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JOURNAL OF
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ORDINARY MEETING, FEBRUARY 2, 1880.

REV. ROBINSON THORNTON, D.D., VICE-PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed, and the following election was announced :—

ASSOCIATE :—REV. P. F. Nursey, B.A., Radnor.

Also the presentation of the following Work for the Library :—
Proceedings of the Royal Society. *From the same.*

The CHAIRMAN.—I have great pleasure in introducing Mr. Rassam. (Cheers.) The name of that distinguished traveller is well known, not only in connection with the subject of his paper, "Recent Assyrian and Babylonian Research," to the success of which he has contributed as much as, if not more, than any living man ; but I also think we have heard of him as engaged in Abyssinia. (Cheers.) He may indeed be termed a perfect citizen of the world, for he has not confined his travels to Europe and Asia, but we hear of him in Africa also. It is, however, in connection with Asiatic research that he now appears before us, and I am glad to have the opportunity of introducing one so eminent on this his first visit to the Society of which he is now a member. I am sure his paper will be found extremely interesting, and that he will be able to afford a satisfactory reply to any question that may be put to him at its close. (Cheers.)

The following paper was then read by the Author :—

RECENT ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN RESEARCH.

BY HORMUZD RASSAM, ESQ.

IN a former paper, which I read some time ago before the Society of Biblical Archæology, I gave an account of my researches in Assyria, which I had carried on there in 1877, for the Trustees of the British Museum ; and now, in this paper which I have the pleasure to read before you, I intend to give a *résumé* of my last explorations in Nineveh and Babylon, with a description of the different ancient sites existing there at present.

2. To those who are interested in archæological research, and more especially with that part of it which relates to the inspired writings, there is something more than fascinating to

the Christian mind which has been associated since childhood with the account given in Holy Writ of Jonah's divine mission to Nineveh, of Sennacherib and his carrying away the ten tribes to Assyria, and Media, and of Nebuchadnezzar and the Jewish Captivity.

3. The widespread fragments of pottery, brick, and stone, (the remnants of those two ancient cities of Chaldea, and Assyria,) which are scattered all over those countries, give evident signs of the utter destruction of those great kingdoms, and stand as a living monument to God's vengeance in visiting them with His wrath for their pride, wickedness, and boasting, even against Jehovah Himself, who said, "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense!"

4. I must in the first place give you an outline of the existing different routes through which a traveller can visit Nineveh and Babylon; and to do so Mossul and Baghdad must be touched at, as they are nigh to those Biblical cities, especially as the traveller will be able to supply himself therefrom with the necessary provisions for the journey. Mossul stands on the right bank of the Tigris, and Nineveh is on the opposite side of the river, while Baghdad is situated about 300 miles lower down on both sides of the same river; but Babylon, or at least the site of its ruins, stands on the left bank of the Euphrates, about sixty miles to the south of Baghdad. There is a town of some importance in the proximity of Babylon which is generally thought to be in the centre of its ancient limit, called Hilla; but travellers who proceed so far east would like, while being in the neighbourhood, to visit the renowned city of Haroon el-Rasheed, and the ruins of Seleucia, and the Parthian palace of Ctesiphon, in the vicinity of Baghdad.

5. At present there are several routes which a traveller may take in visiting Mossul and Baghdad. One of those which I generally take, and which is the safest for an ordinary traveller, is by starting from the Port of Alexandretta, or Iscanderoun, and going over the Bailan Pass, about 2,000 feet above the level of the sea, and crossing the Plain of Antioch, leaving the Lake on the right, and arriving at Aleppo, after being knocked about from the rugged state of the road, in three days' slow marches; the whole distance not being more than sixty miles.

6. It is necessary for a traveller who wishes to make his long journey with ease and comfort to spend two or three days at Aleppo, the supposed site of Zobah, in order that he may provide himself with servants, riding and baggage animals, the requisite supply of provisions, such as sugar, butter, coffee, tea, spices, rice, and flour; because these necessaries

cannot be obtained in the villages. The only commodities that can be obtained away from large towns are fodder for the animals, fuel for cooking, milk, eggs, fowls, and sheep if required, there being no butchers in the rural districts. If a traveller cannot do without meat, he has to buy a live sheep or goat, and have it slaughtered, the price of which is not ruinous, as the best can be purchased for four or five shillings; and considering that in the cool weather the meat can be kept for two or three days, and the interior parts, with the skin of the animal's head, and trotters, which are generally given to the host to make his heart glad, it is good policy sometimes to indulge in this extravagance.

7. From Aleppo there are two ways of proceeding to Mossul; one is by way of Diarbekir, and the other is *viâ* Orfa (the ancient Eddesa, or the supposed site of Ur of the Chaldees), but both routes meet again at Nissibeen, or Nissibis. The former route is considered the safest, but the latter the quickest. After leaving Aleppo, the traveller crosses the Euphrates by the ferry at Birajeek, after three days' slow march through an almost level plain. Thence he proceeds to Orfa, through the plain or hills of Serooj (Serug of the Bible), or diverges northwards to Diarbekir, over the Karach-Dagh, which means "craggy mountain." During the hot season the last-mentioned route is preferable for the benefit of cooler air and better supply of water, though it is two days longer than the other. Both the roads, by way of Orfa and Diarbekir, meet at Nissibeen, and here it is left to the traveller to go on to Mossul direct, leaving the Tigris on the left and the mountain of Sinjar on the right,—risking an encounter with Arab marauders who would dispossess him of whatever he has, even to the clothes he wears, if he try to resist them; or cross the river higher up at Jazeera or Paishapoor, and finish the journey on the left side of the Tigris, on the confines of Assyria proper, until he crosses a bridge of boats which connects Nineveh with Mossul.

8. From Diarbekir, a traveller who likes ease more than sight-seeing, can go down to Mossul on a raft of sheepskins; but as the Tigris is very rocky and rapid between Diarbekir and Mossul, he might be upset in passing some of the rapids, and lose his baggage in the river. I do not, however, remember hearing of any such accidents occurring to any European traveller, as the native raftsmen know those rapids well, and make their passengers disembark and walk along the river side at the dangerous parts.

9. From Mossul, the traveller can either float down the

Tigris to Baghdad, or travel on horseback on either side of the river through Mesopotamia, or Irak. The Mesopotamian route is more easy and shorter by four days, but it is not always safe. The objection to the other route is the existence of a large number of troublesome rivulets, besides the greater and lesser Zabs. In the Mesopotamian track there are scarcely any towns or villages worth mentioning, but on the opposite side there are two towns of importance, which are, Arweel, or Arbela, and Karkook, beside other large villages. The easiest and quickest way to go down to Baghdad from Mossul, is to float down the Tigris on a raft, and when the river is high the 300 miles can be accomplished in three days and nights.

10. From Baghdad to Babylon a traveller can do the journey in three days' slow marches, through Southern Mesopotamia on level ground as flat as a table and as sandy as the seashore, though from all appearances the whole country must have been formerly thickly inhabited, and richly cultivated, from the remains of the canals which are still visible all over the country. As there are no villages between Baghdad and Babylon, some charitable Moslems of Baghdad have built a number of khans or karavansaries at intervals of about fifteen miles for the convenience of the wayfarers and pilgrims who visit the shrine of Hosain at Karbala.

11. Before I proceed any further I must not omit to mention the mode of housing oneself on the journey in those parts. It is always advisable for a traveller to carry two tents with him, one for himself and the other for his domestics, because it sometimes happens that no accommodation can be found on the road; and if shelter can be obtained, the chances are the place would be so filthily dirty, and infested with fleas and other vermin, that instead of having any rest the traveller would be undergoing torture all the time he remains there. The great drawback, however, to tent-life in those countries, excepting in spring or at the end of autumn, is the discomfort of excessive heat and dust-storms of summer, and the cold and wet of winter. I myself never travelled without tents, though, perhaps, I did not have them pitched once in six months. Whenever I approached a village where I intended to halt I always cantered on about one hour or two before the arrival of the luggage, and as soon as I saw a nice-looking house or hut I entered into friendly negotiations with the person I considered to be the chief inmate of the abode; and I never once failed to obtain the lodgings I required from the female members of the family, who always came to my assistance when there was any difficulty to surmount. But if there happens to be

an Arab or Koordish encampment a traveller must go direct to the chief's tent, who alone is expected to show hospitality to a stranger of whatever nationality or religion he may be.

12. There is a much shorter route between the Mediterranean and Babylon by way of Dair at the junction of the river Khaboor (Chebar of the Bible), but it is not always safe to travel through that almost deserted country, because, marauding parties of both the Iniza and Shammar Arabs are always going about in those parts seeking for plunder. It is also difficult to obtain the necessary supplies for one's comfort and living through that long journey.

13. There are also two other routes by which a traveller might reach Babylon; one which is extremely short, but both unsafe and fatiguing, and the other very easy and comfortable, but somewhat long and, to a person who is not fond of a long sea-voyage, might prove somewhat unpleasant and tedious. Those who like to rough it, and are able to ride about 500 miles on the back of a camel and see no life excepting unwelcome Bedouins, who have no scruple whatever to plunder them and leave them to starve in the desert, can travel by coach from Beyrout to Damascus where they join the English post, which goes on camels fortnightly between Damascus and Baghdad. Travelling in such a manner an inexperienced person must make up his mind to be shaken to pieces the first day he mounts that awkward animal, but as soon as his limbs get accustomed to the jog-jogging of that monster the rest of the journey will seem comparatively easy. This mode of travelling occupies ten or twelve days, and most of the way the traveller is in deadly fear of being plundered or killed by a marauding party of the Bedouin Arabs, or being buried in a sand-storm, or, worse than all, dying of thirst.

14. But a person who is fond of a long sea-voyage can get into a comfortable English steamer in the London Docks, and land in the centre of Babylon by merely changing steamers at Basra at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. He can then travel with great comfort, and fare on English diet on the very ruins of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. By this last route it would take about forty days to make the voyage, because, generally speaking, those trading steamers have to visit many ports on the way between England and the Persian Gulf to make the voyage profitable. By this route Gibraltar and Malta are touched at in going through the Mediterranean, and after the steamer passes through the Suez Canal and down the Red Sea it touches at Jeddah, the port of the Hijaz or the holy land of the Moslems. Thence she goes to the British port of Aden,

the emporium of Yaman or Arabia Felix, for provisions and coals. Afterwards she proceeds to Muscat, the port of Oman, at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, from whence she goes on to Bushire, a Persian settlement, to discharge, and receive passengers and cargo. When this is done the vessel proceeds to Basra, the Turkish port below the junction of the Euphrates with the Tigris, for the final outward discharge of her merchandize for the use of Southern Mesopotamia and Irak.

15. I fear I have intruded at too great a length upon your time in giving you a somewhat long account of the different modes of travelling in that part of the East whereon my present paper treats; but I deemed it both fitting and instructive to preface my lecture with a short description of the routes that are at present traversed by modern travellers when wishing to visit the countries above alluded to, in order that you may with greater facility follow me in my last journey through Mesopotamia to Nineveh and Babylon.

16. The expedition that I undertook to Assyria in 1878 proved so pregnant with good results, that the trustees of the British Museum sent me out again to exhume more of the buried relics of the past, and although I was not so successful in this last expedition as I was on former occasions, by bringing to England large objects for the public gaze, I was, nevertheless, fortunate in bringing to light interesting records of the old kings of Assyria and Babylonia,—such as Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Sardanapalus, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, and others. As a matter of course, whenever I start on such expeditions I always make up my mind to bear disappointments, and to work against oppositions, prejudices, and jealousies; but thanks to the energy and help of Sir Henry Layard, Her Majesty's ambassador at Constantinople, who has always been ready to support me, my task has been made easy through his personal influence with the Sultan of Turkey. Most fortunately for me I undertook the last two expeditions during his tenor of office in representing England at the Ottoman capital, and had he not been there I am certain the greater part of my discoveries would have been now buried underground. His first and greatest difficulty was to induce the Sublime Porte to forego some stringent rules which had been framed a few years back (regarding the research for antiquities) to prevent private adventurers from excavating and helping themselves to valuable antiquities for their own benefit. Indeed some explorers, I was told at Constantinople, had actually entered into an agreement with the Turkish Government to give them half of what was found, and that they had broken faith and smuggled

away all the relics discovered, and sold them either in Europe or America. We must not, therefore, wonder at the jealousy of the Porte and the strict rules which they forced upon the late Mr. George Smith, and which they tried likewise to impose on me.

