

Lowering the Ball

NINEVEH AND ITS REMAINS

A NARRATIVE
OF
AN EXPEDITION TO ASSYRIA

DURING THE YEARS 1845, 1846, & 1847

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Abridged by the Author from his Larger Work

WITH NUMEROUS WOODCUTS

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PREFACE
TO
THE PRESENT EDITION.

THIS NEW EDITION of the Abridgment of 'Nineveh and its Remains' has been carefully revised by the Author. Subsequent discoveries amongst the ruins of Nineveh, and the progress made in the interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions, have enabled him to add to the text, and have led him to modify some of the views which were expressed in his original work.

For the convenience of his readers he has added to the account of his visit to the Yezidis, or Devil-worshippers, originally published in 'Nineveh and its Remains,' the narrative of subsequent visits to that curious sect, contained in his work entitled 'Nineveh and Babylon.' He has thus brought together all the information which he has been able to collect concerning them.

October, 1867.

PREFACE
TO
THE FIRST EDITION.

THE INTEREST felt in the discoveries on the site of Nineveh having been so general, it was suggested to me that an abridgment of my work on 'Nineveh and its Remains,' published in a cheap and popular form, would be acceptable to the public. I had already commenced such an abridgment, when I was called away on a second expedition into Assyria, which left me no leisure for literary occupations.

On my return to England, I found that several inaccurate and incomplete accounts of my first researches had already been published. I determined, therefore, to complete without delay the abridged work, which is now presented to the public.

In this abridgment I have omitted the second part of the original work, introducing the principal Biblical and historical illustrations into the narrative, which has thus, I hope, been rendered more useful and complete.

As recent discoveries, and the contents of the inscriptions, as far as they have been satisfactorily decyphered, have confirmed nearly all the opinions expressed in the original work, no changes on any material points have been introduced into

this abridgment. I am still inclined to believe that all the ruins explored represent the site of ancient Nineveh, and whilst still assigning the later monuments to the kings mentioned in Scripture, Shalmanezzer, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, I am convinced that a considerable period elapsed between their foundation and the erection of the older palaces of Nimroud. The results of the attempts to decypher the inscriptions are still too uncertain to authorise the use of any actual names for the earlier kings mentioned in them.

September, 1851.

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INTRODUCTION.



BEFORE SUBMITTING the following narrative of my labours in Assyria to the reader, it may not be uninteresting to give a slight sketch of what had been done in the field of Assyrian antiquities, previous to the recent discoveries on the site of Nineveh.

A few fragments scattered amongst ancient authors, and a list of kings of more than doubtful authenticity, is all that remains of a history of Assyria by Ctesias ; whilst of that attributed to Herodotus not a trace has been preserved. Of later writers who have touched upon Assyrian history, Diodorus Siculus, a mere compiler, is the principal. In Eusebius, and the Armenian historians, such as Moses of Chorene, may be found a few valuable details and hints, derived, in some instances, from original sources, not altogether devoid of authenticity.

It is remarkable that in profane history we meet with only three Assyrian monarchs of whose deeds we have any account,—Ninus, Semiramis, and Sardanapalus. Ninus and his Queen, like all the heroes of primitive nations, appear to have become mythic characters, to whom all great deeds and national achievements were assigned. Although originally historic personages, they were subsequently invested to some extent with divine attributes, and were interwoven with the theology of the race of which they were the first, or amongst the earliest, chiefs. Above thirty generations elapsed between Semiramis and Sardanapalus, during which more than

one dynasty of kings occupied the Assyrian throne and maintained the power of the empire. Yet of these kings nothing has been preserved but doubtful names.

The Assyrians are not particularly alluded to, in the Books of the Old Testament, until the period when their warlike expeditions to the west of the Euphrates brought them into contact with the Jews. Pul, the first king whose name is recorded in Scripture, reigned between eight and nine hundred years before the Christian era, and about two hundred previous to the fall of the empire. The later monarchs are more frequently mentioned in the Bible on account of their wars with the Jews, whom they led captive into Assyria. Very little is related even of their deeds unless they particularly concern the Jewish people.

Of modern historians who have attempted to reconcile the discrepancies of Assyrian chronology, and to restore to some extent, from the fragments to which I have alluded, a history of the Assyrian empire, I scarcely know one to point out, whose writings can claim any authority. From such contradictory materials, it is not surprising that each writer should have formed a theory of his own; and we may, without incurring the charge of scepticism, treat all their efforts as little better than ingenious speculations. In the date alone to be assigned to the commencement of the Assyrian empire, they differ nearly a thousand years; and even when they treat of events which approach the epoch of authentic history,—such as the death of Sardanapalus, the invasion of the Medes, and the fall of the empire,—there is nearly the same comparative discrepancy. The Bactrian and Indian expeditions of Ninus, the wonderful works of Semiramis, and the effeminacy of Sardanapalus, have been described over and over again, and form the standard ingredients of the Assyrian history of modern authors. The narratives framed upon them may convey useful lessons, and are, moreover, full of romantic events to excite the imagination. As such they have been repeated, with a warning that their authen-

ticity rests upon a slender basis, and that it is doubtful whether they are to be regarded as history, or to be classed amongst fables. Although the names of Nineveh and Assyria have been familiar to us from childhood, and are connected with the earliest impressions we derive from the Bible, it is only when we ask ourselves what we really know concerning them, that we discover our ignorance of all that relates to their history, and even to their geographical position.

It is, indeed, one of the most remarkable facts in history, that the records of an empire, so renowned for its power and civilisation, should have been entirely lost; and that the site of a city as eminent for its splendour as its extent, should for ages have been a matter of doubt: it is not perhaps less curious that an accidental discovery should enable us to recover these records, and to identify this site.*

The ruins in Assyria and Babylonia, chiefly huge mounds, apparently formed of mere earth and rubbish, had long excited curiosity from their size and evident antiquity. They were the only remains of an unknown period,—of a period antecedent to the Macedonian conquest. Consequently they alone could be identified with Nineveh and Babylon, and could afford a clue to the site and nature of those cities. There is, at the same time, a vague mystery attaching to remains like these, which induces travellers to examine them with more than ordinary interest, and even with some degree of awe. A great vitrified mass of brick-work near the

* I was constantly asked, when I first returned to England, whether Nineveh stood on the Tigris or the Euphrates, and the confusion between Nineveh and Babylon dates from an early period. We even find John Evelyn writing in his Diary, December 20, 1673, 'I had some discourse with certain strangers, not unlearned, who had been born not far from old Nineveh: they assured me of the ruins being still extant, and vast and wonderful were the buildings, vaults, pillars, and magnificent fragments; but they could say little of the Tower of Babel that satisfied me. But the description of the amenity and fragrance of the country for health and cheerfulness delighted me; so sensibly they spoke of the excellent air and climate in respect of our cloudy and splenetic country.' This description probably applies to the ruins of Babylon at Hillah.

Euphrates, surrounded by the accumulated rubbish of ages, was believed to represent the identical tower of Babel, which called down the divine vengeance, and was overthrown, according to an universal tradition, by the fires of heaven. The mystery and dread, which attached to the place, were kept up by exaggerated accounts of wild beasts, that haunted the subterranean passages, and of the no less savage tribes who wandered amongst the ruins. Other mounds in the vicinity were identified with the hanging gardens of Babylon, and those marvellous structures which tradition has attributed to two queens, Semiramis and Nitocris. The difficulty of reaching these remains, increased the curiosity and interest with which they were regarded; and a fragment from Babylon was esteemed a precious relic, not altogether devoid of a sacred character. The ruins which might be presumed to occupy the site of the great Assyrian capital, were even less known, and less visited, than those of Babylonia. Several travellers had noticed the vast mounds of earth on the left bank of the Tigris, opposite the modern city of Mosul, and when the inhabitants of the neighbourhood pointed out an ancient building as the tomb of Jonah upon the summit of one of them, it was natural to conclude, at once, that it marked the site of Nineveh.*

The first to engage in a serious examination of the ruins of ancient Assyria was Mr. Rich, many years the political Resident of the East India Company at Baghdad,—a man, whom enterprise, industry, extensive and varied learning, and rare influence over the inhabitants of the country, acquired

* It need scarcely be observed, that the tomb of Jonah could not stand above the buried ruins of an Assyrian palace, and that the tradition placing it there is not to be traced to any good source. It is, however, received by Christians and Mussulmans, and probably originated in the spot having been once occupied by a Christian church or convent, dedicated to the prophet. The building, which is supposed to cover the tomb, is very much venerated by Mohammedans, and few Christians have been allowed to enter it. The Jews, in the time of St. Jerome, pointed out the sepulchre of Jonah at Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zabulon.

as much by character as by his official position, eminently qualified for such a task. The remains near Hillah, being in the immediate vicinity of Baghdad, first attracted his attention; and he commenced his labours by carefully examining their sites, and by opening trenches into the various mounds. It is unnecessary to enter into a detailed account of his discoveries. They were of considerable interest, consisting chiefly of fragments of inscriptions, bricks, engraved stones, and a coffin of wood; but the careful account which he drew up of the site of the ruins was of greater value, and has formed the ground-work of all subsequent inquiries into the topography of Babylon.

In the year 1820 Mr. Rich, having visited Kurdistan for the benefit of his health, returned to Baghdad by way of Mosul on the Tigris. Remaining some days in this city, his curiosity was naturally excited by the great mounds on the opposite bank of the river, and he made a careful examination of them. He learnt from the inhabitants of Mosul that, some time previous to his visit, a sculpture, representing figures of men and animals, had been dug out of one of them. This strange object had caused general wonder, and the whole population had issued from the walls to gaze upon it. The ulema, or doctors of the law, having at length pronounced that these figures were the idols of the infidels, the Mohammedans, like obedient disciples, so completely destroyed them, that Mr. Rich was unable to obtain even a fragment.

His first step was to visit the village containing the tomb of Jonah. In the houses he met with a few stones bearing cuneiform inscriptions, which had probably been discovered in digging the foundations; and under the mosque containing the tomb he was shown three very narrow and apparently ancient passages, one within the other, with several doors or apertures.

He next examined the largest mound of the group, called Kouyunjik by the Turks, and Armousheeah by the Arabs,

the circumference of which he ascertained to be 7690 feet. Amongst the rubbish he found a few fragments of pottery, and bricks with cuneiform characters, and some remains of building in the ravines, where the rains had washed away the soil. On a subsequent occasion he made a general survey of the ruins, which was published in the collection of his journals, edited by his widow.

With the exception of a small stone chair, and a few remains of arrow-headed inscriptions, Mr. Rich obtained no other Assyrian relics from the site of Nineveh; and he left Mosul, little suspecting that in the mounds were buried the palaces of the Assyrian kings. As he floated down the Tigris to Baghdad, he visited Nimroud, and was struck by its evident antiquity. The tales of the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages connected the ruins with Nimrod's own city, and better authenticated traditions with that of Al Athur, or Ashur, from which the whole country anciently received its name. He collected a few bricks bearing cuneiform characters, and proceeded with his journey.

The fragments thus obtained by Mr. Rich were subsequently placed in the British Museum, and formed the principal, and indeed almost only, collection of Assyrian antiquities in Europe. A case scarcely three feet square enclosed all that remained, not only of the great city of Nineveh, but of Babylon itself!

Other museums in Europe contained a few cylinders and gems, which came from Assyria and Babylonia; but they were not classified, nor could it be determined to what exact epoch they belonged. Of Assyrian art nothing was known. The architecture of Nineveh and Babylon was a matter of speculation, and the poet or painter restored their palaces and temples, as best suited his theme or his subject. A description of the temple of Belus by Herodotus, led to an imaginary representation of the tower of Babel. Its spiral ascent, its galleries gradually decreasing in circumference and supported by innumerable columns, are familiar to us from the illus-

trations, adorning almost the opening page of that Book, which is associated with our earliest recollections.

Such was our acquaintance with Nineveh—its history, its site, and its arts, before the discoveries described in this work.

As inscriptions in the *cuneiform* character will be frequently mentioned in the following pages, a few words on the nature of this very ancient mode of writing may not be unacceptable to the reader. The epithets of cuneiform, cuneatic, arrow-headed, and wedge-shaped—*tête-à-clou* in French, and *keilförmig* in German—have been assigned to it according as the fancy of the describer saw in its component parts a resemblance to a wedge, the barb of an arrow, or a nail. The term ‘cuneiform’ is now most generally used in England, and probably best expresses the peculiar form of the character, each letter being composed of several distinct wedges combined together. The following may be given as an example:—



This inscription contains the name of an Assyrian king, supposed to be Asshur-idanni-pal, and to be the Assyrian form of the Greek Sardanapalus, and his title of king of Assyria.* It is not improbable that these letters were originally formed by mere lines, for which the wedge was afterwards substituted as an embellishment; and that the character itself may once have resembled the picture writing of Egypt, though all traces of its ideographic properties have been lost. The Assyrians, like the Egyptians, appear to have also possessed a cursive writing, resembling that of the Phœnicians, Palmyrenes, Babylonians, and Jews, which was probably used for documents written on papyrus or parchment, whilst the cuneiform was reserved for monumental purposes. There is this great dif-

* The translation is, ‘The great house (or palace) of Sardanapalus, the king of the country of Assyria.’ More than one Assyrian king bore this name.

ference between the two forms of writing, which appears to point to a distinct origin—the cuneiform always runs from left to right, the cursive from right to left.

The cuneiform character, under various modifications, the letters being differently formed in different countries, prevailed over the greater part of Western Asia to the time of the overthrow of the Persian empire by Alexander the Great.* It is to this circumstance that we mainly owe the progress which has been made in decyphering the Assyrian inscriptions. The Persian kings ruled over all the nations using this peculiar form of writing. These nations consisted of three principal races, the Babylonian (including the Assyrian) speaking a language allied to the Hebrew and Arabic, the Persian speaking a tongue closely connected with Sanscrit, and the Touranian speaking a Tatar or Turkish dialect. When recording their victories and their history, as was their custom, on rocks and pillars, these monarchs used the three languages spoken by their subjects. Such was the origin of what are called the trilingual inscriptions of Persia, which afford the principal clue to the Assyrian writing. The tablets containing these inscriptions are divided into three columns, each column being occupied by a version of the same inscription in one of the three national languages, and each language being written in the modification of the cuneiform character peculiar to it. Fortunately, the contents of the inscriptions on the Persian column have been accurately ascertained, and the alphabet and grammar reduced to a system. Owing, however, to the very large number of distinct characters in the Assyrian inscriptions, there being nearly 400 different signs, whilst in the Persian there are but thirty-nine or forty, and the great apparent laxity in the use of letters and in the grammar, the process of decyphering is one of considerable difficulty, not-

* Some cuneiform inscriptions of a later date than the time of Alexander the Great have been discovered; but the arrow-headed character appears to have rapidly fallen into disuse after the overthrow of the Persian empire.

withstanding the aid which a version of the same inscription in a known tongue naturally supplies.

The most important trilingual inscriptions hitherto discovered are those on the palaces of Darius and Xerxes at Persepolis, over the tomb of Darius, and in the rock tablets of Behistun. The latter are by far the most extensive and valuable. They contain a history of the principal events of the reign of Darius, and giving a long list of countries and tribes subdued by that monarch, and the names of conquered kings and rebels, afford the best materials for decyphering the Assyrian character, proper names being one of the surest clues to the value of letters. The inscriptions of Behistun are upon the face of a lofty precipice, so difficult of access, that Sir Henry Rawlinson has alone succeeded in copying them.

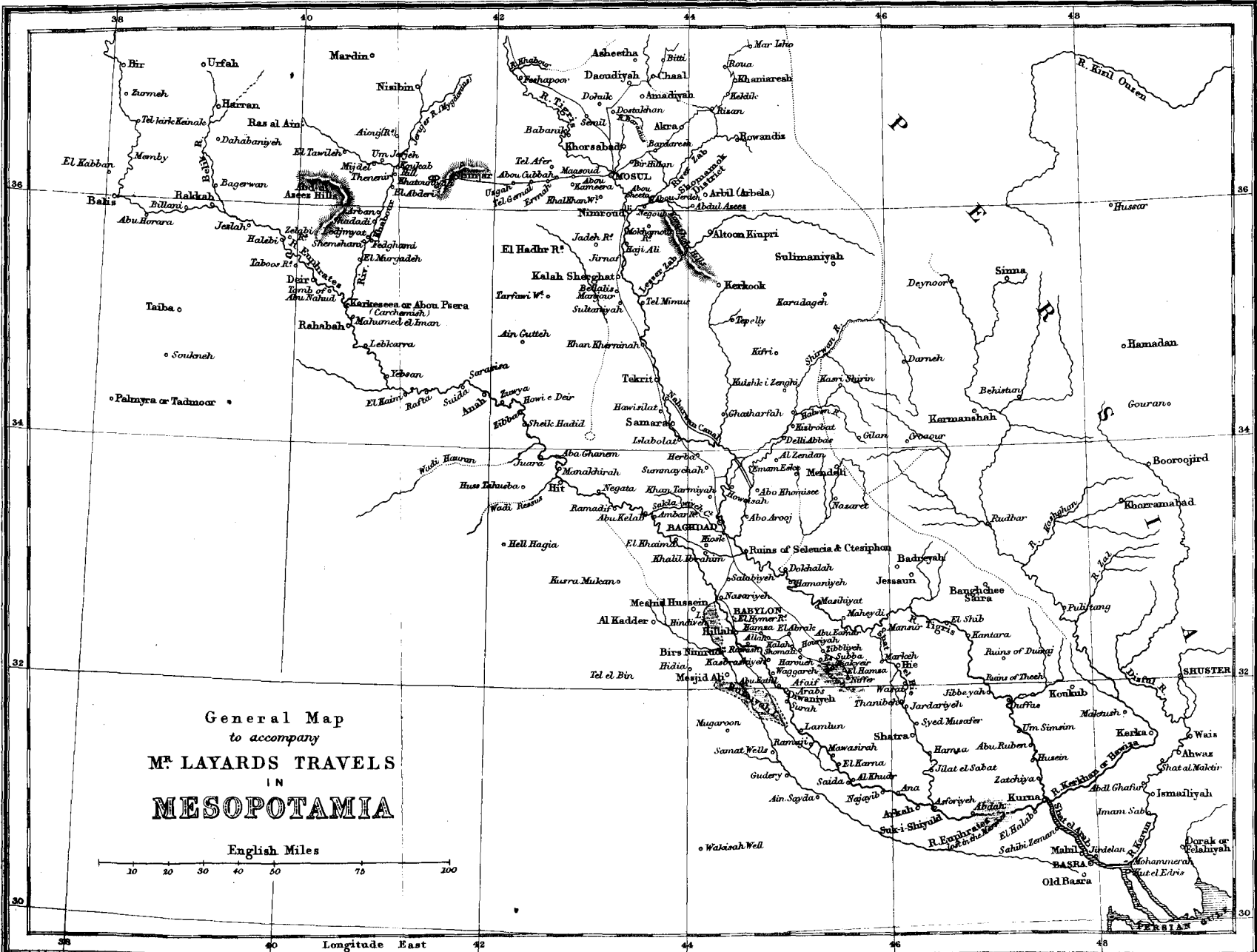
By their assistance he has added greatly to our knowledge of the cuneiform character, and has made many discoveries of great interest and importance. Other scholars, amongst whom may be mentioned the late Dr. Hincks, have also made much progress in decyphering the Assyrian character. It is to the profound learning and singular sagacity of Dr. Hincks that we owe the determination of the numerals, the name of Sennacherib on the monuments of Kouyunjik, and of Nebuchadnezzar on the bricks of Babylon, and many other most important and valuable discoveries. The actual state of our knowledge of the cuneiform character will enable us to ascertain the general contents of an inscription, although probably no one can yet give a complete literal translation of any one record, or the definite sound of many words.

The custom of engraving inscriptions on stone, and on tablets of baked clay, the two methods adopted by the Assyrians for perpetuating their annals, is of the very highest antiquity. The Divine commands were first given to man on stone tables; Job is made to exclaim, 'Oh that my words were now written! . . . *that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever;*'* and Ezekiel, when pro-

* Ch. xix. 23, 24.

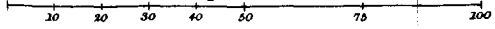
phesying on the river Chebar, was directed 'to take a tile and portray upon it the city of Jerusalem.*' There could have been no more durable method of preserving the national records; and inscriptions carved on the walls of palaces and temples, and on the face of lofty rocks, and impressed on cylinders and tablets of baked clay, have handed down to us the only authentic history of ancient Assyria.

* Ch. iv. 1.



General Map
to accompany
M^r LAYARDS TRAVELS
IN
MESOPOTAMIA

English Miles



NINEVEH

AND ITS REMAINS.



CHAPTER I.

First journey in Assyria—Its ruins—Kouyunjik, Nimroud, and Kalah Sherghat—M. Botta's discoveries—Khorsabad—Return to Mosul.

DURING the autumn of 1839 and winter of 1840, I had been wandering through Asia Minor and Syria, scarcely leaving untrod one spot hallowed by tradition, or unvisited one ruin consecrated by history. I was accompanied by one no less curious and enthusiastic than myself.* We were both equally careless of comfort and unmindful of danger. We rode alone; our arms were our only protection; a valise behind our saddles was our wardrobe, and we tended our own horses, except when relieved from the duty by the hospitable inhabitants of a Turcoman village or an Arab tent. Thus unembarrassed by needless luxuries, and uninfluenced by the opinions and prejudices of others, we mixed amongst the people, acquired without effort their manners, and enjoyed without alloy those emotions which scenes so novel, and spots so rich in varied association, cannot fail to produce.

I look back with feelings of grateful delight to those happy

* My travelling companion, during a long journey from England to Hamadan, was Edward Ledwich Mitford, Esq., now of her Majesty's civil service in the island of Ceylon.

days when, free and unheeded, we left at dawn the humble cottage or cheerful tent, and lingering as we listed, unconscious of distance and of the hour, found ourselves, as the sun went down, under some hoary ruin tenanted by the wandering Arab, or in some crumbling village still bearing a well-known name. No experienced dragoman measured our distances and appointed our stations. We were honoured with no conversations by pashas, nor did we seek any civilities from governors. We neither drew tears nor curses from villagers by seizing their horses, or searching their houses for provisions: their welcome was sincere; their scanty fare was placed before us; we came and ate, and went in peace.

I had traversed Asia Minor and Syria, visiting the ancient seats of civilisation, and the spots which religion has made holy. I now felt an irresistible desire to penetrate to the regions beyond the Euphrates, to which history and tradition point as the birthplace of the wisdom of the West. Most travellers, after a journey through the usually frequented parts of the East, have the same longing to cross the great river, and to explore those lands which are separated on the map from the confines of Syria by a vast blank stretching from Aleppo to the banks of the Tigris. A deep mystery hangs over Assyria, Babylonia, and Chaldæa. With these names are linked great nations and great cities dimly shadowed forth in history; mighty ruins, in the midst of deserts, defying, by their very desolation and lack of definite form, the description of the traveller; the remnants of mighty races still roving over the land; the fulfilling and fulfilment of prophecies; the plains to which the Jew and the Gentile alike look as the cradle of their race. After a journey in Syria the thoughts naturally turn eastward; and without treading on the remains of Nineveh and Babylon our pilgrimage is incomplete.

I left Aleppo, with my companion, on the 18th of March. We still travelled as we had been accustomed—without guide or servants. The road across the desert is at all times impracticable, except to a numerous and well-armed caravan, and offers no object of interest. We preferred that through Bir and Orfa. From the latter city we traversed the low country at the foot of the Kurdish hills, a country little known

and abounding in curious remains. The Egyptian frontier, at that time, extended to the east of Orfa, and the war between the Sultan and Mohammed Ali Pasha being still unfinished, the tribes took advantage of the confusion, and were plundering on all sides. With our usual good fortune, we succeeded in reaching Nisibin unmolested, although we ran daily risks, and more than once found ourselves in the midst of foraging parties, and of tents which, an hour before, had been pillaged by the wandering bands of Arabs. We entered Mosul on the 10th of April.

During a short stay in this town we visited the great ruins on the east bank of the river, which have been generally believed to be the remains of Nineveh.* We rode also into the desert, and explored the mound of Kalah Sherghat, a vast ruin on the Tigris, about fifty miles below its junction with the Zab. As we journeyed thither we rested for the night at the small Arab village of Hammum Ali, around which are still the vestiges of an ancient city. From the summit of an artificial eminence we looked down upon a broad plain separated from us by the river. A line of lofty mounds bounded it to the east, and one of a pyramidal form rose high above the rest. Beyond it could be faintly traced the waters of the Zab. Its position rendered its identification easy. This was the pyramid which Xenophon had described, and near which the ten thousand had encamped : the ruins around it were those which the Greek general saw twenty-two centuries before, and which were even then the remains of an *ancient* city. Although Xenophon had confounded a name, spoken by a strange race, with one familiar to a Greek ear, and had called the place Larissa, tradition still points to the origin of the city, and, by attributing its foundation to Nimrod, whose name the ruins now bear, connects it with one of the first settlements of the human race.†

Kalah Sherghat, like Nimroud, was an Assyrian ruin : a vast shapeless mass, then covered with grass, and showing

* These ruins include the mounds of Kouyunjik and Nebbi Yunus.

† 'He (Nimrod) went out into Assyria and builded Nineveh, the city Rehoboth and Calah, and Resen, between Nineveh and Calah ; the same is a great city.' (Gen. x. 11, 12.)

scarcely any traces of the work of man except where the winter rains had formed ravines down its almost perpendicular sides, and had laid open the remains of ancient walls. A few fragments of pottery and inscribed bricks, discovered after a careful search amongst the rubbish which had accumulated around the base of the great mound, served to prove that it owed its construction to the people who had founded the city of which the mounds of Nimroud are the remains. There was a tradition current amongst the Arabs, that strange figures carved in black stone still existed amongst the ruins; but we searched for them in vain, during the greater part of a day in which we were engaged in exploring the heaps of earth and bricks, covering a considerable extent of country on the right bank of the Tigris. At the time of our visit the country had been abandoned by the Bedouins, and was only occasionally visited by a few plunderers from the Shammar or Aneyza tents. We passed the night in the jungle which clothes the banks of the river, and wandered during the day undisturbed by the tribes of the desert. A Cawass, who had been sent with us by the Pasha of Mosul, alarmed at the solitude, and dreading the hostile Arabs, left us in the wilderness, and turned homewards. But he fell into the danger he sought to avoid. Less fortunate than ourselves, at a short distance from Kalah Sherghat, he was met by a party of horsemen, and fell a victim to his timidity.

Were the traveller to cross the Euphrates to seek for such ruins in Mesopotamia and Chaldæa as he had left behind him in Asia Minor or Syria, his search would be vain. The graceful column rising above the thick foliage of the myrtle, ilex, and oleander; the gradines of the amphitheatre covering a gentle slope, and overlooking the dark blue waters of a lake-like bay; the richly carved cornice or capital half hidden by luxuriant herbage; are replaced by the stern shapeless mound rising like a hill from the scorched plain, the fragments of pottery, and the stupendous mass of brickwork occasionally laid bare by the winter rains. He has left the land where nature is still lovely, where, in his mind's eye, he can rebuild the temple or the theatre, half doubting whether they would have made a more grateful

impression upon the senses than the ruin before him. He is now at a loss to give any form to the rude heaps upon which he is gazing. Those of whose works they are the remains, unlike the Roman and the Greek, have left no visible traces of their civilisation, or of their arts: their influence has long since passed away. The more he conjectures, the more vague the results appear. The scene around is worthy of the ruin he is contemplating; desolation meets desolation: a feeling of awe succeeds to wonder; for there is nothing to relieve the mind, to lead to hope, or to tell of what has gone by. These huge mounds of Assyria, made a deeper impression upon me, gave rise to more serious thoughts and more earnest reflection, than the temples of Balbec and the theatres of Ionia.

In the middle of April I left Mosul for Baghdad. As I descended the Tigris on a raft, I again saw the ruins of Nimroud, and had a better opportunity of examining them. It was evening as we approached the spot. The spring rains had clothed the mound with the richest verdure, and the fertile meadows, which stretched around it, were covered with flowers of every hue. Amidst this luxuriant vegetation were partly concealed a few fragments of bricks, pottery, and alabaster, upon which might be traced the well-defined wedges of the cuneiform character. Did not these remains mark the nature of the ruin, it might have been confounded with a natural eminence. A long line of consecutive narrow mounds, still retaining the appearance of walls or ramparts, stretched from its base, and formed a vast quadrangle. The river flowed at some distance from them: its waters, swollen by the melting of the snows on the Armenian hills, were broken into a thousand foaming whirlpools by an artificial barrier, built across the stream. On the eastern bank the soil had been washed away by the current; but a solid mass of masonry still withstood its impetuosity. The Arab, who guided my small raft, gave himself up to religious ejaculations as we approached this formidable cataract, over which we were carried with some violence. Once safely through the danger, he explained to me that this unusual change in the quiet face of the river was caused by a great dam which had

been built by Nimrod,* and that in the autumn, before the winter rains, the huge stones of which it was constructed, squared, and united by cramps of iron, were frequently visible above the surface of the stream.† It was, in fact, one of those monuments of a great people, to be found in all the rivers of Mesopotamia, which were undertaken to ensure a constant supply of water to the innumerable canals, spreading like net-work over the surrounding country, and which, even in the days of Alexander, were looked upon as the works of an ancient nation.‡ No wonder that the traditions of the present inhabitants of the land should assign them to one of the founders of the human race! The Arab explained the connexion between the dam and the city built by Athur, the lieutenant of Nimrod, the vast ruins of which were then before us, and its purpose as a causeway for the mighty hunter to cross to the opposite palace, now represented by the mound of Hammum Ali. He was telling me of the histories and fate of the kings of a primitive race, still the favourite theme of the inhabitants of the plains of Shinar, when the last glow of twilight faded away, and I fell asleep as we glided onward to Baghdad.

