by Solomon with the Assyrian palaces, and point out the remarkable illustrations of the Jewish temple afforded by the latter.

[43] A peculiar deity is mentioned who probably presided over the earth, but his name is as yet unknown; it is here denoted by a monogram.

[44] Nahum, iii. 13.

[45] Anab. lib. iii. c. 4.

[46] Col. Rawlinson remarks in his memoir on the "Outlines of Assyrian History" (published by the Royal Asiatic Society in 1842), that "the great pyramid at Nimroud was erected by the son of the builder of the north-west palace;" and as the Greeks name that monument the tomb of Sardanapalus, he believes that "a shaft sunk in the centre of the mound, and carried down to the foundations, would lay bare the original sepulchre. The difficulties (he adds) of such an operation have hitherto prevented its execution, but the idea is not altogether abandoned." He appears thus, curiously enough, to be ignorant of the excavations in that ruin described in the text, although he had just visited Nimroud. The only likely place not yet examined would be *beneath* the very foundations.

[47] Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis restored, p. 223.

[48] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii.—plan of Kouyunjik.

[49] I had also shown the probability that the palace of Khorsabad owed its erection to a monarch of this dynasty, in a series of letters published in the Malta Times, as far back as 1843.

[50] Vol. xxii. p. 34. I take this opportunity of attributing to their proper source the discoveries of the names of Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon, inadvertently assigned to others in my "Nineveh and its Remains." We owe these, with many others of scarcely less importance, to the ingenuity and learning of Dr. Hincks. (Literary Gazette, June 27, 1846.)

[51] Isaiah, xxxix. 1, and 2 Kings, xx. 12, where the name is written Berodach.

[52] Col. Rawlinson reads Bel-adon. This Belib is the Belibus of Ptolemy's Canon. The mention of his name led Dr. Hincks to determine the accession of Sennacherib to be in 703 B. C.

[53] Col. Rawlinson gives 11,180 head of cattle, 5230 camels, 1,020,100 sheep, and 800,300 goats. He has also pointed out that both Abydenus and Polyhistor mention this campaign against Babylon.

[54] Joseph. 1. ix. c. 14., and see *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 306, where I had long before the deciphering of the inscriptions endeavoured to point out the representation of this event, in some bas-reliefs at Kouyunjik.

[55] Isaiah, xxxvii. 2 Kings, xix. 9.

[56] 2 Kings, xviii. 13.; and compare Isaiah, xxxvi. 1.

[57] "And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah, king of Judah, 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold." (2 Kings, xviii. 14.)

[58] Shalmaneser, who made war against Hosea, and who is generally supposed to have carried away the ten tribes from Samaria, although the sacred historian does not distinctly say so (2 Kings, xvii.), is identified by general consent with Sargon, who sent his general against Ashdod (Isaiah, xx.).

[59] Chap. VIII.

[60] Xenophon *Cyrop.* lvii. c. 3. Quintus Curtius, liii. c. 3.

[61] Botta's *Monumens de Ninive*, Plate 146.

[62] 2 Kings, xviii. 14. Isaiah xxxvi. 2. From 2 Kings, xix. 8., and Isaiah, xxxvii. 8., we may infer that the city soon yielded.

[63] Isaiah, iii. 18—24. &c. (See translation by the Rev. J. Jones.) This description of the various articles of dress worn by the Jewish women is exceedingly interesting. Most of the ornaments enumerated, probably indeed the whole of them, if we were acquainted with the exact meaning of the Hebrew words, are still to be traced in the costumes of Eastern women inhabiting the same country. Many appear to be mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions amongst objects of tribute and of spoil brought to the king. See also Ezekiel xvi. 10—14. for an account of the dress of the Jewish women.

[64] M. Botta also found, at Khorsabad, the ashes of string in lumps of clay impressed with a seal, without being aware of their origin.

[65] The impressions of the signets of the Egyptian and Assyrian kings, besides a large collection of seals found in Kouyunjik, are now in the British Museum.

[66] The sockets, which are now in the British Museum, weigh 6 lb. 3¾ oz.; the diameter of the ring is about five inches. The hinges and frames of the brass gates at Babylon were also of brass (Herod. i. 178).

[67] "Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh." (Gen. x. 11.)

[68] On Egyptian monuments captives are portrayed with similar feathers attached to their heads; but they appear to be of a negro race, whilst those on the Nimroud bricks bear no traces of negro color or physiognomy. (Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. 1. plate, p. 385.)

[69] That is, as will be hereafter shown, to Pul, or Tiglath Pileser.

[70] The canvass of such tents is divided into strips, which, packed separately on the camels during a march, are easily united again by coarse thread, or by small wooden pins.

[71] The reader may remember a well-known anecdote of this celebrated Sheikh, still current in the desert. He was the owner of a matchless mare whose fame had even reached the Greek Emperor. Ambassadors were sent from Constantinople to ask the animal of the chief, and to offer any amount of gold in return. When they announced, after dining, the object of their embassy, it was found, that the tribe suffering from a grievous famine, and having nothing to offer to their guests, the generous Hatem had slain his own priceless mare to entertain them.

[72] It was parallel to, and to the south of, the chamber marked A A, in the plan of the north-west palace. (*Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. i. Plan III.)

[73] Few wells in the plains bordering on the Tigris yield sweet water.

[74] The caldrons contained about eighty bells. The largest are 3¼ inches high, and 2¼ inches in diameter, the smallest 1¾ inch high, and 1¼ inch in diameter. With the rest of the relics they are now in the British Museum.

[75] 2 Chron. iv. 2. The dimensions, however, of this vessel were far greater. It is singular that in some of the bas-reliefs large metal caldrons supported on brazen oxen are represented.