17. Formerly, when Sir Henry Layard, M. Botta, and myself excavated in Assyria, there was no restriction placed upon our researches, and so we could dig wherever we liked, and send to Europe any relics we might find without let or hindrance. But, as I said before, that since it came to the knowledge of the Sublime Porte that private individuals were enriching themselves by digging out ancient relics, and sending them to Europe for sale, the Ottoman Government framed certain rules which prohibited anyone from digging for antiquities without the special sanction of the Minister of Instruction, and obliged the explorer to give one-third of the objects discovered to the Porte, one-third to the owner of the land where the relics are found, and the other third he was to keep, and if exported to pay a heavy duty thereon. That a special delegate would be appointed to watch the work, and all expenses incurred on the appointment of the said delegate, with a proper guard, be borne by the excavator. The Firman which Sir Henry Layard obtained for me dispensed with all these restrictions, and it only stipulated that we should give the Ottoman Museum every duplicate we found. To this we had no objection, considering that we did not wish to fill the British Museum with unnecessary counterparts. Moreover, almost all the inscriptions that we have found are separate specimens; but when I tried to give the delegate some sculptures and other antiquities which we did not want, he looked suspiciously at them, as if my reason for giving them to him was because they were not thought to be worth keeping by us.

18. Most of the mounds in which ancient remains are found in Assyria and Babylonia are private property, and to enable us to make excavations thereat, it is necessary, independently of the Firman, to indemnify the landlord before the work can be commenced. It had always been the rule with Sir Henry Layard and myself not to enter into an agreement with the landlords, but merely to reward them with a small present which we deemed sufficient for the purpose; and it is an astonishing fact that during our several expeditions we never had any dispute on this head, and none of the landlords ever gave us a moment's trouble, or interfered in our work, even if we chose to destroy or dig up all their ground and render it unfit for tillage. Indeed, a great number never troubled them-

selves to ask for indemnification for any damage done, as they all knew that we were sure to punish any of our *employés* who wantonly did any damage to the property, or trespassed upon any domain without our sanction.

19. It was generally considered all over the country, and established as a precedent, that I could dig anywhere I liked, as it was known by all that I was always ready to reward anyone as he deserved. Indeed, I have been very often accosted on my travels by men and women who had an artificial mound in their patrimony, or near their village, to go and examine the old ruins, which they declared contained antiquities and treasure. It is very curious that though the French and ourselves have been exploring in that country off and on for nearly forty years, and employed thousands of the natives in the diggings, and all know that none of us have ever found any treasure, yet the idea of the hid precious metal can never be disassociated from the minds of the generality of the people of that country. Had I to follow the red-tape system, I might not only have been imposed upon, and made to pay most exorbitantly for the privilege of digging, but I should, most probably, have been prevented altogether from attaining the object of my mission, seeing that it was particularly set forth in my Firman that to enable me to excavate in a private ground it would be necessary for me to obtain the sanction of the landlords, as if I could possibly intrude on any private domain against the wishes of the owner! I was also prohibited from digging in any mound which contained a graveyard, or where the ground was considered sacred; and had this clause been strictly followed, most of the valuable antiquities would have been now and for ever lost to the literary and scientific world.

20. Two incidents in connection with the landlords, one which occurred in Sir Henry Layard's time, and the other during my superintendence, raised us immensely in the estimation of everyone, especially those owners of land who possessed in their property ancient remains. When I rejoined Sir Henry Layard at Constantinople in 1849, one of the landlords of Koyunjik happened to be there to solicit some pecuniary assistance from two *grandeés* of Mossul who held high positions at the Turkish capital; but it appears that he did not meet with success. On finding him in distress I represented his case to Sir Henry Layard, who immediately gave him a suitable present, which the poor old man never forgot till the day of his death, in the beginning of this year. On returning to Mossul he reported in high glee everywhere the kindness and liberality of the English, and as he took care not to say what

we gave him, and if he did, he must have exaggerated the amount, it was thought that we had enriched him for life.

21. The Arabs are proverbially very grateful for any kindness and attention shown them, and consider it a sacred duty to trust a friend. As for acts of liberality and generosity, they are reckoned to be tantamount to praying or fasting; and they have a common saying which expresses their feeling in the words, "A liberal man is beloved of God though he be a reprobate." But it is very difficult for a stranger unaccustomed with Arab habits and usages to deal with them in a way satisfactory to both parties; because, if a person is too munificent, he would be thought to be either a simpleton, or looked upon with suspicion, and be imposed upon accordingly; but were he to act the stingy, he would be held in contempt; and it is therefore not an easy matter to deal with an Arab in striking a bargain.

22. The other case which gave great satisfaction amongst the Arabs was at the time when I discovered a few Sassanian silver coins in the mound of Koyunjik, and after no end of trouble I succeeded in securing the owner a share of the treasure trove. It was specified in the standing rules that any precious metal found in the excavations was to be divided into three parts; one-third I was to have, one-third was to be given to the landlord, and the remainder to be appropriated by the Ottoman Government. When that discovery was made, I kept two-thirds, of which to give half to the landlord, whom I knew expected me to protect his share. The authorities of the place asked me to give it up to them, as they said that the British Government was only entitled to one-third, and the rest must be given to them, and they themselves would settle the matter with the landlord. As a matter of course I demurred, as I said that the Firman did not order me to make over the share of the landlord to the local authorities; but if the owner of the land wished it I should be happy to do so. The landlord was then sent for, and on his being asked to tell me to give up his share to them, he refused to listen to them, and declared that he had presented his portion to me, and no persuasion or threat would induce him to change his mind. Consequently, my victory did not only gain me great praise amongst the populace, but made others in whose ground I wished to dig, but who were afraid to let me do so, waive every objection to my doing so afterwards.

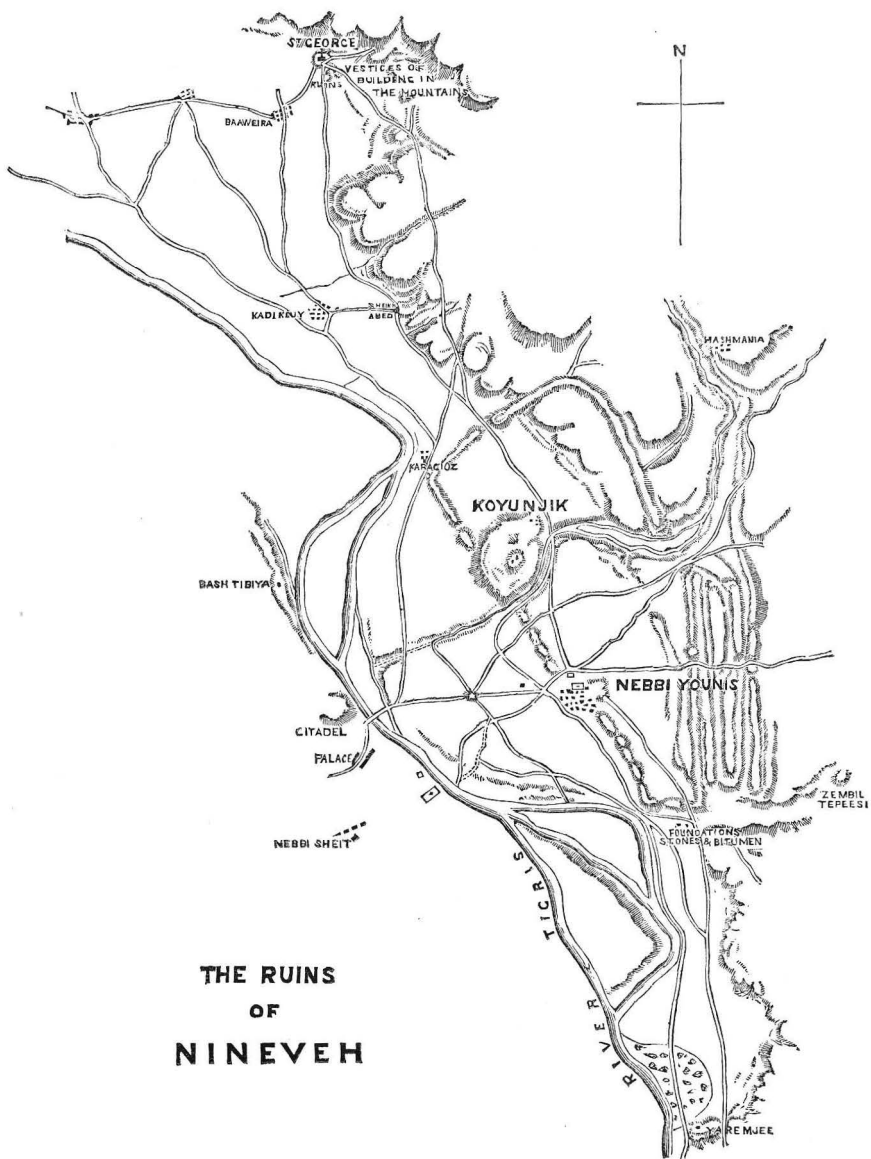
23. Generally speaking, when I found that the land which I wished to examine belonged to a private individual, I appointed two Arab farmers to value the rent of the land, with the loss

of profit on its cultivation while I was making use of it, and reward the landlord accordingly. I always left it to the option of the landlord to let me refill the trenches and smooth down the furrows that had been caused by the diggings, or allow him a specified sum to do the needful himself; and most invariably the landlords chose the latter alternative, as they could then pocket the money and trust to time to do the work needed.

24. There has been so much written from time to time about the researches in Assyria, especially by Sir Henry Layard, who in his two works entitled "Nineveh and its Remains," and "Nineveh and Babylon," has given such an interesting and minute account of his magnificent discoveries, that it would be quite presumption on my part to attempt any addition to his lucid description. I must, therefore, confine myself to describing the nature of my own work and the topography of the ancient Biblical cities.

25. There were four sites of the Royal Assyrian residences discovered on the left side of the Tigris, in what was considered Assyria proper, and which were, I believe, in the time of the preaching of the Prophet Jonah, within the metropolis of Nineveh, these are Koyunjik, Nebbi Younis, Nimroud, and Khorsabad. There are other important ruins within what I consider to be the radius of that "great city," such as Yarmija, Balawat, Karamlais, Bahsheeka, and Shareefkhan. Taking the oblong distance of these different ruins, together with Koyunjik and Nebbi Younis on the western limit, Nimroud on its southern border, and Khorsabad on its northern side, makes the size of the old city around about sixty miles, or three days' journey, as it is mentioned in Holy Writ; because twenty miles are reckoned in that country, according to the travelling of a pedestrian, about a day's journey. In all these mounds there have been discovered Assyrian remains; and at Balawat, especially, I discovered during my expedition to Assyria, in the beginning of the year before the last, the famous bronze gates and temple dedicated to the god of war by Assur-nazir-pal, about which I shall touch hereafter. There are, besides these mounds, several others scattered all over the above mentioned space which must have been formerly temples, or watch-towers to guard the several quarters of the great town, with gardens and orchards enclosed.