My curiosity had been greatly excited, and at that time I formed the design of thoroughly examining, whenever it might be in my power, the ruins of Nimroud.

It was not until the summer of 1842 that I again passed

* This dam is called by the Arabs, either Sukr el Nimroud, from the tradition, or El Awayee, from the noise caused by the breaking of the water over the stones. Large rafts are obliged to unload before crossing it, and accidents frequently happen to those who neglect this precaution.

† Diodorus Siculus, it will be remembered, states that the stones of the bridge built by Semiramis across the Euphrates were united by similar iron cramps, whilst the interstices were filled up with molten lead.

‡ These dams greatly impeded the fleets of the conqueror in their navigation of the rivers of Susiana and Mesopotamia, and he caused many of them to be removed. (Strabo, p. 1051, ed. Ox. 1807.) By Strabo they were believed to have been constructed to prevent the ascent of the rivers by hostile fleets; but their use is evident. Tavernier mentions, in his Travels (vol. i. p. 226), this very dam. He says that his raft went over a cascade twenty-six feet high; but he must have greatly exaggerated.

through Mosul on my way to Constantinople. I was then anxious to reach the Turkish capital, and had no time to explore ruins. I had not, however, forgotten Nimroud. I had frequently spoken to others on the subject of excavations in this and another mound, to which a peculiar interest also attached; and at one time had reason to hope that some persons in England might have been induced to aid in the undertaking. I had even proposed an examination of the ruins to M. Coste, an architect who had been sent by the French Government, with its embassy to Persia, to draw and describe the monuments of that country.

I found that M. Botta had, since my first visit, been named French Consul at Mosul; and had already commenced excavations on the opposite side of the river in the large mound of Kouyunjik. These excavations were on a very small scale, and, at the time of my passage, only fragments of brick and alabaster, upon which were engraved a few letters in the cuneiform character, had been discovered.

Whilst detained by unexpected circumstances at Constantinople, I entered into correspondence with a gentleman in England on the subject of excavations; but, with this exception, no one seemed inclined to assist or take any interest in such an undertaking. I also wrote to M. Botta, encouraging him to proceed, notwithstanding the apparent paucity of results, and particularly calling his attention to the mound of Nimroud, which, however, he declined to explore on account of its distance from Mosul and its inconvenient position. I was soon called away from the Turkish capital to the provinces; and for some months numerous occupations prevented me turning my attention to the ruins and antiquities of Assyria.

In the meanwhile M. Botta, not discouraged by the want of success which had attended his first attempts, continued his excavations in the mound of Kouyunjik; and to him is due the honour of having found the first Assyrian monument. This remarkable discovery owed its origin to the following circumstances. The small party of Arabs employed by M. Botta were at work on Kouyunjik, when a peasant from a distant village chanced to visit the spot

Seeing that every fragment of brick and alabaster uncovered by the workmen was carefully preserved, he asked the reason of this, to him, strange proceeding. On being informed that they were in search of sculptured stones, he advised them to try the mound on which his village was built, and in which, he declared, many such things as they wanted had been exposed on digging the foundations of new houses. M. Botta, having been frequently deceived by similar stories, was not at first inclined to follow the peasant's advice, but subsequently sent an agent and one or two workmen to the place. After a little opposition from the inhabitants, they were permitted to sink a well in the mound; and at a small distance from the surface they came to the top of a wall which, on digging deeper, they found to be lined with sculptured slabs of gypsum. M. Botta, on receiving information of this discovery, went at once to the village, which was called Khorsabad. Directing a wider trench to be formed, and to be carried in the direction of the wall, he soon found that he had entered a chamber, connected with others, and surrounded by slabs of gypsum covered with sculptured representations of battles, sieges, and similar events. His wonder may easily be imagined. A new history had been suddenly opened to him—the records of an unknown people were before him. He was equally at a loss to account for the age and the nature of the monument. The style of art of the sculptures, the dresses of the figures, the mythic forms on the walls, were all new to him, and afforded no clue to the epoch of the erection of the edifice, or to the people who were its founders. Numerous inscriptions, accompanying the bas-reliefs, evidently contained the explanation of the events thus recorded in sculpture, and being in the cuneiform, or arrow-headed, character, proved that the building belonged to an age preceding the conquests of Alexander; for it is generally admitted that after the subjugation of the west of Asia by the Macedonians, the cuneiform writing ceased to be employed.* It was evident that

* Subsequent discoveries in Western Asia seem to show that the cuneiform character was still in use, though probably to a very limited extent, for some time after this period.

the monument appertained to a very ancient and very civilised people ; and it was natural from its position to refer it to the inhabitants of Nineveh, a city, which, although it could not have occupied a site so distant from the Tigris, must have been in the vicinity of these ruins. M. Botta had discovered an Assyrian edifice, the first, probably, which had been exposed to the view of man since the fall of the Assyrian empire.

M. Botta was not long in perceiving that the building which had been thus partly excavated, unfortunately owed its destruction to fire ; and that the gypsum slabs, reduced to lime, were rapidly falling to pieces on exposure to the air. No precaution could arrest this rapid decay ; and it was to be feared that this wonderful monument had only been uncovered to complete its ruin. The records of victories and triumphs, which had long attested the power and swelled the pride of the Assyrian kings, and had resisted the ravages of ages, were now passing away for ever. They could scarcely be held together until an inexperienced pencil could copy them, and thus secure evidence of their existence. Almost all that was first discovered thus speedily disappeared ; and the same fate has befallen nearly everything subsequently found at Khorsabad. A regret is almost felt that so precious a memorial of a great nation should have been exposed to destruction ; but as far as the object of the monument is concerned, the intention of its founders will be amply fulfilled, and the records of their might will be more widely spread, and more effectually preserved, by modern art, than the most exalted ambition could have contemplated.

This remarkable discovery having been communicated by M. Botta, through M. Mohl, to the French Academy, that body lost no time in applying to the Minister of Public Instruction for a grant to enable him to carry on his researches. The application was attended to with that readiness and munificence which almost invariably distinguish the French Government in undertakings of this nature. Ample funds for excavations were at once assigned to M. Botta, and M. Flandin, an artist of acknowledged skill, was placed

under his orders to draw such objects as could not be removed. The work was carried on with activity and success, and, by the beginning of 1845, the monument had been completely uncovered. M. Botta did not extend his researches beyond Khorsabad; but, having secured many fine specimens of Assyrian sculpture for his country, he returned to Europe with a rich collection of inscriptions, copied by himself, and forming the most important result of his discovery.

The success of M. Botta had increased my anxiety to explore the ruins of Assyria. It was evident that Khorsabad could not stand alone. It did not represent ancient Nineveh, nor did it afford us any additional evidence as to the site of that city. If the edifice discovered had been one of its palaces, surely other buildings of a vaster and more magnificent character must exist nearer the seat of government, on the banks of the river Tigris. It was true that M. Botta had laboured unsuccessfully for above three months in the great mound opposite Mosul, which was usually identified with the Assyrian capital; but that mound much exceeded in extent any other known ruin; and it was possible that in the part hitherto explored the traces of the buildings which it once contained were as completely lost as they were in many parts of the mound of Khorsabad. My thoughts still went back to Nimroud, and to the traditions which attached to it. I spoke to others about excavations, but received little encouragement. At last, in the autumn of 1845, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then Sir Stratford Canning, offered to incur, jointly with myself, for a limited period, the expense of excavations in Assyria, in the hope that, should success attend the attempt, means would be found to carry it out on an adequate scale.

It was now in my power to prosecute a work which I had so long desired to undertake; and the reader will not, I trust, be disinclined to join with me in feelings of gratitude towards one who, whilst he has maintained so successfully the honour and interests of England by his high character and eminent abilities, has acquired for his country so many

great monuments of ancient civilisation and art.* It is to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe we are mainly indebted for the collection of Assyrian antiquities with which the British Museum has been enriched; without his liberality and public spirit the treasures of Nimroud would have been reserved for the enterprise of those who have appreciated the value and importance of the discoveries at Khorsabad.

It was deemed prudent that I should leave Constantinople without acquainting any one with the object of my journey. I was furnished with the usual documents given to travellers when recommended by the Embassy, and with letters of introduction to the authorities at Mosul. My preparations were soon completed, and I left Constantinople by steamer for Samsoun in the middle of October. Anxious to reach the end of my journey, I crossed the mountains of Pontus and the great steppes of the Usun Yilak as fast as post-horses could carry me, descended the high lands into the valley of the Tigris, galloped over the vast plains of Assyria, and reached Mosul in twelve days.

* I need scarcely remind the reader that it is to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe we owe the first collection of the marbles of Halicarnassus placed in the British Museum. The difficulties which stood in the way of the acquisition of these valuable relics, and the skill which was required to obtain them, are not generally known. I can testify to the efforts and labour which were necessary for nearly three years before the repugnance of the Ottoman government could be overcome, and permission obtained to extract the sculptures from the walls of a castle, which was more jealously guarded than any similar edifice in the empire. Their removal, notwithstanding the almost insurmountable difficulties raised by the authorities and inhabitants of Budroon, was most successfully effected by Mr. Alison. The Elgin Marbles, and all other remains from Turkey or Greece now in Europe, were obtained with comparative ease.

CHAPTER II.

Mohammed Pasha—His cruelties—The state of the country—Start for Nimroud—An Arab family—Commence excavations—Discovery of a chamber—Of Inscriptions—Of ivory ornaments—Return to Mosul—Conduct of the Pasha—Excavations commenced amongst various ruins—Return to Nimroud—Further discoveries—Selamiyah—Discovery of sculptures—Description of bas-reliefs—Interrupted by the Pasha—Further discovery of sculptures—Deposition of the Pasha—Departure for Baghdad.

My first step on reaching Mosul was to present my letters to Mohammed Pasha, the governor of the province. Being a native of Candia, he was usually known as Keritli Oglu (the son of the Cretan), to distinguish him from his celebrated predecessor of the same name. The appearance of his Excellency was not prepossessing, but it matched his temper and conduct. Nature had placed hypocrisy beyond his reach. He had one eye and one ear; he was short and fat, deeply marked by the small-pox, uncouth in gestures and harsh in voice. His fame had reached the seat of his government before him. On the road he had revived many good old customs and impositions, which the reforming spirit of the age had suffered to fall into decay. He particularly insisted on *dish-parasi* ;* or a compensation in money, levied upon all villages in which a man of such rank is entertained, for the wear and tear of his teeth in masticating the food he condescends to receive from the inhabitants. On entering Mosul, he had induced several of the principal Aghas, who had fled from the town on his approach, to return to their homes; and having made a formal display of oaths and protestations of friendship and protection, cut their throats

* Literally, 'tooth-money.'

to show how much his word could be depended upon. At the time of my arrival, the population was in a state of terror and despair. Even the appearance of a casual traveller led to hopes, and reports were whispered about the town that I was the bearer of the news of the disgrace of the tyrant. Of this the Pasha was aware, and hit upon a plan to test the feelings of the people towards him. He was suddenly taken ill one afternoon, and was carried to his harem almost lifeless. On the following morning the palace was closed, and the attendants answered inquiries by mysterious motions, which could only be interpreted in one fashion. The doubts of the Mosuleeans gradually gave way to general rejoicings; but at mid-day his Excellency, who had posted his spies all over the town, appeared in perfect health in the market-place. A general trembling seized the inhabitants. His vengeance fell principally upon those who possessed property, and had hitherto escaped his rapacity. They were seized and stripped, on the plea that they had spread reports detrimental to his authority.

The villages, and the Arab tribes, had not suffered less than the townspeople. The Pasha was accustomed to give instructions to those who were sent to collect money, in three words—‘Go, destroy, eat;’* and his agents were not generally backward in entering into the spirit of them. The tribes, who had been attacked and plundered, were retaliating upon caravans and travellers, or laying waste the cultivated parts of the pashalic. The villages were deserted, and the roads were little frequented and very insecure.

Such was the Pasha to whom I was introduced two days after my arrival by the British Vice-Consul, Mr. Rassam. He read the letters which I presented to him, and received me with that civility which a traveller generally expects from a Turkish functionary of high rank. His anxiety to know the object of my journey was evident, but his curiosity was not gratified for the moment.

Many reasons rendered it necessary that my plans should

* To eat money, *i. e.* to get money unlawfully, or by pillage, is a common expression in the East.

be concealed, until I was ready to put them into execution. Although I had always experienced from M. Botta the most friendly assistance, there were others who did not share his sentiments ; from the authorities and the people of the town I could only expect the most decided opposition. On the 8th of November, having secretly procured a few tools, I engaged a mason at the moment of my departure, and carrying with me a variety of guns, spears, and other formidable weapons, declared that I was going to hunt wild boars in a neighbouring village, and floated down the Tigris on a small raft constructed for my journey. I was accompanied by Mr. Ross (a British merchant then residing at Mosul*), my Cawass, and a servant.

At this time of the year nearly seven hours are required to descend the Tigris, from Mosul to Nimroud. It was sunset before we reached the Awai, or dam across the river. We landed and walked to a small hamlet called Naifa. No light appeared as we approached, nor were we even saluted by the dogs, which usually abound in an Arab village. We had entered a heap of ruins. I was about to return to the raft, upon which we had made up our minds to pass the night, when the glare of a fire lighted up the entrance to a miserable hovel. Through a crevice in the wall, I saw an Arab family crouching round a heap of half-extinguished embers. The dress of the man, the ample cloak and white turban, showed that he belonged to one of the tribes, which cultivate a little land on the borders of the Desert, and are distinguished, by their more sedentary habits, from the Bedouins. Near him were three women, lean and haggard, their heads almost concealed in black kerchiefs, and the rest of their persons enveloped in the striped cloak or aba. Some children, nearly naked, and one or two mangy greyhounds, completed the group. As we entered all the party rose, and showed

* Mr. Ross will perhaps permit me to acknowledge in a note the valuable assistance I received from him, during my labours in Assyria. His knowledge of the natives, and intimate acquaintance with the resources of the country, enabled him to contribute much to the success of my undertaking ; whilst to his friendship I am indebted for many pleasant hours, which would have passed wearily in a land of strangers.

some alarm at this sudden appearance of strangers. The man, however, seeing Europeans, bid us welcome, and spreading some corn-sacks on the ground, invited us to be seated. The women and children retreated into a corner of the hut. Our host, whose name was Awad or Abd-Allah, was a sheikh of the Jehesh. His tribe having been plundered by the Pasha, and being now scattered in different parts of the country, he had taken refuge in this ruined village. He had learnt a little Turkish, and was intelligent and active. Seeing, at once, that he would be useful, I acquainted him with the object of my journey; offering him the prospect of regular employment in the event of the experiment proving successful, and assigning him fixed wages as superintendent of the workmen. He volunteered to walk, in the middle of the night, to Selamiyah, a village three miles distant, and to some Arab tents in the neighbourhood, to procure men to assist in the excavations.

I slept little during the night. The hovel in which we had taken shelter, and its inmates, did not invite slumber; but such scenes and companions were not new to me: they could have been forgotten, had my brain been less excited. Hopes, long cherished, were now to be realised, or were to end in disappointment. Visions of palaces under-ground, of gigantic monsters, of sculptured figures, and endless inscriptions floated before me. After forming plan after plan for removing the earth, and extricating these treasures, I fancied myself wandering in a maze of chambers from which I could find no outlet. Then, again, all was reburied, and I was standing on the grass-covered mound. Exhausted, I was at length sinking into sleep, when hearing the voice of Awad, I rose from my carpet, and joined him outside the hovel. The day already dawned; he had returned with six Arabs, who agreed for a small sum to work under my direction.

The lofty cone and broad mound of Nimroud rose like a distant mountain in the morning sky. But how changed was the scene since my former visit! The ruins were no longer clothed with verdure and many-coloured flowers; no signs of human habitation, not even the black tent of the Arab, were seen upon the plain. The eye wandered over a

parched and barren waste, across which occasionally swept the whirlwind, dragging with it a cloud of sand. About a mile from us was the small village of Nimroud, like Naifa, a heap of ruins.

Twenty minutes' walk brought us to the principal mound. The absence of all vegetation enabled me to examine the remains with which it was covered. Broken pottery and fragments of bricks, inscribed with cuneiform characters, were strewed on all sides. The Arabs watched my motions as I wandered to and fro, and observed with surprise the objects I had collected. They joined, however, in the search, and brought me handfuls of rubbish, amongst which I found with joy the fragment of a bas-relief. The material on which it was carved had been exposed to fire, and resembled, in every respect, the burnt gypsum of Khorsabad. Convinced from this discovery that sculptured remains must still exist in some part of the mound, I sought for a place where excavations might be commenced with a prospect of success. Awad led me to a piece of alabaster which appeared above the soil. We could not remove it, and on digging downward, it proved to be the upper part of a large slab. I ordered all the men to work around it, and they shortly uncovered a second slab. Continuing in the same line, we came upon a third; and in the course of the morning, discovered ten more, the whole forming a square, with a slab missing at one corner, uninjured by fire, and in perfect preservation. It was evident that we had found a chamber, and that the gap was its entrance. I now dug down the face of one of the stones, and an inscription in the cuneiform character was soon exposed to view. Similar inscriptions occupied the centre of all the slabs, which were otherwise quite plain, and without any traces of carving upon them. Leaving half the workmen to remove the rubbish from the chamber, I led the rest to the S. W. corner of the mound, where I had observed many fragments of calcined alabaster.

A trench, opened in the side of the mound, brought me almost immediately to a wall, bearing inscriptions in the same character as those already described. The slabs, which had been nearly reduced to lime by exposure to

intense heat, threatened to fall to pieces as soon as uncovered.

Night interrupted our labours. I returned to the village well satisfied with their result. It was now evident that the remains of buildings of considerable extent existed in the mound : and that although some had been destroyed by fire, others had escaped the conflagration. As inscriptions, and the fragment of a bas-relief had been found, it was natural to conclude that sculptures were still buried under



Awad, Sheikh of the Jehesh.

the soil. I determined, therefore, to explore the N. W. corner, and to empty the chamber partly uncovered during the day.

On returning to the village, I removed from the crowded hovel in which we had passed the night. With the assistance of Awad, who was no less pleased than myself with our success, we patched up with mud the least ruined house in the village, and restored its falling roof. We contrived

at least to exclude, in some measure, the cold night winds ; and to obtain a little privacy for my companion and myself.

Next morning my workmen were increased by five Turcomans from Selamiyah, who had been attracted by the prospect of regular wages. I employed half of them in emptying the chamber, and the rest in following the wall at the S.W. corner of the mound. Before evening, the work of the first party was completed, and I found myself in a room* panelled with slabs about eight feet high, and varying from six to four feet in breadth. Upon one of them, which had fallen backwards from its place, was rudely inscribed, in Arabic characters, the name of Ahmed Pasha, one of the former hereditary governors of Mosul. A native of Selamiyah remembered that some Christians were employed to dig into the mound about thirty years before, in search of stone for the repair of the tomb of Sultan Abd-Allah, a Mussulman Saint, buried on the left bank of the Tigris, a few miles below its junction with the Zab. They uncovered this slab ; but being unable to move it, they cut upon it the name of their employer, the Pasha. My informant further stated that, in another part of the mound, he had forgotten the precise spot, they had found sculptured figures, which they broke in pieces, carrying away the fragments.

The bottom of the chamber was paved with smaller slabs than those which lined the walls. They were covered with inscriptions on both sides, and had been placed upon a layer of bitumen, which, having been used in a liquid state, had retained a perfect impression in relief of the characters carved upon the stone. The inscriptions on the upright slabs were about twenty lines in length, and all were precisely similar.

In the rubbish near the bottom of the chamber I found several objects in ivory, upon which were traces of gilding ; amongst them were the figure of a king carrying in one hand the Egyptian crux ansata, or emblem of life, part of a crouching sphinx, and an elegant ornamental border of

* Chamber A, Plan II. p. 42.

flowers. Awad, who had his own suspicions of the object of my search, which he could scarcely persuade himself was limited to mere stones, carefully collected all the scattered fragments of gold leaf he could find in the rubbish ; and, calling me aside in a mysterious and confidential fashion, produced them wrapped up in a piece of dingy paper. 'O Bey,' said he, 'Wallah! your books are right, and the Franks know that which is hid from the true believer. Here is the gold, sure enough, and please God, we shall find it all in a few days. "Only don't say anything about it to those Arabs, for they are asses and cannot hold their tongues. The matter will come to the ears of the Pasha.' The Sheikh was much surprised, and equally disappointed, when I generously presented him with the treasures he had collected, and all such as he might hereafter discover. He left me, muttering 'Yia Rubbi!' and other pious ejaculations, and lost in conjectures as to the meaning of these strange proceedings.

At the foot of the slabs in the S.W. corner, we found a great accumulation of charcoal, proving that the building of which they had formed part had been destroyed by fire. I dug also in several directions in this part of the mound, and in many places came upon the calcined remains of walls.

On the third day, I opened a trench in the high conical mound, but found only fragments of inscribed bricks. I also dug at the back of the north side of the chamber first explored, in the expectation of coming upon other walls beyond, but unsuccessfully. As my chief aim was to ascertain, as soon as possible, the existence of sculptures, all my workmen were moved to the S.W. corner, where the many remains of walls already discovered evidently belonging to the same edifice, promised speedier success. I continued the excavations in this part of the mound until the 13th, still finding inscriptions, but no sculptures.

Some days having elapsed since my departure from Mosul, and the experiment having been so far successful, it was time to return to the town and acquaint the Pasha, who had, no doubt, already heard of my proceedings, with the object

of my researches. I started, therefore, early in the morning of the 14th, and galloped to Mosul in about three hours.

I found the town in great commotion. In the first place, his Excellency had, on the previous day, entrapped his subjects by the reports of his death, in the manner already described, and was now actively engaged in seeking pecuniary compensation for the insult he had received in the rejoicings of the population. In the second, the British Vice-Consul having purchased an old building to store his stock in trade, the Cadi, a fanatic and a man of infamous character, had given out that the Franks had formed a design of buying up the whole of Turkey, and was endeavouring to raise a riot, which was to end in the demolition of the Consulate and other acts of violence. I called on the Pasha, and, in the first place, congratulated him on his speedy recovery ; a compliment which he received with a grim smile of satisfaction. He then introduced the subject of the Cadi, and the disturbance he had created. 'Does that ill-conditioned fellow,' exclaimed he, 'think that he has Sheriff Pasha (his Excellency's immediate predecessor) to deal with, that he must be planning a riot in the town? When I was at Siwas the Ulema tried to excite the people because I encroached upon a burying-ground. But I made them eat dirt ! Wallah ! I took every gravestone and built up the castle walls with them.' He pretended at first to be ignorant of the excavations at Nimroud ; but subsequently thinking that he would convict me of prevarication in my answers to his questions as to the amount of treasure discovered, pulled out of his writing-tray a scrap of paper, as dingy as that produced by Awad, in which was also preserved an almost invisible particle of gold leaf. This, he said, had been brought to him by the commander of the irregular troops stationed at Selamiyah, who had been watching my proceedings. I suggested that he should name an agent to be present as long as I worked at Nimroud, to take charge of all the precious metals that might be discovered. He promised to write on the subject to the chief of the irregulars, but offered no objection to the continuation of my researches.

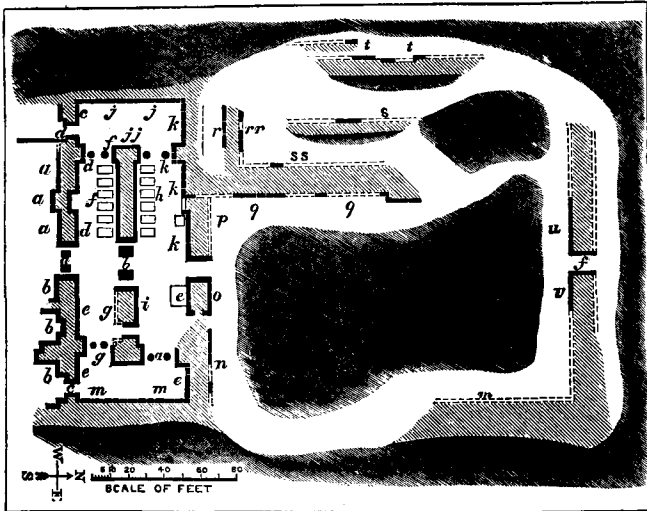
Reports of the treasures extracted from the ruins had already reached Mosul, and had excited the cupidity and jealousy of the Cadi and principal inhabitants of the place. It was evident that I should have to contend against a formidable opposition ; but as the Pasha had not, as yet, openly objected to my proceedings, I hired some Nestorian Christians, who had left their mountains for the winter to seek employment in Mosul, and sent them to Nimroud. At the same time I engaged agents to explore several mounds in the neighbourhood of the town, hoping to ascertain the existence of sculptured buildings in some part of the country, before steps were taken to interrupt me.

Mormous, an Arab of the tribe of the Haddedeem, had informed me that figures had been accidentally uncovered in a mound near the village of Tel Kef. As he offered to take me to the place, we rode out together ; but he only pointed out the site of an old quarry, with a few rudely hewn stones. Such disappointments occurred daily ; and I wearied myself in scouring the country to see remains which had been most minutely described to me as sculptures, or slabs covered with writing, and which generally proved to be the ruin of some modern building, or an early tombstone inscribed with Cufic characters.

The mounds, which I directed to be opened, were those of Baasheikha (of considerable size), Baazani, Karamles, Karakush, Yara, and Jerraiyah. Connected with the latter ruin many strange tales were current in the country. It was said that on its lofty conical mound formerly stood a temple of black stone, held in great reverence by the Yezidis, or worshippers of the devil, with walls covered with all manner of sculptured figures, and with inscriptions in an unknown language. When the Bey of Rowandiz fell upon the Yezidis, and massacred those who were unable to escape, he destroyed this house of idols ; but the ruins of the building, it was declared, had only been covered by a small accumulation of rubbish. The lower part of an Assyrian figure, in relief on basalt, dug up, it was said, in the mound, was actually brought to me ; but I had afterwards reason to suspect that it was discovered at Khorsabad. Excavations

were carried on for some time at Jerraiyah, but no remains of the Yezidi temple were brought to light.

Having finished my arrangements in Mosul, I returned to Nimroud on the 19th. During my absence, my Cawass had carried the excavations along the back of a wall, in the S.W. corner of the mound, and had discovered an entrance



PLAN I. South-West Ruin, Nimroud.

or doorway.* Being anxious to make as much progress as possible, I increased my workmen to thirty, and distributed them in three parties. By opening long trenches at right angles in various directions, we came upon the top of a wall,† built of slabs with inscriptions similar to those already described. One, however, was reversed, and was covered with characters, exceeding in size any I had yet seen. On examining the inscription carefully, I found that it corresponded with those of the chamber in the N.W. corner; but

* Wall *c*, Plan I.

† Wall *m*, same Plan.

as the edges of this, as well as of all the other slabs hitherto discovered in the S.W. ruins, had been cut away to make the stones fit into the wall, several letters had been destroyed. From these facts it was evident that materials taken from another building had been used in the construction of the one we were now exploring; but as yet it could not be ascertained whether the face or the back of the slabs had been uncovered; for the general plan of the edifice could not be determined until the heap of rubbish and earth under which it was buried had been removed. The excavations were now carried on but slowly. The soil, mixed with sun-dried and baked bricks, pottery, and fragments of alabaster, offered considerable resistance to the tools of the workmen; and when loosened, had to be removed in baskets and then thrown over the edge of the mound. The Nestorians from the mountains, strong and hardy men, could alone wield the pick; the Arabs were employed in carrying away the earth. Spades could not be used, and there were no other means than those I had adopted to clear away the rubbish from the ruins. A person standing on the mound could see no remains of building until he approached the edge of the trenches, into which the workmen descended by steps, and where parts of the walls were exposed to view.

The Abou-Salman and Tai Arabs continuing their depredations in the plains of Nimroud and surrounding country, I deemed it prudent to remove from Naifa, where I had hitherto resided, to Selamiyah. This village is built on a rising ground near the Tigris, and was formerly a place of some importance, being mentioned at a very early period as a market town by the Arab geographers, who generally connect it with the ruins of Athur or Nimroud. It occupies an ancient site, and in long lines of mounds, enclosing the village, can be traced the walls of an Assyrian town, or more probably of one of the suburbs of the capital. Even five years before Selamiyah had been a flourishing place, and could furnish 150 well-armed horsemen. The Pasha had, however, plundered it; and the inhabitants had fled to the mountains and into the neighbouring province of Baghdad.

Ten miserable huts now stood in the midst of ruins of bazaars and streets surrounding a kasr or palace, belonging to the former hereditary Pashas of Mosul, well-built of alabaster, but rapidly falling into decay. I had intended to take possession of this building, which was occupied by a few Hytas or irregular troops; but the rooms were in such a dilapidated condition that the low mud hut of the Kiayah, or chief of the village, appeared to be both safer and warmer. I accordingly spread my carpet in one of its corners, and giving the owner a few piastres to finish other dwelling-places which he had commenced, established myself for the winter. The premises, which were speedily completed, consisted of four hovels, surrounded by a mud wall, and roofed with reeds and boughs of trees. I occupied half of the largest habitation, the other half being appropriated for beasts of the plough, and various domestic animals. We were separated by a wall; in which, however, numerous apertures served as means of communication. These I studiously endeavoured for some time to block up. A second hut was devoted to the wives, children, and poultry of my host; a third served as kitchen and servants' hall: the fourth was converted into a stall for my horses. In the enclosure formed by the buildings and outer wall, the few sheep and goats which had escaped the rapacity of the Pasha, congregated during the night, and kept up a continual bleating and coughing until they were milked and turned out to pasture at day-break.