[76] They were dedicated to the gods in temples. Colœus dedicated a large vessel of brass, adorned with griffins, to Heré. Herod. iv. 152.

[77] The Egyptian goddess Athor is represented with similar ears and hair.

[78] 1 Kings, vii. 13, 14. 2 Chron. iv.

[79] 2 Kings, xxiv. 14, 16. Jeremiah xxiv. 1.; xxix. 2.

[80] In ancient history, embossed or inlaid goblets are continually mentioned amongst the offerings to celebrated shrines. Gyges dedicated goblets, Alyattes, a silver cup, and *an inlaid iron saucer* (the art of inlaying having been invented, according to Herodotus, by Glaucus), and Cræsus similar vessels, in the temple of Delphi. (Herod. i. 14. and 25. Pausanias, l. x.) They were also given as acceptable presents to kings and distinguished men, as we see in 2 Sam. viii. 10. and 3 Chron. ix. 23, 24. The Lacedæmonians prepared for Cræsus a brazen *vessel ornamented with forms of animals round the rim* (Herod. i. 70.), like some of the bowls described in the text. The embossings on the Nimroud bronzes may furnish us with a very just idea of the figures and ornaments of the celebrated shield of Achilles, which were probably much the same in treatment and execution.

[81] Such may have been "the bosses of the bucklers" mentioned in Job, xv. 26.

[82] 1 Kings, x. 16, 17.; xiv. 25, 26.

[83] Jer. li. 11. Ezek. xxi. 21., and compare Isaiah, xlix. 2., where a polished *shaft* is mentioned.

[84] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 319.

[85] Ezek. xxvii. 15. Ivory was amongst the objects brought to Solomon by the navy of Tharshish (1 Kings x. 22).

[86] The height of the glass vase is 3¼ inches; of the alabaster, 7 inches.

[87] See p. 129.

[88] 1 Kings, x. 18. This is a highly interesting illustration of the work in Solomon's palaces. The earliest use of metal amongst the Greeks appears also to have been as a casing to wooden objects.

[89] Herod, i. 14.

[90] Both sculptures have, however, been completely restored in the British Museum.

[91] No tradition is more generally current in the East than the well known story of the Seven Sleepers and their Dog. There is scarcely a district without the original cave in which the youths were concealed during their miraculous slumber.

[92] They were first visited by the late M. Rouet, French consul at Mosul. In my *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 114 note, will be found a short description of the sculptures by my friend Mr. Ross. These are the rock-tablets which have been recently described in the French papers, as a new discovery by M. Place, and as containing a series of portraits of the Assyrian kings!

[93] These tombs are not of the Assyrian epoch. The Jews, as well as other nations of antiquity, were, however, accustomed to make such rock-chambers for their dead, as we learn from Isaiah, xxii. 16. "What hast thou here? and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, as *he that heweth him out a sepulchre on high*, and that graveth an habitation for himself in a rock?"

[94] I examined the remarkable tablets at the Nahr-el-Kelb, on my return to Europe in 1851. They were sculptured, as I stated in my first work, by Sennacherib, the king of the Bavarian monuments.

[95] See p. 117.

[96] *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. chap. 12.

[97] The names of the principal are Tel-el-Barour, Abbas, Kadreeyah, Abd-ul-Azeez, Baghurtha, Elias Tuppeh, Tarkheena, and Doghan.

[98] Anab. b. ii. c. 4.

[99] See p. 56.

[100] Isaiah, xxxvi. 18, 19.

[101] *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 104.

[102] See p. 124.

[103] 2 Kings, xviii. 11. Ezek. i. 2.

[104] 2 Chron. xxxv. 20.

[105] I use the word "dromedary" for a swift riding camel, the *Deloul* of the Arabs, and *Hejin* of the Turks: it is so applied generally, although incorrectly, by Europeans in the East.

[106] Burckhardt, the English traveller best acquainted with the Bedouin character, and admirably correct in describing it, makes the following remarks: "With all their faults, the

Bedouins are one of the noblest nations with which I ever had an opportunity of becoming acquainted.... The sociable character of a Bedouin, when there is no question of profit or interest, may be described as truly amiable. His cheerfulness, wit, softness of temper, good nature and sagacity, which enable him to make shrewd remarks on all subjects, render him a pleasing, and often a valuable companion. His equality of temper is never ruffled by fatigue or suffering." (Notes on the Bedouins, pp. 203, 208.) Unfortunately, since Burckhardt's time, closer intercourse with the Turks and with Europeans, has much tended to destroy many good features in the Arab character.

[107] See p. 187.

[108] The following are the names of the principal mounds seen during this day's march: Ermah, Shibbit, Duroge, Addiyah, Abou-Kubbah, and Kharala, each name being preceded by the Arabic word *Tel*, *i. e.* mound. They are laid down in the map accompanying this volume, their positions having been fixed by careful bearings, and in some instances by the sextant.

[109] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 258.

[110] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 259.

[111] The traveller who has looked down from Mardin, for the first time, upon the plains of Mesopotamia, can never forget the impression which that singular scene must have made upon him. The view from the Sinjar hill is far more beautiful and varied.

[112] In the spring months, when the pastures are good, the sheep and camels of the Bedouins require but little water, and the tents are seldom pitched near a well or stream; frequently as much as half a day's journey distant. Suttum assured me that at this time of the year the camels need not be watered for two months, such is the richness of the grass of the Desert.

[113] It is an error to suppose that the Bedouins never ride horses; for several reasons, however, they seldom do so.