26. Nimroud is considered by Assyrian scholars to be the "Calah" of the Bible; but whether this be correct or not, I believe, at the time of the preaching of Jonah, it was comprised within the southern extremity of Nineveh. In this



**THE RUINS
OF
NINEVEH**

mound there were four different palaces discovered by Sir Henry Layard during his researches, the oldest of which, whose sculptures were found in better preservation than any other Assyrian bas-reliefs yet discovered, belonged to Assurnazir-pal, the father of Shalmaneser, mentioned in the second of Kings, who reigned about 860 B.C. The second, which is called in Layard's "Nineveh and Babylon" the central palace, was very much destroyed, and beyond a few scattered sculptures and some entrances embellished with human-headed bulls, no complete edifice was found. Here was also found the famous black obelisk now in the British Museum, on which is represented that king's conquest of Cappadocia, Armenia, Media, Babylonia, Syria, and Phœnicia. It is related here also that "Jehu, the son of Omri,* gave Shalmaneser a tribute of gold, silver, and articles manufactured from gold"; and one of the figures represented on the obelisk prostrating himself on the ground before the great king was either Jehu himself or his ambassador. The third building at Nimroud, which is called the south-west palace, was found very much destroyed by fire; and from the records found on some of the dilapidated sculptures it seemed that this palace was built by Esarhaddon, the son of Sennacherib, who, to save himself the expense and trouble of bringing the required material from a distant quarry, contented himself by removing the sculptures from the other palaces at Nimroud, turned the bas-relief to the brick wall or support, and had his own designs engraved on the back of them. In the chronicle of this king he says that he had built a magnificent palace at that part of Nineveh called Nebbi Younis, but hitherto nothing has been discovered at that mound deserving the praise that Esarhaddon lavished upon it. As I shall have occasion hereafter to refer to this mound, I must pass to the fourth building discovered at Nimroud, called the south-east palace, which was supposed to have been erected by the grandson of Esarhaddon, believed to be Saracus of Berosus, mentioned by Abydenus, in whose time the prophecy of Nahum was fulfilled, when the utter annihilation of that great Assyrian kingdom took place. The style of architecture of this, (scarcely worth the dignified name of palace,) was very inferior to any Assyrian building that has been discovered. It was built, as Sir Henry Layard supposes, when the empire was decaying and art declining, because there were neither sculptures nor paintings visible,

* Assyrian scholars identify this king of Israel with Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat and grandson of Nimshi, mentioned in 2 Kings ix. 2; and they consider the parental name of "Omri" to have been given to him by the Assyrians from their association with a former king of the same name.

but the whole structure was panelled by rude limestone slabs about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. The upper part of the walls, built of sun-dried bricks, was simply plastered over with lime—a mode of decoration which the Sassanians employed in their buildings after the destruction of the Babylonian monarchy. Below this I discovered the remains of a more ancient edifice, containing a few sculptures which had been brought from the centre palace, belonging to the time of Tiglath-pileser, or Shalmaneser, with a stone tablet or stele representing thereon the king of the time, supposed to be the grandson of Esarhaddon; and also two detached statues dedicated to the god Nebo, all of which are now in the British Museum.

27. Last year I discovered, not far from the north-west palace at Nimroud, a temple built by the same founder, but the destroying enemy had managed to make so thorough a wreck of the whole structure that there was no trace left of the actual walls; and even the beautiful, enamelled tiles which must have adorned the ceiling were so broken and scattered about in different directions that, though more than a dozen large baskets were filled with the pieces found, I was not able to complete even a single one for the British Museum. The only objects that I found whole and standing in their original position were a marble altar and what seemed to me a vessel let in the floor of the room to receive the blood of the sacrifice. I also found marble seats for the ministering priests to sit on, or use for some other purpose. Besides these there were pieces of a very handsome tripod, round and square pillars of marble, and stone, with hundreds of inscribed bricks scattered all over the place, with about twelve marble platforms; some of them contain inscriptions which were so much damaged that no one has as yet been able to read them. These platforms I believe to have been dedicated to different gods for sacrificial purposes; and I trust when the Assyrian scholars manage to decipher the inscriptions some valuable acquisition may be added to history.

28. At the mound of Khorsabad, where excavations were carried on for the Louvre by the French Government, under the superintendence of MM. Botta and Place, the late French consuls at Mossul, a fine but a ruined palace was discovered, which is said to have been erected by Sargon, the father of Sennacherib.

29. At Koyunjik, which I consider to be the city of Nineveh, Sir Henry Layard discovered the grand palace of the last-named monarch, where it is supposed he was slain by his sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer. At the northern corner of the same mound I discovered, in 1854, another palace built by the

grandson of Sennacherib and son of Esarhaddon, whose name has been read by different Assyriologists as Assur-bani-pal.* This palace was also very much damaged, but from the nature of the bas-reliefs, which were found in good preservation, especially those comprising the lion-hunt room, Assyrian art seems to have very much improved in that period, for any one who takes the trouble to visit the basement Assyrian room in the British Museum cannot but help admiring the spirit in which the different animals used for the chase are delineated; and whether one looks at the lions charging, or suffering from the wounds inflicted, or lying dead, hounds chasing the wild ass and deer, and others being held by a leash, he sees the true spirit of art therein depicted.† In this very palace were discovered the Creation and Deluge records, with thousands of other inscribed terra-cottas, which have thrown lustre on the obscure ancient history, and brought to light a number of Hebrew, Assyrian, and other Gentile kings whose names had been missing. Amongst the latter I discovered a perfect decagon terra-cotta cylinder covered with nearly 1,300 lines of fine inscription, recording a history of about twenty years of the reign of Assur-bani-pal, or Sardanapalus, about 640 years before the Christian era, including an account of the utter subjection of Egypt, and his supremacy over Western Asia. On a former expedition I had discovered a duplicate copy of this cylinder, which was in a dilapidated state, and a good deal of it was missing; but this new find has enabled Mr. Pinches, of the British Museum, to refill the broken parts.

30. Formerly Assyrian researchers did not consider it worth the expense to clear out all the *débris* from the buried chamber, seeing that in those days the reading of the cuneiform characters had not attained to the existing knowledge, and so Sir Henry Layard and I tried, with the little money we had at our disposal, to procure for the British Museum as many records of the past as possible engraved on marble and stone. I do not mean to say that we threw away any inscription found, and that we had only valued sculptured antiquities; but as we had only a certain amount to spend, and so many months in which

* Assur-iddenna-pal and Assur-iddenna-palla, supposed to be Sardanapalus of the Greek and Roman legends. Hunting, it seems, was a great recreation of the Assyrian kings, because we find that at the north-west palace at Nimroud, Assur-nazir-pal, the father of Shalmaneser, is represented on the sculptures engaged in the lion and bull hunt.

† On viewing the sculptures of the lion hunt in this chamber it reminds one of the inspired words of Nahum in the 11th verse of the second chapter where it is said, "Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?"

to accomplish our missions, we could spare neither money nor time in clearing out all the rubbish from the different chambers which we discovered, and so we could only dig about 5 ft. or 6 ft. in front of the walls, whether sculpture or otherwise, so as to allow space for the workmen to pass each other unhindered. Since then there has been so much interest evinced in this branch of archæological research, especially since the Creation and the Deluge tablets were deciphered, the Trustees of the British Museum have been most anxious to obtain an additional supply to the already existing collection, particularly in completing the tablets which are considered most interesting to Biblical study. On this account I was sent to Mesopotamia again by the British Museum authorities in 1877; and though my first attention was directed towards the above object, nevertheless I could not content myself with that stale occupation of merely examining the already-discovered palaces, but I endeavoured to try other new localities, where my efforts proved successful. Now we do not only clear out all the chambers of the *débris*, but actually break down every wall, in search for records, because it happened that both in the palace of Sennacherib and that of Assur-bani-pal we found cylinders buried in the solid brick walls, which were placed there evidently by the king's command, to preserve them from destruction in case of fire.

31. The first time I began to consider it necessary to examine all the walls of the Assyrian chambers, was, when I discovered, by a mere accident, one of the afore-mentioned cylinders recording the annals of Sardanapalus buried in a solid wall about ten feet from the lion-hunt room of the same king, which I discovered no less than twenty-five years before. I was that day going to Nimroud to look after my other excavations there, but before I proceeded thither I went to see how the work was progressing at Koyunjik and also to give directions for future proceedings. When I was leaving, the overseer superintending the work at that mound asked me whether he was to cover a remnant of a broken wall with the *débris* they were clearing out or have it removed first. I told him, most fortunately, that as we were clearing every part of the palace he might just as well pull down that remnant of a wall too, and it appeared that I had not gone away two hours before we were rewarded by the discovery of this valuable relic.

32. The Kings of Assyria, it seems, had a wise plan of building within the bottom part of the solid walls of a palace the official record of their reign; and, generally speaking, they

had a number of copies made of the same history, and buried the objects on which they were written in different parts of the building, in order that if the palace were burnt down the Royal records would be preserved. Had this cylinder and many others not been thus secured they would doubtless have met with the same fate as others whose pieces are found scattered all over the different palaces and also in the fields. These historical cylinders are of different sizes and shapes; some are divided into six, eight, or ten sides or panels, and some are oblong, but the one I found in the palace of Sardanapalus was the largest that has yet been discovered. Other records, such as astronomical observations, invocations or hymns, legends, contracts, and official deeds, were impressed on different sized terra-cotta tablets the same as the Creation and Deluge ones. The arrowheads, or characters, must have been impressed by a small wedge tool before the terra-cotta objects were baked, and the characters are so beautifully and exactly formed that one would think that the whole was done by one stroke of a stamp. It must be very pleasing to the Christian as well as the student to find that both sacred and profane histories have been very much verified by the discovery of these records on terra-cotta and other Assyrian writings. We read in Ezekiel, who prophesied on the river Chebar (Khaboor), that he was commanded to take a tile and lay it before him and pourtray upon it the city, even Jerusalem; and we are also told that Calisthenes was informed by the Chaldean priests that they kept their astronomical observations on bricks baked in the furnace.

33. I had a great difficulty in digging out these historical relics, because, before I could penetrate to the bottom of the chambers where these objects were found, I had sometimes to dig through 30 or 40 feet of *débris*, which had accumulated since the destruction of the buildings by modern occupiers of the mound and different explorers. Since I undertook the last two expeditions I worked on systematically, by either throwing away the rubbish far away from the site I intended to excavate, or having a few chambers cleared out altogether without even leaving a wall, and then worked round the heap in the centre. By this method there is no fear now of wasting our time or money, or losing any relic which might have been missed in the removal of the rubbish from place to place as was done formerly.

34. The excavations at Nimroud, generally speaking, are not very deep, as they are at Koyunjik; because in some places at the former mound we had only to dig 1 ft. or 2 ft. and

come upon the top of the buildings, while at the latter place we were obliged sometimes to excavate down 20 feet ere we could come upon any sign of ancient remains. In one case, where I discovered the Assur-nazir-pal's obelisk, which is now in the British Museum, I had to penetrate into the ground 35 feet before I came upon Assyrian remains. The discovery of this obelisk and the large Sardanapalus cylinder makes me very often wonder how an explorer might miss a most valuable record of the past by merely digging a foot or even a few inches from either side of it; and this fact leads me to hope that before England abandons the researches in Assyria and Babylonia altogether, where she has been so marvellously successful in her explorations, she will have the mounds of Koyunjik and Nimroud laid bare, that is to say, have them thoroughly examined, by beginning at one end and finishing at the other. I feel confident that if the work were continued for the next hundred years, in the same style in which we have been carrying it on for the last thirty-five years, still, at the end, we might, perhaps, miss a relic which would be most invaluable to both religious and scientific research.