The roofs not having been constructed to exclude the winter rains now setting in, it required some exercise of ingenuity to escape the torrent which descended into my apartment. I usually passed the night on these occasions crouched up in a corner, or under a rude table which I had constructed. The latter, having been surrounded by trenches to carry off the accumulating waters, generally afforded the best shelter. My Cawass, who was a Constantinopolitan, complained bitterly of the hardships he was compelled to endure, and I had some difficulty in prevailing upon my servants to remain with me.

The present inhabitants of Selamiyah, and of most of the

villages in this part of the Pashalic of Mosul, are Turcomans, descendants of tribes brought by the early Turkish Sultans from the north of Asia Minor, to people a country which had been laid waste by repeated massacres and foreign invasions. In this part of the Ottoman Empire, there is scarcely, except in Mosul and in the Mountains, a vestige of the ancient population. The great tribes which inhabit the Desert came from the Gebel Shammar, in Nedjd, within the memory of man. The inhabitants of the plains to the east of the Tigris are mostly Turcomans and Kurds, mixed with Arabs, or with Yezidis, who are strangers in the land, and whose origin cannot easily be determined. A few Chaldæan and Jacobite Christians, scattered in Mosul and the neighbouring villages, or dwelling in the most inaccessible part of the mountains of Kurdistan, their places of refuge from the devastating bands of Tamerlane, are probably the only descendants of that great Assyrian people which once swayed, from these plains, a considerable part of Asia.

The Yuz-bashi, or captain of the irregular troops, one Daoud Agha, a native of the north of Asia Minor, called upon me as soon as I was established in my new quarters. Like most men of his class, acknowledged freebooters,* he

* The irregular cavalry (Hyta as they are called in this part of Turkey, and Bashi-bozuku in Roumelia and Anatolia) are collected from all classes and provinces. A man known for his courage and daring is named Hyta-bashi, or chief of the Hytas, and is furnished with *teskérés*, or orders for pay and provisions, for so many horsemen, from four or five hundred to a thousand or more. He collects all the vagrants and freebooters he can find to make up his number. They must provide their own arms and horses, although sometimes they are furnished with them by the Hyta-bashi, who deducts a part of their pay until he reimburses himself. The best Hytas are Albanians and Lazes, and they form a very effective body of irregular cavalry. Their pay at Mosul is small, amounting to about eight shillings a month; in other provinces it is considerably more. They are quartered on the villages, and are the terror of the inhabitants, whom they plunder and ill-treat as they think fit. When a Hyta-bashi has established a reputation for himself, his followers are numerous and devoted. He wanders about the provinces, and like a condottiere of the middle ages, sells his services, and those of his troops, to the Pasha who offers most pay, and the best prospects of plunder. Since the introduction of the *tanzimat*, or reformed system of Government, the number of irregular troops has been greatly reduced, and the Hytas are no longer able to ill-treat the inhabitants of villages as formerly.

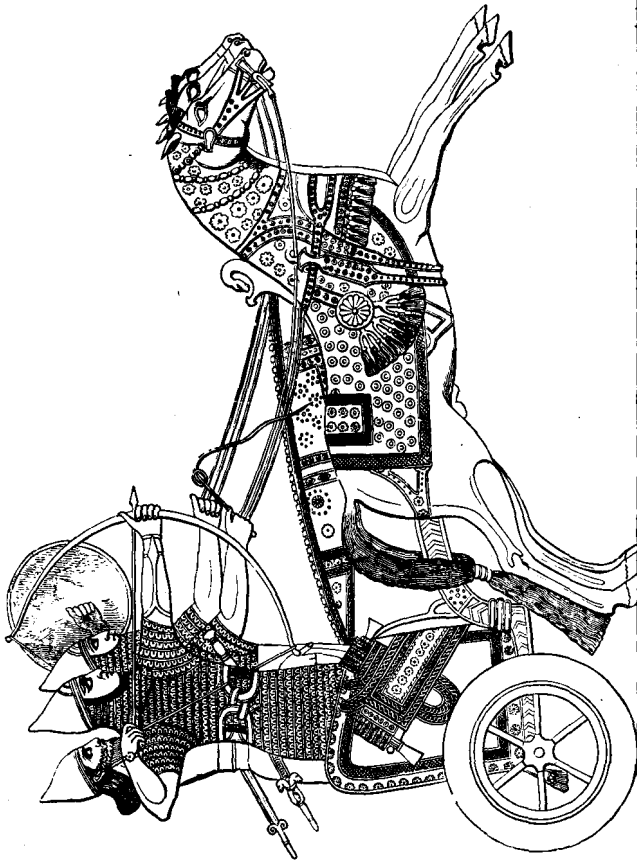
was frank and intelligent. He tendered me his services, entertained me with his adventures, and planned hunting expeditions. A few presents secured his adherence, and he proved himself afterwards a very useful and faithful ally.

I had now to ride three miles every morning to the mound of Nimroud; and my workmen, who were afraid, on account of the Arabs, to live at Naifa, returned, after the day's labour, to Selamiyah. The excavations were carried on as actively as the means at my disposal would permit. An entrance, or doorway, had now been completely cleared, and the backs of several inscribed slabs had been uncovered.* A cornerstone, which had evidently been brought from another building, was richly sculptured with flowers and scroll-work in relief; but there were no figures; nor could any idea be yet formed of the relative position of the walls. I therefore ordered a trench to be opened from the doorway into the interior of the mound, presuming that we should ultimately come to the opposite side of the chamber, to which, it appeared probable, we had found the entrance. After removing a large accumulation of earth mixed with charcoal, charred wood, and broken bricks, we reached the top of a new wall on the afternoon of the 28th November. In order to ascertain whether we were in the inside of a chamber, the workmen were directed to clear away the earth from both sides of the slabs. The south face was unsculptured, but the first stroke of the pick on the opposite side disclosed the top of a bas-relief. The Arabs were no less excited than myself by the discovery; and working until dark, notwithstanding a heavy fall of rain, they completely exposed to view two slabs.†

On each slab were two bas-reliefs, divided by an inscription. In the upper compartment of the largest was a battle scene, in which were represented two chariots, each drawn by richly caparisoned horses at full speed, and containing a group of three warriors, the principal of whom was beardless and evidently an eunuch. This figure was clothed in a complete suit of mail of metal scales, embossed in the centre,

* Wall and entrance *d*, Plan I. p. 22.

† Wall *f*, same Plan.



Assyrian Warriors in a Chariot, from a Bas-relief discovered at Nimroud.

and apparently attached to a shirt of felt or linen. This shirt was confined at the waist by a girdle. On his head was a pointed helmet, from which fell lappets, covered with metal scales, protecting the ears, lower part of the face, and neck, the whole head-dress resembling that of the early Normans. His left hand grasped a bow at full stretch, whilst his right drew the string, with the arrow ready to be discharged. On his left arm was a guard, probably of leather, to protect it from the arrow. His sword was in a sheath, the end of which was elegantly adorned with the figures of two lions. In the same chariot were a charioteer urging on the horses with reins and whip, and a shield-bearer who warded off the shafts of the enemy with a circular shield. The chariots were low, rounded at the top, and edged by a rich moulding or border, probably inlaid with precious metals or painted. To the sides were suspended two highly ornamented quivers, each containing, beside the arrows, a hatchet and an axe. The wheels had six spokes. The curved end of the pole, adorned with the head of a bull, was attached to the fore part of the chariot by a singular contrivance, of which neither the use nor the material can be determined from the sculptures. It appears to have been intended both as an ornament and as a support for the pole, and may have been a light frame-work, covered with linen or silk; its breadth almost precludes the idea of its having been of any other material. It was elaborately painted or embroidered with sacred emblems and elegant devices. The chariot, which was probably of wood and open behind, was drawn by three horses, whose trappings, decorated with a profusion of tassels and rosettes, must have been of the most costly description. They may have been of the looms of Dedan, whose merchants, in the days of old, supplied the East with 'precious clothes for chariots.* The archer was probably an Assyrian general, the Rab-saris, or chief of the eunuchs, and was pursuing a flying enemy. Beneath the chariot wheels were scattered the conquered and the dying, and an archer, about to be trodden down, was represented as endeavouring to stop the

* Ezekiel, xxvii. 20.

advancing horses. The costume of the vanquished differed from that of the Assyrian warriors. They wore short tunics descending to their knees, and their hair was confined by a simple fillet round the temples.

I observed with surprise the elegance and richness of the ornaments, the attempt at a faithful delineation of the limbs and muscles, both in the men and horses, and the knowledge of art displayed in the grouping of the figures, and in the general composition. In all these respects, as well as in costume, this sculpture appeared to me not only to differ from, but to surpass in design and execution, the bas-reliefs of Khorsabad. I traced also, in the cuneiform character used in the inscription, a marked difference from that on the monument discovered by M. Botta. Unfortunately, the slab had been exposed to fire, and was fractured into so many pieces that it would have been impossible to remove it. The edges had, moreover, been cut away, to the injury of some of the figures and of the inscription; and as the next slab was reversed, it was evident that both had been brought from another building.

The lower bas-relief on the same slab represented the siege of a castle, or walled city. To the left were two warriors, armed with short swords and circular shields, and dressed in a tunic, edged by a fringe of tassels, and confined at the waist by a broad girdle. Each carried a quiver at his back, and a bow on his left arm. They wore the pointed helmet, before described. The foremost warrior was ascending a ladder placed against the castle. Three turrets, with angular battlements, rose above walls similarly ornamented. In the first turret were two warriors, one in the act of discharging an arrow, the other raising a shield and casting a stone at the assailants, from whom the besieged were distinguished by their head-dress,—a simple fillet binding the hair above the temples. The second turret was occupied by a slinger preparing his sling. In the interval between this turret and the third, and over an arched gateway, was a female figure, distinguished by long hair descending upon her shoulders in ringlets. Her right hand was raised as if in the act of asking for mercy. In the third turret were two

more of the besieged, the first discharging an arrow, the second elevating his shield and endeavouring with a torch to burn an instrument resembling a catapult, which had been brought up to the wall by an incline constructed apparently of boughs of trees and rubbish. These figures were out of all proportion when compared with the size of the building. An Assyrian warrior, bending on one knee, and holding a torch in his right hand, was setting fire to the gate of the castle, whilst another in full armour was forcing stones from the walls with an instrument, probably of iron, resembling a blunt spear. Between them was a wounded man falling headlong from the battlements.

The adjoining slab, which was angular in shape and formed a corner, was much injured, the greater part having been cut away in order to fit it into its place. The upper of the two compartments into which it was divided was occupied by two warriors; the foremost in a pointed helmet, riding on one horse and leading a second; the other without helmet, standing in a chariot, and holding the reins loosely in his hands. The chariot horses had been destroyed, and the marks of the chisel were visible on many parts of the slab, the sculpture having been in some places carefully defaced. The lower bas-relief represented the battlements and towers of a castle. A woman stood on the walls tearing her hair in sign of grief. Beneath, by the side of a stream, denoted by numerous undulating lines, crouched a fisherman drawing a fish from the water with a fishing line. This slab had been exposed to fire like that adjoining, and had sustained too much injury to be removed.

As I was meditating in the evening over my discovery, Daoud Agha entered, and seating himself near me, delivered a long speech, to the effect, that he was a servant of the Pasha, who was again the slave of the Sultan; and that servants were bound to obey the commands of their master, however disagreeable and unjust they might be. I saw at once to what this exordium was about to lead, and was prepared for the announcement, that he had received orders from Mosul to stop the excavations by threatening those who were inclined to work for me. On the following morning,

therefore, I rode to the town, and waited upon his Excellency. He pretended to be taken by surprise, disclaimed having given any such orders, and directed his secretary to write at once to the commander of the irregular troops, who was to give me every assistance rather than throw impediments in my way. He promised to let me have the letter in the afternoon before I returned to Selamiyah; but an officer came to me soon after, and stated that as the Pasha was unwilling to detain me he would forward it during the night. I rode back to the village, and acquainted Daoud Agha with the result of my visit. About midnight, however, he returned to me, and declared that a horseman had just brought him more stringent orders than any he had yet received, and that on no account was he to permit me to carry on the excavations.

Surprised at this inconsistency, I returned to Mosul early next day, and again called upon the Pasha. 'It was with deep regret,' said he, 'I learnt after your departure yesterday, that the mound in which you are digging had been used as a burying-ground by Mussulmans, and was covered with their graves; now you are aware that by the law it is forbidden to disturb a tomb, and the Cadi and Mufti have already made representations to me on the subject.' 'In the first place,' replied I, 'being pretty well acquainted with the mound, I can state that no graves have been disturbed; in the second, after the wise and firm '*politica*' which your Excellency exhibited at Siwas, gravestones would present no difficulty. Please God, the Cadi and Mufti have profited by the lesson which your Excellency gave to the ill-mannered Ulema of that city.' 'In Siwas,' returned he, immediately understanding my meaning, 'I had Mussulmans to deal with, and there was tanzimat,* but here we have only Kurds and Arabs, and Wallah! they are beasts. No, I cannot allow you to proceed; you are my dearest and most intimate friend; if anything happens to you, what grief should I not suffer; your life is more valuable than old stones; besides, the responsibility would fall upon my head.' Finding that

* The reformed system, introduced into most provinces of Turkey, had not then been extended to Mosul and Bagdad.

the Pasha had resolved to interrupt my proceedings, I pretended to acquiesce in his answer, and requested that a Cawass of his own might be sent with me to Nimroud, as I wished to draw the sculptures and copy the inscriptions which had already been uncovered. To this he consented, and ordered an officer to accompany me.

On my return to Selamiyah there was little difficulty in inducing the Pasha's Cawass to permit a few workmen to *guard* the sculptures during the day; and as Daoud Agha considered that this functionary's presence relieved him from any further responsibility, he no longer interfered with me. Wishing to ascertain the existence of the graves, and also to draw one of the bas-reliefs, which had been uncovered, I rode to the ruins on the following morning, accompanied by the Hytas and their chief, who were going their usual rounds in search of plundering Arabs. Daoud Agha confessed to me on our way that he had received orders to make graves on the mound, and that his troops had been employed for two nights in bringing stones from distant villages for that purpose.* 'We have destroyed more real tombs of the true Believers,' said he, 'in making sham ones, than you could have defiled between the Zab and Selamiyah. We have killed our horses and ourselves in carrying those accursed stones.' A steady rain setting in, I left the horsemen, and returned to the village.

In the evening Daoud Agha brought back with him a prisoner and two of his followers severely wounded. He had fallen in with a party of horsemen under Sheikh Abd-urrahman of the Abou-Salman Arabs, whose object in crossing the Zab had been to plunder me as I worked at the mound. After a short engagement, the Arabs were compelled to recross the river.

I continued to employ a few men to open trenches by way of experiment, and was not long in finding other sculptures. Near the western edge of the mound were discovered parts of several colossal figures, at the foot of the S.E. corner a

* In Arabia, the graves are merely marked by large stones placed upright at the head and feet, and in a heap over the body.

crouching lion, rudely carved in black basalt, and in the centre a pair of gigantic winged bulls, the head and half of the wings of which had been destroyed. On the backs of the slabs on which the bulls were sculptured, in high relief, were inscriptions in the arrow-headed character. The remains of two small winged lions forming the entrance into a chamber, and a bas-relief nine feet in height, representing a human figure raising the right hand, and carrying a branch with three flowers resembling the poppy, in the left, were also uncovered. But these sculptures afforded no clue to the nature of the buildings, of which only detached and unconnected walls had as yet been exposed.

The experiment had now been fairly made ; there was no longer any doubt of the existence not only of sculptures and inscriptions, but even of large edifices in the interior of the mound of Nimroud. I lost no time, therefore, in acquainting Sir Stratford Canning with my discovery, and in urging the necessity of a Firman, or order from the Sultan, which would prevent any future interference either on the part of the authorities, or of the inhabitants of the country.

It was nearly Christmas, and as it was desirable to remove from the mound the tombs, which had been made by the Pasha's orders, and others, more genuine, which had since been found, I came to an understanding on the subject with Daoud Agha. I covered over the sculptures brought to light, and withdrew altogether from Nimroud, leaving an agent at Selamiyah.

On entering Mosul on the morning of the 18th of December, I found the whole population in a ferment of joy. A Tatar, or imperial courier, had that morning brought from Constantinople the welcome news that the Porte, at length alive to the wretched condition of the province, and to the misery of the inhabitants, had disgraced the governor, and had named Ismail Pasha, a young major-general of the new school, to carry on affairs until Hafiz Pasha, who had been appointed to succeed Keritli Oglu, could reach his government.

Ismail Pasha, who had been for some time in command of the troops at Diarbekir, had gained a great reputation for **justice** amongst the Mussulmans, and for toleration amongst

the Christians. Consequently his appointment had given much satisfaction to the people of Mosul, who were prepared to receive him with a demonstration. However, he slipped into the town during the night, some time before he had been expected. On the following morning a change had taken place at the palace, and Mohammed Pasha, with his followers, were reduced to extremities. The dragoman of the consulate, who had business to transact with the late governor, found him sitting in a dilapidated chamber, through which the rain penetrated without hindrance. 'Thus it is,' said he, 'with God's creatures. Yesterday all those dogs were kissing my feet; to-day every one, and everything, falls upon me, even the rain!'

Meanwhile the state of the country rendering the continuation of my researches at Nimroud almost impossible, I determined to proceed to Baghdad, to make arrangements for the removal of the sculptures at a future period.

CHAPTER III.

Return to Mosul—Ismaïl Pasha—Change in the state of the country—Return to Nimroud—The ruins in spring—Excavations resumed—Further discoveries—New interruptions—Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman and the Abou-Salman Arabs—Fresh bas-reliefs in the north-west corner—Discovery of the principal palace—Entire bas-reliefs—Discovery of the colossal lions—Surprise of the Arabs—Sensation at Mosul, and conduct of the Pasha and Cadi—Excavations stopped—Further discoveries—Description of the human-headed lions—Reflections on their antiquity and object—The Jebour Arabs—Their Sheikhs—Nimroud in March—Description of the plain at sunset—The tunnel of Negoub—An Assyrian inscription.

ON my return to Mosul in the beginning of January, I found Ismaïl Pasha installed in the government. He received me with courtesy, offered no opposition to the continuation of my researches at Nimroud, and directed the irregular troops stationed at Selamiyah to afford me assistance and protection. The change since my departure had been as sudden as great. A few conciliatory acts on the part of the new governor, an order from the Porte for an inquiry into the sums unjustly levied by the late Pasha, with a view to their repayment, and a promise of a diminution of taxes, had so far encouraged those who had fled to the mountains and the desert, that the inhabitants of the villages were slowly returning to their homes; and even the Arab tribes, whose pasture grounds are in the districts of Mosul, were again pitching their tents on the banks of the Tigris.

During my absence my agents had not been inactive. Several trenches had been opened in the great mound of Baasheikha; and fragments of sculpture and inscriptions, with entire pottery and inscribed bricks, had been discovered

there. At Karamles a platform of brickwork had been uncovered, and the Assyrian origin of the ruin proved by the cuneiform inscription on the bricks, which contained the name of Sargon, the Khorsabad king.

I rode to Nimroud on the 17th of January, having first engaged a party of Nestorian Chaldæans to accompany me.

The change that had taken place in the face of the country during my absence, was no less remarkable than that in the political state of the province. To me they were both equally agreeable and welcome. The rains, which had fallen almost incessantly from the day of my departure for Baghdad, had rapidly brought forward the vegetation of spring. The mound was no longer an arid and barren heap; its surface and its sides were covered with verdure. From the summit of the pyramid the eye ranged, on one side, over a broad plain enclosed by the Tigris and the Zab; on the other, over a low undulating country bounded by the snow-capped mountains of Kurdistan; but it was no longer the dreary waste I had left a month before; the landscape was clothed in green, the black tents of the Arabs chequered the plain of Nimroud, and their numerous flocks pastured on the distant hills. The Abou-Salman had recrossed the Zab, and had sought their old encamping grounds. The Jehesh and Shemutti Arabs had returned to their villages, around which the wandering Jebours had pitched their tents, and were now engaged in cultivating the soil. Even on the mound the plough opened its furrows, and corn was sown over the palaces of the Assyrian kings.

Security had been restored, and Nimroud offered a more convenient and pleasant residence than Selamiyah. Hiring, therefore, three mud-built huts, I removed to my new dwelling place. A few rude chairs, a table, and a wooden bedstead, formed the whole of my furniture. My Cawass spread his carpet, and hung his tobacco pouch in the corner of a hovel, which he had appropriated, and spent his days in peaceful contemplation. The servants constructed a rude kitchen, and the grooms shared the stalls with the horses. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a young Chaldæan gentleman, and the brother of the British Vice-consul, came to reside with

me, and undertook the payment and superintendence of the workmen.

My agent, with the assistance of the chief of the Hytas, had punctually fulfilled the instructions he had received on my departure. Not only were the counterfeit graves carefully removed, but even others, which possessed more claim to respect, had been rooted out. I entered into an elaborate argument with the Arabs on the subject of the latter, and proved to them that, as the bodies were not turned towards Mecca, they could not be those of true Believers. I ordered the remains, however, to be carefully collected, and to be reburied at the foot of the mound.

Since my last visit, another sculptured slab, divided into two compartments, had been discovered in the S. W. ruins.* The upper bas-relief had been destroyed; the lower contained four figures, carrying supplies for a banquet, or spoil taken from the enemy. The object carried by the foremost figure could not be determined; the second bore either fruit or a loaf of bread; the third a basket and a skin of wine; the fourth a similar skin, and a vessel of not inelegant shape. The four figures were clothed in long fringed robes, descending to the ankles, and wore the conical cap or helmet before described. The slab had been reduced in size, to the injury of the sculpture, and had evidently belonged to another building. It had on either side the usual inscription, and had been so much injured by fire that it could not be moved.

My labours had scarcely been resumed when I received information that the Cadi of Mosul was endeavouring to stir up the people against me, on the plea that I was digging up and carrying away treasure; and, what was worse, finding inscriptions proving that the Franks once held the country, and upon the evidence of which they intended immediately to resume possession of it, exterminating all true Mussulmans. These stories, however absurd they may appear, rapidly gained ground in the town. Old Mohammed Emin Pasha, a great authority upon such matters, brought out

* Wall 4, Plan I. p. 22.

his Yakuti (a well-known and much-esteemed Arabic writer), and confirmed, by that geographer's account of treasures anciently found at Khorsabad, the allegations of the Cadi. A representation was ultimately made by the Ulema to Ismail Pasha ; and as he expressed a wish to see me, I rode to Mosul. He was not, he said, influenced by the Cadi or the Mufti, nor did he believe the absurd tales which they had spread abroad. I should shortly see how he intended to treat these troublesome fellows, but he thought it prudent at present to humour them, and made it a personal request that I would, for the time, suspend the excavations. I consented with regret ; and once more returned to Nimroud, without being able to gratify the ardent curiosity I felt to explore further the extraordinary building, the nature of which was still a mystery to me.

The Abou-Salman Arabs, who encamp around Nimroud, are known for their thievish propensities, and might have caused me some annoyance. Thinking it prudent, therefore, to conciliate their chief, I rode over one morning to their principal encampment. Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman received me at the entrance of his capacious tent of black goat-hair, which was crowded with relations, followers, and strangers, enjoying his hospitality. He was one of the handsomest Arabs I ever saw ; tall, robust, and well-made, with a countenance in which intelligence was no less marked than courage and resolution. On his head he wore a turban of dark linen, from under which a many-coloured kerchief fell over his shoulders ; his dress was a simple white linen shirt, descending to the ankles, and an Arab cloak thrown loosely over it. Contrary to the custom of the Arabs, he had shaved his beard ; and, although he could scarcely be much beyond forty, I observed that the little hair which could be distinguished under his turban was already grey. He received me with every demonstration of hospitality, and led me to the upper place in the tent, which was divided by a goat-hair curtain from the harem, or women's quarters. The place of reception for the guests was at the same time occupied by two favourite mares and a colt. A few camels were kneeling on the grass around, and the horses of the strangers were

tyed by halters to the tent-pins. From the carpets and cushions, which were spread for me, stretched on both sides a long line of men of the most motley appearance, seated on the bare ground. The Sheikh placed himself at the furthest end, as is the custom in some of the tribes, to show his respect for his guest ; and could only be prevailed upon, after many excuses and protestations, to share the carpet with me. In the centre of the group, near a small fire of dried camel's dung, crouched a half-naked Arab, engaged alternately in blowing up the expiring embers, and in pounding the roasted coffee in a mortar, ready to replenish the huge copper pots which stood near him.

After the customary compliments had been exchanged with all around, one of my attendants beckoned to the Sheikh, who left the tent to receive the presents I had brought to him,—a silk gown, such as are worn by Arab chiefs, and a supply of coffee and sugar. He dressed himself in his new attire, and returned to the assembly. 'Inshallah,' said I, 'we are now friends, although scarcely a month ago you came over the Zab on purpose to appropriate the little property I am accustomed to carry about me.' 'Wallah, Bey,' he replied, 'you say true, we are friends ; but listen : the Arabs either sit down and serve his Majesty the Sultan, or they eat from others, as others would eat from them. Now my tribe are of the Zobeide, and were brought here many years ago by the Pashas of the Abd-el-Jelleel.* These lands were given us in return for the services we rendered the Turks in keeping back the Tai and the Shammar, who crossed the rivers to plunder the villages. All the great men of the Abou-Salman perished in encounters with the Bedouin†, and Injeh Bairakdar, Mohammed Pasha, upon whom God has had mercy, acknowledged our fidelity and treated us with honour. When that blind dog, the son of the Cretan, may curses fall upon him ! came to Mosul, I waited upon him, as it is usual for the Sheikh ; what did *he* do ? Did *he* give me the cloak of honour ? No ; he put me,

* The former hereditary governors of Mosul.

† The father, uncles, and two or three brothers of Abd-ur-rahman, besides many of his other relations, had been slain as he described.

an Arab of the tribe of Zobeide, a tribe which had fought with the Prophet, into the public stocks. For forty days my heart melted away in a damp cell, and I was exposed to every variety of torture. Look at these hairs,' continued he, lifting up his turban, 'they turned white in that time, and I must now shave my beard—a shame amongst the Arabs. I was released at last; but how did I return to the tribe?—a beggar, unable to kill a sheep for my guests. He took my mares, my flocks, and my camels, as the price of my liberty. Now tell me, O Bey, in the name of God, if the Osmanlis have eaten from me and my guests, shall I not eat from them and theirs?'

The fate of Abd-ur-rahman had been such as he described it; and so had fared several chiefs of the desert and of the mountains. It was not surprising that these men, proud of their origin and accustomed to the independence of a wandering life, had revenged themselves upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the villages, who had no less cause to complain than themselves. However, the Sheikh promised to abstain from plunder for the future, and to present himself to Ismail Pasha, of whose conciliatory conduct he had already heard.

It was nearly the middle of February before I thought it prudent to make fresh experiments among the ruins. To avoid notice I employed only a few men, and confined myself to the examination of such parts of the mound as appeared to contain buildings. My first attempt was in the S. W. corner, where a new wall was speedily discovered, all the slabs of which were sculptured, and uninjured by fire, though they had, unfortunately, been half destroyed by long exposure to the atmosphere.* On three consecutive slabs was one bas-relief; on others were only parts of a subject. It was evident from the costume, the ornaments, and the general treatment, that these sculptures did not belong either to the same building, or to the same period as those previously discovered. I recognised in them the style of Khor-sabad, and in the inscriptions certain characters, which were peculiar to the remains from that ruin. These slabs,

* Wall *g*, Plan I. p. 22.

like those in other parts of the edifice, had evidently been brought from elsewhere.

The most perfect of the bas-reliefs was, in many respects, interesting. It represented a king, distinguished by his high conical tiara, raising his extended right hand and resting his left upon a bow. At his feet crouched a warrior, probably a captive enemy or rebel, but more likely the latter as he wore the pointed helmet peculiar to the Assyrians. An eunuch held a fly-flapper or fan over the head of the king, who appeared to be conversing or performing some ceremony with an officer standing in front of him,—probably his vizir or minister.* Behind this personage, who differed from the king by his head-dress,—a simple fillet confining the hair,—were two attendants, the first an eunuch, the second a bearded figure. This bas-relief was separated from a second above, by an inscription; the upper sculpture had been almost totally destroyed, and I could with difficulty trace a wounded figure, wearing a helmet with a curved crest of Greek form, and horsemen engaged in battle. Both subjects were continued on the adjoining slabs, but they were broken off near the bottom, and the feet of a row of figures, probably other attendants, standing behind the king and his minister, could alone be distinguished.

On the same wall, which had completely disappeared in some places, could be traced another group resembling that just described, and several colossal winged figures in low relief.