[114] It is considered exceedingly inhospitable amongst the Shammar to place a hot dish before guests, as they are obliged to eat quickly out of consideration for others, who are awaiting their turn, which they cannot do, unless the mess be cool, without burning their mouths, or wasting half their time picking out the colder bits. On one occasion, Ferhan, the great chief of the Shammar, and a large number of horsemen having alighted at my tent, I prepared a dinner for them. The Sheikh was afterwards heard to say that the Bey's feast was sumptuous, but that he had not treated his guests with proper hospitality, as the dishes were so hot nobody could eat his fill.

[115] These are "the rings and nose jewels," which Isaiah (iii. 21.) describes as worn by the Jewish women. It is curious that no representation of them has hitherto been found in the Assyrian sculptures. I take this opportunity of mentioning, that I saw a finger-ring sculptured on a fragment at Khorsabad.

[116] As this was known to be a mere matter of form with me, as I made it a rule never to accept presents of this kind, Suttum might have offered me his bay colt, the most valuable horse amongst the Shammar, to increase the display of hospitality. The reason he did not was this, that although he knew I would have returned the horse, I might have expressed a wish to buy it, and have offered a price. An offer of this kind would have at once injured the value of the animal in the eyes of the Bedouins, and its owner might have been ultimately compelled to sell it. On one occasion, when I was amongst the Shammar, at Al Hather, an Arab rode into my encampment on a beautiful grey colt. I was so much struck with the animal, that I at once expressed a wish to its rider to purchase it. He merely intimated that the sum I named was beneath the value. I increased it, but he only shook his head, and rode off. Nevertheless, the report spread amongst the tribes that he had bargained for the sale of his horse. Although of the best blood, the animal was looked upon with suspicion by the Bedouins, and the owner was, some months after, obliged to sell him at a lower price than I had bid, to a horse-dealer of Mosul! A knowledge of such little prejudices and customs is very necessary in dealing with the Arabs of the Desert, who are extremely sensitive, and easily offended.

[117] Its note resembles the cry of the camel-driver, when leading the herds home at night, for which it is frequently mistaken.

[118] Literally, "strength-money:" the small tribes, who wander in the Desert, and who inhabit the villages upon its edge, are obliged to place themselves under the protection of some powerful tribe to avoid being utterly destroyed. Each great division of the Shammar receives a present of money, sheep, camels, corn, or barley, from some tribe or another for this protection, which is always respected by the other branches of the tribe. Thus the Jehesh paid *kowee* to the Borajj, the Jebours of the Khabour to Ferhan (the hereditary chief of all the Shammar), the people of Tel Afer to the Assaiyah. Should another branch of the Shammar plunder, or injure, tribes thus paying *kowee*, their protectors are bound to make good, or revenge, their losses.

[119] Cawal Yusuf actually became the farmer of the revenues for a sum scarcely exceeding 350*l.* The inhabitants of the Sinjar were greatly pleased by this concession to one of their

own faith, and were encouraged to cultivate the soil, and to abstain from mutual aggressions.

[120] These relics are now in the British Museum.

[121] The height of this fragment was 5 ft. 8 in.

[122] A lion very similar to that discovered at Arban, though more colossal in its dimensions, exists near Serong. (Chesney's Expedition, vol. i. p. 114.)

[123] 2 Kings, xvii. 6. Ezek. i. 1. In the Hebrew text the name of this river is spelt in two different ways. In Kings we have קְבוּר, Khabour, answering exactly to the Chaboras of the Greeks and Romans, and the Khabour of the Arabs. In Ezekiel it is written קְבָר, Kebar. There is no reason, however, to doubt that the same river is meant.

[124] The name occurs in Ezekiel, iii. 15. "Then I came to them of the captivity at *Tel-Abib*, that dwelt by the river of Chebar." In the Theodosian tables we find *Thallaba* on the Khabour, with which it may possibly be identified. (Illustrated Commentary on the Old and New Testaments, published by Charles Knight, a very useful and well-digested summary, in note to word.) It is possible that Arbonad, a name apparently given to the Khabour in Judith, ii. 24., may be connected with Arban: however, it is not quite clear what river is really meant, as there appears to be some confusion in the geographical details. The cities on the Khabour, mentioned by the Arab geographers, are Karkisia (Circesium, at the junction of the river with the Euphrates), Makeseen (of which I could find no trace), Arban, and Khabour. I have not been able to discover the site of any ruin of the same name as the river. Karkisia, when visited in the twelfth century by Benjamin of Tudela, contained about 500 Jewish inhabitants, under two Rabbis. According to Ibn Haukal, it was surrounded by gardens and cultivated lands. The spot is now inhabited by a tribe of Arabs.

[125] In speaking of the Bedouins I mean the Aneyza, Shamma, Al Dhefyr, and other great tribes inhabiting Mesopotamia and the Desert to the north of the Gebel Shammar. With the Arabs of the Hedjaz and Central Arabia I am unacquainted.

[126] Polygamy, it may be here mentioned, is very common amongst the Bedouins.

[127] The title of haraymi (thief), so far from being one of disgrace, is considered evidence of great prowess and capacity in a young man. Like the Spartans of old, he only suffers if caught in the act. There was a man of the Assaiyah tribe, who had established an immense renown by stealing no less than ninety horses, amongst which was the celebrated mare given by Sofuk to Beder Khan Bey.

[128] Easterns never hawk, if they can avoid it, when the sun is high, as the bird of prey described in the text then appears in search of food.

[129] One of the principal objects of the Bedouins in battle being to carry off their adversaries' mares, they never wound them if they can avoid it, but endeavour to kill or unhorse the riders.