35. The discovery of the bronze gates at the mound of Balawat, about nine miles from Nimroud, which has created so much interest in England and elsewhere, is a proof of what I have said. This mound has been used as a cemetery from time immemorial by the Mohammedans, and most likely by the Sassanians before them; and I do not believe there is a space of 2 feet in all the mound where a grave had not been dug to the depth of 5 or 6 feet; and yet for all this long period no one happened to hit upon that monument, as it was buried between 5 and 16 feet below the surface of the ground. Most fortunately, the upper part of it was only 5 feet below the surface, and thus the pickaxe of the grave-digger, after the lapse of more than 2,500 years, came in contact with the metal of this rare object which stopped his progress, and he, thinking it to be the pioneer of endless treasure, had no scruple then to think more of the living than of the dead. He took out what he could of the bronze for sale, and made it appear to the mourners that that was unhallowed ground for a true believer to be buried in. Of the pieces which were dug out, two were sent to me to England as a present, and this led me to search for the rest when I went out to Assyria two years ago. It is most astonishing that with so many explorers and eminent *savants* who must have often passed that mound, no one thought of digging in it until by a mere accident of opening a grave I was led to have it explored, and brought to

light the illustrated history of the conquests of Shalmaneser. There are, however, two good reasons why the mound of Bala-wat was left untouched by us for so long a time when we never lost an opportunity of trying every good-sized artificial mound that we saw or heard of. The first was its insignificance, for it could scarcely be seen from any great distance, quite unlike the huge mounds of Koyunjik, Khorsabad, and Nimroud; the second, that the sight of so many graves on the top of it would naturally debar any attempt being made to disturb it without feeling sure that it contained Assyrian remains. Had the gravedigger not hit upon this object in 1875, it is quite certain that these gates, which are now in the British Museum, would have been at this time lying buried under the graveyard of the Shabbak Koords.

36. These bronzes appear to have covered a two-leaf cedar gate about 20 feet square by 4 inches thick; and as the wood has quite rotted away, we could only find out its thickness from the bend of the nails that were found fixed to it. The scrolls or sheets of bronzes I found did not cover the whole wooden frame, but between each of the scrolls there must have been some ornamental woodwork or some precious metal of which the monument was stripped when the Assyrian monarchy began to decay. The illustrations on this monument, which are of bas-reliefs in repoussé work, are minute in detail and elegant in style, and represent the battle-scenes, marching order, and religious ceremonies of the Assyrians. Each plate is divided into two tiers, and surrounded by a large number of rosettes, which answered two purposes, of ornamenting and encircling the top of the nails that fastened the metal to the wood. This trophy is so much corroded and broken that a good deal of labour has been spent on it to have it renovated and put together; but it is hoped that under the good management of Mr. Ready, of the British Museum, the most accomplished restorer of such damaged monuments, the public will ere long be able to see it and examine the variety of subjects depicted thereon. It affords many representations which had not appeared before in Assyrian bas-reliefs, and the most curious are the pontoons thrown across a river, the mode of the Assyrian worship, and the way they performed their sacrifices.

37. It seems from the different representations on the bronzes, that the Assyrian kings acted on some occasions as high-priests, and their sacrifices were chosen from the kine and sheep, and the mode of killing the animal was by stabbing him with a dagger through the heart. There is one scene, differently understood by two Assyrian scholars, as either at Nahr-el-Kelb,

near Beyrout, or at Lake Van, where the Assyrian priests are represented as offering a bullock and a ram as a peace-offering in front of a tablet or stele of an Assyrian king hewn in the rock, and two attendants are in the act of throwing joints of meat into the sea, which may be an act of adoration or propitiation to the sea; but there are two monsters represented in the water in the act of devouring the flesh which is thrown to them; one looks like a hippopotamus, and the other an alligator, which fact throws doubt on the supposition that the water represented on the plate is either the Mediterranean Sea or Lake Van.

38. Within 15 feet of this gate I found another one, about half the size of the above; but this has been greatly damaged from corrosion, and I fear that with all the care Mr. Ready will, I am sure, lavish upon it, he will scarcely be able to restore half of it. From all that can be seen of the illustrations upon it, it seems that all the subjects represent hunting scenes and domestic amusements; and instead of the plates being divided into two rows of figures, as they are on the large gate, they only consist of one, but the designs are larger.

39. At Balawat I also found a temple dedicated by Assurnazir-pal, the builder of the north-west palace at Nimroud, to the goddess of war, wherein I discovered a marble coffer, with two tablets of the same material therein enclosed, covered with inscription. They begin with the pedigree of that king, and relate his conquests. Then they give an account of the erection of gates of cedar-wood overlaid with copper to adorn the temple. At the end of these tablets there is a curious invocation made to Istar, the goddess of war and battle, against those who would see them and desecrate them by removing them from their place; and as I was the guilty party, I fear that I have fallen under their condemnation!*

40. The religion of the Assyrians and Babylonians has always been a great mystery to me, and unless some further discoveries are made in connection with Assyrian and Babylonian history which might throw more light upon the subject, we have to trust to mere theories founded on doubtful authori-

* The literal translation of this quaint orison, according to Mr. Ernest Budge's rendering, is as follows:—"Whoever (this) tablet shall see and sins many shall speak, O goddess Istar, lady of war and battle, his weapons then thou breakest, his throne then takes from him. Whoever (this) tablet shall see and (?) remove, altars shall cleanse, a victim shall sacrifice, to its place shall restore (it), Assur the lord great, his prayers shall hear, in the battle of the kings, (in) place of meeting (approaching), the thought of his heart (courage) he shall cause to find (it)?"

ties. I believe that the Assyrians and Chaldeans and all the children of Shem believed in the existence of one over-ruling power, but acknowledged him by different attributes, and at intervals neglected the worship of the Creator for the love of the creature. Let us take the family of Abraham as an example, and see how, with the exception of the Patriarch himself, who "believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," not forgetting Lot, they all possessed idols which they no doubt worshipped and adored. Firstly, we find, when Abraham sent Eliezar his steward to Mesopotamia, to the family of Nahor, to take from them a wife unto his son Isaac, both Laban and Bethuel his father, the nephew of the Patriarch, avowed the existence of Jehovah; but we find afterwards, when Jacob went to that family on the same errand for his own espousals, the belief in the true God was mixed up with idolatry. In one place Rachel calls upon the name of the Lord, and in another we find her setting her heart on her father's idols and taking them to herself. It must also be believed that if the Ninevites had not really acknowledged the omnipotence and over-ruling power of God, the prophet Jonah would not have been sent to call them to repentance.* Secondly, let us notice the striking constant rebellion of the Israelites, how they from time to time forgot the divine truth, and imitated their heathen neighbours in the worship of false gods, and in the very presence of the Almighty, so to speak, provoked Aaron to make them gods; and from time to time afterwards they forsook the true worship of Jehovah and adored the images of the heathen, and actually "sacrificed their children to idols, and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before them." We also know that until the birth of the twelve Patriarchs, the Holy Land was only promised to the children born of Chaldean mothers; and both Abraham and Isaac particularly prohibited their children from taking unto themselves wives from the land of promise, whose people had been cursed through Canaan; but they were to marry from the family of Nahor, who was blest through his forefather Shem. How truly and literally that wonderful prophecy of Noah has been verified through the offspring of his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth! Have not the Canaanites lived under the curse, and suffered utter annihilation for their awful vices and wickedness, fulfilling the prophetic

* It is an extraordinary fact that the Assyrians or Chaldean Christians up to the present day commemorate the repentance or "supplication of the Ninevites" by fasting and prayer for three days every year.

denunciation of Noah, who said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren"?

41. Then it was said: "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem," by which we understand that Noah blessed God in the seed promised to Abraham, on whom was bestowed the inheritance of both the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem, as it has been fulfilled in the possession of the former by the Israelites, and the free entrance into the latter through the blood of his descendant the Saviour of the world.

42. Of Japheth it was decreed that God would enlarge him, that is to say, make him great both in possession and power, and that he would "dwell in the tents of Shem." There is no prophecy in the Bible, to my mind, which has been more forcibly, and so truly and wonderfully fulfilled as this; and I only wonder that anyone reading these passages and comparing them with what has been taking place for the last 2,500 years, after a lapse of forty-three centuries, could ever doubt the inspiration of the Pentateuch; but the fickle and carnal mind of man would rather believe an imaginative argument of a fellow man than trust to mere sacred truths. The descendants of Japheth, represented by the Romans, Greeks, Medes, and Tartars, have been holding under their sway not only the Holy Land, but all the country which was formerly governed by different descendants of Shem, namely the Assyrians, the Arameans, the Chaldeans, and the Arabians; and even now, when the Turk is reviled and detested, not only in Europe but in Asia, he occupies the dwellings of Shem, and to reform or dispossess him of this sway requires more than the human brains of the greatest statesmen in Christendom can accomplish.

43. I must now say a few words about the structure of the Assyrian buildings, and how I believe the *débris* accumulated over them. I have often been asked by different people about this, and even after I tried to explain to them my theory I did not feel quite satisfied at the end with the opinion I had formed on the subject. The general idea is that the Assyrian palaces consisted of one story high without any basement; but, from my personal observations of the different erections, I believe that most of the Royal edifices consisted of at least two stories. Even if we allowed the brick walls above the sculptures to have been 10 or 15 feet high and 5 or 6 feet thick, there would not be material enough to fill in the space between the walls of the large saloons and halls, especially the open courtyards, which are sometimes from 100 to 150 feet square, and when we consider that in some instances we found the earth that covered the ruins was about 10 feet above them, it is more

than probable that there were other buildings on the top of the one which was found buried below them.* The late M. Place, who excavated at Khorsabad for the French Museum, was of the same opinion, and in the interesting work he published he explains his theory by elegant plans and drawings.

44. It is believed, on the authority of Greek and other historians, that when the last Assyrian king, supposed to be Saracus, was besieged at Nineveh by Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, he shut himself in one of his palaces, which he set on fire and perished therein with all his family about 625 B.C.,† so when the lower or ground story was burnt down the upper one fell into it, and since then rain and sand-storms and future occupiers of the place made the mound look as if it had been a natural hill. The nature of the rubbish and walls led me to this conjecture, and thus I believe that most of the Assyrian palaces were two stories high. The first story or ground floor was panelled with plain or sculptured slabs, engraved after they were built in, with walls to support them of sun-dried bricks varying from 4 to 5 feet in thickness. The second story must have been built entirely of sun-dried bricks plastered or painted over with hunting scenes or martial representations. It may be urged that the lower story could not have been supplied with daylight when there was another story above it; my answer to this objection is, that the outer rooms or halls might have been lighted through apertures or windows in the outer walls, and that the inner rooms, like those in which Sennacherib deposited his library, had no separate light, but were merely supplied by the reflection from the outer rooms, or it might have been that those rooms had no other building above them, and they were lighted by means of skylights. However, be it as it may, I feel confident that it was quite impossible that the whole of the Assyrian palaces could have been filled up to such an extent from the mere falling in of the upper part of the walls and the roofing.‡

* It is impossible to look at the rubbish heaped over the palaces of Assyria without calling to mind the words of the prophet Nahum, "And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock."

† It is also related that the conqueror completed the utter destruction of that magnificent Assyrian capital by levelling the great walls and delivering the whole city to the flames. This destruction by fire has also been prophesied by Nahum and wonderfully fulfilled. He says in ch. iii. 15, "there shall the fire devour thee." In which of the palaces Saracus destroyed himself it is impossible to tell, but most probably he took refuge in Sennacherib's palace at Koyunjik, as it must have been the most impregnable of all.

‡ Herodotus, in his account of Babylon, mentions that the houses in that city were built three or four stories high.