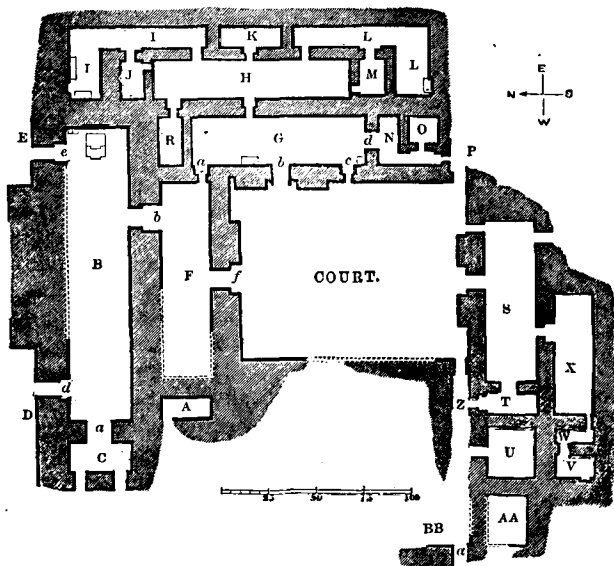
Some deep trenches led to the discovery of two new walls,† the sculptures on which were not better preserved than those previously found in this part of the mound. Of the lower parts of several colossal figures, some had been purposely

* I shall in future designate this person, who is continually represented in the Assyrian bas-reliefs, the king's vizir or minister. It has been conjectured that he is a friendly or tributary monarch, but as he often occurs amongst the attendants, aiding the king in his battles, or waiting upon him at the celebration of religious ceremonies, with his hands crossed in front, as is still the fashion in the East with dependents, it appears more probable that he was his minister, or some high officer of the court.

† s and z, Plan I. p. 22.

defaced by a sharp instrument ; others, from long exposure, had been almost entirely obliterated.

These experiments were sufficient to prove that the building I was exploring had not been entirely destroyed by fire, but had been partly exposed to gradual decay. No well-preserved sculptures had hitherto been discovered, and only one or two could be removed. I determined, therefore, to abandon this corner of the mound, and to resume excavations



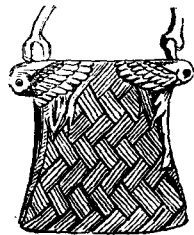
PLAN II. North-west Palace, Nimroud.

in the north-west ruins near the chamber first opened, where the slabs were uninjured. The workmen were directed to dig behind the remains of the small lions, which appeared to have stood at a door or entrance. After removing much earth, they discovered a few unsculptured slabs, fallen from their places and broken in many pieces. The walls of the room of which they had originally formed part could not be traced.

As this part of the building stood on the very edge of the mound, it had probably been more exposed, and had consequently sustained more injury than any other. I determined, therefore, to open a trench more in the centre of the edifice, and accordingly commenced digging at the edge of a deep gully or ravine, which, worn by the winter rains, extended far into the ruins. In two days the workmen reached the top of an entire slab, standing in its original position.* On one face of it I discovered, to my great satisfaction, two colossal human figures carved in low relief, and in admirable preservation. In a few hours the earth and rubbish were completely removed from the sculpture. The figures were back to back, and from the shoulders of each sprang two wings. They appeared to represent divinities, presiding over the seasons, or over some particular religious ceremonies. The one, whose face was turned to the East, carried a fallow deer on his right arm, and in his left hand a branch bearing five flowers. Around his temples was a fillet, adorned in front with a rosette. The other held a square vessel or basket, by a handle, in the left hand, and an object resembling a fir-cone in the right.† On his head he wore a rounded cap, having at the lower part a kind of horn curved upwards in front. The garments of both, consisting of a robe or stole falling from the shoulders to the ankles, and a short tunic underneath descending to the knee, were richly and tastefully decorated with embroideries and fringes. Their hair fell in a profusion of ringlets on their shoulders, and their beards were elaborately arranged in alternate rows of curls. Although the relief was lower, yet the outline was perhaps more careful and

* Chamber B, Plan II.

† This square vessel was probably of metal, sometimes made to resemble a basket. It may have contained water, as one of the sacred elements; whilst the fir-cone, from its inflammable nature, may have typified fire, another holy element; or the two objects may have been used for sacrificial purposes, and the winged figures may represent priests engaged in sacrifice. The fir-cone and this square vessel or basket are constantly seen in the Assyrian sculptures.



Vessel or Basket carried by Winged Figures.

true than that of the sculptures of Khorsabad. The limbs were delineated with peculiar accuracy, and the muscles and bones faithfully, though too strongly and coarsely marked. The ornaments delicately graven on the robes, the tassels and fringes, the bracelets and armlets, the elaborate curls of

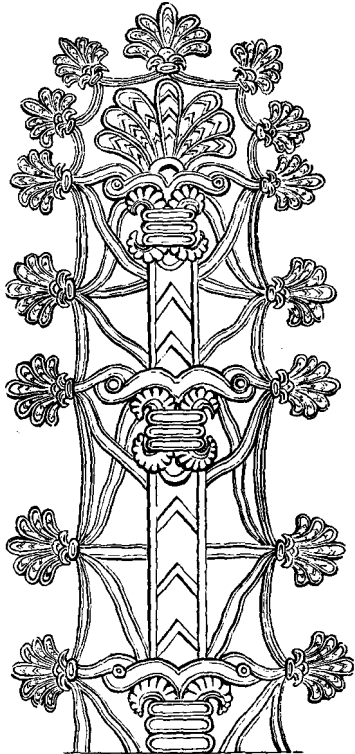


Winged Figure. (N.W. Palace, Nimroud.)

the hair and beard, were all as perfect as if the bas-relief had just left the workshop of the sculptor. In the centre of the slab, and crossing the figures, was an inscription in the arrow-headed character.*

* These figures are now in the British Museum.

Adjoining this slab was a second, cut so as to form an angle or corner of the wall, and sculptured with an elegant device, in which curved branches, springing from a kind of scroll-work, terminated in flowers of graceful form. As one of the winged figures last described was turned, as if in act of adoration, towards this device, it was evidently a sacred emblem; and I recognised in it the holy tree, or tree of life, so universally adored, from the remotest periods, in the East, and preserved in the ancient religion of the Persians to the final overthrow of their empire by the Arabian conquerors. The flowers were formed by seven petals springing from two tendrils, or a double scroll; resembling that graceful ornament characteristic of the Ionic order of architecture known as the 'honeysuckle.' In the embroideries on the garments of the two winged figures just described, and on other bas-reliefs subsequently discovered, this flower alternates with another ornament resembling a tulip, either full blown, or in the bud.* The fact of the two flowers occurring together establishes, beyond a doubt, the origin of one of the most



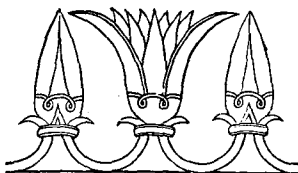
Sacred Tree. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

* That the Assyrians derived this ornament from a tulip or lily is, I think, almost proved by the representation of a flower and bud in a bas-relief discovered at Kouyunjik.

favourite and beautiful ornaments of Greek art, which may thus be traced directly to Assyria. The intertwining branches



Assyrian Ornament. (Nimroud.)



Assyrian Ornament. (Kouyunjik.)

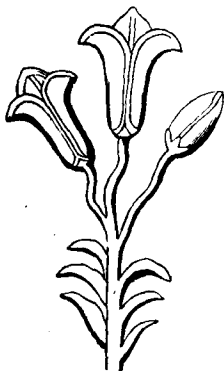


Early Greek Honeysuckle Ornament.



Later Greek Honeysuckle Ornament.

of this sacred tree of the Assyrians may also illustrate the 'network of pomegranates,' which was one of the principal ornaments of the temple of Solomon,* as further discoveries have shown that there was a remarkable similarity between the architecture and architectural ornaments of the Jews and of the Assyrians. This sculpture and the two winged figures resembled in their style and details several of the fragments built into the S.W. palace, proving at once from whence the greater part of the materials used in the construction of that building had been obtained. Adjoining this corner-stone was another slab, on which was sculptured also in low relief, a figure of



Flower of the Tulip or Lily.
(Kouyunjik.)

* 1 Kings, vii. 41, 42. Similar trees, with pomegranates instead of flowers, were afterwards discovered in the centre palace of Nimroud. Mr. Fergusson, in his 'Palace of Nineveh and Persepolis restored,'

singular form. A human body clothed in robes similar to those of the winged men just described, was surmounted



Eagle-Headed Figure. (N.W. Palace, Nimroud.)

has conjectured that this sacred tree, so frequently represented in Assyrian monuments, represents the 'grove' or 'groves' which led the Israelites into idolatry (Judges, iii. 7; 1 Kings, xiv. 23; 2 Kings, xxi. 3, 7, &c.). Mr. Fergusson also remarks, with regard to the connection between the ornaments mentioned in the text and those of Greek

by the head of an eagle or of a vulture.* The long curved beak was half open, and displayed a narrow pointed tongue, on which were still the traces of red paint. On the shoulders fell the usual curled and bushy hair of the Assyrian images, and a comb of feathers rose on the top of the head. Two wings sprang from the shoulders. In one hand this figure held the square vessel, in the other the fir-cone. In a kind of girdle it carried three daggers, the handle of one being in the form of the head of a bull. They may have been of precious metal, but more probably of copper, inlaid with ivory or enamel. A few days before, a square-headed copper dagger handle, hollowed to receive an ornament of some such material, had been discovered in the south-west ruins, and is now preserved in the British Museum.

This figure, which was probably intended to represent the union of certain divine attributes, may perhaps be identified with the god Nisroch, in whose temple Sennacherib was slain by his sons † after his return from his unsuccessful expedition against Jerusalem; the word 'Nisr' signifying, in many Semitic languages, an eagle. ‡

On all these figures were seen traces of colour, particularly on the hair, beard, eyes, and sandals, and there can be no doubt that they had been originally painted, like all early works of sculpture. The slabs on which they were sculptured had sustained no injury, and had evidently formed part of the panelling of a chamber, which could be com-

architecture, 'that it is now impossible to doubt that all that is Ionic in the arts of Greece is derived from the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates' (p. 340).

* It has been suggested that it is the head of a cock, but it is unquestionably that of a carnivorous bird of the eagle tribe.

† 2 Kings, xix. 37.

‡ The form of this deity was conjectured to be that of an eagle long before the discovery of the Assyrian sculptures (And. Beyerli ad Joh. Seldeni de Dis Syriis Syntag. addit. p. 325). The identification of this figure with the god 'Nisroch' has, however, given rise to a great deal of discussion. Sir Henry Rawlinson is of opinion that there was no Assyrian god known by the name of Nisroch, which, he contends, is a corruption in some MSS. of the Septuagint, of 'Asarak,' or 'Mesorak.'

pletely explored by digging along the wall, now partly uncovered.

On the morning following these discoveries, I had ridden to the encampment of Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman, and was returning to the mound, when I saw two Arabs of his tribe coming towards me and urging their mares to the top of



Discovery of the Gigantic Head.

their speed. On reaching me they stopped. 'Hasten, O Bey,' exclaimed one of them—'hasten to the diggers, for they have found Nimrod himself. Wallah ! it is wonderful but it is true ! we have seen him with our eyes. There is no God but God ;' and both joining in this pious exclamation, they galloped off, without further words, in the direction of their tents.

On reaching the ruins I descended into the newly opened

trench, and found the workmen, who had already seen me, as I approached, standing near a heap of baskets and cloaks. Whilst Awad advanced and asked for a present to celebrate the occasion, the Arabs withdrew the screen they had hastily constructed, and disclosed an enormous human head sculptured in full out of the alabaster of the country. They had uncovered the upper part of a figure, the remainder of which was still buried in the earth. I saw at once that the head must belong to a winged lion or bull, similar to those of Khorsabad and Persepolis. It was in admirable preservation. The expression was calm, yet majestic, and the outline of the features showed a freedom and knowledge of art, scarcely to be looked for in works of so remote a period. The cap had three horns, and, unlike that of the human-headed bulls hitherto found in Assyria, was rounded and without ornament at the top.

I was not surprised that the Arabs had been amazed and terrified at this apparition. It required no stretch of imagination to conjure up the most strange fancies. This gigantic head, blanched with age, thus rising from the bowels of the earth, might well have belonged to one of those fearful beings which are described in the traditions of the country as appearing to mortals, slowly ascending from the regions below. One of the workmen, on catching the first glimpse of the monster, had thrown down his basket and had run off towards Mosul as fast as his legs could carry him. I learnt this with regret, as I anticipated the consequences.

Whilst I was superintending the removal of the earth, which still clung to the sculpture, and giving directions for the continuation of the work, the noise of horsemen was heard, and presently Abd-ur-rahman, followed by half his tribe, appeared on the edge of the trench. As soon as the two Arabs I had met had reached their tents, and published the wonders they had seen, every one mounted his mare and rode to the mound to satisfy himself of the truth of these inconceivable reports. When they beheld the head they all cried together, 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his Prophet!' It was some time before the Sheikh could be prevailed upon to descend into the pit, and convince

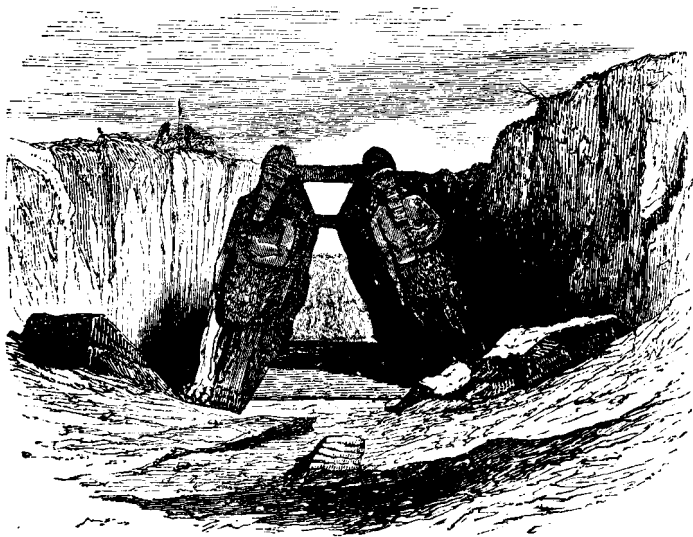
himself that the image he saw was of stone. 'This is not the work of men's hands,' exclaimed he, 'but of those infidel giants of whom the Prophet, peace be with him! has said, that they were higher than the tallest date tree; this is one of the idols which Noah, peace be with him! cursed before the flood.' In this opinion, the result of a careful examination, all the bystanders concurred.

I now ordered a trench to be dug due south from the head, in the expectation of finding a corresponding figure, and before night-fall reached the object of my search about twelve feet distant. Engaging two or three men to sleep near the sculptures, I returned to the village, and celebrated the day's discovery by a slaughter of sheep, of which all the Arabs near partook. As some wandering musicians chanced to be at Selamiyah, I sent for them, and dances were kept up during the greater part of the night. On the following morning Arabs from the other side of the Tigris, and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, congregated on the mound. Even the women could not repress their curiosity, and came in crowds, with their children, from afar. My Cawass was stationed during the day in the trench, into which I would not allow the multitude to descend.

As I had expected, the report of the discovery of the gigantic head, carried by the terrified Arab to Mosul, had thrown the town into commotion. He had scarcely checked his speed before reaching the bridge. Entering breathless into the bazaars, he announced to every one he met that Nimrod had appeared. The news soon got to the ears of the Cadi, who called the Mufti and the Ulema together, to consult upon this unexpected occurrence. Their deliberations ended in a procession to the Governor, and a formal protest, on the part of the Mussulmans of the town, against proceedings so directly contrary to the laws of the Koran. The Cadi had no distinct idea whether the very bones of the mighty hunter had been uncovered, or only his image; nor did Ismail Pasha very clearly remember whether Nimrod was a true-believing prophet, or an infidel. I consequently received a somewhat unintelligible message from his Excellency, to the effect that the remains should be treated with

respect, and be by no means further disturbed; that he wished the excavations to be stopped at once, and desired to confer with me on the subject.

I rode to Mosul at once, and called upon him accordingly. I had some difficulty in making him understand the nature of my discovery. At last he was persuaded that I had only discovered part of an ancient figure in stone, and that

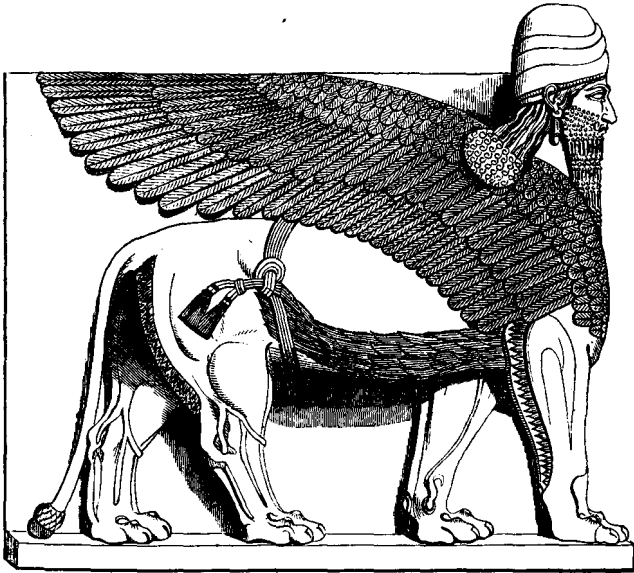


An Entrance to the Great Hall of the North-west Palace. (Nimroud.)

neither the remains of Nimrod nor of any other personage mentioned in the Koran had been disturbed. However, as he requested me to discontinue my operations until the excitement in the town had somewhat subsided, I returned to Nimroud and dismissed the workmen, retaining only two men to dig leisurely along the walls without giving cause for further interference. I ascertained by the end of March the existence of a second pair of winged human-headed lions,*

* Entrance to Chamber B, Plan II. p. 42.

differing from those previously discovered in form, the human shape being continued to the waist, and being furnished with human arms, as well as with the legs of the lion. In one hand each figure carried a goat or stag, and in the other, which hung down by the side, a branch with three flowers. They formed a northern entrance into the hall or chamber, of which the human-headed lions previously described formed the western portal. I completely un-



Human-headed Lion. (N.W. Palace, Nimroud.)

covered the latter, and found them to be entire. They were about twelve feet high and twelve feet long. The body and limbs were admirably portrayed; the muscles and bones, although strongly developed, to denote power and strength, showed at the same time a correct knowledge of the anatomy and form of the animal. Expanded wings sprung from the shoulders and spread over the back; a knotted girdle,

ending in tassels, encircled the loins. As these sculptures were placed against walls forming a doorway or entrance, and thus only one side of the body was to be seen, they were carved partly in full and partly in relief. The head and fore-part, facing the chamber, were in full; the rest of the figure was sculptured in high relief; and that the spectator might have both a perfect front and side view, it was furnished with five legs; four on the side forming the entrance, and an additional leg in front. The slab was covered, in all parts not occupied by the image, with inscriptions in the cuneiform character. Remains of colour could still be traced in the eyes—the pupils being painted black, and the rest filled up with a white pigment; but on no other parts of the sculpture. These magnificent specimens of Assyrian art were in perfect preservation, even to the most minute and delicate details of the wings and ornaments.

I used to contemplate for hours these mysterious emblems, and muse over their intent and history. What more noble forms could have ushered the people into the temple of their gods? What more sublime images could have been borrowed from nature, by men who sought, unaided by the light of revealed religion, to embody their conception of the wisdom and power of a Supreme Being? They could find no better type of intellect and knowledge than the head of the man; of strength, than the body of the lion; of ubiquity, than the wings of the bird. These winged human-headed lions were not idle creations, the offspring of mere fancy; their meaning was written upon them. They had awed and instructed races which flourished 3000 years ago. Through the portals which they guarded, kings, priests, and warriors had borne sacrifices to their altars, long before the wisdom of the East had penetrated to Greece, and had furnished its mythology with symbols recognised of old by the Assyrian votaries. They may have been buried, and their existence may have been unknown, before the foundation of the eternal city. For twenty-five centuries they had been hidden from the eye of man, and they now stood forth once more in their ancient majesty. But how changed was the scene around them! The luxury and civilisation of a mighty nation had

given place to the wretchedness and ignorance of a few half-barbarous tribes. The wealth of temples, and the riches of great cities, had been succeeded by ruins and shapeless heaps of earth. Above the spacious hall in which they stood, the plough had passed and the corn now waved. Egypt has monuments no less ancient and no less wonderful; but they have stood forth for ages to testify her early power and renown; whilst those before me had but now appeared to bear witness, in the words of the prophet, that once 'the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches and with a shadowing shroud of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs . . . his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters when he shot forth. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the fields bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations;' for now is 'Nineveh a desolation and dry like a wilderness, and flocks lie down in the midst of her: all the beasts of the nations, both the cormorant and bittern, lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice sings in the windows; and desolation is in the thresholds.'*

The entrance formed by the human-headed lions led into a chamber, round which were sculptured winged figures of deities or priests, such as I have already described. They were in pairs facing one another, and separated by the sacred tree. These bas-reliefs were inferior in execution and finish to those previously discovered.†

During the month of March I received visits from the principal Sheikhs of the Jebour Arabs, whose followers had now partly crossed the Tigris, and were pasturing their flocks in the neighbourhood of Nimroud, or cultivating patches of millet on the banks of the river. The Jebours are a branch of the ancient tribe of Obeid, and their original pasture grounds are on the banks of the Khabour, from its junction with the Euphrates, near the ancient Carchemish or Circe-

* Ezekiel, xxxi. 3, &c.; Zephaniah, ii. 13 and 14.

† Chamber C, Plan II. p. 42.

sium, to its source at Ras-el-Ain. Having been suddenly attacked and plundered a year or two before by the Aneyza, they had left their old haunts, and taken refuge in the districts around Mosul. They were at this time divided into three branches, under different Sheikhs. The names of the three chiefs were Abd'rubbou, Mohammed-Emin, and Mohammed-ed-Dagher. Although all three visited me at Nimroud, it was the first with whom I was best acquainted, and who rendered me most assistance. I thought it necessary to give to each a few small presents, such as a silk dress, or an embroidered cloak, with a pair of capacious boots, as in case of any fresh disturbances in the country it would be as well to be on friendly terms with their tribe.

The middle of March in Mesopotamia is the brightest epoch of spring. A new change had come over the face of the plain of Nimroud. Its pasture lands, known as the 'Jaif,' are renowned for their rich and luxuriant herbage. In times of quiet, the studs of the Pasha and of the Turkish authorities, with the horses of the cavalry and of the inhabitants of Mosul, are sent here to graze. Day by day they now arrived in long lines. The Shemutti and Jehesh left their huts, and encamped on the greensward which surrounded the villages. The plain, as far as the eye could reach, was studded with the white pavilions of the Hytas, and the black tents of the Arabs. Picketed around them were innumerable horses in gay trappings, struggling to release themselves from the bonds which restrained them from ranging over the green pastures.

Flowers of every hue enamelled the meadows ; not thinly scattered over the grass, as in northern climes, but in such thick and gathering clusters that the whole plain seemed a patchwork of many colours. The dogs, as they returned from hunting, issued from the long grass dyed red, yellow, or blue, according to the flowers through which they had last forced their way.

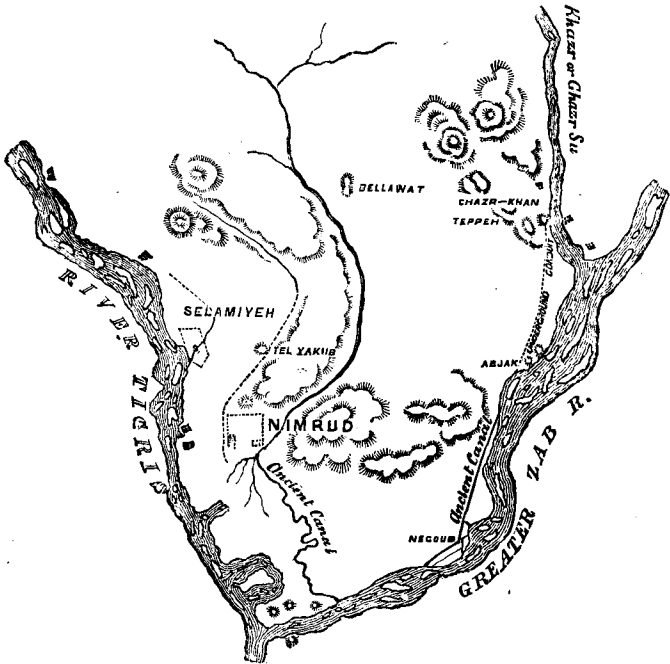
The villages of Naifa and Nimroud were deserted, and I remained alone with Said (my host) and my servants. The houses now began to swarm with vermin ; we could no longer sleep under the roofs, and it was time to follow the

example of the Arabs. I accordingly encamped on the edge of a large pond on the outskirts of Nimroud. Said accompanied me ; and Salah, his young wife, a bright-eyed Arab girl, built up his shed, and watched and milked his diminutive flock of sheep and goats.

I was surrounded by Arabs, who had either pitched their tents, or, too poor to buy the black goat-hair cloth of which they are made, had erected small huts of reeds and dry grass.

In the evening, after the labour of the day, I often sat at the door of my tent, and giving myself up to the full enjoyment of that calm and repose which are imparted to the senses by such scenes as these, gazed listlessly on the varied groups before me. As the sun went down behind the low hills which separate the river from the desert—even their rocky sides had struggled to emulate the verdant clothing of the plain—its receding rays were gradually withdrawn, like a transparent veil of light, from the landscape. Over the pure, cloudless sky was the golden glow of the sunset. The great mound threw its dark shadow far across the plain. In the distance, and beyond the Zab, Keshaf, another venerable ruin, rose indistinctly in the evening mist. Still more distant, and still more indistinct, was a solitary hill overlooking the ancient city of Arbela. The Kurdish mountains, whose snowy summits cherished the dying sunbeams, yet struggled with the twilight. The bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle, at first faint, became louder as the flocks returned from their pastures, and wandered amongst the tents. Girls hurried over the greensward to seek their fathers' cattle, or crouched down to milk those which had returned alone to their well-remembered folds. Some were coming from the river bearing the replenished pitcher on their heads or shoulders ; others, no less graceful in their form, and erect in their carriage, were carrying the heavy load of long grass which they had cut in the meadows. Sometimes a party of horsemen might have been seen in the distance slowly crossing the plain, the tufts of ostrich feathers which topped their long spears showing darkly against the evening sky. They would ride up to my tent and give me the usual salu-

tation, 'Peace be with you, O Bey!' or 'Allah Aienak, God help you!' Then driving the end of their lances into the ground, they would spring from their mares, and fasten their halters to the still quivering weapons. Seating themselves on the grass, they related deeds of war and plunder, or speculated on the site of the tents of Sofuk, until the moon rose,



The Canal of Negoub and Map of Country around Nimrud.

when they vaulted into their saddles and took the way of the desert.

The plain now glittered with innumerable fires. As the night advanced, they vanished one by one, until the landscape was wrapped in darkness and in silence, only dis-

turbed by the cry of the jackal and the barking of the Arab dog.

Abd-ur-rahman rode to my tent one morning, and offered to take me to a remarkable cutting in the rock, which he described as the work of Nimrod, the Giant. The Arabs call it 'Negoub,' or The Hole. We were two hours in reaching the place, as we hunted gazelles and hares by the way. A tunnel through the rock opens by two low arched outlets, upon the river. It is of considerable length, and is continued for about a mile by a deep channel, also cut in the rock, but open at the top. I suspected at once that this was an Assyrian work, and on examining the interior of the tunnel, discovered a slab covered with cuneiform characters, which had fallen from its place, and had been wedged in a crevice. With much difficulty I ascertained that an inscription had also been cut on the back of the tablet. From the darkness of the place, I could scarcely copy even the few characters which had resisted the wear of centuries. Some days after, others who had casually heard of my visit to Negoub, and conjectured that some Assyrian remains might have been found there, sent a party of workmen to the spot; who, finding the slab, broke it into pieces in their attempt to displace it. This wanton destruction of the tablet is much to be regretted. From the inscription, which I was able at a subsequent period to restore, it appears to have been set up by Sennacherib, to record the repair of the tunnel, which had been originally excavated in the rock by his predecessor, Sardanapalus, the builder of the north-west palace at Nimroud.*

* Mr. Rawlinson, on the authority of Captain Jones ('Ancient Monarchies,' vol. i. p. 251 note, and vol. ii. p. 196), states, that the canal, of which the tunnel of Negoub forms a part, was cut to supply Calah (the city of which he believes Nimroud to mark the site) with mountain water, and that it was carried to the eastern corner of the Nimroud ruins. But this appears to me, from the difference of level, to be impossible. The canal, of which the remains may be traced to the south of Nimroud, was supplied by a small stream, the Shor Derreh, coming from the north, and marked on Captain Jones's chart; or from the Tigris, which probably washed the foot of the mound when the canal was constructed.

The tunnel of Negoub is undoubtedly a remarkable work. Its object is doubtful. It may have led the waters of the Zab into the surrounding country for irrigation; or it may have been the termination of the great canal, which is still to be traced by a double range of lofty mounds near the ruins of Nimroud, and which may have united the Tigris with the neighbouring river, and thus fertilised a large tract of land. In either case, the level of the two rivers, as well as the face of the country, must have changed considerably since the period of its construction. At present Negoub is above the Zab, except at the time of the highest floods in spring, and then water is only found in the mouth of the tunnel; all other parts having been almost choked up with rubbish and river deposits.

CHAPTER IV.