[130] Burckhardt has thus defined the terms of this law: "The Thar rests with the khomse, or fifth generation, those only having the right to revenge a slain parent, whose fourth lineal ascendant is, at the same time, the fourth lineal ascendant of the person slain; and, on the other side, only those male kindred of the homicide are liable to pay with their own for the blood shed, whose fourth lineal ascendant is at the same time the fourth lineal ascendant of the homicide. The present generation is thus comprised within the number of the khomse. The lineal descendants of all those who are entitled to revenge at the moment of the manslaughter inherit the right from their parents. The right to blood-revenge is never lost; it descends on both sides to the latest generation." (Notes on Arabs, p. 85.)

[131] *I. e.* The ancient ruined city, a name very generally given by the Turks to ruins.

[132] The form of salutation used by the Turks, consisting of raising the hand from the breast, or sometimes from the ground, to the forehead.

[133] Burckhardt remarks that "Bedouins are, perhaps, the only people of the East that can be entitled true lovers." (Notes on Bedouins, p. 155.)

[134] In the winter of the year my residence in Babylonia, after an engagement near Baghdad, between the Boraij and the Turkish regular troops, in which the latter were defeated, a flying soldier was caught within sight of an encampment. His captors were going to put him to death, when he stretched his hands towards the nearest tent, claiming the Dakheel of its owner, who chanced to be Sahiman, Mijwell's eldest brother. The Sheikh was absent from home, but his beautiful wife Noura answered to the appeal, and seizing a tent-pole beat off his pursuers, and saved his life. This conduct was much applauded by the Bedouins.

[135] The manner in which reports are spread and exaggerated in the Desert is frequently highly amusing. In all encampments there are idle vagabonds who live by carrying news from tribe to tribe, thereby earning a dinner and spending their leisure hours. As soon as a stranger arrives, and relates anything of interest to the Arabs, some such fellow will mount his ready-saddled deloul, and make the best of his way to retail the news in a neighbouring

tent, from whence it is carried, in the same way, to others. It is extraordinary how rapidly a report spreads in this manner over a very great distance. Sofuk sent to inform the British resident at Baghdad, of the siege and fall of Acre, many days before the special messenger dispatched to announce that event reached the city; and I have frequently rejected intelligence received from Bedouins, on account of the apparent impossibility of its coming to me through such a source, which has afterwards proved to be true.

[136] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 93.

[137] I have elsewhere described the ruins and springs of Abou Maria. (Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 257.)

[138] The Tigris this year had risen much higher than usual. I have already mentioned that the plain of Nimroud was completely under water; opposite Mosul the flood nearly reached the mounds of Kouyunjik and Nebbi Yunus.

[139] Burckhardt (Notes on the Bedouins, p. 269) gives the following account of the mode of preparing them:—"The Arabs in preparing locusts as an article of food, throw them alive into boiling water, with which a good deal of salt has been mixed: after a few minutes they are taken out and dried in the sun. The head, feet, and wings are then torn off; the bodies are cleansed from the salt and perfectly dried; after which process whole sacks are filled with them by the Bedouins. They are sometimes eaten broiled in butter; and they often constitute materials for a breakfast when spread over unleavened bread mixed with butter." It has been conjectured that the locust eaten by John the Baptist in the wilderness was the fruit of a tree; but it is more probable that the prophet used a common article of food, abounding even in the Desert.

[140] Cory's Fragments, page 30.

[141] The authorities respecting this god are collected in Selden, "De Dis Syris," and in Beyer's commentary. Abarbanel, in his commentary on Samuel, says that Dagon had the form of a fish, from the middle downwards, with the feet and hands of a man.

[142] 1 Sam. v. 4.

[143] Judges, xvi. 23.

[144] Joshua, xv. 41. From the connection of this verse with the 33rd, it would appear that the town was in a valley.

[145] Joshua, xix. 27. 1 Mac. x. 83.

[146] Ezra, vi. 1.

[147] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 147.

[148] Page 125.

[149] This is evident from Lucian's "De Deâ Syrâ," c. 4.; and see Gesenius's "Thesaurus" in voce "Ashtoreth." (1 Kings, xi. 5. 33. 2 Kings, xxiii. 13.) Quære, whether the bull's horns placed on the head of this divinity, were not originally the horns of the moon's crescent?

[150] This city, one apparently of considerable size and importance, must have stood somewhere near Antioch, or between Antioch and Aleppo. The Sharutinians may probably be identified with the Shairetana of the Egyptian monuments, at one time the allies, and at another the enemies, of Egypt. Few travellers are aware that, above the city of Antioch, carved in the rock, are colossal figures of an Egyptian sphinx and two priests. I have been informed that there are other similar monuments in the neighbouring mountains.

[151] This barbarous practice, frequently represented in the bas-reliefs, seems, therefore, to have prevailed from the earliest times in the East. Darius impaled 3000 Babylonians when he took their city. (Herod. iii. 159.) The last instance with which I am acquainted of this punishment having been inflicted in Turkey, was at Baghdad, where, about ten years ago, Nejib Pasha impaled four rebel Arab Sheikhs, one at each corner of the bridge. They survived for many hours. It is said that, unless they drink water, when they instantly die, persons so treated will live even for two or three days.

[152] Might this word, translated conjecturally pearls, mean the shell fish from which the Tyrian dye was extracted?

[153] The whole of the last passage is very obscure; the translation is partly conjectural.

[154] Isaiah, xv. 6. Translation by the Rev. John Jones.

[155] For this valley I received three different names, Hassanawa, Hassanmama, and Nahala, the latter from the Zibari chief. The difficulty of getting a correct name either of a place or a person from a Kurd is very great, and travellers in Kurdistan can scarcely avoid falling into frequent errors in this respect. The same name is pronounced in a variety of ways, and is subject to all manner of additions and contractions. If it have any meaning, the difficulty is, of course, less.