45. It may be that after the destruction of the Nineveh palaces other occupiers of less refined tastes levelled the hateful sites and erected their dwellings on them, and thus the brick buildings accumulated from time to time on the top and made the Royal residences look like a mass of rubbish. This is shown by the Sassanian and Arab ruins which were found in the palace of Assur-bani-pal and Kala-Shergat. Indeed, at the former place, it is shown that other people who occupied that site made some show of modern architecture by using stone and plaster with pillars to adorn the exterior part of the building. Unfortunately these superstructures have also been so much destroyed that I could not trace the general plan of the building, because undoubtedly both the people of Nebbi Younis and Mossul had been digging for stone and marble from time immemorial for their own purposes, and nothing but the depths of the Assyrian structures saved them from utter demolition. I believe that more than one-half of Assur-beni-pal's palace was destroyed by the Sassanians in digging for stone, as they were too indolent to obtain it from the stone and marble quarries which are abundant around Koyunjik and Mossul.

46. It is quite marvellous how the different prophecies have been truly fulfilled with regard to the destruction of the great Biblical kingdoms, and I cannot but feel surprised and pained at the scepticism of the day, and wonder what greater proof can be looked for than to follow the prophets in their different denunciations against the ungodly, and see how literally every inspired word has come to pass even on the disobedient people of God. The time of reconciliation has not yet come, and when God through His mercy vouchsafes His forgiveness that once-blessed land will again "flow with milk and honey."

47. The site of the city of Nineveh has never been forgotten in the country, because both tradition and historical records point out Koyunjik and Nebbi Younis as the spots where the capital of the old world stood. Nebbi Younis (which means in Arabic "Prophet Jonah,") is the mound within half a mile of Koyunjik, contains a mosque dedicated to that prophet in which is shown the shrine of Jonah. It was formerly a Chaldean church, but like many other old churches in Asiatic Turkey they were preferred by the indolent Mohammedan conquerors to convert into mosques rather than to go to the expense of building new ones. Though this mound is generally called Nebbi Younis, after the prophet Jonah, officially it is still called "*Nineweh*," and this I learnt when I wanted to make some excavations there, and had to enter into an agreement

with the guardians of the mosque to allow me to do so, as all the land belongs to it. They merely mentioned the word "Nineweh" in the document, and when I asked them for the reason of omitting the common name of "Nebbi Younis," they said that that was the only legal name they could use.

48. I had great difficulty in digging in that mound, as it is reckoned a sacred place by all Mohammedans; but as the guardians of the mosque were my personal friends, and possessed immense influence amongst all classes of the community, they assisted me in managing the affair legally and satisfactorily against the religious prejudices and fanaticism of the lower classes. The great difficulty which had always been experienced formerly in trying to dig in that mound was in persuading the landlords to let us buy their dwellings, because all the mound is either covered with tombs or private houses, and those who were disposed to sell were afraid either of the inhabitants of the mound, or were prevented from doing so by religious scruples. However, I succeeded, not without much trouble and opposition from the local authorities, in opening a few trenches in different parts of the mound; but as the time of my return to England was drawing nigh, I was unable to make extensive excavations. I hope if I return again to that country to be able to examine that part of Nineveh more satisfactorily.

49. The Ottoman authorities explored some years ago one part of the mound, not far from the mosque, but as they do not generally carry on their work systematically and energetically they were not rewarded with any particularly good results. I myself merely found some inscriptions, and a terra-cotta tablet, unfortunately very much broken, on which is portrayed in relief an Assyrian monarch, either Sardanapalus or Esarhaddon, his father, in close combat with a lion. The attitude of both the king and the lion is so beautifully sketched out, and their limbs and muscles are so spiritedly marked, that it gives one pleasure to spend a few minutes upon examining the clay relic.

50. The mound of Nebbi Younis is supposed to have been inhabited by three kings, namely, Pul, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon; but from the annals of the latter king we learn he had built a palace "such as the kings, his fathers who went before him, had never made," and which he called "the palace of the pleasures of all the year." According to this statement, the climate of that country must have been quite different from what it is now, because the heat of summer at the present day is so intense that no one in his senses can

spend at that spot the summer months with any feeling of pleasure, especially as there are very pleasant and delightful nooks within thirty or forty miles of Nineveh, where the kings of Assyria might have had an enjoyable retreat in the verdant valleys of the Assyrian mountains.

51. It may not be out of place here to mention what Moslem authors and their prophet Mahommed say regarding the mission of Jonah to Nineveh. In the 37th chapter of the Koran it is written: "Jonas was also one of those who were sent by Us.* When he fled into the loaded ship, and those who were on board cast lots among themselves and he was condemned; and the fish swallowed him, for he was worthy of reprehension, and if he had not been one of those who praise God, verily he had remained in the belly thereof until the day of resurrection; and we cast him on the naked shore, and he was sick; and we caused a plant of gourd to grow over him; and we sent him to an hundred thousand persons, or they were a greater number; and they believed, wherefore we granted them to enjoy this life for a season." It is not surprising that such a mistake is made here as to the number of persons Nineveh contained, and the growing of the gourd before the divine proclamation, when we find even Josephus, who ought to have known his Hebrew Bible better, made such a blunder in his history of the Jews when he mentions that the whale which swallowed Jonah vomited him out on the shore of the Euxine or Black Sea; and also that when he went to Nineveh "he preached that in a very little time they should lose the dominion of Asia."

52. Al-Baidhawee, an Arab historian, narrates the following story concerning the preaching of Jonah. With regard to the Ninevites, he says: "This people having corrupted themselves with idolatry, Jonas, the son of Mattai (or Amittai, which the Mahommedans suppose to be the name of his mother), an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin, was sent by God to preach to and reclaim them. When he first began to exhort them to repentance, instead of hearkening to him they used him very ill, so that he was obliged to leave the city, threatening them at his departure that they should be destroyed within three days, or, as others say, forty. But when the time drew near, and they saw the heavens overcast with a black colour which shot forth fire and filled the air with smoke, and hung directly over their city, they were in a terrible consternation, and

* The word "Us" is used here in the same sense as in Genesis, chap. i. ver. 28, "Let Us make man in *Our* image," as the Moslems acknowledge the Koran to be revealed.

getting into the fields with their families and cattle, they put on sackcloth, and humbled themselves before God, calling aloud for pardon, and sincerely repenting of their past wickedness. Wherefore God was pleased to forgive them, and the storm blew over."

53. The inhabitants of Assyria consist now of mixed races, Arabs, Turkomans, Koords, Yezeedees, Jews, and Christians called Chaldeans and Syrians. The last two-named denominations doubtless belong to one nationality, the Assyrian, and they were only distinguished by these two names when they separated consequent upon the theological dispute of the age, namely, Monophysites or Jacobites, and Nestorians. These were again subdivided into four divisions through the proselytism of Rome; those of the Chaldeans who embraced Popery kept to their original name, and those who did not consent to Nestorius' excommunication were nicknamed after him; but those who separated from the Jacobites adopted the name of Syrian Catholics, while those who adhered to the Monophysite heresy they called Jacobites.

54. It is out of place here to enter into the theological disputes of those times and the diversity of opinion existing as to the right of the present Chaldeans to that ancient name. Suffice it to say, that from the time of the Chaldean or Assyrian monarchy up to to-day the name has not been lost; especially as we find from ancient history and ecclesiastical records at Rome that such people as Chaldean Christians did exist before a part of the community joined the Roman Church. It may be asked, what has become of the great Chaldean or Assyrian nation, which must have numbered at the time when Assyria was at its zenith at least 20,000,000? This can easily be answered by the fact that according to the existing rules in the Ottoman Dominions, handed down from father to son from time immemorial, when a person of any nationality embraces the faith of another denomination or creed he becomes *ipso facto* a member of that nationality. For instance, if a Christian, Jew, or Yezeedee, becomes a Mohammedan, he would at once be reckoned of the same nationality to which he joined himself, whether Turk, Arab, or Koord, and those who have seceded from their sects would feel so ashamed of having been unbelievers that they very seldom mention the name of their "infidel" parents! Even amongst the Christians in the East, if a Greek or a Syrian joins the Armenian Church, or an Armenian or a Syrian joins the Greek Church, he at once will be considered as belonging to that sect, and thus when the Assyrians or Chaldeans were

converted to Christianity, as it is supposed in the time of the Apostles, they were called Nazarenes, by which name the Christians are styled even now by the Moslem inhabitants of Asiatic Turkey, but they themselves retain the name of their different nationalities, as the case may be, and use the language of their nationality in ecclesiastical matters. Now there is no person who can be properly called a Turk, an Arab, or a Koord who is not a Moslem; nor is there a Greek, Armenian, Syrian, or Chaldean, who is not a Christian. Since the conquest of the countries commonly called Turkey and Persia by the followers of Mohammed in the seventh century of the Christian era, no Christian, Jew, or Gentile, dared change his religion and embrace another save Islamism; it is therefore certain that all the existing non-Mohammedan population of Turkey have descended from Christian, Jew, or Yezedee parents since the promulgation of the dogma "there is no God but one, and Mohammed is his prophet."

55. The Yezedees, who are generally called devil-worshippers, are doubtless of Assyrian or Chaldean origin, and having mixed for so many centuries with Christians and Moslems, they have adopted certain ceremonies from both. There is no doubt they believe in the power of two deities, the good and the evil; the latter of which, who is inferior to the former, and whom we call Satan, they acknowledge to be now in disgrace, but at the end of time the good God would be reconciled to him, and give him unlimited power; and then, woe betide those who had abused him when he was restrained! Both in life and habit they resemble the Koords, and in their bravery and daring, even at the present day, when they consist of a small number, and dreadfully persecuted, they show they valour and spiritedness characteristic of the ancient Assyrians.

56. The rural Chaldean Christians, whether Roman Catholics or Nestorians, come under the same category of physical superiority over other nationalities; and it is a notable fact that what Xenophon reported nearly 2,300 years ago, when he marched with the 10,000 Greeks through the mountains of Assyria, can be repeated now with regard to the bravery of the Chaldeans, the timidity of the Armenians, and the treachery of the Koords, whom he found occupying the same country as they do now.

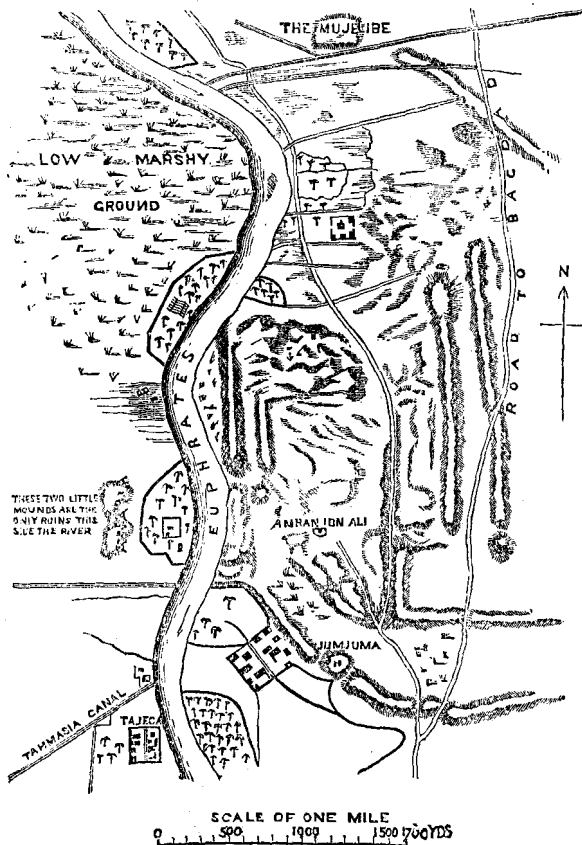
57. In my last two expeditions to Mesopotamia I had a great desire to make a few excavations at Babylon, but different causes prevented me from fulfilling my object until last February. I had been suffering from low fever the whole of the winter, and though I was not actually laid up I could not

go about much and superintend the different excavations in person as I wished. We had a most trying and unhealthy autumn and winter for want of rain, and the whole country, embracing Assyria, Irack, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Northern Arabia, was parched up; and consequently the deaths from starvation of kine, sheep, and camels, were frightful. As I said before, the easiest way to go from Mossul to Baghdad is by raft down the river Tigris, and the voyage can be accomplished in three days if the river is high, as it is generally in the beginning of spring. But when I went down to Baghdad myself last February it took me five days to make the voyage, as there was very little rise then owing to the scarcity of rain and snow during last winter in the mountains of Assyria, Koordistan, and Armenia. I have heard since that in consequence of that great drought the waters of both the Euphrates and the Tigris diminished to such an extent that all water traffic ceased for a time, and the steamers from the Persian Gulf to Baghdad had to land their cargoes in some parts of the Tigris where the water was very shallow, and have them carried to other localities, where other steamers were waiting to receive the goods.