Preparations for a journey to Al Hather—Gathering of the caravan—Leave Mosul—The desert—Flocks of camels—The Haddedeem Arabs—An Arab repast—An encampment—An Arab tribe moving—The tents of Sofuk—Description of the Shammar Sheikh—His history—Sofuk's harem and wives—His mare—Ride to Al Hather—Arab guides—The ruins of Al Hather—Return to Mosul—Murder of Nejris, and of Sofuk.

THE operations at Nimroud having been suspended until permission to continue them could be received from Constantinople, I thought the time opportune to visit Sofuk, the Sheikh of the great Bedouin tribe of Shammar, which occupies nearly the whole of Mesopotamia. He had lately left the Khabour, and was now encamped near the western bank of the Tigris, below its junction with the Zab, and consequently not far from Nimroud. I had two objects in view in going to his tents; in the first place, I wished to obtain the friendship of the chief of a powerful tribe of Bedouins, who would probably cross the river in the neighbourhood of the excavations during the summer, and might indulge, to my cost, in their plundering propensities; and, at the same time, I was anxious to visit the remarkable ruins of Al Hather, which I had only examined very hastily on a former journey.

Mr. Rassam (the British Vice-consul) and his wife, with several native gentlemen of Mosul, Mussulmans and Christians, were induced to accompany me; and, as we issued from the gates of the town, and assembled in the well-peopled burying-ground opposite the Governor's palace, I found myself at the head of a formidable party. Our tents, lent to us by the Pasha, with our provisions and necessary furniture, were carried by a string of twelve camels. Mounted above these loads, and on donkeys, was an army of camel-drivers,

tent-pitchers, and volunteers ready for all services. There were, moreover, a few horsemen of the irregular cavalry, the Cawasses, the attendants of the Mosul gentlemen, the Mosul gentlemen themselves, and our own servants, all armed to the teeth. Ali Effendi, chief of the Mosul branch of the Omaree, or descendants of Omar, which had furnished several Pashas to the province, was our principal Mussulman friend. He was mounted on the Hedban, a well-known white Arab, beautiful in form and pure in blood, but then of great age. Close at his horse's heels followed a confidential servant; who, perched on a pack-saddle, seemed to roll from side to side on two small barrels, the use of which might have been an enigma, had they not emitted a very strong smell of raki, or native brandy. A Christian gentleman was wrapped up in cloaks and furs, and appeared to dread the cold, although the thermometer was at 100. The English lady was equipped in riding-habit and hat. The two Englishmen, Mr. Ross and myself, wore a striking mixture of European and Oriental raiments. Mosul ladies, wrapped from head to foot in blue sheets, their faces concealed by black horsehair sieves, had been dragged to the top of piles of carpets and cushions, under which groaned their unfortunate mules. Greyhounds in leashes were led by Arabs on foot; whilst others played with strange dogs, who followed the caravan for change of air. The horsemen galloped round and round, occasionally dashing into the centre of the crowd, throwing their horses on their haunches when at full speed, or discharging their guns and pistols into the air. A small flag with British colours was fastened to the top of a spear, and confided to a Cawass. Such was the motley caravan which left Mosul by the Bab el Top, where a crowd of women had assembled to witness the procession.

We took the road to the ruins of the monastery of Mar Elias, a place of pilgrimage for the Christians of Mosul, which we passed after an hour's ride. Evening set in before we could reach the desert, and we pitched our tents for the night on a lawn near a deserted village, about nine miles from the town.

On the following morning we soon emerged from the low

limestone hills ; which, broken into a thousand rocky valleys, form a barrier between the Tigris and the plains of Mesopotamia. We now found ourselves in the desert, or rather wilderness ; for at this time of the year, nature could not disclose a more varied scene, or a more luxuriant vegetation. We trod on an interminable carpet, figured by flowers of every hue. Nor was water wanting ; for the abundant rains had given reservoirs to every hollow, and to every ravine. Their contents, owing to the nature of the soil, were brackish, but not unwholesome. Clusters of black tents were scattered, and flocks of sheep and camels wandered, over the plain. Those of our party who were well mounted urged their horses through the meadows, pursuing the herds of gazelles, or the wild boar, skulking in the long grass. Although such scenes as these may be described, the exhilaration caused by the air of the desert in spring, and the feeling of freedom arising from the contemplation of its boundless expanse, must have been experienced before they can be understood. The stranger, as well as the Arab, feels the intoxication of the senses which they produce.

About mid-day we found ourselves in the midst of great herds of camels. They belonged to the tribe of Hadddeen. The sonorous whoop of the Arab herdsmen resounded from all sides. A few horsemen were galloping about, driving back the stragglers, and directing the march of the leaders of the herd. Shortly after we came up with some families moving to a new place of encampment, and at their head I found my old antiquity hunter, Mormous. He no sooner perceived us than he gave orders to those who followed him, and of whom he was the chief, to pitch their tents. We were now in the Wadi Ghusub, formed by a small salt stream forcing its sluggish way through a dense mass of reeds and water shrubs, from which the valley has taken its name. About fifteen tents having been raised, a sheep was slaughtered in front of the one in which we sat ; large wooden bowls of sour milk, and platters of fresh butter were placed before us ; fires of camel's dung were lighted ; decrepit old women blew up the flames ; the men cut the carcass into small pieces, and capacious cauldrons soon sent forth volumes of steam.

The sheep having been boiled, the Arabs pulled the fragments out of the cauldron and laid them on the wooden platters with their fingers. We helped ourselves after the same fashion. The servants succeeded to the dishes, which afterwards passed through the hands of the camel drivers and tent pitchers ; and at last, denuded of all apparently edible portions, reached a strong party of expectant Arabs. The condition of the bones by the time they were delivered to a crowd of hungry dogs, assembled on the occasion, may easily be imagined.

We resumed our journey in the afternoon, preceded by Mormous, who volunteered to accompany us. As we rode over the plain, we fell in with the Sheikh of the Haddedeem mounted on a fine mare, and followed by a large concourse of Arabs, driving their beasts of burden loaded with tents and furniture. He offered to conduct us to a branch of the Shammar, whose encampment we could reach before evening. We gladly accepted his offer, and he left his people to ride with us.

We had been wandering to and fro in the desert, uncertain as to the course we should pursue. The Sheikh now rode in the direction of the Tigris. Before nightfall we came to a large encampment, and recognised in its chief one Khalaf, a Bedouin, who frequently came to Mosul, and whom Mr. Rassam and myself had met on our previous journey to Al Hather. He received us with hospitality; sheep were immediately slaughtered, and we dismounted at his tent. Even his wives, amongst whom was a remarkably pretty Arab girl, came to us to gratify their curiosity by a minute examination of the Frank lady. As the intimacy, which began to spring up, was somewhat inconvenient, we directed our tents to be pitched at a distance from the encampment, by the side of a small stream. It was one of those calm and pleasant evenings, which in spring make a paradise of the desert. The breeze, bland and perfumed by the odour of flowers, came gently over the plain. As the sun went down, countless camels and sheep wandered to the tents, and the melancholy call of the herdsmen rose above the bleating of the flocks. The Arabs led their prancing mares to the

water ; the colts, as they followed, played and rolled on the grass. I spread my carpet at a distance from the group which had gathered round our encampment, to enjoy without interruption the varied scene. Rassam, now in his element, collected around him a knot of admiring Arabs, unscrewed telescopes, exhibited various ingenious contrivances, and described the wonders of Europe, interrupted by the exclamations of incredulous surprise, which his marvellous stories elicited from the hearers. Ali Effendi and his Mussulman friends, who preferred other pleasures and more definite excitement, hid themselves in the high rushes, and handed round a small silver bowl containing fragrant ruby-coloured spirits, which might have rejoiced even the heart of Hafiz. The camel-drivers and servants hurried over the lawn, tending their animals or preparing the evening meal.

We had now reached the pasture-grounds of the Shammar, and Sheikh Khalaf declared that Sofuk's tents could not be far distant. A few days before they had been pitched almost among the ruins of Al Hather ; but he had since left them, and it was not known where he had encamped. We started early in the morning, and took the direction pointed out by Khalaf. Our view was bounded to the east by a rising ground. When we reached its summit, we looked down upon a plain, which appeared to swarm with moving objects. We had come upon the main body of the Shammar. The scene caused in me feelings of melancholy, for it recalled many hours, perhaps unprofitably, though certainly happily spent ; and many friends, some who now sighed in captivity for the joyous freedom which those wandering hordes enjoyed ; others who had perished in its defence. We soon found ourselves in the midst of wide-spreading flocks of sheep and camels. As far as the eye could reach, to the right, to the left, and in front, still the same moving crowd. Long lines of asses and bullocks laden with black tents, huge cauldrons and variegated carpets ; aged women and men, no longer able to walk, tied on the heap of domestic furniture ; infants crammed into saddle-bags, their tiny heads thrust through the narrow opening, balanced on the donkey's

back by kids or lambs tied on the opposite side ; girls clothed only in the close-fitting Arab shirt, which displayed rather than concealed their graceful forms ; mothers with their children on their shoulders ; boys driving flocks of lambs ; horsemen armed with long tufted spears, scouring the plain on their fleet mares ; riders urging their dromedaries with short hooked sticks, and leading their high-bred steeds by the halter ; colts galloping amongst the throng ; high-born ladies seated in the centre of huge wings, which extend like those of a butterfly from each side of the camel's hump, and are no less gaudy and variegated.* Such was the motley crowd through which we had to wend our way for several hours. Our appearance created a lively sensation ; the women checked our horses ; the horsemen assembled round us, and rode by our side ; the children yelled and ran after the Franks.

It was mid-day before we found a small party that had stopped, and were pitching their tents. A young chestnut mare belonging to the Sheikh, was one of the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld. As she struggled to free herself from the spear to which she was tied, she showed the lightness and elegance of the gazelle. Her limbs were in perfect symmetry ; her ears erect, slender, and transparent ; her nostrils high, dilated and deep red ; her neck gracefully arched, and her mane and tail of the texture of silk. We all involuntarily stopped to gaze at her. 'Say Masha-Allah,' exclaimed the owner, who, seeing not without pride, that I admired her, feared the effect of an evil eye. 'That I will,' answered I, 'and with pleasure ; for, O Arab, you possess the jewel of the tribe.' He brought us a bowl of camel's milk, and directed us to the tents of Sofuk.

We had still two hours' ride before us, and when we

* These wings are formed by a light frame-work of cane, varying from sixteen to twenty feet in length, covered with parchment, and ornamented, as is also the body and neck of the camel, with tassels and fringes of worsted of every hue, and with strings of glass beads and shells. The lady sits in the centre in a kind of pavilion, covered with gay carpets, by which she is shaded from the sun. This singular contrivance sways from side to side, and the motion is very disagreeable to one not accustomed to it.

reached the encampment of the Shammar Sheikh, our horses, as well as ourselves, were exhausted by the heat of the sun, and the length of the day's journey. The tents were pitched on a broad lawn in a deep ravine; they were scattered in every direction, and amongst them rose the white pavilions of some Turkish irregular cavalry. Ferhan, the son of Sofuk, and a party of horsemen, rode out to meet us as we approached, and led us to the tent of the chief, distinguished from the rest by its size, and by the spears which were driven into the ground at its entrance. Sofuk advanced to receive us; he



Arab Tents.

was followed by about three hundred Arabs, including many of the principal Sheikhs of the tribe. In person he was short and corpulent, more like an Osmanli than an Arab; but his eye was bright, restless and intelligent, his features regular, well formed and expressive. His dress differed but in the quality of the materials from that of his followers.

A thick kerchief or 'kefieh,' striped with red, yellow, and blue, and fringed with long plaited cords, was thrown over his head, and fell upon his shoulders. It was held in its place, above the brow, by a band of spun camel's wool, tied at intervals by silken threads of many colours. A long white shirt, descending to the ankles, and a black and white cloak over it, completed his attire.

He led Rassam and myself to the end of the tent, where we seated ourselves on well-worn carpets. When all the party had found places, the words of welcome, which had been exchanged before we dismounted, were repeated. 'Peace be with you, O Bey! upon my head you are welcome: my house is your house,' exclaimed the Sheikh, addressing the stranger nearest to him. 'Peace be with you, O Sofuk! may God protect you!' was the answer, and similar compliments were paid to every guest, and by every person, present. Whilst this ceremony, which took nearly half an hour, was going on, I had leisure to examine those who had assembled to meet us. Nearest to me was Ferhan, the Sheikh's eldest son, a young man of handsome appearance and intelligent countenance, although the expression was neither agreeable nor attractive. His dress resembled that of his father; but from beneath the kerchief thrown over his head hung his long black tresses plaited into many tails. His teeth were white as ivory, like those of most Arabs. Beyond him sat a crowd of men of the most ferocious and forbidding exterior—warriors who had passed their lives in war and rapine, looking upon those who did not belong to their tribe as natural enemies, and preferring their wild freedom to all the riches of the earth.

Mrs. Rassam had been ushered into this crowded assembly. The scrutinising glance, with which she was examined from head to foot by all present, not being agreeable, we requested that she might be taken to the tent of the women. Sofuk called two black slaves, who led her to the harem, scarcely a stone's throw distant.

The compliments having been at length finished, we conversed upon general topics. Coffee, highly drugged with odoriferous herbs found in the desert, and with spices, a mix-

ture for which Sofuk was celebrated, was handed round before we retired to our own tents.

Sofuk's name was so well known in the desert, and he so long played a conspicuous part in the politics of Mesopotamia, that a few words on his history may not be uninteresting. He was descended from the Sheikhs, who brought the tribe from Nedjd in Arabia Proper to Mesopotamia. At the commencement of his career he had shared the chiefship with his uncle, after whose death he became the Sheikh of the Shammar. He was long troublesome to the Turkish governors of the provinces on the Tigris and Euphrates; but gained the confidence of the Porte by a spirited attack upon the camp of Mohammed Ali Mirza, son of Feth Ali Shah, and governor of Kirmanshah, when that prince was marching upon Baghdad and Mosul. After this exploit, to which was mainly attributed the safety of the Turkish cities, Sofuk was invested by the Sultan as Sheikh of the Shammar. At times, however, when he had to complain of ill-treatment from the Pasha of Baghdad, or could not control those under him, his tribes were accustomed to indulge their love of plunder, to sack villages and pillage caravans. He thus became formidable to the Turks, and was known as the King of the Desert. When Mehemet Reshid Pasha led his successful expedition into Kurdistan and Mesopotamia, Sofuk was amongst the chiefs whose power he sought to destroy. Knowing that it would be useless to attempt it by force, he had recourse to stratagem: invited the Sheikh to his camp on the pretence of investing him with the customary robe of honour, and seizing him, sent him a prisoner to Constantinople. There he remained some months, until, in its turn deceived by his promises, the Porte permitted him to return to his tribe. He now sought to revenge himself for the treachery practised upon him. From that time his Arabs had been the terror of the Pashalics of Mosul and Baghdad, and had even carried their depredations to the east of the Tigris. However, Nejris, the son of Sofuk's uncle, had recently appeared as his rival, and many branches of the Shammar had declared for the new Sheikh. This led to dissensions in the tribe; and, at the time of our visit, Sofuk, who had forfeited his

popularity by many acts of bad faith, was almost deserted by the Arabs. In this dilemma he had applied to the Pasha of Mosul, and had promised to serve the Porte and to control the Bedouins, if he were assisted in re-establishing his authority. This state of things accounted for the presence of the white tents of the Hytas in the midst of his encampment.

His intercourse with the Turkish authorities, who had to be conciliated by adequate presents before assistance could be expected from them, and the famine, which for the last two years had prevailed in the countries surrounding the desert, were not favourable to the domestic prosperity of Sofuk. The wealth and display, for which he was once renowned amongst the Bedouins, had disappeared. A few months before, he had even sent to Mosul the silver ankle-rings of his favourite wife—the last resource—to be exchanged for corn. The furred cloaks, and embroidered robes, which he once wore, had shared the same fate, and had not been replaced. The only carpet in his tent was the rag on which sat his principal guests; the rest squatted on the grass, or on the bare ground. He led the life of a pure Bedouin, from the commonest of whom he was only distinguished by the extent of his female establishment—always a weak point with the Sheikh. But even in the days of his greatest prosperity, the meanest Arab looked upon him as his equal, addressed him as ‘Sofuk,’ and seated himself unbidden at his side. The system of patriarchal government, faithfully described by Burckhardt, still exists, as it has done for 4000 years, in the desert.

The usual Arab meal was brought to us soon after our arrival—large wooden bowls and platters filled with boiled fragments of mutton swimming in melted butter, and sour milk. When we had eaten, Sofuk came to our tents and remained with us the greater part of the day. He was dejected and sad. He bewailed his poverty, inveighed against the Turks, to whom he attributed his ruin, and confessed, with tears, that his tribe was fast deserting him. Whilst conversing on these subjects, two Sheikhs rode into the encampment, and hearing that the chief was with us, they fastened their high-bred mares at the door of our tent and seated themselves on our carpets. They had been amongst

the tribes to ascertain the feeling of the Shammar towards Sofuk, of whom they were the devoted adherents. One was a man of forty, blackened by long exposure to the desert sun, and of a savage and sanguinary countenance. His companion was a youth, whose features were so delicate and feminine, and eyes so bright that he might have been taken for a woman; a profusion of black hair which fell, plaited into numerous tresses, on his breast and shoulders, added to his feminine appearance. An animated discussion took place as to the desertion of the Nejm, a large branch of the Shammar tribe. The young man's enthusiasm and devotedness knew no bounds. He threw himself upon Sofuk, and clinging to his neck covered his cheek and beard with kisses. When the chief had disengaged himself, his follower seized the edge of his garment, and sobbed violently as he held it to his lips. 'I entreat thee, O Sofuk!' he exclaimed, 'say but the word; by thine eyes, by thy beard, by the Prophet, order it, and this sword shall find the heart of Nejrîs, whether he escape into the farthest corner of the desert, or be surrounded by all the warriors of the tribe.' But it was too late, and Sofuk saw that his influence was fast declining.

I must endeavour to convey to the reader some idea of the domestic establishment of a great Arab Sheikh. Sofuk, at the time of our visit, was the husband of three wives, who were considered to have special claims to his affection and his constant protection; for it was one of Sofuk's weaknesses, arising either from a desire to impress the Arabs with a notion of his greatness and power, or from a partiality to the first stage of married life, to take a new partner nearly every month; and at the end of that period to divorce her, and marry her to one of his attendants. The happy man thus lived in a continual honeymoon. Of the three ladies now forming his harem, the chief was Amsha, a lady celebrated in the song of the Arab of the desert for her beauty and noble blood. She was a daughter of Hassan, Sheikh of the Tai, a tribe tracing its origin from the remotest antiquity, and one of whose chiefs, Hatem, her ancestor, is a hero of Eastern romance. Sofuk had carried her away by force from her father; but had always treated her with great respect.

From her rank and beauty, she had earned the title of 'Queen of the Desert.' Her form, traceable through the thin shirt, the only garment which like other Arab women she wore, was well proportioned and graceful. She was tall in stature, and rather fair in complexion. Her features were regular, and her eyes large, dark, and brilliant. She had undoubtedly claims to more than ordinary beauty; to the Arabs she was perfection, for all the resources of their art had been exhausted to complete what nature had begun. Her lips were dyed deep blue, her eyebrows were continued in indigo until they united over the nose, her cheeks and forehead were spotted with beauty-marks, her eyelashes darkened by kohl; and on her legs and bosom could be seen the tattooed ends of flowers and fanciful ornaments, which were carried in festoons and network over her whole body. Hanging from each ear, and reaching to her waist, was an enormous earring of gold, terminating in a tablet of the same material, carved and ornamented with four turquoises. Her nose was also adorned with a prodigious gold ring, set with jewels, of such ample dimensions that it covered her mouth, and had to be removed when she ate. Ponderous rows of strung beads, Assyrian cylinders, fragments of coral, agates, and parti-coloured stones hung from her neck; silver rings encircled her wrists and ankles, making a loud jingling as she walked. Over her blue shirt was thrown, when she issued from her tent, a coarse striped cloak, and a common black kerchief was bound loosely round her temples by a rope of twisted camel's hair.

Her ménage combined, if the old song be true, the domestic and the queenly, and was carried on with a nice appreciation of economy. The immense sheet of black goat-hair canvass, which formed the tent, was supported by twelve or fourteen stout poles, and was completely open on one side. Being entirely set apart for the women, it had no partitions, like the tent of the common Arab, who is obliged to reserve a corner for the reception of his guests. Between the centre poles were placed, upright and close to one another, large goat-hair sacks, filled with rice, corn, barley, coffee, and other household stores; their mouths being, of

course, upwards. Upon them were spread carpets and cushions, on which Amsha reclined. Around her, squatted on the ground, were some fifty handmaidens, tending the wide cauldrons, baking bread on the iron plates heated over the ashes, or shaking between them the skins suspended from three stakes, and filled with milk to be thus churned into butter. It is the privilege of the head wife to prepare in her tent the dinner of the Sheikh's guests. Fires, lighted on all sides, sent forth a cloud of smoke, which hung heavily under the folds of the tent, and would have long before dimmed any eyes less bright than those of Amsha. As supplies were asked for by the women, she lifted the corner of her carpet, untied the mouths of the sacks, and distributed their contents. Everything passed through her hands. To show her authority and rank, she poured continually upon her attendants a torrent of abuse, and honoured them with epithets of which I may be excused attempting to give a translation; her vocabulary equalling, if not exceeding, in richness, that of the highly educated lady of the city.* The combination of the domestic and the queenly was thus complete. Her children, three naked little urchins, black with sun and mud, and adorned with long tails of plaited hair hanging from the crown of their shaven heads, rolled in the ashes, or on the grass.

Amsha, as I have observed, shared the affections, though not the tent of Sofuk—for each establishment had a tent of its own—with two other ladies; Atouia, an Arab not much inferior to her rival in personal appearance; and Ferrah, originally a Yezidi slave, who had no pretensions to beauty. Amsha, however, always maintained her sway, and the others could not sit, without her leave, in her presence. To her alone were confided the keys of the larder—supposing Sofuk to have had either keys or larder—and there was no appeal from her authority on all subjects of domestic economy.

* It may not perhaps be known that the fair inmate of the harem, whom we picture to ourselves conversing with her lover in language too delicate and refined to be expressed by anything but flowers, uses ordinarily words which would shock the ears of even the most depraved amongst us.

Mrs. Rassam was received with great ceremony by the ladies. To show the rank and luxurious habits of her husband, Amsha offered her guest a glass of 'eau sucrée,' which Mrs. Rassam, who is over nice, assured me she could not drink, as it was mixed by a particularly dirty negro, in the absence of a spoon, with his fingers, which he sucked continually during the process.

In the evening Amsha and Ferrah returned Mrs. Rassam's visit; Sofuk having, however, first obtained a distinct promise that they were to be received in a tent from which gentlemen were to be excluded. They were very inquisitive, and their indiscreet curiosity could with difficulty be satisfied.

Sofuk was the owner of a mare of matchless beauty, called, as if the property of the tribe, the Shammeriyah. Her dam, who died about ten years ago, was the celebrated Kubleh, whose renown extended from the sources of the Khabour to the end of the Arabian promontory, and the day of whose death is an epoch from which the Arabs of Mesopotamia date events concerning their tribe. Mohammed-Emin, Sheikh of the Jebours, assured me that he had seen Sofuk ride down the wild ass of the Sinjar on her back, and the most marvellous stories are current in the desert of her fleetness and powers of endurance. Sofuk esteemed her and her daughter above all the riches of the tribe; for her he would have forfeited all his wealth, and even Amsha herself. Owing to the visit of the irregular troops, the best horses of the Sheikh and his followers were concealed in a secluded ravine at some distance from the tents.

Al Hather was about eighteen miles from Sofuk's encampment. He gave us two well-known horsemen to accompany us to the ruins. Their names were Dathan and Abiram. The former was a black slave, to whom the Sheikh had given his liberty and a wife—two things, it may be observed, which are in the desert perfectly consistent. He was the most faithful and brave of all the adherents of Sofuk, and the fame of his exploits had spread through the tribes of Arabia. As we rode along, I endeavoured to obtain from him some information concerning his people, but he would only speak

on one subject. 'Ya Bej,'* said he, 'the Arab only thinks of two things, war and love : war, Ya Bej, every one understands ; let us, therefore, talk of love.'

As we rode to Al Hather, we passed large bodies of the Shammar moving with their tents, flocks, and families. On all sides appeared the huge expanding wings of the ladies' camel-saddles, looking, as they rose above the horizon, like some stupendous butterfly skimming slowly over the plain. Dathan was known to all. As the horsemen drew near, they dismounted and embraced him, kissing him, as is customary, on both cheeks, and holding him by the hand until many compliments had been exchanged.

A dark thunder-cloud rose behind the time-worn ruins of Al Hather as we approached them. The sun, still throwing its rays upon the walls, lighted up the yellow stones until they shone like gold.† Mr. Ross and myself, accompanied by an Arab, urged our horses onwards, that we might escape the coming storm ; but it burst upon us in its fury ere we reached the palace. The lightning played through the vast buildings, the thunder re-echoed through the deserted halls, and the hail compelled us to rein up our horses, and turn our backs to the tempest. It was a fit moment to enter such ruins as these. They rose in solitary grandeur in the midst of a desert, 'in mediâ solitudine positæ,' as they stood fifteen centuries before, when described by the Roman historian.‡ On my previous visit, the first view I obtained of Al Hather was perhaps no less striking. We had been wandering for three days in the wilderness without seeing one human habitation. On the fourth morning a thick mist hung over the plain. We had given up the search, when the vapours were suddenly drawn up like a curtain, and we saw the ruins before us. At that time within the walls were the

* 'O my Lord:' he so prefaced every sentence. The Shammar Arabs pronounce the word *Beg*, which the Constantinopolitans soften into *Bey*, *Bej*.

† The rich golden tint of the limestone, of which the great monuments of Syria are built, is known to every traveller in that country. The ruins of Al Hather have the same bright colour ; they look as if they had been steeped in the sunbeams.

‡ Ammianus Marcellinus, lib. xxv. cap. 8.

tents of some Shammar Arabs, but now as we crossed the confused heaps of fragments, forming a circle round the city, we saw that the place was tenantless. Flocks on a neighbouring rising ground showed, however, that Bedouins were not distant.

We pitched our tents in the great court-yard, in front of the palace, and near the entrance to the inner inclosure. During the three days we remained amongst the ruins I had ample time to take accurate measurements, and to make plans of the various buildings still partly standing within the walls. As Al Hather has already been described by others, and as the information I was able to collect has been placed before the public,* I need not detain the reader with a detailed account of the place. Suffice it to mention, that the walls of the city, flanked by numerous towers, form almost a complete circle, in the centre of which rises the palace, an edifice of great magnificence, solidly constructed of squared stones, and elaborately sculptured with figures and ornaments. It dates probably from the reign of one of the Sassanian kings of Persia, certainly not prior to the Arsacian dynasty, although the city itself was, I have little doubt, founded at a very early period, being, like Palmyra, one of the great caravan stations, connecting the cities of Syria with those on the banks of the Tigris. Some singular marks upon the stones, which appear to be either builders' signs, or to have reference to some religious or masonic observances, are also found in most of the buildings of Sassanian origin in Persia, Babylonia, and Susiana.

With the exception of occasional alarms in the night, caused by thieves attempting to steal our horses, we were not disturbed during our visit. The Bedouins from the tents in the neighbourhood brought us milk, butter, and sheep. We drank the water of the river Thathar, which is brackish but wholesome; and our servants and camel-drivers filled during the day many baskets with truffles.

On our return we crossed the desert, reaching Wadi

* See Dr. Ross's Memoir in the Geographical Society's Journal, and Dr. Ainsworth's Travels. A memoir, on the place by me, accompanied by plans, &c., was read before the Institute of British Architects.

Ghusub the first night, and Mosul on the following morning. Dathan and Abiram, who had both distinguished themselves in recent forays, and had consequently accounts to settle with the respectable merchants of the place, the balance being very much against them, could not be prevailed upon to enter the town, where they were generally known. We had provided ourselves with two or three dresses of Damascus silk, and we invested our guides with them as a mark of satisfaction for their services. Dathan grinned a melancholy smile as he received his reward. 'Ya Bej,' he exclaimed, as he turned his mare towards the desert: 'may God give you peace! Wallah! your camels shall be as the camels of the Shammar. Be they laden with gold, they shall pass through our tents, and our people shall not touch them.'

A year after our visit the career of Sofuk was brought to its close. I have mentioned that Nejris, his rival, had obtained the support of nearly the whole tribe of Shammar. In a month from the time of our journey Sofuk found himself nearly alone. His relations and immediate adherents, amongst whom were Dathan and Abiram, still pitched their tents with him; but he feared the attacks of his enemies, and retreated for safety into the territory of Beder Khan Bey, to the east of the Tigris, near Jezirah. He then sought the support of Nejib Pasha of Baghdad, under whose authority the Shammar were supposed to be, and having succeeded in bringing back a large number of the Bedouins, proposed to Nejris, that they should meet at his tents, forget their differences, and share equally the sheikhship of the tribe. The unfortunate Nejris was induced by Ferhan, the son of Sofuk, to enter the encampment of his rival, where he was perfidiously murdered, in violation of those laws of hospitality which are so much respected by the Arabs. The Shammar were amazed and disgusted by an act of treachery which brought disgrace upon the tribe. They withdrew a second time from Sofuk, and placed themselves under a new leader, a relation of the murdered Sheikh. Sofuk again appealed to Nejib Pasha, justifying his conduct by the dissensions which would have led to constant disorders in Mesopotamia had there still been rival candidates for the sheikhship. Nejib

pretended to be satisfied, and agreed to send out a body of irregular troops to assist Sofuk in enforcing his authority throughout the desert.