[156] Khan-i-resh is, by observation, 4372 feet above the level of the sea.

[157] It was this chief, or one of his dependants, I believe, who plundered and was about to murder two American missionaries, who attempted to cross the mountains the year after my visit.

[158] As I have used the word convent, it may be necessary to remind the reader that the Nestorians have no establishments answering to Roman Catholic places of retirement, and that monastic vows are not taken by them.

[159] The height of the convent above the level of the sea is, by observation, 6625 feet.

[160] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 141.

[161] The place of our encampment at Bash-Kalah was, by observation, 7818 feet above the level of the sea.

[162] The Jewish encampment was 9076 feet above the level of the sea.

[163] Amongst the Jewish population scattered widely over this part of ancient Media, might be sought the descendants of the ten tribes, with more probability than in the various lands which ingenious speculation has pointed out as dwelling-places of the remnant of Israel.

[164] I must not omit to mention the name of Dr. Bimerstein, a German gentleman at the head of the quarantine establishment, from whom I received much civility and assistance during my stay at Wan, and who, by the influence he had obtained over the Pasha, and by his integrity and good sense, had contributed considerably towards the improvement in the condition of the Christians, and the general prosperity of the pashalic. He was a pleasing exception in a class made up of the refuse and outcasts of Europe, who have done more than is generally known to corrupt the Turkish character, and to bring an European and a Christian into contempt. I am proud to say that an Englishman is not, I believe, to be found amongst them.

[165] Wan is about 5600 feet above the level of the sea.

[166] This inscription was copied, with a strong telescope, by Schulz, and is published with the rest of his transcripts.

[167] The Mussulmans have only two great annual feasts in which labor gives way to rejoicings and festivities; the Christians of all sects have little else but fasts and festivals throughout the year. A lazy Christian will add to his own holidays the Friday of the Mohammedans, and the Saturday of the Jews.

[168] The desire of a large number of the Armenians to improve their institutions, and to adopt the manners of Europe, is a highly interesting, and indeed important, fact. I was amused, after having contributed a trifle to the funds of the school, at having presented to me a neatly printed and ornamented receipt, with the amount of my donation duly filled up in the blank space left for the purpose, the document being signed by the head of the school.

[169] I cannot refrain from recording the names of the Rev. Messrs. Goddall, Dwight, Holmes, Hamlin, and Schauffler, of the Constantinople missionary station; the late excellent and enterprising Dr. Smith, who, like the estimable Dr. Grant, his fellow-laborer in the same field, and many others of his countrymen, has recently fallen a victim to his zeal and devotion; the Rev. Eli Smith of Beyrout, and Perkins of Ooroomiyah; men who will ever be connected with the first spread of knowledge and truth amongst the Christians of the East, and of whom their country may justly be proud. Personally I must express my gratitude to them for many acts of kindness and friendship. The American mission has now establishments in Smyrna, Brousa, Trebizond, Erzeroom, Diarbekir, Mosul, Aintab, Aleppo, and many other cities in Asia Minor, together with native agents all over Turkey.

[170] The several streams forming the headwaters of the eastern branch of the Tigris mentioned in this Chapter were not before known, I believe, to geographers.

[171] The encampment at Billi was 8612 feet above the level of the sea.

[172] The bearing I obtained of Mount Ararat (N. 15°. 30" E.), corresponds correctly with its position on the best maps. Our distance was about 145 miles.

[173] Those who wish to have a painful picture of the nature of the interference amongst the Nestorians, to which I allude, may read Mr. Badger's Nestorians and their Rituals, and Mr. Fletcher's Travels in Assyria. Although Mr. Badger naturally gives his own version of these transactions, the impartial reader will have no difficulty in seeing the misfortunes to which the unfortunate opposition to the American missions naturally led.

[174] Consuls are so called in Southern Turkey and Persia, and all European strangers are supposed to be consuls.

[175] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 180.

[176] On my return to Mosul I sent to Constantinople a report of the exactions and cruelties to which the Nestorians had been subjected by their Turkish rulers; but nothing, I fear, has been done to amend their condition.

[177] This bas-relief is now in the British Museum.

[178] Cyrop. lib. viii. c. 3.

[179] Quint. Curt. lib. iii. c. 3. I have quoted this description in my Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 279. The Persian king, although represented on the walls of Persepolis with a crown, also wore a high cap or upright turban, as we learn from Xenophon (Anab. lib. ii. c. 5).

[180] 2 Kings, xvii. 6.

[181] Cyrus covered his chariot-horses, all but the eyes, with armour. (Xenophon, Inst. 1. vi.)

[182] Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, vol. ii. p. 109.

[183] So many characters are unfortunately wanting in this epigraph, that the inscription cannot be satisfactorily translated. It commences, it would appear, with the name of the Susianian king, although written without the first character found on the other slabs. The captive, however, was not the monarch himself, who was slain, as it has been seen, in the battle. The name of Shushan, written, as in the book of Daniel, for Susa, is highly interesting. It places beyond a doubt the identification of the site of the campaign.

[184] 1 Sam. xviii. 6.

[185] Isaiah, v. 12. In Daniel, iii. 5., we have mention of the "cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer;" but it is scarcely possible to determine what these instruments really were: they probably resembled those represented in the bas-reliefs described in the text. The instrument of ten strings mentioned in Psalm xxxiii. 2., xlii. 3., and cxliv. 9., may have been the harp of the sculptures, and the psaltery the smaller stringed instrument.

[186] Niebuhr's Thirty-fourth Lecture on Ancient History.

[187] See especially Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan, &c., by the late C. J. Rich, Esq., vol. ii. chap. xviii.

[188] Daniel, iii.