58. Kala Shergat, which is supposed to be the Resen mentioned in the tenth chapter of Genesis, stands on the same side of the Tigris as Mossul, and the distance between them is about sixty miles. As I wished to have some work carried on at Kala Shergat during my sojourn in Babylonia, I landed there and left an overseer with a few workmen to examine some parts which I marked out for them. Both the French and ourselves had dug there on different occasions, and the last time I excavated there was in 1853, when I discovered three inscribed terra-cotta cylinders, copies of each other, the oldest Assyrian record that has yet come to light, supposed to be about 1,200 years B.C. They give an account of the first five years of the reign of Tiglath-pileser I., who is said to have been the first to organize the country of Assyria and "established the troops of Assyria in authority," that is to say, the first monarch in the history of the world who organized a standing army. Since then I have found other interesting relics; but the mound is so large, and the ruins are in such utter confusion, as if the whole mound was turned topsy-turvy, that it would require unlimited funds and considerable labour to examine it thoroughly. There are no villages near Kala Shergat, but roving Arabs who are encamping round it, and of these I chose my workmen.

59. The only point we touched at after leaving Kala Sher-

gat was Tickreet, a dirty Arab town about halfway between the former place and Baghdad. After I had spent about three days at the latter place, and arranged everything for my expedition to Babylon, I started thitherward, and reached the site of that famous ancient city in about eighteen hours' ride, only resting one night on the journey. The first object that attracts the traveller's notice on approaching Babylon is a remarkably high mound at the extreme northern border of it, called erroneously by Rich, Imjaileba, but by the natives of the country "Babel." I, myself, believe this to be the site of "the hanging gardens," and in riding into Hillah through Babylon it is skirted on the western side.



THE RUINS OF BABYLON

60. I had in the first instance to go into the town of Hillah, where a respectable Hebrew merchant of Baghdad lent me his house to reside in during my sojourn there, in order that I might transact my business with the governor of the district with greater facility, especially as it is very central for a person who wishes to explore in different parts of Babylon. The governor was of Koordish extraction, and belonged to the old school of pashas. He had just had imported into his harem, from Constantinople, a Circassian slave-girl, to whom he was paying more attention than caring for state affairs; at least, this was the Arab rumour in the place, but I myself did not care whether he thought more of his honeymoon enjoyment or his official duties as long as my affairs were attended to, as I was very anxious to begin work. I had to send no less than three times to his residence to inform him of the object of my mission, and my desire to commence operations at once, as I was pressed for time. Once his attendants refused to take a message in, on the excuse that he was asleep, though it was about mid-day; then one day he pleaded indisposition, a very convenient excuse for a pasha to make when he does not wish to see a stranger; and at last, most fortunately for him, it began to rain, which of course obliged him to remain at home for fear of catching cold! But most luckily for me he was that day in good-humour, and told my agent, whom I had sent to communicate with him, that I might begin work as soon as I liked, and hoped that when I came in to Hillah again we should be able to meet and talk the matter over.

61. As soon as I received his Excellency's messages I started forthwith for Querich, an Arab village situated within a few yards of the ruins of "Imjaileeba," which is the site of the royal residence of the kings of Babylon, and I took my quarters in the chief's house. As soon as I had settled myself I made it known all over the village that I wanted labourers to work for me in different parts of Babylon; and as all had heard of my intention before I left Baghdad, and knew that I had been exploring in different parts of Assyria and Mesopotamia, and had dug in their ruins before, while I was with Sir Henry Layard, my application was immediately responded to. The only difficulty was the amount of wages they demanded, which I refused to agree to, but we soon came to terms by splitting the difference; nevertheless, after two or three days, when we got acquainted with each other, my scale of wages was accepted, and I was able after that to employ as many men as I liked for one-third less than what is generally paid in the country.

62. From time immemorial the Arabs of Hillah and its suburbs were in the habit of digging in Babylon for bricks for building purposes; and it is a known fact that Hillah, Sockashayokh, and other small towns and villages on both sides of the Euphrates, up and down the river, have been built from the materials that had been got out of the ruins of that once great city; and since the value of Babylonian antiquities became known, both Jewish and Armenian brokers of Baghdad began to bribe these Arab diggers to sell them any inscribed terra-cottas or other relics which might be found in the diggings. The labourers did this under the cover of their usual avocations, as it was contrary to law to dig for antiquities without a special order from the Porte.

63. The iniquity of carrying on this kind of smuggling cannot be too much condemned, because the Arab style of searching for antiquities is too rough to extricate fragile objects with care; and when they find them, in nine cases out of ten they break and lose a large part of them; but, worse than all, they try to make a good capital by breaking the inscribed objects and dividing them amongst the clandestine purchasers. For instance, if an Arab digger had promised the brokers to supply them with antiquities, he would not give each individual a share of what was discovered, but he would break sometimes a most valuable relic to divide amongst the different buyers, thinking that, by following this system, he would earn more money. I myself bought a valuable terra-cotta round cylinder for the British Museum when I was at Baghdad, the year before last, which had been found at Babylon and met with the same fate. The discoverer had tried to saw it in two pieces, and while doing so, the upper part broke into a number of fragments, some of which were lost. The saw that was used for that purpose must have been very rough indeed to gnaw off nearly half an inch of the inscription.

64. I have been obliged to enter into this detail to show you the great opposition I was met with on arriving at Babylon, because, naturally, my movements were watched with great jealousy by both the Arab brick-diggers and those who were bribing them to dig for antiquities. I found that I had no power to prevent them excavating where I wanted to dig myself, as it was known that the practice of digging for bricks had been allowed ever since Babylon was destroyed, and neither I nor the authorities had any power to stop such work; and to allow the Arabs to do so would curtail my operations and cause our work no end of mischief. In the first instance I managed to engage one of the brick con-

tractors to enter my service, and prevailed upon him to let his men work for me, promising him that they should have all the plain bricks they found in the diggings but all other antiquities must be made over to me. I then sent for the rest of the brick-diggers and spoke to them as to the advisability of working for me and preventing any complications occurring by digging separately themselves. I told them that I was willing to employ them, and allow them to take all the bricks that they wanted without incurring any expense themselves. This offer put them in a fix, as they found they had no excuse then to say that I was preventing them from pursuing the avocation they were brought up in. The result was that they all, without a dissentient voice, agreed to my proposal, and forthwith they went to work for me, and they have continued to do so cheerfully and faithfully ever since.

65. I learned afterwards that the poor Arabs received very little for the antiquities they sold to the Jewish and Armenian brokers. I found that what a broker asked £5 or £10 for—an inscribed terra-cotta—he had only paid the poor Arab discoverer one or two shillings. An inscribed marble slab, which was said to have been found at Kala Shergat, which a native of Mossul sold to a French consul for four shillings the late Mr. George Smith had purchased for seventy pounds.

66. The present visible ruins of Babylon consist of a section called “Babel,” as already mentioned; Imjaileeba, (the site of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar), Omran, and Jimjima. The two last-mentioned localities look as if they had been occupied by the royal retinue and household. With the exception of Birs Nimroud there is nothing on the Syrian side of the Euphrates, beyond a faint tracing of some walls, to show the extent of the western limit of Babylon.

67. If anyone wants to be convinced how literally and truthfully the different prophecies about the utter destruction of Babylon have been fulfilled, he has only to visit that country and see with his own eyes the complete desolation of what was once upon a time called in Holy Writ “the glory of kingdoms.” Indeed the destruction of that city was so complete that one wonders whether the accounts given of its greatness and magnificence by different Greek and other historians were not rather exaggerated; but the words of God cannot fall to the ground, as one of the great prophets* did predict that “the beauty of the Chaldee’s excellency shall be

* Isaiah xiii. 19.

as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah," and again it is said,* "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods He has broken into the ground."

68. Nothing can be seen now of that famous city but heaps of rubbish in which are mingled, in utter confusion, broken bricks, pottery, and remnants of enamelled tiles of different colours and designs. These latter, which are only found at the kasir, or palace, are mentioned both in sacred and profane writings. Ezekiel alludes to them in the 14th and 15th verses of the 23rd chapter, and Diodorus the Grecian historian, says concerning them, "that the walls and towers of the palace were covered with tiles of different colours representing hunting scenes, wherein were shown different kinds of wild beasts with Semiramis on horseback brandishing a spear, and near her, Ninus in the act of killing a lion."

69. At the mound of "Babel" I followed the excavations of the Arabs who were digging for bricks and stone, and uncovered four exquisitely-built wells of red stone placed parallel, and within a few feet of each other, in the northern centre of the mound. They are so beautifully and scientifically built that it vexes one to see the Arabs breaking them for the sake of making lime of the stone obtained therefrom. Each well is built of circular pieces of stone, which must have been brought from a great distance. Each stone, about 3 feet in height, had been bored and made to fit the one below it so exactly, that one would imagine that the whole well was hewn in one solid rock. These wells are connected with a subterraneous arched vault communicating with an aqueduct supplied with water from the Euphrates; and even now, when the river is high, the water is seen to ooze out through the *débris* in the watercourse. These wells, which were about 140 feet high, must have supplied the Hanging Gardens with water, as they doubtless stood higher than any other building in the city.

70. I found it would be only waste of money and labour to excavate at Imjaaleeba, or kasir, because from the deep ditches existing, and the nature of the rubbish which had been thrown up, I was convinced that there could be no ancient remains of any value left there, so I contented myself by having a trial at its centre for a week, and abandoned it for other localities not far distant which had not been so much turned up. These were the other ruins of the city called Omran and Jimjima, and in both these spots I was amply

* Isaiah xxi. 9.

rewarded for my labours in Babylon. Here were discovered what are called the contract tablets, and as the bulk of the inscribed terra-cottas were found of unbaked clay, my idea is that both the royal mint and banking establishments of Babylon were established at Omran and Jimjima.

71. The drawback experienced formerly in digging for antiquities at Babylon was the haphazard way of going about it, as the Arabs had made such a mess of the ground that it would puzzle the most experienced eye to know where to begin and where to end. However, nothing daunted, I persevered, and after a week's trial we came upon signs of standing walls which surprised the Arabs not a little; and since then, I am happy to say, our workmen have been finding, almost daily, relics of the past. Nothing of any great magnitude, I am sorry to say, has been found in the ruins of Babylon which would interest the general public to look at like the sculptures obtained from Nineveh; but for all that, what we are discovering is of the utmost value to Assyrian scholars and those interested in ancient history, especially with that part connected with the Holy Bible. In these ruins I discovered a terra-cotta cylinder, which has been deciphered by Sir Henry Rawlinson, and found to be the official record of the taking of Babylon by Cyrus while Belshazzar was revelling with "a thousand of his lords," and using at his impious banquet the golden and silver vessels which were taken by his father, Nebuchadnezzar, from the Temple at Jerusalem. The name of Belshazzar does not appear on this cylinder, because, most unfortunately, a part of it is broken and missing.