The commander of the troops sent by Nejib was joyfully received by Sofuk, who immediately marched against the tribe. But he had scarcely left his tent, when he found that he had fallen into a snare such as he had more than once set for others. In a few hours after, his head was in the palace of the Pasha of Baghdad.

Such was the end of one whose name will long be remembered in the wilds of Arabia; who, from his power and wealth, received the title of 'the King of the Desert,' and led the great tribe of Shammar from the banks of the Khabour to the ruins of Babylon. The tale of the Arab will turn for many years to come on the exploits and magnificence of Sofuk.

CHAPTER V.

Discovery of small objects—Pavement of the chambers—An Arab feast—Arrival of Tahyar Pasha—Excavations continued—The summer at Nimroud—A whirlwind—Further discoveries of bas-reliefs—Description of the sculptures—Painted plaster—Receipt of vizirial letter—Excavations at Kouyunjik—Fresh discoveries at Nimroud—Surprise of the Arabs—First collection of sculptures sent to England—Visit from Tahyar Pasha—Speculations of the Turks on the sculptures—Remove to Mosul—Discovery of a building in a mound near Kouyunjik—New chambers opened at Nimroud.

ON my return to Mosul I hastened back to Nimroud. During my absence little progress had been made in the excavations, as only two men had been employed in removing the rubbish from the upper part of the chamber to which the great human-headed lions formed an entrance. The lions to the east of them* had, however, been completely uncovered; that to the right had fallen from its place, and was sustained by the opposite sculpture. Between them was a large pavement slab covered with cuneiform characters.

In clearing the earth from this entrance, and from behind the fallen lion, many ornaments in copper, two small ducks in baked clay, and tablets of alabaster inscribed on both sides with cuneiform characters, were discovered.† Amongst the remains in copper were the head of a ram or bull‡, several hands (the fingers closed and slightly bent), and a few ornaments in the shape of flowers. The hands may have served as a casing to similar objects in baked clay, frequently

* Entrance *d*, Plan II. p. 42.

† All these objects are now in the British Museum.

‡ This head probably belonged to a throne or seat.

found amongst the ruins, and having the names, titles, and genealogy of the King, inscribed upon them. The heads of the ducks are turned upon the back, which bears an inscription in cuneiform characters. Objects somewhat similar have been found in Egypt.* The inscribed tablets appear to have been built into the walls of sun-dried bricks, and buried in the foundations, to record the building of the edifice. The inscription upon them resembled that generally found on the slabs in the N. W. palace, and which I have called 'the standard inscription of Nimroud.'

It is remarkable that whilst such parts of the great hall as had been uncovered were paved with baked bricks, and the smaller entrance to it with a large slab of alabaster, between the two great lions there were only sun-dried bricks. In the middle of this entrance, near the fore-part of the lions, were a few square stones carefully placed. I expected to find under them small figures or idols in clay, similar to those discovered by M. Botta in the doorways at Khorsabad; but I was disappointed.

As several of the principal Christian families of Mosul were anxious to see the sculptures, whose fame had spread over the town and province, I was desirous of gratifying their curiosity before the heat of summer had rendered the plain of Nimroud almost uninhabitable. An opportunity, at the same time, presented itself of securing the good-will of the Arab tribes encamped near the ruins, by preparing an entertainment which might gratify all parties. The Christian ladies, who had never before been out of sight of the walls of their houses, were eager to see the wonders of Nimroud, and availed themselves joyfully of the permission, with difficulty extracted from their husbands, to leave their homes. The French consul and his wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Rassam, joined the party. On the day after their arrival I issued a general invitation to all the Arabs of the district, men and women.

White pavilions, borrowed from the Pasha, had been

* Similar ducks in stone and metal have been found in Assyrian ruins; they appear to have been used as weights.

pitched near the river, on a broad lawn still carpeted with flowers. These were for the ladies, and for the reception of the Sheikhs. Black tents were provided for some of the guests, for the attendants, and for the kitchen. A few Arabs encamped around us to watch the horses, which were picketed on all sides. An open space was left in the centre of the group of tents for dancing, and for various exhibitions provided for the entertainment of the company.

Early in the morning came Abd-ur-rahman, mounted on a tall white mare. He had adorned himself with all the finery he possessed. Over his keffieh or head-kerchief was folded a white turban, edged with long fringes which fell over his shoulders, and almost concealed his handsome features. He wore a long robe of red silk and bright yellow boots, an article of dress much prized by Arabs. He was surrounded by horsemen carrying spears tipped with tufts of ostrich feathers.

As the Sheikh of the Abou-Salman approached the tents I rode out to meet him. A band of Kurdish musicians advanced at the same time to do honour to the Arab chief. As he drew near to the encampment, the horsemen, led by Schloss, his nephew, urged their mares to the utmost of their speed, and engaging in mimic war, filled the air with their wild war-cry. Their shoutings were, however, almost drowned by the Kurds, who belaboured their drums, and blew into their pipes with redoubled energy. Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman, having dismounted, seated himself with becoming gravity on the sofa prepared for guests of his rank; whilst his Arabs picketed their mares, fastening the halters to spears driven into the ground.

The Abou-Salman were followed by the Shemutti and Jehesh, who came with their women and children on foot, except the Sheikhs, who rode on horseback. They also chanted their peculiar war-cry as they advanced. When they reached the tents, the chiefs placed themselves on the divan, whilst the others seated themselves in a circle on the green sward.

The wife and daughter of Abd-ur-rahman, mounted on mares, and surrounded by their slaves and hand-maidens,

next appeared. They dismounted at the entrance of the ladies' tents, where an abundant repast of sweetmeats, halwa, parched peas, and lettuces had been prepared for them.

Fourteen sheep had been roasted and boiled to feast the crowd that had assembled. They were placed on large wooden platters, which, after the men had satisfied themselves, were passed on to the women. The dinner having been devoured to the last fragment, dancing succeeded. Some scruples had to be conquered before the women would join, as there were other tribes, besides their own, present, and it is not according to Arab etiquette that the women of one tribe should appear before the men of another tribe; and when at length, by the exertions of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, this difficulty was overcome, they made up different sets. Those who did not take an active share in the amusements seated themselves on the grass, and formed a large circle round the dancers. The Sheikhs remained on the sofas and divans. The dance of the Arabs, the *Débkè*, as it is called, resembles in some respects that of the Albanians, and those who perform in it are scarcely less vehement in their gestures, or less extravagant in their excitement, than those wild mountaineers. They form a circle, holding one another by the hand, and, moving slowly round at first, go through a shuffling step with their feet, twisting their bodies into various attitudes. As the music quickens, their movements are more active; they stamp with their feet, yell their war-cry, and jump as they hurry round the musicians. The motions of the women are not without grace; but as they insist on wrapping themselves in their coarse cloaks before they join in the dance, their forms, which the simple Arab shirt so well displays, are entirely concealed.

When those who formed the *Debkè* were completely exhausted by their exertions, they joined the lookers-on, and seated themselves on the ground. Two warriors of different tribes, furnished with shields and naked scimitars, then entered the circle, and went through the sword-dance. Excited by the warlike notes of the drums and pipes, the performers gradually warmed from play into earnest contest.

The bystanders were at length obliged to interfere and to deprive the combatants of their weapons, which were replaced by stout staves. With these they belaboured one another unmercifully to the great enjoyment of the crowd. On every successful hit, the tribe, to which the one who dealt it belonged, set up their war-cry and shouts of applause, whilst the women deafened us with the shrill *tahlehl*, a noise made by a combined motion of the tongue, throat, and hand vibrated rapidly over the mouth. When an Arab or a Kurd hears this *tahlehl* of the women, he almost loses his senses through excitement, and is ready to commit any desperate act.

A party of Kurdish jesters from the mountains entertained the Arabs with performances and imitations, more amusing than refined. They were received with shouts of laughter. The dances were kept up by the light of the moon, the greater part of the night.

On the following morning Abd-ur-rahman invited us to his tents, and we were entertained with renewed *Debkès* and sword-dances. The women, undisturbed by the presence of another tribe, entered more fully into the amusement, and danced with greater animation. The Sheikh insisted upon my joining with him in leading off a dance, in which we were followed by some five hundred warriors, and Arab women.

The festivities lasted three days, and made the impression I had anticipated. They earned me a great reputation and no small respect, the Arabs long afterwards talking of their reception and entertainment. When there was occasion for their services, I found the value of the feeling towards me, which a little show of kindness to these ill-used people had served to produce.

Hafiz Pasha, who had been appointed to succeed the last governor, having received a more lucrative post, the province was sold to Tahyar Pasha, who made his public entry into Mosul early in May, followed by a large body of troops, and by the Cadi, Mufti, Ulema, and principal inhabitants of the town. The Mosuleeans had not been deceived by the good report of his benevolence and justice which had

preceded him. He was a perfect specimen of the Turkish gentleman of the old school, of whom few are now left in Turkey: venerable in his appearance, bland and polished in his manners, courteous to Europeans, and well informed on subjects connected with the literature and history of his country. I had been furnished with serviceable letters of introduction to him; he received me with every mark of attention, and at once permitted me to continue the excavations. As a matter of form, he named a Cawass, to superintend the work on his part. I willingly concurred in this arrangement, as it saved me from any further inconvenience arising out of reports that I was carrying away treasure; for which, it was still believed, I was successfully searching. This officer's name was Ibrahim Agha. He had been many years with Tahyar Pasha, and was a kind of favourite. He served me during my residence in Assyria, and on my subsequent journey to Constantinople, with great fidelity; and, as is very rarely the case with his fraternity, with great honesty.

The support of Tahyar Pasha relieved me from some of my difficulties; for there was no longer cause to fear any interruption on the part of the authorities. But my means were very limited, and my own resources did not enable me to carry on the excavations as I wished. I returned, however, to Nimroud, and formed a small but effective body of workmen, choosing those who had already proved themselves equal to the work.

The heats of summer had now commenced, and it was no longer possible to live under a white tent. The huts were equally uninhabitable, and still swarmed with vermin. In this dilemma I ordered a recess to be cut into the bank of the river, where it rose perpendicularly from the water's edge. By screening the front with reeds and boughs of trees, and covering the whole with similar materials, a small room was formed in which I lived. I was much troubled, however, with scorpions and other reptiles, which issued from the earth forming the walls of my apartment; and later in the summer by the gnats and sandflies, which hovered on a calm night over the river. Similar rooms were made for my servants.

They were the safest that could be invented, should the Arabs take to stealing after dark. My horses were picketed on the edge of the bank above, and the tents of my workmen were pitched in a semicircle behind them.

The change to summer had been as sudden as that which ushered in the spring. The verdure of the plain had perished almost in a day. Hot winds, coming from the desert, had burnt up and carried away the shrubs; flights of locusts, darkening the air, had destroyed the few patches of cultivation, and had completed the havoc commenced by the heat of the sun. The Abou-Salman Arabs, having struck their black tents, were now living in *ozails*, or sheds constructed of reeds and grass, along the banks of the river. The Shemutti and Jehesh had returned to their villages, and the plain presented the same naked and desolate aspect that it wore in the month of November. The heat, however, was now almost intolerable. Violent whirlwinds occasionally swept over the face of the country. They could be seen as they advanced from the desert, carrying along with them clouds of sand and dust. Almost utter darkness prevailed during their passage, which lasted generally about an hour, and nothing could resist their fury. On returning home one afternoon after a tempest of this kind, I found no traces of my dwellings; they had been completely carried away. Ponderous wooden frame-works had been borne over the bank, and hurled some hundred yards distant; the tents had disappeared, and my furniture was scattered over the plain. When on the mound, my only secure place of refuge was beneath the fallen lion, where I could defy the fury of the whirlwind: the Arabs ceased from their work, and crouched in the trenches, almost suffocated and blinded by the dense cloud of fine dust and sand which nothing could exclude.*

* Storms of this nature are frequent during the early part of summer throughout Mesopotamia, Babylonia, and Susiana. It is difficult to convey an idea of their violence. They appear suddenly and without any previous sign, and seldom last above an hour. It was during one of them that 'the Tigris' steamer, under the command of Colonel Chesney, was wrecked in the Euphrates; and so darkened was the atmosphere that, although the vessel was within a short distance of the bank

Although the number of my workmen was small, the excavations were carried on as actively as possible. The two human-headed lions at the small entrance to the great hall already described, led into another chamber, or to sculptured walls forming an outward facing to the building.* The slabs to the right and left had fallen from their original position, and, with the exception of one, were broken. I had some difficulty in raising the pieces from the ground. As the face of the slabs was downwards, the sculpture had been well preserved.

To the right was represented the king holding a bow in one hand and two arrows in the other. He was followed by his attendant eunuch, who bore a second bow and a quiver for the king's use, and a mace, with a head in the form of a rosette, which may have been one of the wooden clubs, topped with iron, mentioned by Herodotus as a weapon used by the Assyrians, or one of those staffs adorned with an apple, a rose, a lily, or an eagle described by the same historian as carried by the Babylonians.† Standing before him were his vizir and an eunuch, with their hands crossed before them, a posture still assumed in the East as one of respect and submission by inferiors in the presence of persons of rank. It is interesting thus to trace the observance of the same customs in the same countries, after the lapse of so many centuries. In a bas-relief representing a similar subject discovered in the S. W. ruins, the vizir raises his right hand before the king—an attitude, apparently denoting homage, in which dependants are seen on the later monuments of the Achæmenian and Sassanian dynasties. Dejoces, who was the successor of the Assyrian monarchs, permitted no one to see him, except certain privileged individuals; and the person of the Persian king, as we learn from the story of Esther, was considered so sacred, that even the queen, who ventured before him without being bidden, was punished with death, 'except the king might hold out the golden

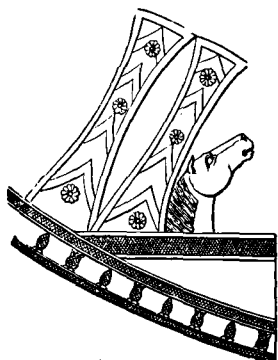
of the river, several persons who were in her are supposed to have lost their lives from not knowing in what direction to swim.

* Wall D, Plan II. p. 42.

† Herod. lib. vii. c. 68, and lib. i. c. 195.

sceptre that she might live.* It might be expected, therefore, that in the Assyrian sculptures those who stand in the royal presence would be portrayed in the humblest posture of submission. These figures were about eight feet high; the relief very low, and the ornaments rich and elaborate. The bracelets, armlets, and weapons were all adorned with the heads of horses, bulls, and rams, the style of which would not have been unworthy of the exquisite chasing of the middle ages; colour still remained on the hair, beard, and sandals.

The adjoining slab, forming a wall at right angles with these bas-reliefs, was of enormous dimensions, but had been broken in two pieces: the upper part had fallen, the lower was still standing in its place. It was only after many ineffectual attempts that



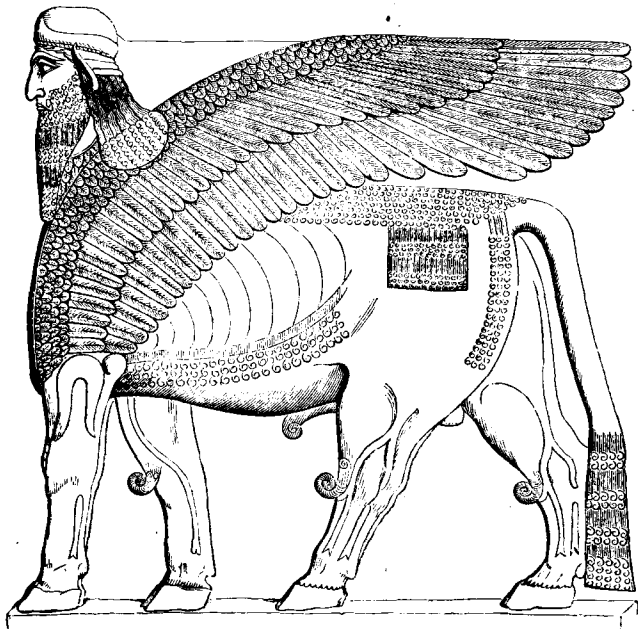
Handles of three Daggers carried in the Girdle. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

I succeeded in raising the fallen half sufficiently to see the sculpture upon it. It was a winged giant, carrying the fir-cone and square utensil, about sixteen and a half feet high and in low relief; in other respects similar to those already described, except that it had four wings, two springing from each shoulder, and almost completely encircling the figure.

On the opposite side of the entrance were also a vizir and his attendant; but they were followed by figures, differing altogether in dress from those previously discovered, and apparently representing not Assyrians, but people of another race; some carrying presents or offerings, consisting of armlets, bracelets, and ear-rings on trays; others elevating their clenched hands, probably in token of submission. They were evidently captives and tribute-bearers from a conquered nation ushered into the presence of the monarch by his minister. Amongst the objects of tribute were two

* Herod. lib. i. c. 99.; Esther, iv. 11.

monkeys held by ropes ; one raising itself on its hind legs, the other sitting on the shoulders of its keeper.* The costume of these figures consisted of high boots turned up at the toes, resembling those still in use in Turkey and Persia ; conical caps, apparently formed by bands, or folds of felt or linen; and loose shirts descending to the ankles ornamented down the centre and at the bottom with fringes.



Winged human-headed Bull. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

The figure with the monkeys was clothed in a short tunic, scarcely reaching to the calf of the leg, and his hair was simply bound up by a fillet. There were traces of black paint on his face, but it may have been washed down from the hair, as no remains of colour have been found on the face of any other figure, although it is probable that the Assy-

* This bas-relief is in the British Museum.

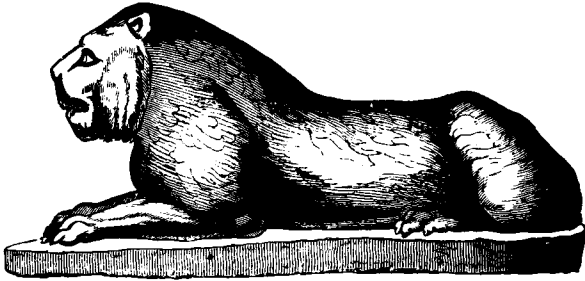
rians, like the Egyptians, may have denoted races, sex, and orders of the priesthood by various tints.

To the south of the colossal lions, forming the principal entrance* to the great hall, the wall was continued by an eagle-headed figure resembling that on the opposite side. Adjoining it was a corner-stone bearing the sacred tree. Beyond, the slabs ceased altogether; but I soon found that they had only fallen from their places, and were lying on the floor with their faces downwards, and that, although broken, the sculptures upon them representing battles, sieges, and other historical subjects, were, as far as it could be ascertained by the examination of one or two, in admirable preservation. The wall of sun-dried bricks, against which they had stood, and of which they had formed the panelling, was still distinctly visible to the height of twelve or fourteen feet. This wall served as my guide in digging onwards, to the distance of about one hundred feet.

The first sculpture discovered still standing in its original position, was a winged human-headed bull carved out of yellow limestone. On the previous day we had found the human head belonging to the corresponding bull on the opposite side of the entrance, which had fallen from its place and was broken into several pieces, ^a. This head is now in the British Museum. I lifted the body with difficulty; and discovered under it sixteen copper lions, of admirable execution, forming a regular series, diminishing in size from the largest, which was above one foot in length, to the smallest, which scarcely exceeded an inch. A ring was attached to the back of some of them. When these lions were brought to England and cleaned, it was found that upon them were short inscriptions in the cuneiform character, and in cursive Semitic or Phœnician letters. The cuneiform inscriptions contain the name of Sennacherib, to whose reign consequently these objects are to be referred, and specify the weight of the lion, which is also stated in the Phœnician writing. In addition, lines or notches on the side of the lion correspond with the number of manæ mentioned in the inscriptions. The largest lion now weighs nearly 39 lbs., and is believed to

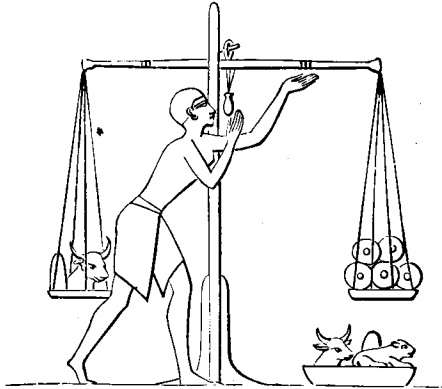
* Entrance *a*, Chamber B, Plan II. p. 42.

represent half a Babylonian talent; the smallest, 1 oz. 15 dwt., probably equal to one mana.



Bronze Lion.

These copper lions may have formed a series of weights kept in the palace as the royal standard for general reference. Weights similar in shape were used by the Egyptians,



Egyptian weighing Rings of Metal with Weights in the form of a seated Lion.

and are represented in a bas-relief from a tomb in which an Egyptian is seen weighing rings of metal.* Near the lions

* For a more complete account of the lion weights, and of other weights in the shape of a duck, discovered in the ruins, see my 'Nineveh and Babylon' (unabridged edition), pp. 600 and 601 and notes.

were found fragments of an earthen vase, on which were represented in relief two figures, with the wings and claws of a bird, the breasts of a woman, and the tail of a scorpion.*

Beyond the entrance formed by the winged bulls the slabs were still upright and entire. On the first was sculptured a winged man carrying a branch with five flowers in his raised right hand, and the usual square vessel in his left. On his head he wore a garland adorned with three rosettes. On each of the four following slabs were two bas-reliefs, divided by the usual standard inscription. The upper bas-relief, on the first slab, represented a castle apparently built on an island in a river. One of its towers was defended by an armed man, on two others were women. Three warriors, probably escaping from the enemy, were swimming across the stream ; two of them supporting themselves on inflated skins, in the mode practised to this day by the Arabs inhabiting the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, when they cross those rivers ; except that, in the bas-relief, the swimmers were pictured as retaining in their mouths the aperture through which the skin is filled with air, whilst the modern Arab simply ties it up. The third, pierced by the arrows discharged by two Assyrian warriors kneeling on the opposite shore, was struggling without any support against the current. Three rudely designed trees completed the background.

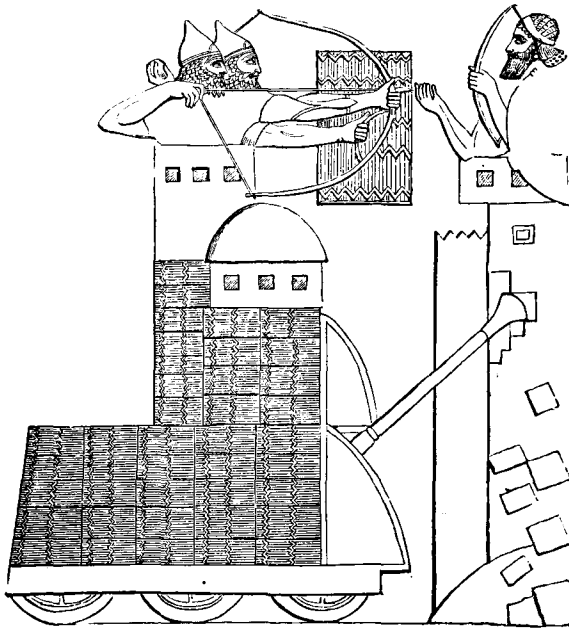
The upper compartment of the next slab represented the siege of a city or castle by the Assyrians. The king, followed by his shield-bearer and attendants, was seen discharging an arrow against the enemy. A tower of wicker-work, moving on wheels, and to which was attached a battering-ram, apparently worked from the interior, had been drawn up to the castle. This tower was occupied by two Assyrian archers, and the ram had already dislodged several stones from the walls. The besieged, apparently anticipating the fall of their stronghold, were asking for quarter.

Beneath the two bas-reliefs just described was one subject. The king, followed by his eunuchs and his chariot, from

* All these remains are now in the British Museum.

which he had dismounted, was receiving a line of prisoners led before him by his vizir. Some bore objects of spoil or tribute, such as vases, shawls, and elephants' tusks; others were bound together by ropes, and were driven forward by Assyrian warriors with drawn swords.

The upper compartments of the third and fourth slabs contained two hunting scenes. In one the king was represented discharging an arrow against a lion springing upon his



Battering Ram with movable Tower containing Warriors.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

chariot, whilst a second lion, mortally wounded, had fallen beneath the feet of the horses. Two warriors with drawn swords appeared to be running to the assistance of the monarch. This bas-relief from the knowledge of art displayed in the treatment and composition, the correct and

effective delineation of the men and animals, and the spirit of the grouping, is one of the finest specimens yet discovered of Assyrian sculpture, and forms an interesting object of study and comparison in connection with the earliest specimens of Greek art, which was probably founded on that of Assyria. The rage of the fallen animal, who is struggling to extricate the arrow from its neck, is admirably portrayed; whilst the majesty and power conveyed in the form of the springing lion is worthy of a very high order of art. In the other bas-relief the king in his chariot was seen piercing a wild bull with a short sword: a second bull wounded by arrows being beneath the horses. A horseman following the chariot led a second horse, ready for the use of the king. The animal represented in this sculpture was probably a wild ox, once inhabiting the Assyrian plains, but long since extinct, as neither tradition nor history records its existence in this part of Asia. It may have roved through Assyria at a very early period, and may have been exterminated when an increasing population covered the face of the country with cities and villages.* It is distinguished from the domestic ox by a number of small marks covering the body, and apparently intended to denote rough and shaggy hair, and is represented with one horn, as horses are frequently drawn with only two legs or one ear, because the Assyrian sculptor did not attempt to give both in a side view of the animal. Beneath these bas-reliefs was represented the king on his return from the chase, pouring a libation, or drinking out of the sacred cup, above the fallen lion and bull. His

* I have found no representation of this animal in any sculptures of a later date than those of the N. W. palace of Nimroud, the earliest Assyrian edifice with which we are acquainted. Had it inhabited the plains of Mesopotamia in the time of Xenophon, he would probably have described it when speaking of the wild animals of that country. The wild ox is, however, mentioned in Deut. xiv. 5, amongst the animals whose flesh may be eaten by the Jews. The 'wild bull in a net' is also alluded to in Isaiah, li. 20. The Hebrew word is rendered 'wild bull' in the Targums, and 'oryx' in the Vulgate: some, however, think that it means a kind of antelope. (Gesenius, *Lex. in voce.*) The Rev. Mr. Rawlinson believes the animal in the sculptures to represent the aurochs, or European bison, which is still found in the Caucasus. (*Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii. p. 131.)

attendants stood around him, and musicians celebrated, on stringed instruments, his victories over the wild beasts of the desert.*

The frequent representations in the Nineveh sculptures of hunting scenes in which the king is the principal actor, is a proof of the high estimation in which the chase was held by the primitive inhabitants of Assyria. A conqueror and the founder of an empire was, at the same time, a great hunter. His courage, wisdom, and dexterity were as much shown in encounters with wild animals as in martial exploits; he rendered equal services to his subjects, whether he cleared the country of beasts of prey, or repulsed an enemy. The scriptural Nimrod, who laid the foundation of the Assyrian monarchy, was 'a mighty hunter before the Lord;' and the Ninus of history and tradition, the builder of Nineveh, and the greatest of the Assyrian kings, was as renowned for his encounters with the lion and the leopard, as for his triumphs over warlike nations. The Babylonians, as well as the Assyrians, ornamented the walls of their temples and palaces with pictures and sculptures representing the chase; and similar subjects were introduced even in the embroideries of garments. The Assyrians were probably also the first to have those enclosed parks, or paradises, which were afterwards maintained at so vast a cost by the Persian kings of the Achæmenian and Sassanian dynasties. In these spacious preserves wild animals of various kinds were kept for the diversion of the king and of those who were privileged to join with him in the chase. They contained lions, tigers, wild boars, antelopes, and many varieties of birds. The sculptures just described may represent the king hunting in one of these royal paradises.†

The Assyrian, like the Persian, youths were probably trained to the chase at an early age. Xenophon gives an interesting account of the hunting expeditions of the Persians in the time of Cyrus. The king was accompanied by half

* All the bas-reliefs here described are now in the British Museum.

† A series of bas-reliefs subsequently discovered at Kouyunjik, and now in the British Museum, represent the king hunting lions turned out of cages in which they have been brought to the hunting grounds.

his guard, each man being armed, as if he were going to battle, with a bow, quiver, sword, shield, and two javelins,—hunting being, as Xenophon declares, the truest method of practising all such things as relate to war.* Such, it would appear from the bas-reliefs, was also the practice amongst the Assyrians, for the king is represented as accompanied by warriors fully equipped for the fight.

On the floor of the hall, near the sculptures just described, were found remains of painted plaster still adhering to the sun-dried bricks, which had formed the upper part of the wall above the sculptured slabs, and had fallen from their places. The colours, particularly the blues and reds, were still fresh and vivid when first discovered; but on exposure to the air they faded rapidly. The designs were elegant and elaborate. It was found almost impossible to preserve any portion of this very thin coating of plaster, which crumbled to pieces when an attempt was made to move it.

About this time I received from Sir Stratford Canning the vizirial letter, granting me official permission to continue the excavations and to carry away such objects as might be discovered. I was sleeping in the tent of Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman, who had invited me to hunt gazelles with him before dawn on the following morning, when an Arab messenger awoke me. He was the bearer of letters from Mosul; and I read by the light of a small camel-dung fire, the document which secured to the nation the records of Nineveh, and the collection of the ancient monuments of Assyrian art which are now preserved in the British Museum.