[189] The white ass of Baghdad is much esteemed in the East. Some are of considerable size, and, when fancifully dyed with henna, their tails and ears bright red, and their bodies spotted, like an heraldic talbot, with the same color, they bear the chief priests and the men of the law, as they appear to have done from the earliest times. (Judges, v. 10.)

[190] Baghdad contained, before the great plague of 1830, 110,000 inhabitants, but can now scarcely hold many more than 50,000. It is divided into two parts by the Tigris, the smaller quarters forming suburbs on the western bank.

[191] Jeremiah, 1. 38.

[192] This is the Kasr of Rich and subsequent travellers.

[193] Isaiah, xiii. 19-22., and compare Jeremiah, 1. 39.: "therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the island shall dwell there, and the *owls* shall dwell therein." A large grey owl is found in great numbers, frequently in flocks of nearly a hundred, in the low shrubs among the ruins of Babylon.

[194] From this tribe was the celebrated lady of Haroun-al-Reshid, "the Zobeide," as she was called from her origin.

[195] The generous hospitality frequently shown by men living, like Zaid, upon the smallest means, is one of the most interesting features of Arab character.

[196] The most accurate and careful description is that by Mr. Rich, to whom I shall have frequent occasion to refer, and whose valuable memoirs on the site of the city were my text-books during my researches at Babylon. In the preface, by his widow, to the collected edition of his memoirs, will be found an interesting summary of the researches and discoveries of previous travellers. Ker Porter, Mr. Buckingham, and several other travellers, have given accounts more or less full of the ruins.

[197] Abydenus states (ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. ix. c. 41.) that the first wall of Babylon, built by Belus, had disappeared, and was rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar. It must be borne in mind how much ancient authors copied from one another. Nearly all the descriptions which have reached us of Babylon appear to have been founded on the account of Herodotus and the uncertain statements of Ctesias.

[198] I had visited it on several occasions during previous journeys. For the first time in 1840, with Mr. Mitford.

[199] These dimensions are from Rich. I was unable to take any measurements during my hurried visit.

[200] See [Chap. XI](#).

[201] Lib. ii. c. 8.

[202] Lib. ii. c. 10. Such is the form that Calmet and other antiquaries have given to the

hanging gardens of Babylon in their restored plans of the city.

[203] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 139.

[204] Isaiah, xiv. 23.

[205] On the Tigris, near its junction with the Euphrates, is the traditionary tomb of Ezra. The Jews, from the first centuries of the Christian era, also appear to have visited this spot as the place of sepulture of the prophet. Benjamin of Tudela says of it, "The sepulture of Ezra, the priest and scribe, is in this place (name lost), where he died on his journey from Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes." In the early part of the 13th century, a celebrated Jewish poet, named Jehuda Charisi ben Salomo, described both tombs in verse. (Dr. Zunz's Essay in 2d volume of Asher's ed. of Benjamin of Tudela.)

[206] For an interesting account of those singular relics, and for translations of the inscriptions on the bowls, see the larger work in 8vo.

[207] Josephus against Appian, l. i. cviii. The Jewish historian quotes from Hecatæus, who gives a characteristic account of the attachment of the Jews to their faith.

[208] Benjamin of Tudela's Travels; and see Milman's History of the Jews, book xix. &c.

[209] The form of the letters certainly approach the cuneiform character when written with simple lines, as it is sometimes seen on Assyrian relics and monuments. (See Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 143.) I am not, however, at present ready to admit that the early Chaldee square letters were derived from this source.

[210] See Book of Enoch translated by Archbishop Lawrence, particularly chap. vii. sect. 2. and chap. lxxviii. Among the names of the angels who came down to the daughters of men and instructed them in sorcery and the magic arts, we find Tamiel, Agheel, Azael, and Ramiel.

[211] Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 1049. Oxf. ed. Arrian, lib. vii. 17.

[212] Isaiah, xxi. 9.

[213] Daniel, v. 5.

[214] Esther i. 6.

[215] This inscription was obtained from some ruins near Baghdad by Sir Harford Jones, and is now in the Museum of the East India Company. A facsimile of it has been published.

[216] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. 2d part, chap. ii.

[217] The usual dimensions of the Babylonian bricks are as nearly as possible one foot square, by three and a half inches thick. Rich says thirteen inches square. Mr. Birch has conjectured that they may represent multiples of some Babylonian measure, perhaps the cubit.

[218] Mr. Birch has found more than one notice of Babylon on Egyptian monuments of the time of Thothmes III.

[219] Ezekiel, xvii. 4.

[220] Daniel, v. 30, 31. This event took place B. C. 538. Whether the Darius of the book of Daniel be Cyrus himself, or a Median who commanded the armies of that monarch, and was afterwards appointed viceroy of Babylon, is one of the many disputed points of ancient history.

[221] Arrian, Exp. Alex. 1. vii. c. 17. See Jeremy's Epistle in the Apocryphal book of Baruch, vi. 10, 11, and 28, for instances of the cupidity of the Babylonian priests. They had even stripped the idols of their robes and ornaments to adorn their wives and children. This epistle contains a very curious account of the idol worship of the Babylonians.

[222] Isaiah, xiv. 23. Jeremiah, li. 42.

[223] See an interesting Memoir on Babylon, by M. de St. Croix, in the 48th vol. of the Transactions of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, in which all the authorities on the subject of the gradual decay of the city are collected.

[224] Isaiah, xliiii. 14.

[225] Ezekiel, xxvii. 15.