72. There is no doubt that the city of Babylon was built on the eastern bank of the Euphrates (like the city of London being on the left side of the Thames) with the greater part of the Chaldean metropolis stretching about ten miles on both sides of the "great river."

73. Both at Babylon and Nineveh all the traces of the external walls mentioned by ancient historians have disappeared, as it was prophetically foretold by Jeremiah,* but I think the separate divisions mentioned by Herodotus, with regard to the former metropolis, can be slightly traced; one on the left side of the Euphrates and the other on the right, which takes in Birs Nimroud. It is quite impossible now to trace with any degree of accuracy the inner square on the western side of the Euphrates, but traces are yet visible of the square on the opposite side.

* Jeremiah li. 58.

74. There is one fact connected with the destruction of Babylon and the marvellous fulfilment of prophecy which struck me more than anything else, which fact seems never to have been noticed by any traveller; and that is, the non-existence in the several modern buildings in the neighbourhood of Babylon of any sign of stone which had been dug up from its ancient ruins, because it seems that in digging for old materials the Arabs only used the bricks for building purposes, but always burnt the stone thus discovered for lime, which fact wonderfully fulfils the divine words of Jeremiah, namely, "And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner nor a stone for foundation, but thou shalt be destroyed for ever, saith the Lord."* In another place, the same prophet foretells her doom in the following majestic words, "How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken? How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations."† And although no less than three mighty conquerors endeavoured to restore its magnificence after its first destruction, yet they laboured in vain. The last of these, Alexander the Great, met with his death even before he could remove the rubbish from the Temple of Belus, where it is said he employed 10,000 men for the purpose.

75. At this mound, where Alexander the Great is said to have tried to rebuild the Temple of Belus, I made some excavations, which proved successful. As far as I remember, no one before me found any trace of ancient building in that locality, but I was fortunate enough to find, after one day's labour, remains of a hall connected with other chambers, wherein I found records of Nebuchadnezzar with broken pillars, capitals, and fragments of enamelled bricks, and part of a cedar beam, which are now in the British Museum. As it was not quite safe to carry on the excavations there without my personal superintendence, I was obliged, on leaving the country, to bring the work to a close in that place; but I left a few workmen with two trustworthy overseers to continue the research in Babylon proper. Since my return to this country, however, I deemed it advisable to recommend the resumption of the work at Birs Nimroud on a smaller scale, as we have a trustworthy Arab overseer who could superintend the operations there without much danger.

76. The ruins of the tower variously named Borsippa, Temple of Belus, Birs Nimroud, and tower of Babel, rising as it were a high mountain out of the sea, struck me with greater

* Jeremiah li. 26.

† Jeremiah l. 23.

astonishment than anything that I had seen of ancient devastations, and I could not but look with wonder upon the seeming supernatural vitrification of a large part of the still standing brick piles that can be seen for about twenty-five miles around. Different travellers attribute the cause of vitrification to either lightning, or extreme power of artificial heat; but it seemed to me on examining the different masses that neither the work of man nor the common electric fluid could have caused that extent of vitrification. These huge boulders are not large lumps of vitrified bricks, like those found in the brick-kilns, but actual masonry, which had been torn down from the top to the bottom. On consulting two scientific gentlemen in this country who understand the effect of lightning upon such massive structure, I was told that electric fluid could not cause such wholesale vitrification; but as the specimens I brought with me, which they examined, were only pieces which I had picked up from amongst the rubbish on the tower, they could not quite decide as to the agency which caused the extraordinary, and apparently abnormal change.

77. I tried when I was at the Birs to break off a large piece of the huge boulders to bring home with me for examination, but unfortunately I had no tools with me powerful enough to do as I wished; nevertheless, I hope that when I return to that country this year to be able to break a good-sized piece for the purpose of examination. Benjamin of Tudela, the Jewish traveller, in writing about Birs Nimroud, says that, "the heavenly fire which struck the tower split it to its very foundation;" and I do not know why we should not believe such a phenomenon, unless it is proved convincingly to the contrary.

78. Although different travellers have visited the place from time to time, and noticed the strange, and what would seem supernatural visitation, not one of them has come to any definite scientific conclusion as to the real agency which had produced the extraordinary fusion. At the end of this paper I shall quote the different notices given by different authors upon the subject, and will leave it to those interested in this matter to draw their own conclusions therefrom. I must say that, as far as I am concerned, after having read these various accounts, I did not feel a bit wiser, but thought might not the following words of Jeremiah be fulfilled:—"Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth, and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain."*

* Jeremiah li. 25.

79. After I had made arrangements for the continuation of the excavations in Babylon I returned to Baghdad for the purpose of visiting a new mound, called Tel-loh, on the Shat el-Hai, the river which runs in Southern Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates, about 150 miles to the south-east of Babylon, where I had heard there were some ancient remains discovered. I might have gone direct all the way by land from Hillah, but I was told that the journey would be very fatiguing and inconvenient for want of provisions and habitations on the way, whereas by going to Baghdad I could go all the way by water, partly by steamer and partly by native craft. Here I could excavate for only three days, because, firstly, I could not spare the time, as I lost no less than six days on the voyage; and, secondly, I found on arriving there that Tel-loh was not included in my firman, that district having a few years back been taken from the Baghdad pashalic and added to the vilayet of Basra, which had been constituted into an independent province. However, I managed during my short stay there to dig out some inscribed objects, which have proved to belong to a very early age, somewhere about 2,000 years B.C.

80. Some French travellers had visited the place a few years back and made a few excavations there; and to show what damage can be done to valuable antiquities by allowing private individuals to dig for their own personal benefit, I will relate what took place in reference to a very old black basalt statue in sitting posture, which was discovered there some years back. The Arab who first found it cut its head off and took it away to sell, and on account of some misfortune that befell him while it was in his possession, he broke it to pieces and threw it in the river; then a French traveller cut the hands off and sold them to the late Mr. George Smith for the British Museum; and afterwards the French Consul at Basra cut off the bust and carried it away with him; and when I was there I came upon the lower part, which was covered with inscription, and had I deemed it worth the expense I might have been the fourth spoiler of what the Arabs call, "Loh, the idol of the infidels." This mound is very large, but low, and in some places we had only to dig about 6 inches and found records of the past.

81. I then returned to Baghdad, and after having sent away to England the different antiquities found at Babylon, Birs Nimroud, and Tel-loh, and made some arrangements for continuing the explorations at the former place, I started for Kala Shergat and Mossul along the western border of the Tigris.

82. In both the mounds of Kala Shergat and Koyunjik where excavations were carried on during my absence, some small objects of antiquity had been found; and after having spent a month longer at Mossul in packing up the different relics discovered in Assyria to take with me to England, and arranged as to leaving about thirty men under the superintendence of my nephew to go on with the excavations at Koyunjik, I started on my homeward journey in the beginning of May through Northern Mesopotamia, leaving the mountain of Sinjar this time on my right.

83. I had intended on going direct west to the river Khaboor* to make some excavations in a number of mounds on its eastern and western banks which were reported to me to be of Assyrian origin. Although I saw an unaccountable number of mounds scattered on the right and left of my route I only cared about examining three or four of those which seemed to me worth digging at; but, unfortunately, I could not find any workmen to enable me to make the intended trial, as the late drought had driven all the Arabs, who usually encamped around these mounds, further north, for the sake of pasture for their cattle and food for themselves. Indeed, provisions were so scarce in the country that I was obliged to forego a visit which I had intended to make to the supposed site of Carchemish, and for two whole days our poor animals had to feed on a scanty supply.

84. At the foot of one of the mounds on the left side of the Khaboor I found the upper part of a black basalt tablet, or stele, of an Assyrian king, which had been broken and hurled down to the bottom by the Arabs when they were digging a grave. It was too large for me to move, and having no tools to thin it with, so that it might be carried on the back of a mule, I had it buried deep in the mound where I found it, trusting to future time when I could manage to have it thinned and moved to Aleppo or Mossul.

85. My homeward route lay this time through Telaafar the capital of Sinjar, called Balad Taban, on the left side of the Khaboor, and then along its bank until we came to a ford, which is called Shareeat-Ihlala, where we crossed and journeyed then on the right bank of the said river until we reached Ibsair† at the junction of the Khaboor with the Euphrates. We then went on to Dair, the largest town in those parts,

* This Khaboor or "Chebar" is supposed to be the river mentioned by Ezekiel, in ch. i. 1.

† This Ibsaira was supposed formerly to be the site of Carchemish.

where the governor of the district resides, and having crossed the Euphrates opposite the city and remained there two days for rest, we went on to Aleppo along the "great river" until we came to Maskana, whence we branched off for the above-mentioned city, which is only about forty-five miles from the Euphrates.

86. Maskana is a new station near the ancient city of Bales, where a military guard was established a few years ago by the Ottoman Government for keeping the Iniza Arabs in order, and for the convenience of passengers who came from Baghdad, Basra, or Hillah, by water so far up the Euphrates. The authorities have established one or two steamers to ply up and down the river as far as Maskana during the spring season, when the water is high enough to render the steam navigation safe, and of course any person who wishes to visit Aleppo from Southern Mesopotamia and dislikes roughing it could easily come up by this route without much fatigue.

87. In conclusion I must apologize for the length and, perhaps, not very entertaining account of my travels; and more especially I must crave your forgiveness for any unintended laudation of my exploits and what would seem very personal; but in relating certain undertakings and successes, a writer cannot help bringing self to the front and making his story look as if it had been drawn up for the purpose of boasting and vaunt. I must also beg the indulgence of the learned, both in theological and scientific matters, and particularly those who are acquainted with archaic research, if I have touched upon any subject which required more study than I have had time or ability to grapple.

WHAT DIFFERENT AUTHORS SAY CONCERNING BIRS NIMROUD OR TOWER OF BABEL.

"THE tower built by the dispersed generation is four miles from Hillah. It is constructed of bricks, called Al-ajur (the word still used by the Arabs for kiln-burnt bricks); the base measures two miles, the breadth 240 yards, and the height about one hundred canna. The heavenly fire which struck the tower split it to its very foundation."—*Benjamin of Tudela.*

"This tower-like ruin is pierced throughout with small square apertures, probably to preserve the fabric from the influence of damp. . . . In different parts are several immense brown and black masses of brickwork, more or less changed into vitrified state, looking at a distance like so many edifices torn up from their foundations. . . . Previous to examination I took them for masses of black rock. . . . They must have been exposed to the fiercest fire, or scathed by lightning."—*Mignan's Chaldaea.*

"The most curious of the fragments are several misshapen masses of brick-work, quite black. . . These have certainly been subjected to some fierce heat, as they are completely molten, a strong presumption that fire was used in the destruction of the tower, which in parts resembles what the Scriptures prophesied it should become—a *burnt mountain*. In the denunciations respecting Babylon, fire is particularly mentioned as an agent against it."—Keppel's *Personal Narrative*.

"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 lightning, and, as the ruin is almost rent 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."—Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*.

"It is more difficult to explain the cause of the vitrification of the upper building. My late talented friend, Captain Newbold, assistant-resident in the Deccan, originated an idea when we examined the Birs Nimroud in company, which is, I believe, now beginning to be adopted, that, in order to render their edifices more durable, the Babylonians submitted them, when erected, to the heat of a furnace. This will account for the remarkable condition of the brickwork on the summit of the Birs Nimroud, which has undoubtedly been subjected to the agency of fire. No wonder that the early explorers, carried away by their feelings of reverence, should have ascribed the vitrified and molten aspect of the ruins to the avenging fire of heaven, instead of to a more natural agency. It is worthy of notice that in several places where vitrified bricks occur in Babylonia, they are associated with a tradition that Nimrod there threw the patriarch Abraham into a furnace. There appears, therefore, to be some grounds for Captain Newbold's suggestion."—Loftus' *Chaldea and Susiana*.