The vizirial order was as comprehensive as could be desired; and having been granted on the departure of the British ambassador for England, was the highest testimony the Turkish government could give of their respect for the character of Sir Stratford Canning, and of their appreciation of the eminent services he had rendered them.

One of the difficulties, and not one of the least which had to be encountered—the opposition of the local authorities—was now completely removed. Still, however, money was wanting, and, in the absence of the necessary means, ex-

* *Cyrop.* lib. i. c. 2.

tensive excavations could not be carried on. I hastened, nevertheless, to communicate the letter of the Grand Vizir to the Pasha, and to make arrangements for pursuing the researches as effectually as possible.

Not having yet examined the great mound of Kouyunjik, which was believed to mark the true site of Nineveh, I determined to open trenches in it. I had not previously done so, as from the vicinity of the ruins to Mosul the inhabitants of the town would have been able to watch my movements, and to cause me continual interruptions before the sanction of the authorities had been obtained to my proceedings. A small party of workmen having been organised, excavations were commenced on the southern face, where the mound was highest; as sculptures, if any still existed, would probably be found in the best state of preservation under the largest accumulation of rubbish. My researches, however, were not then attended with much success. Some fragments of sculpture and cuneiform inscriptions were discovered, which enabled me to assert with confidence that the remains were those of a building contemporary, or nearly so, with Khorsabad, and consequently of a more recent epoch than the most ancient palace of Nimroud. All the bricks dug out of the ruins bore the name of the same king, but I could not find any traces of his genealogy. After excavating for about a month, I discontinued my researches until a better opportunity might offer.

On my return to Nimroud, about thirty men, chiefly Arabs, were employed to dig in the N. W. palace.

Beyond the five sculptured slabs last described, a corner-stone with the sacred tree was discovered, which formed the eastern end of a great hall, 154 feet in length, and only 33 feet in breadth. These proportions, the length so far exceeding the width, are peculiar to Assyrian interior architecture, and may probably be attributed to the difficulty experienced in roofing over a larger span. Adjoining this corner-stone was a winged human figure; and then came a slab, fourteen feet in length, with a kind of recess cut in it, in which were four figures in relief. Two kings stood face to face, their right hands raised in prayer or adoration. Between

them was the oft-recurring sacred tree, above which appeared the emblem of the supreme deity of the Assyrians—a human figure to the waist, with the wings and tail of a bird, enclosed in a circle, —which was adopted by the Persians, and represents Ormuzd, or the great God of the Zoroastrian system, on the monuments of Persepolis. In the right hand of this figure was a ring. The kings, who were either different monarchs, or more probably but a double representation of the same, appeared to be attired for the performance of some religious ceremony. Their waists were encircled by knotted bands, the ends of which fell almost to their feet. Around their necks were suspended certain mystic emblems, such as a cross, a star, and the horned cap worn by the human-headed lions, and in their hands they carried a kind of mace, terminating in a disk or globe. Each king was followed by a winged deity, or priest, with the fir-cone and basket.*

To the left of this slab was a winged figure similar to that on the right, and a second corner-stone, with the sacred tree, completed the eastern end of the hall. Part of both the winged figures adjoining the centre slab, as well as the lower part of that slab, which advanced beyond the sculpture, had been purposely defaced, and still bore the marks of the chisel.

Subsequent excavations disclosed in front of the bas-relief of the two kings, a slab of alabaster, 10 feet by 8, and about 2 feet thick, cut into steps or gradines on the side facing the grand entrance, and covered on both sides with inscriptions. On raising it, a process of considerable difficulty from its great weight and size, I found beneath a few pieces of gold-leaf and some fragments of bone, which crumbled into dust as soon as exposed to the air. This great slab may have been used for sacrificial purposes, for, in a corner of the same part of the chamber, were two square stones, slightly hollowed in the centre, and round the slab itself was a conduit in alabaster, apparently intended to carry off some fluid, perhaps the blood of the sacrifice.

On the first slab of the northern wall, adjoining the corner-stone, was a human figure with four wings; the

* This bas-relief is now in the British Museum.

right hand raised, and the left holding a mace. Beyond were two human-headed lions, forming a fourth entrance to the great hall, and corresponding with those on the same side; * from which, however, they differed somewhat in form, the hands being joined in front instead of bearing an animal. They, also, led to an outer wall, on which was sculptured a procession of figures, similarly clothed to those adjoining the other entrance, and bearing tribute or spoil. The corner was likewise formed by a colossal winged figure, which was connected with the corresponding sculpture by four or more winged human-headed bulls and lions, of enormous proportions. Two of these gigantic sculptures had fallen on their faces and were broken in several pieces. This assemblage of winged human-headed lions and bulls appears to have formed the grand entrance into the palace, and must have been truly magnificent. †

As the edge of a ravine or gully had now been reached, the workmen were directed to resume excavations between the yellow bulls, which formed the entrance into a further



Sacred Emblems suspended round the neck of the King. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

chamber. ‡ This room, the walls of which had been partly destroyed, was panelled with bas-reliefs representing eagle-headed deities facing one another, and separated by the sacred tree, except on the east side, where a king stood between a pair of these mythic figures. Around the monarch's neck were suspended the five sacred emblems. They consist of a star, a kind of Maltese cross, a half-moon, a bident, and a horned cap similar to that worn by the human-headed bulls, and are constantly found on Assyrian monuments. §

* Entrance c, Chamber B, Plan II. p. 42.

† This appears to have been the usual mode of ornamenting the principal entrances and façades of the Assyrian palaces. Similar groups of winged human-headed bulls and colossal figures were discovered at Kouyunjik and Khorsabad. (See 'Nineveh and Babylon,' abridged edition, chap. ii.)

‡ Chamber F, Plan II. p. 42.

§ It is worthy of remark, that, with the exception of the horned cap, these symbols are found on the sacred monuments of India. It is

An entrance, formed by four slabs, two with bas-reliefs of human figures carrying a mystic flower,* led me into a new chamber, remarkable for the elaborate and careful finish of its sculptures. I uncovered the northern wall, and the eastern as far as a second entrance.†

The northern end of the chamber was occupied by one group, the principal figure in which was that of the king, seated on a throne or stool, holding in his right hand a cup, and resting his left upon his knee. In front of the monarch stood an eunuch, raising with one hand a fan, and holding in the other the cover or stand of the cup from which the king was drinking or pouring a libation. Over the shoulder of his attendant was thrown an embroidered towel, resembling that still presented by servants in the East to one who has drunk, or performed his ablutions. He was followed by a winged figure with the fir-cone and basket. Behind the king were two eunuchs bearing his arms, and a second winged figure similar to that in front of the throne. The whole group probably represented the celebration, after a great victory, of some religious ceremony, in which the presiding divinities of Assyria, or priests assuming their form, ministered to the king. This very fine bas-relief, which is now in the British Museum, was remarkable for the extreme delicacy and beauty of the details and its extraordinary preservation. The robes of the monarch and those of his attendants were covered with the most elaborate designs slightly graven in the alabaster, and which, no doubt, had been originally painted. In the centre of his breast were represented two kings in act of adoration before the emblem of the supreme God. Around were figures of winged deities, and the king performing different religious cere-

curious that on these monuments they should also be accompanied by the sacred bull. According to Sir Henry Rawlinson, the eight-rayed sun or star (sometimes represented with six rays) is the emblem of Gula, the Sun goddess; the crescent, the emblem of Sin, the Moon god; the four-rayed star, or rather cross, the emblem of Shamas, the Sun god; the horned cap the emblem of the King's guardian genius; and the bident sometimes represented with three prongs, the emblem of Iva, the god of the Atmosphere. (Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' ii. p. 703.)

* Entrance a, Chamber F, Plan II. p. 42.

† Entrance z, Chamber G, Plan II. p. 42.

monies. Borders of similar groups, including various forms of animals and monsters, winged horses, gryphons, and sphinxes, adorned the front, and were carried round the skirts, of the dress. The embroideries on the garments of the priests and eunuchs were of the same kind and equally



Ornament on the Dress of Eunuchs.

elaborate. They consisted chiefly of men struggling with winged monsters, ostriches standing before the sacred tree, and numerous elegant devices, in which the seven-petalled flower was always the most conspicuous.



Ornament on the Robe of King.

These ornaments were probably intended to represent embroideries on silk, linen, or woollen stuffs, in the manufacture and dyeing of which the Assyrians had obtained so great a perfection that the beauty of their garments was still renowned many centuries after the fall of the empire. Amongst those who traded 'in blue clothes and embroidered work'

with Tyre were the merchants of Ashur, or Assyria; and Achan confessed to Joshua that 'when he saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels' weight, he coveted and took them.* Robes such as are seen in these sculptures may have been 'the dyed attire and embroidered work' so frequently mentioned in the Bible as the garments of princes and the most costly gifts of kings. The ornaments and figures upon them may either have been dyed, woven in the loom, or embroidered with the needle, like 'the prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides.†

In the bas-relief I am describing, the dress of the king consisted of a long flowing garment or gown, such as is still worn by men in the East, edged with fringes and tassels descending to his ankles, and confined at the waist by a girdle. Over this robe a kind of cloak, similarly ornamented and open in front, appears to have been thrown. From his shoulders fell a cape, or hood, also adorned with tassels, and with two long ribbons or lappets. He wore the conical mitre, or tiara, which distinguishes the monarch in Assyrian bas-reliefs, and appears to have been reserved for him alone. It is impossible to determine from the sculptures the nature of the material of which it was made, but it may be conjectured that it consisted of bands or folds of linen or silk. It was embroidered with flowers and other ornaments, and was surmounted by a small cone or point.‡ Around the neck of the king was a necklace. He



Ornament on the Robe of Winged Figure.

* Ezekiel, xxvii. 24; Joshua, vii. 21.

† Judges, v. 30. We learn from Pliny (lib. viii. c. 48), that gold threads were introduced into the Assyrian woof of many hues.

‡ The head-dress of the Persian monarchs, called the 'cidaris,' appears to have resembled the Phrygian bonnet, or the French Cap of

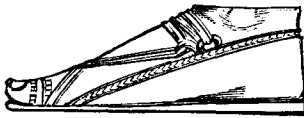
wore earrings, and his arms, which were bare from a little above the elbow, were encircled by armlets and bracelets remarkable for the beauty of their forms.



Head-Dress of the King.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

The clasps were in the shape of the heads of animals, and the centre was ornamented with stars and rosettes, probably inlaid with precious stones.* His beard was elaborately plaited, and his hair, which fell in ringlets on his shoulders, may have been partly artificial like that of the Persian monarchs, who, according to Xenophon,† wore a wig. Both the hair and beard were probably dyed, and the eyes blackened with some preparation resembling the *kohl*

or *surma* still used by persons of both sexes in the East. His sandals covered the back part of the foot, leaving the fore part exposed, and were fastened by bands crossing the



The King's Sandal.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)



The King's Footstool.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

instep and passing round the great toe. The soles appear to have been of wood or thick leather.

The eunuchs and winged figures wore robes and ornaments similar in most respects to those of the king. The

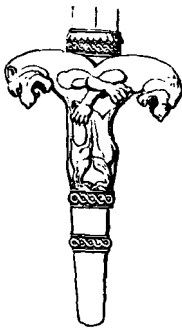
Liberty. That worn by Darius was of blue and white, or purple and white. It is probable that the one worn by the Assyrian king was of two or more colours. (Quint. Curt. lib. iii. ch. 3, and lib. vi. ch. 6.)

* The dress of the Assyrian king appears to have been similar to that of his successors in the empire of the East. Xenophon describes Astyages as clothed in a purple coat and rich habit, with necklaces round his neck and bracelets on his arms. (Cyrop. lib. i. ch. 3.) Darius wore a tunic of white and purple, embroidered robes, golden girdle, and sword adorned with jewels. (Quint. Curt. lib. iii. c. 3.)

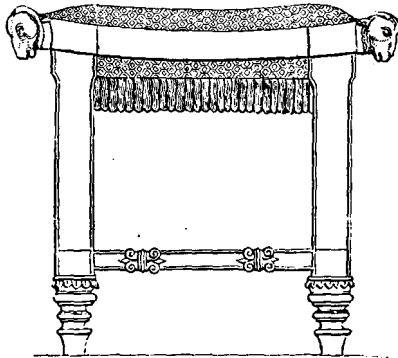
† Cyrop. lib. i. c. 3.

eunuchs, however, had no other head-dress than the carefully curled ringlets.

The arms, carried by the eunuchs for their own use, as well as for that of the king, were richly ornamented with the heads of lions: the beaks of eagles held the strings of their bows, and their quivers were covered with groups of human figures and animals. The king's throne and his footstool were in keeping with the rest of the details. The throne or



End of a Sword Sheath.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)



The King's Throne.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

rather stool, for it had neither back nor arms, was tastefully carved, and adorned with the heads of rams; the legs of the footstool terminated in lions' paws. They may have been of wood or copper, inlaid with ivory and other precious materials, or of solid gold, like the tables and couches in the temple of Belus at Babylon.*

The figures in these fine bas-reliefs were about eight feet high. They were in an extraordinary state of preservation, and seemed as if they had just come from the hands of the sculptor, the most delicate chasings being still distinct, and the outline retaining all its original sharpness.† On the

* A copper or bronze throne and footstool, restored from fragments subsequently discovered at Nimroud, are now in the British Museum.

† They are now in the British Museum; but unfortunately, owing to the extreme neglect shown in their transport to this country, they have been much injured.

other slabs forming the walls of this chamber were alternate groups, representing the king holding his bow in one hand and two arrows in the other, standing between winged figures ; and the king also erect, raising the sacred cup, and attended by eunuchs. The details in these sculptures were similar in character to those already described. They furnished, however, many new and interesting groups ; such as the combats of winged figures with monsters of various kinds, scenes of the chase, goats and bulls kneeling before the sacred tree, and the king performing religious ceremonies.

The king represented in these finely preserved and elaborate sculptures was undoubtedly the builder of the palace or temple which I was exploring ; and his name had been found in every inscription hitherto discovered amongst its ruins. It was the same image, too, which occurred in other bas-reliefs, in the same edifice. The Assyrian form of this name, according to some interpretations of the cuneiform characters in which it is written, appears to approach so nearly to that of the monarch, whose name has been handed down to us by the Greeks, that I shall call him 'Sardanapalus.' A name very similar to it appears, however, to have been borne by a later Assyrian king, and it may therefore be doubtful to which of the two the traditionary history recorded by the Greeks may apply.*

The Arabs marvelled at these strange figures. As each head was uncovered they showed their amazement by extravagant gestures, or exclamations of surprise. If it were a bearded man, they concluded at once that it was an idol or an evil spirit, and cursed or spat upon it. If an eunuch, they declared that it was the likeness of a beautiful girl, and kissed or patted the cheek. They soon felt as much interest as I did in the discoveries, and worked with renewed ardour when their curiosity was excited by the appearance of

* At one time Sir Henry Rawlinson read the name of the Nimroud king as Asshur-idanni-pal ; later, as Asshur-izzir-pal. According to Dr. Hincks it is Asshur-yuzhur-bal ; according to M. Oppert, Assur-iddannapalla. Mr. Rawlinson ('Ancient Monarchies') accepts his brother's first reading.

a fresh sculpture. On such occasions, stripping themselves almost naked, throwing the kerchief from their heads, and letting their matted hair stream in the wind, they would rush like madmen into the trenches to carry off the baskets of earth, shouting, at the same time, the war-cry of their tribe.

Passing through an entrance formed by the usual winged figures, I reached a further chamber panelled by slabs, on which was sculptured the king, raising a richly ornamented cup and standing between two divinities wearing fillets adorned with rosettes round their temples.*

I quitted this chamber, after uncovering the upper part of four or five bas-reliefs; and returning to the western wall of that previously explored, discovered another pair of human-headed lions, similar to, but smaller than, those forming the western entrance to the great hall. The accumulation of earth and rubbish above this part of the ruins was very considerable, and it is not improbable that it was owing to this that the sculptures, which were in the most perfect preservation, had been so completely guarded from injury.

I was now anxious to send to Baghdad and Busrah, for transport to Bombay or England, such sculptures as I could move with the means at my disposal. Major Rawlinson had obligingly proposed that, for this purpose, the small steamer belonging to the East Indian Government, and kept on the lower part of the Tigris, should be sent up to Nimroud, and I expected the most valuable assistance, both in removing the slabs and in forming plans for future excavations, from her able commander, Captain Jones. The 'Euphrates,' one of the two vessels originally constructed for the navigation of the rivers of Mesopotamia, had some years before succeeded in reaching the tomb of Sultan Abd-Allah, a few miles below Nimroud. Impediments, not however more serious than those she had already surmounted, occurring in this part of the bed of the stream, she returned to Baghdad. A vessel, even of her size, and with engines of the same power, could have reached, I have little doubt, the bund or dam of the *Awai*, which would probably have been a barrier to a further

* Chamber H. Plan. II. p. 42.

ascent of the Tigris. It was found, however, that the machinery of the 'Nitocris,' the vessel now on the station, was either too much out of repair, or not sufficiently powerful to carry the vessel over the rapids, which occur in the river above Baghdad. After ascending some miles above Tekrit the attempt was given up, and she turned back.

Without proper materials it was impossible to move the colossal lions, or even any entire slab. The ropes of the country were so weak and ill-made that they could not support any considerable weight. I determined, therefore, to saw the slabs containing double bas-reliefs into two pieces, and to lighten them as much as possible by cutting from the back. As the inscriptions were all exactly the same, being repetitions of the standard inscription, I did not consider it necessary to preserve them, as they added to the weight. With the help of wooden levers, and by digging away the wall of sun-dried bricks, I was able to move the sculptures into the centre of the trenches, where they were reduced to the requisite size. They were then packed in felt in wooden cases, and transported from the mound upon some rude buffalo carts belonging to the Pasha, to the river, where they were placed upon a raft constructed of inflated sheep skins and beams of poplar wood. They were floated down the Tigris as far as Baghdad, were there transferred to boats of the country, and reached Busrah in the month of August. They were then shipped for Bombay, from whence they were transported to England round the Cape of Good Hope. The sculptures sent home on this occasion formed the first Assyrian collection exhibited to the public in the British Museum.

Whilst I was moving these bas-reliefs, Tahyar Pasha visited me at Nimroud. He was accompanied, for his better security, by a large body of regular and irregular troops, and three guns. His Diwan Effendesi, seal-bearer, and all the dignitaries of his household, were also with him. I entertained this large company for two days. The Pasha's tents were pitched on an island in the river near my shed. He examined the ruins, and expressed no less wonder at the sculptures than the Arabs; nor were his conjectures as to

their origin and history, and the nature of the subjects represented, much more rational than those of the sons of the desert. The colossal human-headed lions terrified, as well as amazed, his Osmanli followers. 'La Illahi il Allah' (there is no God but God) was echoed from all sides. 'These are the idols of the infidels,' said one, more knowing than the rest. 'I saw many such when I was in Italia with Reshid Pasha, the ambassador. Wallah! they have them in all the churches, and the Papas (priests) kneel and burn candles before them.' 'No, my lamb,' exclaimed a more aged and experienced Turk. 'I have seen the images of the infidels in the churches of Beyoglu (Pera); they are dressed in many colours; and although some of them have wings, none have a dog's body and a tail; these are the works of the Jin, whom the holy Solomon, peace be upon him! reduced to obedience and imprisoned under his seal.' 'I have seen something like them in your apothecaries' and barbers' shops,' said I, alluding to the well-known figure, half woman and half lion, which is met with so frequently in the bazaars of Constantinople. 'Istafer Allah' (God forbid!), piously ejaculated the Pasha; 'that is a sacred emblem of which true believers speak with reverence, and not the handiwork of infidels.' 'There is no infidel living,' exclaimed an engineer, who was looked up to as an authority on these subjects, 'either in Frangistan or in Yenghi Dunia (America), who could make anything like that; they are the work of the Majus (Magi), and are to be sent to England to form a gateway to the palace of the Queen.' 'May God curse all infidels and their works!' observed the *cadi's* deputy, who accompanied the Pasha; 'what comes from their hands is of Satan: it has pleased the Almighty to let them be more powerful and ingenious than the true believers in this world, that their punishment and the reward of the faithful may be greater in the next.'

The heat had now become so intense that my health began to suffer from continued exposure to the sun, and from the labour entailed upon me by the excavations. In the trenches, where I daily passed many hours superintending the workmen, drawing the sculptures, and copying the inscriptions,

the thermometer generally ranged from 112° to 115° in the shade, and on one or two occasions even reached 117°. Hot winds swept like blasts from a furnace over the desert during the day, and drove away sleep at night. I resolved, therefore, to take refuge in the sardaubs or cellars of Mosul; and, in order not to lose time, to try further excavations in the Mound of Kouyunjik. Leaving a superintendent, and a few guards to watch over the uncovered sculptures at Nimroud, I rode to the town.

The houses of Baghdad and Mosul are provided with underground apartments called 'sardaubs,' in which the inhabitants pass the day during the summer months. They are generally ill lighted, and the air is close and frequently unwholesome: still they offer a welcome retreat during the hot weather, when the extreme heat renders it almost impossible to sit in a room. At sunset the people emerge from these subterranean chambers, and congregate on the flat roofs, where they spread their carpets, eat their evening meal, and pass the night.

After many fruitless inquiries after the bas-relief described by Rich * as having been discovered in one of the mounds forming the large quadrangle in which are included Nebbi Yunus and Kouyunjik, I met with an aged stone-cutter, who declared that he had not only been present when the sculpture was found, but that he had been employed to break it up. He pointed out the spot, in the northern line of ruins, and I at once commenced excavations. The workmen were not long in coming upon fragments of sculptured alabaster, and after two or three days' labour, an entrance was discovered which had been formed by two winged figures. They had, however, been purposely destroyed. The legs and the lower part of the tunic were alone preserved. The proportions were colossal, and the relief higher than that of any sculpture hitherto discovered in Assyria. This entrance led into a chamber, the lower part of the walls of which was panelled with limestone slabs about five feet high and three broad. There were marks of the chisel upon them all as if something had been effaced; but from their size it appeared

* Residence in Kurdistan and Nineveh, vol. ii. p. 39.

doubtful whether figures had ever been sculptured upon them. The upper part of the walls was of sun-dried bricks. In the rubbish filling up the chamber were discovered numerous baked bricks, bearing the name of Sennacherib, the builder of the great palace at Kouyunjik. The pavement was of limestone. After tracing the walls of one chamber, I renounced a further examination of the ruin, as no traces of sculpture were to be found, and the accumulation of rubbish was very considerable.

This mound appeared to cover either an entrance to the city, or a small temple or tower forming part of the walls. From its height, it would seem that the building had two or more stories.*

The comparative rest obtained in Mosul so far restored my strength, that I returned to Nimroud in the middle of August, and again attempted to renew the excavations. I uncovered the top of many of the slabs in the chamber last discovered, and found two chambers leading out of it.† The sculptures were similar to those already described; the king standing between two winged figures, and holding in one hand a cup, and in the other a bow. The only new feature was a recess cut out of the upper part of one of the slabs. I am at a loss to account for its use; from its position it might have been taken for a window, opening into the adjoining room, in which, however, there was no corresponding aperture. It may have been used as a place of deposit for sacred vessels and instruments, or as an altar for sacrifice, as a large square stone slightly hollowed in the centre, probably to contain a fluid, was generally found in front of similar recesses.

The walls of the small chamber to the west were unsculptured. The pavement was formed by inscribed slabs of alabaster. The further entrance‡ led me into a long narrow room surrounded by double bas-reliefs separated by the

* This mound was further explored on my second visit to Nineveh, and was found to cover one of the city gates, formed by colossal human-headed bulls and other sculptures. (See 'Nineveh and Babylon,' chap. i.)

† Chambers I and R, Plan II. p. 42.

‡ Entrance *b*, Chamber H, Plan II. p. 42.

usual inscription; the upper (similar on all the slabs) representing two winged human figures, kneeling before the mystic tree; the lower, eagle-headed figures facing each other in pairs, and separated by the same symbol.

The state of my health again compelled me to renounce, for the time, my labours at Nimroud. As I required a cooler climate, I determined to visit the Tiyari mountains, inhabited by the Nestorians or Chaldæan Christians, and to return to Mosul in September, when the violence of the heat had abated.

CHAPTER VI.

Departure for the Tiyari mountains—Khorsabad—Shaikh Adi—A Kurdish encampment—A Chaldean village—Amadiyah—A Turkish governor—Albanian irregulars—An Albanian chief—The Valley of Berwari—Chaldean villages—A Kurdish Bey—Asheetha.

THE preparations for my journey were completed by the 28th August, and on that day I started from Mosul for the mountains. My party consisted of Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, Ibrahim Agha (my Cawass), two Albanian irregulars, who were to accompany me as far as Amadiyah, a servant, a groom, and one Ionan, or Ionunco, as he was familiarly called, a half-witted Nestorian, whose drunken frolics were reserved for the entertainment of the Patriarch, and who was enlisted into our caravan for the amusement of the company. We rode our own horses. As Ionunco pretended to know all the mountain-roads, and volunteered to conduct us, we placed ourselves under his guidance. I was provided with Bouyourouldis, or orders, from the Pasha to the authorities, as far as Amadiyah, and with a letter to Abd-ul-Summit Bey, the Kurdish chief of Berwari, through whose territories we had to pass. Mar Shamoun, the Nestorian Patriarch (who was then living at Mosul), gave me a very strong letter of recommendation to the meleks, or chiefs, and priests of the Nestorian districts.

As I was anxious to visit the French excavations at Khorsabad on my way to the mountains, I left Mosul early in the afternoon, notwithstanding the great heat of the sun. It was the sixth day of Ramazan,* and the Mohammedans

* During the month of Ramazan, Mohammedans fast from dawn to sunset: between these times they cannot even drink water or smoke; two privations equally great to Easterns. When the month of Ramazan falls in the summer, this fasting causes real suffering.

were still endeavouring to sleep away their hunger when I passed through the gates, and crossed the bridge of boats. Leaving my baggage and servants to follow leisurely, I galloped on with the Albanians, and reached Khorsabad in about two hours.

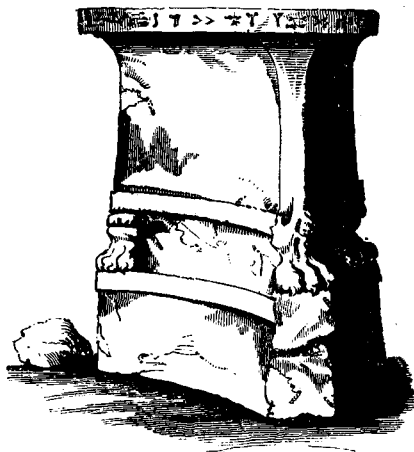
The mound is about fourteen miles N.N.E. of Mosul. A small village * formerly stood on its summit, but the houses were purchased and removed by M. Botta, when excavations were undertaken by the French Government. It has been rebuilt in the plain at the foot of the mound. The Khausser, a stream issuing from the hills of Makloub, is led into numerous channels as it approaches Khorsabad, and irrigates extensive rice grounds. The place is consequently very unhealthy, and the few squalid inhabitants who appeared were almost speechless from ague. M. Botta's workmen suffered greatly from fever, and many fell victims to it.

The excavations were carried on as at Nimroud; and the general plan of the building is the same as that of the Assyrian edifices discovered in that ruin. It has, however, more narrow passages, and the chambers are inferior in size, though the sculptured slabs are in general higher. The relief of the larger figures is bolder, that of the smaller about the same. The human-headed bulls differ principally in the head-dress from those at Nimroud; the horned cap is not rounded off, but is high and flat at the top, and richly ornamented with rosettes, like that of the winged monsters of Persepolis. Some of the human heads are turned inwards, which give the figure an awkward appearance.

Since M. Botta's departure the sides of the trenches had fallen in, and had filled up the greater part of the chambers; the sculptures were rapidly perishing; and, shortly, little will remain of this remarkable monument. Scarcely any part of the building had escaped the fire which destroyed it, and

* In the drawing of this village, engraved in M. Botta's large work on Nineveh, the houses are represented with sloping roofs and as of considerable size. Such roofs are never seen in this part of the East, and the village, like all others in Assyria, was a mere collection of miserable mud huts.

the alabaster slabs having been reduced to lime, and being cracked into innumerable fragments, very few bas-reliefs could be removed. Of exterior architecture I could find no traces except a curious cornice, and a flight of steps, flanked by solid masonry, apparently leading to a small temple built of black stone or basalt, the foundations of which still remain. At the foot of the mound lies an altar or tripod, quite Greek in form and similar to that brought from the same ruins and now in the Louvre.



Altar, or Tripod. (From Khorsabad.)

Khorsabad, or Khishtabad, is mentioned by Yakuti and other early Arab geographers. It is described as a village occupying the site of an ancient Assyrian city called 'Saraoun,' or 'Saraghoun,' and Yakuti declares, that, soon after the Arab conquest, considerable treasures were found amongst the ruins.* It was generally believed at Mosul, where a copy of Yakuti's very rare work exists, that it was in consequence of this notice, and in the hopes of finding further riches, M.

* The name of the King who built the palace, of which the ruins exist at Khorsabad, is 'Sargon,' according to the inscriptions, and he is believed to be the Sargon mentioned in the Bible. (Isaiah, xx. 1.)

Botta excavated in the mound ; hence much of the opposition encountered by him from the authorities.