[226] Of the early reputation of the looms of Babylon we may form an idea from the fact of "a goodly Babylonish garment" (*i. e.* garment of Shinar) being mentioned in the book of Joshua (vii. 21) amongst the objects buried by Achan in his tent. In a curious decree of the time of Diocletian, regulating the maximum value of articles of clothing and food throughout the Roman empire, several objects from Babylon are specified. Babylonian skins of the first quality are rated at 500 denarii; of the second quality at 40; Babylonian shoes, called mullai, at 120 denarii per pair; and a Babylonian girdle at 100. Plain Babylonian socks are also mentioned, but the amount at which they were valued is wanting. This decree was

discovered at Eski Hissar, the ancient Stratoniceia, in Asia Minor. (See Leake's Asia Minor.)

[227] "And the men of Cuth made Nergal," in Samaria, where they had been transplanted after the first captivity. (2 Kings, xvii. 30.) The country of the Cuthites was probably in the neighbourhood of Babylon, though the commentators have not agreed upon its exact site. Josephus says that it was in Persia (Antiq. ix. 14.)

[228] xviii 2.

[229] The common notion amongst ignorant Mohammedans is, that an eclipse is caused by some evil spirit catching hold of the sun or moon. On such occasions, in Eastern towns, the whole population assembles with pots, pans, and other equally rude instruments of music, and, with the aid of their lungs, make a din and turmoil which might suffice to drive away a whole army of evil spirits, even at so great a distance.

[230] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 139, note.

[231] Isaiah, xxi. 1.

[232] I have lately learnt, to my great grief, that poor Suttum has been killed in some affray with the Aneyza.

[233] Of the same size and form as that containing the records of Essarhaddon, given by me to the British Museum. It has been only partly restored, and the inscription, which appears to be historical, has not yet been deciphered.

[234] See Chapter 20.

[235] Isaiah, xxxvii. 18, 19.

[236] 1 Kings, vii. 23-25. The brazen sea of Solomon stood upon twelve oxen, three facing each cardinal point. It must be borne in mind that the Assyrian sculptor frequently represented only one figure to signify many, and that more than one ox probably supported the vessel portrayed in this bas-relief.

[237] These measurements merely include that part of the palace actually excavated.

[238] Since my departure a fine entire bas-relief has, I understand, been found near the ruined tomb in the centre of the mound.

[239] The distance from centre to centre of the pedestals facing each other was 9 feet three inches; their diameter, 11½ inches in the broadest part. The second pair found were about 84 feet distant from the first. There were the remains of a wall of sundried bricks, 6 feet 3 inches from the centre of one of the pedestals.

[240] Tacit. Ann. lib. xii. c. 13., and Ammianus Marcell. 1. xxiii. c. 20. The latter author especially mentions that the town had belonged to the Persians.

[241] In the same shape as the Egyptian. (See Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, vol. ii. p. 112.)

[242] See Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. Introduction, p. xiv. Benjamin of Tudela places the tomb of Nahum at Ain Japhata, to the south of Babylon.

[243] According to Col. Rawlinson (Outlines of Assyrian History, p. xx.), to Neptune or Noah!

[244] The actual weight of the large ducks in the British Museum being 480 oz. troy, the mana would be equal to 16 oz., with a small fraction over. The Attic mana has been computed to be 14 oz., with a small fraction. It would consequently be to the Babylonian talent as 7 to 8. According to Herodotus (lib. iii. c. 89.) the Eubœan talent was to the Babylonian as 6 to 7. If this statement be correct, the Eubœan would be to the Attic as 48 to 49. (Dr. Hincks.)

[245] One cylinder bears his name.

[246] Lib. i. c. 195. As a written signature is of no value, except in particular cases, in the East, and as all documents to be valid must be sealed with seals bearing the names of the parties to them, the engraved signet is of great importance, and the trade of an engraver one of considerable responsibility. The punishment for forging seals is very severe, and there are many regulations enforced for securing their authenticity.

[247] Compare Job, xxxviii. 14. "It is turned as clay to the seal."

[248] Compare 1 Kings, xix. 16. and 2 Kings, ix. 2.

[249] Sargon is called on the monuments of Khorsabad, "the conqueror of Samaria and of the circuit of Beth Khumri." (Dr. Hincks, Trans. of the R. Irish Acad. vol. xx.)

[250] 1 Kings, xix. 15.

[251] Colonel Rawlinson suggests about 930 B. C.

[252] Especially if, as Egyptian scholars still maintain, the name is found on Egyptian monuments of the 18th dynasty.

[253] See my Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 155, where this genealogy was first pointed

out.

[254] Discovered during the first expedition. (Nineveh and its Remains, vol. i. p. 83.)

[255] This interesting discovery was first announced in the Athenæum of Jan. 3, 1852.

[256] These three kings came against Israel (2 Kings, xv. 19, and 29, and 1 Chron. v. 26); but Pul is particularly mentioned as receiving tribute from Menahem, and Tiglath Pileser, as carrying away Israelites into captivity in the time of Pekah, between whose reign and that of Menahem only two years elapsed. (2 Kings, xv. 23.)

[257] See an interesting note on this subject in Rich's Narrative, vol. ii. p. 123.

[258] 2 Chron. xxxiii.

[259] We have a curious illustration of the magnificent suicide of Sardanapalus in the history of Zimri, king of Israel. "And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire and died." 1 Kings xvii. 18. There is nothing, therefore, improbable in the romantic history of the Assyrian king.

[260] The reading according to Col. Rawlinson is marked R—that according to Dr. Hincks, H.

[261] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 185.

[262] It was not necessary to the effect of his preaching that Jonah should be of the religion of the people of Nineveh. I have known a Christian priest frighten a whole Mussulman town to tents and repentance by publicly proclaiming that he had received a divine mission to announce a coming earthquake or plague.

[263] 2 Kings, xx. 19.

[264] 2 Kings, xxv. 19.