"At the foot of this tower-like mass lie great boulders of vitrified brick-work, which were evidently fused by fire, from heaven or elsewhere, and hurled from the original summit of the building, which was no doubt 100 ft. or 150 ft. higher. The appearance of these masses of fused brickwork very naturally led Jews and Mussulmans to conclude that they had been blasted by lightning at the time of the confusion of tongues, which put a stop to the building of the Tower of Babel by the impious descendants of Noah."—Geary's *Through Asiatic Turkey*.

The CHAIRMAN.—We are all very much indebted to Mr. Rassam for his paper, which is so full of interest; and although he has been kind enough to exert his voice, and read between thirty-six and thirty-seven pages of printed matter, the length of a paper should be measured rather by the amount of interest it contains than by any other standard. (Hear, hear.) I may say that I have heard some papers read in places not a hundred miles from here that have been much shorter than this, but which have yet seemed unreasonably long. This paper, although it consists of nearly thirty-seven pages, has not appeared to me a long one, and I think I may say the same on behalf of the majority of those present. (Hear, hear.) There is one thing on which I cannot help remarking, and that is the admirable way in which

Mr. Rassam has drawn out the very point which we, the members of this Institute, desire to have drawn out, namely, the defence of Holy Scripture. (Cheers.) In his discoveries in Assyria and Babylon he has shown the fulfilment—the literal fulfilment—of prophecy. (Hear, hear.) That, I conceive, is a very great point. We all of us know how this argument is met by sceptics. They tell us that these prophecies of Jeremiah, Nahum, and others were all written after the event. For my part, I am not so credulous as to believe that any persons could have existed who could have forged the different prophecies that are given to us in the differing styles, say, of Jeremiah and Nahum, and make them so well suit the history, not only of Genesis, but also of Kings and Chronicles, and at the same time to fit in with the present state of things as truly as they do. (Hear, hear.) I confess it appears to me—not being a credulous person—to be a more reasonable plan to believe in prophecy, than to admit that such accomplished forgers could have existed as those who are believed to have concocted such extremely clever prophecies, so accurately corresponding with facts. (Hear, hear.) I think, therefore, that the argument which Mr. Rassam continually impressed on us throughout his interesting and valuable paper in regard to the fulfilment of prophecy is a very telling one. I have thought it right to trouble you with these few observations because I could not help speaking on a matter of so much interest to us all. (Hear, hear.) I hope now that Mr. Pinches will respond to the challenge Mr. Rassam has offered, but before he does so I should state that I have just had placed in my hands a letter from Dr. Porter, President of Queen's College, Belfast (who has often travelled over, explored, and examined almost every part of Palestine, and regions eastward),—Dr. Porter expresses his great regret that circumstances prevent his being present to-night, adding that the paper is one of high value, and calculated to be of much service.

Mr. T. G. PINCHES.—I think we cannot but express our obligations to Mr. Rassam for the interesting account he has given us of his travels. That, however, is a subject on which I, of course, cannot presume to speak; but there is one point upon which Mr. Rassam has touched in his paper to which I may briefly refer. He tells us that at the end of the tablets he found in the Temple at Balawat “there is a curious invocation made to Estar, the goddess of war and battle, against those who would see them and desecrate them by removing them from their place, and, as I was the guilty party, I fear that I have fallen under their condemnation.” I think that Mr. Rassam has misunderstood this inscription, because it is said that whoever “destroyed” the tablets should fall under the condemnation there mentioned; but Mr. Rassam, on the contrary, has not destroyed them, but has been the means of bringing them to light, and thus has incurred the thanks rather than the reprobation of the monarch who erected them. Therefore, I hope he will experience all the blessings which we are told await the fulfilment of the prophecy. I may say also that I do not think from these tablets that the copper gates mentioned thereon are those which Mr. Rassam

found,* and my reason for saying so is that the material is different. Mr. Rassam's gates are of bronze. It may have been that the terms "copper" and "bronze" were confused, but still there are two distinct terms used for these metals. There were four inscriptions discovered, I believe, at Khorsabad, and each of them was written on a different metal. Each of these tablets contained the name of the substance of which it was composed, written in Assyrian, so that the names of these metals are well determined. I do not think there can be a doubt that the gates mentioned in the inscriptions were of copper and not those found by Mr. Rassam, which are of bronze.† Mr. Rassam has not told you everything about these wonderful gates, which are even more wonderful than he has given you to understand. The number of representations to be found in each band of bronze is about half as many as will be found in the whole Nimroud Gallery of the British Museum. The height of the gates was at first estimated at about twenty-one feet, but I am inclined to think that the height was even more than that, namely about twenty-six feet, while the widths of each of the two gates was about six feet, making the total width about twelve feet. There was an edging containing in duplicate an inscription of Shalmaneser which is of very great interest. With regard to the point of which Mr. Rassam spoke when he alluded to the antiquities obtained from Tel-loh, I may state that they are of very great interest, consisting mostly of cones containing dedi-

* Mr. Rassam had added, parenthetically, in the course of his lecture, that he believed the gates mentioned on the tablets were those he had discovered in the mound of Balawat. (T. G. P.)

† Mr. Pinches suggests "there is yet another, and more conclusive reason why these cannot be the gates Mr. Rassam found, and it is this: that while the tablets were deposited in the temple of Balawat by Assur-nazir-pal, the gates Mr. Rassam found were set up by his son, Shalmaneser II."

Mr. Pinches also desires to add the following remarks upon two sections of the paper:—

§ 37. That either Lake Van or Lake Urmieh is intended there can be no doubt, for the inscription which accompanies the scene tells us that it is "the sea of the land of Nairi," a country which, from its being generally mentioned in connection with the land of Urardhu, the Ararat of the Bible, must have been north of Assyria. Indeed, Prof. Schrader remarks (*Keilinschriften und Geschichtsforschung*, p. 180) that Urardhu or Ararat appears to have been considered, in the olden times, as a part of the land of Nairi, and he identifies "the sea of the land of Nairi" with Lake Urmieh, Lake Van being generally called, in the inscriptions, "the upper sea of the land of Nairi." The supposed hippopotamus and crocodile in the water are thought to be the offsprings of the Assyrian bronze-chaser's own imagination, due, perhaps, to some legend or traveller's tale.

§ 49. The clay figure of a man killing a lion undoubtedly represents Assurbani-pal or Sardanapalus, and a comparison with the sculptures in the Assyrian Basement Room of the British Museum will show that it served, most likely, for the model for the Assyrian sculptor when he carved the slab numbered 107A, which shows the very same subject. They are true works of art, the clay original being, if anything, the better of the two.

catory inscriptions. These inscriptions were, for the most part, dedicated by the king, whose name is read Gudea, who reigned about 2,000 years before Christ. We are told also of another king whose name is read Líg-Bagus, and who reigned also somewhere about that period. About these kings very little, indeed, is known, and the inscriptions therefore are naturally of very great interest. The piety of the Babylonian monarchs appears to have been something wonderful. According to their own lights they were not the impious people they are generally supposed to have been by the ecclesiastical writers and most of the Biblical writers, and it should be remembered that there was a great amount of bigotry everywhere. That they were cruel is, however, very certain.

The CHAIRMAN.—Perhaps the Rev. Mr. Stern, who has recently joined the Institute, will kindly make a few remarks.

Mr. RASSAM.—Ladies and Gentlemen : Probably some of you do not know that the Rev. Mr. Stern was more than two years my companion in captivity in Abyssinia, twenty-two months of which we were in chains. He was prisoner two years before my time, when his right arm was chained to his feet, which bowed him to the ground. He also visited Mossul and Baghdad.

Rev. H. A. STERN (who was very cordially received).—I have been exceedingly pleased to listen to the interesting paper which my friend Mr. Rassam has just read. It has been my privilege to traverse almost the whole of the region Mr. Rassam has so graphically described, and I can bear testimony to the correctness of every one of his statements with regard to the country, its inhabitants, and the various difficulties the traveller has to encounter in visiting those interesting and ancient regions. I can also bear testimony as to the impression which the sight of the ruins of Babylon make upon the student of Scripture. Several times I have stood upon those ruined cities, castles, and temples which Mr. Rassam has described, and I can truly say, without the least exaggeration, that with the Bible in my hand, a kind of solemn awe has overwhelmed me as I have looked around. Whenever I gazed, whichever way I turned, mound after mound arose in regular succession, like the waves in a stormy ocean, each of these mounds containing the ruins of former greatness. I was particularly struck with the Tower of Belos, to which Mr. Rassam has referred. I do not know whether I am correct or not, but it occurred to me as I beheld that singular wall, which, shivered and torn, rises spectre-like from amidst the *débris* of buried greatness and vanished glory, how minutely the words of the prophet have been verified : “Her high gates shall be burned with fire.” Indeed, standing amidst these gigantic ruins, with the Bible in one’s hand, one realizes how remarkably have been fulfilled the denunciations of the prophet concerning the luxurious and sin-polluted Babylon. But I do not wish at this late hour to trespass on the indulgence of the audience ; I will, therefore, simply tender Mr. Rassam our best thanks for the interesting and instructive paper with which he has favoured us. (Cheers.)

Mr. RASSAM.—After what our respected President has stated with regard to

the fulfilment of prophecy, and what sceptics have said as to some accounts given in Scripture being forgeries, it might well be asked, how came the prophecies to be so wonderfully fulfilled? There are certain events which have taken place that no one can deny in the face of the facts I have given. In the first place, it is very extraordinary that there is certainly one-fourth of the account given by the ancient historians which is not believed in these days, and that whatever they have said cannot be corroborated except where it is affirmed by sacred history. In the second place, we know that geographers and historians, like Benjamin of Tudela and Josephus, have made great blunders, and if you take their books and go to the countries they have described, it will be found that a good deal of what they have told you is not correct. For instance, with regard to Jonah and the whale, we of course know the correctness of the prophecy concerning that event; but suppose I were an infidel, and did not believe in the Word of God, I could not but say that the Scriptural account of Jonah is correct, but the nonsensical allegation of Josephus, that the whale vomited Jonah on the shores of the Euxine, was inadmissible, seeing that that would more than double the distance to Nineveh. I say, therefore, that it would have been impossible for any forgers to have given these predictions to us, for they never could have come down later than the seventh century before Christ. How could any forgers, then, have told us that they knew that after 4,000 years the Turks would be governing the Biblical land; as it is well known that the Turks were Tartars who were formerly called Scythians, and admitted to be the descendants of Japhet? With regard to the destruction of different parts of Babylon and Nineveh, if I had had the opportunity of writing a longer paper I could have given proof upon proof; but supposing I were a Chinese, I could not help believing that those so-called forgeries had unmistakable veracity stamped upon them, and have been shown to be literally fulfilled. It is really wonderful! (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN.—Is there anyone present who can read the inscription on this cone (holding up a small cone that had been referred to by Mr. Rassam in his paper)? It would be very interesting to know to what it has reference. It is a sort of newspaper 4,000 years old.

Mr. PINCHES (to whom the cone was handed).—This is a cone from Tel-loh. It contains an inscription relating to the king known as Gudea, who calls himself Viceroy of Zirgulla. The name by which Tel-loh is still known among the Arabs is, I believe, Zerghul. The cone is dedicated to a god called Nintsu, and speaks of the rebuilding of his Temple at Zirgulla. But this cone is not written, nor are any of the inscriptions of the period to which it belongs, in the Semitic language, but in a language supposed to be allied to the Turkish. There is only one word on which to base any connection, and I do not myself think that it is allied to the Turkish, though some of the grammatical forms are a little bit alike. (Hear, hear.)

The meeting was then adjourned.