[265] Driving away the cattle and sheep of a conquered people, and accounting them amongst the principal spoil, has ever been the custom of Eastern nations who have not altogether renounced a nomadic life, and whose chief wealth consequently consisted in these animals. When Asa defeated the Ethiopians, "he carried away sheep and camels in abundance; and returned to Jerusalem." (2 Chron. xiv. 15.)

[266] The same thing may, indeed, be inferred from several passages in Chronicles and Kings. See particularly 2 Kings, xvi. 7, xvii. 4.

[267] 1 Kings, iv. 21, and 24. "*He reigned over all the kings* from the river even unto the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt;" and the kings "brought him every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses and mules, a rate year by year." (2 Chron. ix. 24, 26.) Such were probably the very articles brought yearly to the Assyrian king, and enumerated in his records.

[268] 2 Chron. v. 62.

[269] 1 Chron. v. 6 and 26.

[270] 2 Kings, xvii. 6, xviii. 11.

[271] 2 Kings, xvii. 29.

[272] See woodcuts, Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. p. 340.

[273] Ch. iii. 12-14.

[274] From this propylæum came the two colossal bulls in the British Museum; it was part of the royal palace.

[275] Nineveh and its Remains, vol. ii. part ii. ch. 2. A recent trigonometrical survey of the country by Captain Jones proves, I am informed, that the great ruins of Kouyunjik, Nimroud, Karamless, and Khorsabad, form very nearly a perfect parallelogram, corresponding with the conjecture I ventured to make in my former work. A recent writer (Bonomi, Nineveh and its Palaces, p. 94), adopting the theory of the greater extent of Nineveh, has endeavored to prove that the Gebel Makloub is the remains of its eastern walls, stating that he "has the testimony of a *recent observant* traveller, Mr. Barker, who has no doubt that the so-called 'mountain' is entirely the work of man." Unfortunately it happens that the Gebel Makloub is somewhat higher, and far more precipitous and rocky than the Malvern hills. It would, indeed, have required Titans to raise such a heaven-reaching wall! Scarcely less extravagant are the conjectures that the mound is called Kouyumjik, not Kouyunjik, because silver ornaments may have been found there, and that Yaroumkeh, a mere Turkish name meaning "half-way village," is "roum," "signifying the territory and inhabitants of the Roman empire," and, consequently, a part of Nineveh, "Roman and ancient being synonymous terms!" The line, too, indicated in Mr. Bonomi's diagram for the former bed of the Tigris, in order to complete the parallelogram, would take the river over a range of steep limestone hills. I may here observe that the name of "Niniouah" is not known in the country as applied either to the mound of Nebbi Yunus, or any other ruin in the country. Before founding theories upon

such grounds, it would be as well to have some little acquaintance with the localities and with the languages spoken by the people of the country.

[276] 1 Kings, v. 15.

[277] The Jewish cubit appears to have been about eighteen inches.

[278] The height, according to 2 Chron. iii. 4, was 120 cubits, which would appear to be an error slipped into the text, although Josephus gives the same dimensions, adding an upper story or structure.

[279] Mr. Fergusson has pointed out, from the account of Josephus, the probability of the temple having had two stories. (*The Palaces of Nineveh restored*, p. 222.)

[280] See Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible.

[281] See frontispiece to Fergusson's *Palaces of Nineveh restored*.

[282] Josephus, b. viii. c. 2. Fergusson's *Palaces of Nineveh*, p. 229.

[283] It will be remembered that the annals on the bulls of Kouyunjik include six years of his reign, and must consequently have been inscribed on them in the seventh year.

[284] 1 Kings, v. 8.

[285] See [Frontispiece to this volume](#).

[286] Such also appears to have been the case at Nimroud.

[287] 1 Kings, vii. 2. It is only by supposing it to have been one great hall that we can at all understand the proportions and form of the building as subsequently given. The Hebrew word, as its Arabic equivalent still does, will bear both meanings. Pharaoh's daughter's house, which was "*like unto the porch*," was probably the harem or private apartment.

[288] *Palaces of Nineveh restored*, p. 181. That the Assyrians were, however, acquainted with slanting roofs may be inferred from a bas-relief discovered at Khorsabad. (Botta, Plate 141.)

[289] Jerem. xix. 13.

[290] *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. part ii. ch. 2.

[291] Daniel, v. 5.

[292] 1 Kings, vi. 28. I cannot, however, but express my conviction that much of the metal called gold both in the sacred writings and in the profane authors of antiquity, was really copper, alloyed with other metals, the aurichalcum, or orichalcum, of the Greeks, such as was used in the bowls and plates discovered at Nimroud.

[293] Rich estimates the entire length of the inclosure at about four miles, and its greatest breadth at nearly two. This appears to me rather above the actual extent of the ruins. It must also be remembered that they narrow off from the northern side to a few hundred yards at the southern. I have not hitherto had time to lay down my survey of Nimroud. The general plan of the mound in my first work must be considered as a mere rough sketch.

[294] Rich's Narrative, vol. ii. p. 60.

[295] It will be borne in mind that the Tigris has now changed its course.

[296] According to Mr. Rich, the distance from the inside of the inner wall to the inside of the outer was 2007 feet. Allowing 200 feet for the outer the breadth of the whole fortifications would be about 2200 feet, or not far from half a mile.

[297] If the city, or this part of it, were ever taken by the river having been turned upon the walls, as some ancient authors have declared, the breach must have been made at the north-western corner. There are no traces of it.

[298] Sir Anthony Shirley's *Travels in Persia*. Purchas, vol. ii. p. 1387.

[299] *Narrative of a Residence in Kurdistan*, vol. i. pp. 40, 51.

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