I had finished my hasty examination of the ruins by the time the baggage reached the village. The sun had set, but being unwilling to expose my party to fever by passing the night on this unhealthy spot, I rode off to a small hamlet about two miles distant. It was quite dark when we reached it, and we found ourselves in the midst of a marsh, even more extensive than that of Khorsabad. As there was no village



Summer Sleeping-place in the Hills.

beyond, I was obliged to stop here; and clambering up to a platform of branches of trees elevated upon poles, I passed the night free from the attacks of the swarms of gnats which infested the stagnant water below.

We left the hamlet long before sunrise, and soon reached some of the springs of the Khausser, a small stream which rises at the northern extremity of the Gebel Makloub, irrigates the lands of numerous villages on its course towards Mosul, and falls into the Tigris, near Kouyunjik, after traversing the large quadrangle containing the ruins of Nineveh.

Our path crossed the northern spur of Gebel Makloub, and then stretched over an extensive plain to the first range of the Kurdish hills. After sunrise the heat soon became intense, the soil was parched and barren; a few mud walls marked here and there the ruins of a village, and the silence and solitude were only broken by parties of Kurds, lazily driving before them, towards Mosul, donkeys laden with rich clusters of grapes from the mountains.

A weary ride brought us to the Yezidi village of Ain Sifni. Its white houses and conical tombs had long been visible on the declivity of a low hill: its cleanliness was a relief after the filth of Mussulman and Christian habitations. I had expected to find there Sheikh Nasr, the religious chief of the Yezidis. As he was absent, I partook of the hospitality of the head of the village, and continued my journey in the afternoon to the tomb of Sheikh Adi. After a further ride of two hours through a pleasant ravine watered by a mountain torrent, whose banks were concealed by flowering oleanders, we reached a well wooded valley, in the centre of which rose the white spire of the tomb of the great Yezidi saint.

Stretching myself by a fountain in the cool shade, flung over the tomb by a cluster of lofty trees, I gave myself up to a full flow of gratitude, at this sudden change from the sultry heat and salt streams of the plains to the verdure and sweet springs of the Kurdish hills. There were 'pleasure-places' enough for all my party, and each eagerly seized his tree and his fountain. The guardians of the tomb, and a few wanderers from a neighbouring village, gathered round me, and satisfied my curiosity as far as their caution and prejudices would allow. But I reserve an account of the sanctuary, and of the singular sect to which it belongs, until I describe my second visit to the place.

We passed the night on the roof of one of the buildings within the precincts of the sacred edifice, and continued our journey at dawn on the following morning.

Quitting the Yezidi district, we entered the mountains inhabited by the large Kurdish tribe of Missouri. The valleys were well wooded; many-shaped rocks towered above our

heads and rose in the streams of the Gomel,* which almost cut off our passage through the narrow defiles. A few villages were scattered on the declivities, but their inhabitants had deserted them for rude huts, built of branches of trees,—their summer habitations.

In four hours we reached the large village of Kaloni, or Kalah-oni, rising amongst vineyards, and hanging over the



Kurdish Women at a Spring.

bed of the Gomel. The houses, well constructed of stone, were empty. Huge horns of the ibex ornamented the lintels of the gateways and the corners of the buildings. The inhabitants were at some distance, on the banks of the stream, living under the trees in their temporary sheds.

These Kurds were of the Badinan branch of the Missouri tribe. Their chief, whose hut was in the midst of this group

* Or Gomer ; this stream forms the principal branch of the Ghazir, or Bumadus.

of simple dwellings, was absent ; but his wife received me with hospitality. Beautiful carpets, the work of her own women, were spread for me under a mulberry tree; and large bowls of milk and cream, wooden platters filled with boiled rice, slices of honeycomb, and baskets of new-gathered fruit, were speedily placed before us. The men sat at a respectful distance, and readily gave me such information as I asked for. The women, unembarrassed by veils, brought straw to our horses, or ran to and fro with their pitchers. Their hair fell in long tresses down their backs, and their foreheads were adorned with rows of coins and beads ; many were not unworthy of the reputation for beauty which the women of Missouri enjoy.

The valley, shut in by lofty rocks, was well wooded with fruit trees—the mulberry, the peach, the fig, the walnut, the olive, and the pomegranate ; beneath them sprang the vine, or were laid out plots of Indian corn, sesame, and cotton. The sheds were built of boughs ; and the property of the owners,—carpets, horse-cloths, and domestic utensils,—were spread out before them. From almost every door, mingling with the grass and flowers, stretched the many-coloured threads of the loom, at which usually sat one female of the family. The carpets made by the Kurdish women are celebrated throughout the East, for the beauty of their texture and of their colours. There was a cleanliness, and even richness, in the dresses of both women and men, an appearance of comfort and industry, which contrasted strikingly with the miserable state of the people of the plain ; and proved that these Kurds had been sufficiently fortunate to escape the notice of the last governor of Mosul, and were reserved for some more scrutinising Pasha.

I acknowledged the hospitality of the Kurdish lady by a present to her son, and rode up to the small Chaldæan village of Bebozi, standing on the summit of a high mountain. The ascent was most precipitous, and the horses could with difficulty reach the place. We found a group of ten houses, built on the edge of a cliff overhanging the valley, at so great a height, that the stream below was scarcely visible. The inhabitants were poor, but received us with unaffected

hospitality. I had left the usual track to Amadiyah for the purpose of visiting an inscription, said to exist near this village. A guide was soon found to conduct me to the spot of which I had heard; but after toiling up a very difficult pathway, I was shown a rock on which were only a few rude marks, bearing no resemblance to any writing that had ever been invented. I was accustomed to such disappointments, and always prepared for them. I returned to the village and visited the small church. The people of Bebozi are amongst those Chaldæans who have been recently brought over to the Roman Catholic faith. They furnish but a too common instance of the mode in which such proselytes are made. In the church I saw a few miserable Italian prints representing miracles of saints and of the blessed Virgin, dressed up in all the horrors of red, yellow, and blue.

Having rested in the village, we resumed our journey, and crossed a range of hills, covered by a forest of dwarf oaks. We descended into the valley of Cheloki, reaching about sunset the large Kurdish village of Spandareh, so called from its poplar trees, where we passed the night.

We were now separated from the valley of Amadiyah by a range of high and well-wooded mountains, called Ghara. This range we crossed by a track little frequented, and of so precipitous a nature that our horses could scarcely keep their footing—one, indeed, carrying part of our baggage, suddenly disappeared over the edge of a rock, and was found some hundred feet below, on his back, firmly wedged between two rocks: how he got there with nothing but the bone of his tail broken, was a mystery beyond the comprehension of our party. The valley of Amadiyah is cut up into innumerable ravines by the torrents, which rush down the mountains and force their way to the river Zab. It is, however, well-wooded with oaks, producing in abundance the galls for which this district is celebrated. The peasants were now picking this valuable article of export.

The town and fort of Amadiyah had been visible from the crest of the Ghara range; but we had a long ride before us, and it was nearly midday ere we reached the foot of the

lofty isolated rock on which they are built. We rested in the small Chaldæan village of Bebadi, one of the few in the district which still retain the Nestorian faith. The inhabitants were miserably poor, and I had to listen to a long tale of wretchedness and oppression. The church was hung with a few tattered cotton handkerchiefs, and the priest's garments were to match. I gave him two or three pieces of common print, out of which he made a turban for himself, and beautified the altar.

Some half-clothed, fever-stricken Albanians were slumbering on the stone benches as we entered the gates of the fort of Amadiyah, which certainly during the season of Ramadan, if not at all others, might be taken by surprise by a few resolute Kurds. We found ourselves in the midst of a heap of ruins—porches, bazaars, baths, habitations, all laid open to their inmost recesses. Falling walls would have threatened passers-by, had there been any; but the place seemed a desert. We had some difficulty in finding our way to a crumbling ruin, honoured with the name of the serai—the palace. Here the same general sleep prevailed. Neither guards nor servants were visible, and we wandered through the building until we reached the room of the governor. His hangers-on were indulging in comfort and slumber upon the divans, and we had some trouble in rousing them. We were at length taken to a large gaudily painted room, in a tower built on the very edge of the rock, and overlooking the whole valley—the only remnant of the state of the old hereditary Pashas of Amadiyah. A refreshing breeze came down from the mountain, the view was so extensive and beautiful, that I almost forgot the desolation and poverty which reigned around.

A few miserable Nestorian Chaldæans, and one or two half-starved Jews came to me with the usual melancholy tale of distress; and shortly after Kasha Mendi, a worthy ecclesiastic, who ministered to the spiritual wants of half the villages in the valley, hearing of my arrival, joined the party. The priest was, of course, better informed than the rest; and from him I obtained the information I required as to the state of the Chaldæans in the district, and as to the means

of reaching Tiyari. The Albanian irregulars were to leave me here, the authority of the Pasha of Mosul not extending beyond Amadiyah. We were now to enter the territories of Kurdish chiefs, who scarcely acknowledged any dependence upon the Porte. I determined upon hiring mules for the rest of my journey, and sending all my horses, except one, with the Albanians to Dohuk, there to await my return.

It was the hour of afternoon prayer before Selim Agha, the Mutesellim or governor, emerged from his harem; which, however, as far as the fair sex were concerned, was empty. The old gentleman, who was hungry, half asleep, and in the third stage of the ague, hurried through the ordinary salutations, and asked at once for quinine. His attendants exhibited illustrations of every variety of the fever; some shivered, others glowed, and the rest sweated. He entreated me to go with him into the harem; his two sons were buried beneath piles of cloaks, carpets, and grain-sacks, but the whole mass trembled with the violence of their shaking. I dealt out emetics and quinine with a liberal hand, and returned to the salamluk, or reception room, to hear from Selim Agha a most doleful history of fever, diminished revenues, arrears of pay, and rebellious Kurds. The tears ran down his cheeks as he recapitulated his manifold misfortunes, and entreated me to intercede with the governor of Mosul for his advancement or recall. I left him with his watch in his hand, anxiously looking for sunset, that he might console himself with a dose of tartar emetic.

Amadiyah was formerly a place of considerable importance and strength, and contained a very large and flourishing population. It was governed by hereditary Pashas—feudal chiefs, who traced their descent from the Abbaside Caliphs, and were always looked up to, on that account, with religious respect by the Kurds. The ladies of this family were no less venerated, and enjoyed the very peculiar title for a woman of 'Khan.' The last of these hereditary chiefs was Ismail Pasha; who long defied, in his almost inaccessible castle, the attempts of Injeh Bairakdar Mohammed Pasha to reduce him. A mine was at length sprung under a part of the wall which from its position, the Kurds had believed safe

from attack, and the place was taken by assault. Ismail Pasha was sent a prisoner to Baghdad, where he still remains; and his family, amongst whom was his beautiful wife, Esmā Khan, not unknown to the Europeans of Mosul, together with Mohammed Seyyid Pasha of Akra,* a chief of the same race, long lived upon the bounty of Mr. Rassam. Amadiyah is frequently mentioned by the early Arab geographers and historians, and its foundation dates, most probably, from a very early epoch. Kasha Mendi casually confirmed the assertion of Rich, that the town was once called Ecbatana, by saying that he had seen it so designated in a very early Chaldaean MS. The only ancient remains that I could discover were a defaced bas-relief on the rock near the northern gate, of which sufficient alone was distinguishable to enable me to assign to it an approximate date—the time of the Arsacian kings; and some excavations in the rock within the walls, which appear to have been used at an early period as a Christian church. Amadiyah is proverbially unhealthy, notwithstanding its lofty and exposed position. At this time of the year the inhabitants leave the town for the neighbouring mountains, in the valleys of which they construct 'ozailis,' or sheds, with boughs.

I made my way through the deserted streets to a small inclosure, in which were the quarters of the Albanians. The disposable force may have consisted of three men; the rest were stretched out on all sides, suffering under every stage of fever, amidst heaps of filth and skins of water melons, showing the nature and extent of their commissariat. One of their chiefs boasted that he had braved the fever, and insisted upon my drinking coffee, and smoking a narguileh of no very prepossessing appearance with him. He even indulged so far in mirth and revelry, that he disturbed a shivering youth basking in the last rays of the sun, and brought him to play upon a santour, which had lost the greater number of its strings. A melody of his native mountains brought on a fit of melancholy, and he dwelt upon the miseries of an irregular's life, when there was

* A district to the east of Amadiyah.

neither war nor plunder. The evening gun announced sunset whilst I was sitting with the chief; and I left the garrison as they were breaking their fast on donkey-loads of unripe water-melons.

On my return to the serai, I found the Governor recovering from the effects of his emetic, and anxious for his dinner. As the month of Ramazan is, during the nights, one of festivity and open house, Ismail Agha of Tepelin (the Albanian chief in command of the garrison), the Cadi, the collector of the revenue, a Kurdish chief, and one or two others, came as guests. Our meal gave undoubted proofs either of the smallness of the means of Selim Agha, or of the limited resources of the country. When the dinner was over, I introduced a theological subject as becoming the season, and the Cadi entered deeply into the subject of predestination and free will. The reckless way in which the Albanian threw himself into the argument astonished the company, and shocked the feelings of the expounder of the law. His views of the destiny of man were bold and original; he appealed to me for a confirmation of his opinions, and assuming that I fully concurred with him, and that he had silenced the Cadi, who was ejaculating a pious '*Istaffer Allah*' (may God forgive him), he finished by asking me to breakfast.

Next morning I left my guards and the attendants of the Governor to hire mules for my journey from the peasants who had brought provisions to the town, and after some difficulty found my way to the quarters of Ismail Agha. They were in a small house, the only habitable spot in the midst of a heap of ruins. His room was hung round with guns, swords, and yataghans, and a few dirty Albanians, armed to the teeth, were lounging at the door. The chief had adorned himself most elaborately. His velvet jacket was covered with a maze of gold embroidery, his arms were of the most costly description, and ample fur cloaks were spread over the dingy divans. It was a strange display of finery in the midst of misery. He received me with great cordiality; and when he found that I had been to his old haunts in his native land, and had known his kith and kin,

his friendship for me exceeded all reasonable bounds. 'We are all brothers, the English and the Tosques' (an Albanian tribe), exclaimed he, endeavouring to embrace me; 'we are all Framasouns; * I know nothing of these Turks and their Ramazan, thank God! Our stomachs were given us to be filled, and our mouths to take in good things.' He accompanied these words with a very significant signal to one of his followers, who, at no loss to understand his meaning, set about forming a pyramid of cushions, to the top of which he mounted at the imminent risk of his neck, and reached down from a shelf a huge bottle of wine, with a corresponding pitcher of raki. Ismail Agha then dived into the recesses of a very capacious but ill-looking purse, out of which he pulled twenty paras,† its sole contents, and despatched without delay one of his attendants to the stall of a solitary grocer, who was apparently the only commercial survivor in the wreck around him. The boy soon returned with a small parcel of parched peas, a few dates, and three lumps of sugar, which were duly spread on a tray and placed before us as zests to the wine and brandy. It was evident that Ismail Agha had fully made up his mind to a morning's debauch, and my position was an uncomfortable one. After drinking a few glasses of raki in solitary dignity, he invited his followers to join him. Messengers were despatched in all directions for music; a Jew with the *ague*, the band of the regiment, consisting of two cracked dwarf kettledrums and a *fife*, and two Kurds with a fiddle and a *santour*, were collected together. I took an opportunity of slipping out of the room unseen, amidst the din of Albanian songs and the dust of *Palicari* dances.

On my return to the *serai* I found the mules ready, the owners having been, after much discussion, brought to understand that it was my intention to pay for their hire. Everything being settled, and the animals loaded, I wished

* The terms *Framasoun* (or *Freemason*) and *Protestant*, which are frequently used indiscriminately, are in the East, I am sorry to say, equivalent to *infidel*. The Roman Catholic missionaries have very industriously spread the calumny.

† About one penny.

the Mutesellim good day, and promised to bring his miserable condition to the notice of the Pasha.

Accompanied by a Kurdish chief, we left Amadiyah by the gate opposite to that by which we had entered. We were obliged to descend on foot the steep pathway leading to the valley below. Crossing some well-cultivated gardens, we commenced the ascent of the mountains through a wooded ravine, and came suddenly upon the Yilaks, or summer quarters of the population of Amadiyah. The spot was well chosen. The torrent was divided into a thousand streams, which broke over the rocks, falling in cascades into the valley below. Fruit trees and oaks concealed the huts and tents, and creepers of many hues almost covered the sides of the ravine. All our party enjoyed the delicious coolness and fragrance of the place; and we did not wonder that the people of Amadiyah had left the baneful air of the town for these pleasant haunts. An hour's ride brought us to the summit of the pass, from which a magnificent view of the Tiyari mountains opened before us. Ionunco became eloquent when he beheld his native Alps, and named one by one the lofty peaks which sprang out of the confused heaps of hills; that of Asheetha and several others were covered with snow. Below us was the long valley of Berwari, which separates the range of Amadiyah from the Nestorian country. At a short distance from the crest of the pass we found a small barren plain, called Nevdasht, in which stands the Kurdish village of Maglana. We reached Hayis, a Nestorian hamlet, about sunset. There were but four families in the place, so destitute that we could only procure a little boiled meal, and some dried mulberries for our supper. The poor creatures, however, did all they could to make us comfortable, and gave us what they had.

The valley of Berwari is well-wooded with the gall-bearing oak; and the villages are surrounded by gardens and orchards. The present chief of the district, Abd-ul-Summit Bey, is a Mussulman fanatic, and has almost ruined the Christian population. In all the villages through which we passed we saw the same scene, and heard the same tale of wretchedness. Yet the land is rich, water plentiful, and the

means of cultivation easy. Fruit trees of many descriptions abound ; and tobacco, rice, and grain of various kinds could be extensively cultivated. Even the galls afford but a scanty gain to the villagers, as those who collect them are obliged to sell them to the chief at a very low price. The villages are partly inhabited by Kurds and partly by Nestorian Chaldæans ; there are no Catholics amongst them. Many of the Christian villages have been reduced to five or six houses, and some even to two or three. We stopped at several during our day's journey. The men, with the priests, were generally absent picking galls ; the women were seated in circles under the trees, clipping the grapes and immersing them in boiling water previous to drying them for raisins. We were everywhere received with the same hospitality, and everywhere found the same poverty. Even Ibrahim Agha, who had been enured to the miseries of misgovernment, grew violent in his expressions of indignation against Abd-ul-Summit Bey, and indulged in a variety of threats against all the male and female members of his family.

The castle of Kumri or Gumri, the residence of Abd-ul-Summit Bey, stands on the pinnacle of a lofty isolated rock, and may be seen from most parts of the valley of Berwari. It is a small mud fort, but is looked upon as an impregnable place by the Kurds. The chief had evidently received notice of my approach, and probably suspected that the object of my visit was an inspection, for no friendly purposes, of his stronghold ; for as we came near to the foot of the hill, we saw him hastening down a precipitous pathway on the opposite side, as fast as his horse could carry him. A mullah, one of his hangers-on, having been sent to meet us on the road, informed me that his master had left the castle early in the morning, for a distant village, whither we could follow him. Not having any particular wish to make a closer inspection of Kalah Kumri, I struck into the hills, and took the pathway pointed out by the mullah.

We rode through several Kurdish villages, surrounded by gardens, and well watered by mountain streams. A pass of some elevation had to be crossed before we could reach the village of Mia, our quarters for the night. Near its summit

we found a barren plain on which several Kurdish horsemen, who had joined us, engaged with my own party in the Jerid. The mimic fight soon caused general excitement, and old habits getting the better of my dignity, I joined the *mêlée*. A severe kick in the leg from a horse soon put an end to my manœuvres, and we were detained until I was sufficiently recovered from the effects of the accident to continue our journey. It was consequently sunset before we reached Mia. There are two villages of this name; the upper, inhabited by Mohammedans, the lower by Nestorian Chaldæans. A Kurd met us as we were entering the former, with a message from Abd-ul-Summit Bey, to the effect that, having guests, he could not receive me there, but had provided a house in the Christian village, where he would join us after his dinner. I rode on to the lower Mia, and found a party of Kurds belabouring the inhabitants, and collecting old carpets and household furniture. Understanding that these proceedings were partly meant as preparations for my reception, though the greater share of the objects collected was intended for the comfort of the Bey's Mussulman guests, I at once put a stop to the pillaging, and released the sufferers. We ascended to a clean and spacious roof; and with the assistance of the people of the house, who were ready enough to assist us when they learnt that we were Christians, established ourselves there for the night.

Soon after dark another messenger came from Abd-ul-Summit Bey to say that as the Cadi and other illustrious guests were with him, he could not visit me before the morning. I had from the first suspected that these delays and excuses had an object, and that the chief wished to give a proof of his dignity to the Kurds, by treating me in as unceremonious a manner as possible; so, calling the Kurd, and addressing him in a loud voice, that the people who had gathered round the house might hear, I requested him to be the bearer of a somewhat uncivil answer to his master, and took care that he should fully understand its terms. Ionunco's hair stood on end at the audacity of this speech, and the Nestorians trembled at the results. Ibrahim Agha tittered with delight; and pushing the Kurd away by the

shoulders, told him to be particular in delivering his answer. The message had the effect I had anticipated; an hour afterwards, shuffling over the housetops at the great risk of his shins, and with a good chance of disappearing down a chimney, came the Bey. He was enveloped in a variety of cloaks; and wore, after the manner of the Bohtan chiefs, a turban of huge dimensions—about four feet in diameter—made up of numberless kerchiefs and rags of every hue of red, yellow, and black, and a jacket and wide trowsers richly embroidered; in his girdle were all manner of weapons. In person he was tall and handsome; his eyes were dark, his nose aquiline, and his beard black; but the expression of his face was far from prepossessing. I left him to open the conversation, which he did by a multiplicity of excuses and apologies for what had passed, not having, by the Prophet, been aware, he said, of the rank of the guest by whose presence he had been honoured. I pointed out to him one or two fallacies in his assertions; and we came to a distinct understanding on the subject, before we proceeded to general topics. He sat with me till midnight, and entered, amongst other things, into a long justification of his conduct towards Christians, which proved that his authority was not established as well as he could desire.

In the morning the Bey sent me a breakfast, and gave me a party of Kurdish horsemen as an escort to the Tiyari frontier, which was not far distant. Beyond Mia we passed through Bedou, the largest and most populous Kurdish village I had seen.

Our guards would not venture into the territories of the Tiyari, between whom and the Kurds there are continual hostilities, but quitted us in a narrow desolate valley, up which our road to Asheetha now led. I lectured my party on the necessity of caution during our future wanderings; and reminded my Cawass and Mohammedan servants that they had no longer the quiet Christians of the plains to deal with. Resigning ourselves to the guidance of Ionunco, who now felt that he was on his own soil, we made our way with difficulty over the rocks and stones with which the valley is blocked up, and struck into what our guide represented to be a short cut to

Asheetha. The pathway might certainly, on some occasions, have been used by the mountain goats ; but the passage of horses and mules was a miracle. After a most tedious walk, we reached the top of the pass and looked down on the village. From this spot the eye rested upon a scene of great beauty. In front rose the lofty peak, with its snows and glaciers, visible even from Mosul. At our feet the village spread over the whole valley; and detached houses, surrounded by gardens and orchards, were scattered over the sides of the mountains. To the right ran the valley which leads to the Zab. We had little difficulty in descending over the loose stones and detritus which cover the face of the mountain, although both our mules and ourselves had frequent falls. On reaching the entrance of the valley, we rode at once to the house of Yakoub, the rais or chief of Asheetha, who received us with grateful hospitality.

CHAPTER VII.

Asheetha—A Nestorian house—The massacre—Zaweetha—Nestorian priests—Murghi—Lizan—Scene of the massacre—A Tiyari bridge—Raola—The house of the Melek—The district of Tkhoma—Alarm of the inhabitants—Church service—Tkhoma Gowaia—A Kurdish chief—Pass into Baz—Ergub—Return to Tkhoma—Be-Alatha—Roads of Tiyari—Chonba—Murder of Melek Ismail—Return to Asheetha—Kasha Auraham—A copper mine—Challek—Ourmeli—A Subashi—A Kurdish saint—Malthayiah—Sculptures—Alkosh—Tomb of the prophet Nahum—Rabban Hormuzd—Telkef and its Christian inhabitants—Return to Mosul—Second massacre in the Nestorian mountains—Capture and exile of Beder Khan Bey.

WE had no sooner reached the house of Yakoub Rais, than a cry of 'The Bey is come,' spread rapidly through the village, and I was surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and boys. My hand was kissed by all, and I had to submit for some time to this tedious process. As for my companion, he was almost smothered in the embraces of the girls, nearly all of whom had been liberated from slavery after the great massacre, and had been supported in their distress by his brother for some months in Mosul.* Amongst the men were many of

* It may be remembered, that Beder Khan Bey, in 1843, invaded the Tiyari districts, massacred in cold blood nearly 10,000 of their inhabitants, and carried away as slaves a large number of women and children. But it is, perhaps, not generally known, that the release of the greater part of the captives was obtained through the humane interference and generosity of Sir Stratford Canning, who prevailed upon the Porte to send a commissioner into Kurdistan, for the purpose of inducing Beder Khan Bey and other Kurdish chiefs to give up the slaves they had taken, and who advanced, himself, a considerable sum towards their liberation. Mr. Rassam also obtained the release of many slaves, and maintained and clothed, at his own expense and for many months, not only the Nestorian Patriarch, who had taken refuge in Mosul, but many hundred Chaldæans who had escaped from the mountains.

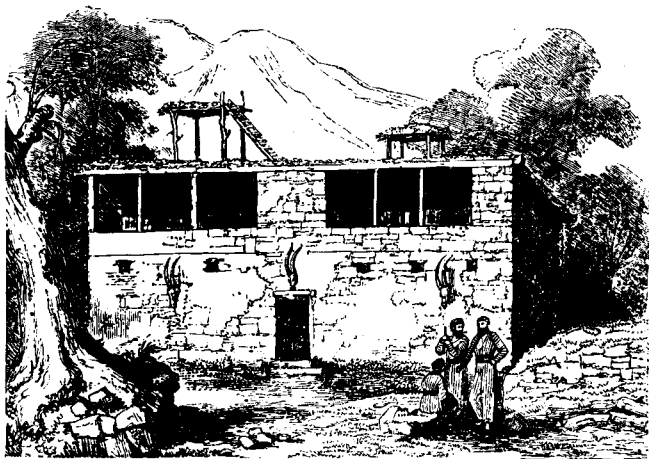
those who had been employed by me at Nimroud. They were distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants of Asheetha by their gay dresses and arms, the fruits of their industry during the winter. They were anxious to show their gratitude and their zeal in my service. The priests came too ; Kasha Ghioorghis, Kasha Hormuzd, and others. As they entered the room, the whole assembly rose ; and lifting their turbans and caps reverentially from their heads, kissed the hand extended to them. In the meanwhile the girls had disappeared, but soon returned, each bearing a platter of fruit which they placed before me. My workmen also brought large dishes of boiled garas (a kind of millet) swimming in butter. There were provisions enough for the whole company.

The first inquiries were after Mar Shamoun, the Patriarch. I produced his letter, which the priests first kissed and then placed to their foreheads. They afterwards passed it to the principal men, who went through the same ceremony. Kasha Ghioorghis then read the letter aloud, and at its close, those present uttered a pious ejaculation for the welfare of their Patriarch, and renewed their expressions of welcome to us.

These preliminaries having been concluded, we had to satisfy all present as to the object, extent, and probable duration of our journey. The village was in the greatest alarm at a threatened invasion from Beder Khan Bey. The district of Tkhoma, which had escaped the former massacre, was now the object of his fanatical vengeance. He was to march through Asheetha, and orders had already been sent to the inhabitants to collect provisions for his men. As his expedition was not to be undertaken before the close of Ramazan, there was full time to see the proscribed districts before the Kurds entered them. I determined, however, to remain a day in Asheetha, to rest our mules.

On the morning following our arrival, I went with Yakoub Rais to visit the village. The trees and luxuriant crops had concealed the desolation of the place, and had given to Asheetha, from without, a flourishing appearance. As I wandered, however, through the lanes, I found little but ruins. A few houses were rising from the charred heaps ; still the greater part of the sites were without owners, whole families

having perished. Yakoub pointed out, as we went along, the former dwellings of wealthy inhabitants, and told me how and where they had been murdered. A solitary church had been built since the massacre; the foundations of others were seen amongst the ruins. The pathways were still blocked up by the trunks of trees cut down by the Kurds. Watercourses, once carrying fertility to many gardens, were now empty and dry; and the lands which they had irrigated were left naked and unsown. I was surprised at the proofs



A Nestorian House in the District of Tiyari.

of the industry and activity of the few surviving families, who had returned to the village, and had already brought a large portion of the land into cultivation.

The houses of Asheetha are not built in a group, but are scattered over the valley like those of the Tiyari districts.* Each dwelling stands in the centre of the land belonging to its owner; consequently, the village occupies a much larger space than would otherwise be required, but has a cheerful

* Asheetha and Zaweetha were formerly looked upon as half-independent districts, each having its own Rais or head. They were neither within the territories nor under the authority of the Meleks of Tiyari.

and pleasing appearance. The houses are simple, and constructed so as to afford protection and comfort, during winter and summer. The lower part is of stone, and contains two or three rooms inhabited by the family and their cattle during the cold months. Light is admitted by the door, and by small holes in the wall. There are no windows, as, in the absence of glass, a luxury as yet unknown in Kurdistan, the cold would be very great during the winter, when the inhabitants are frequently snowed up for many days together. The upper floor is constructed partly of stone, and partly of wood, the whole side facing the south being open. Enormous beams, resting on wooden pillars and on the walls, support the roof. This is the summer habitation, and here all the members of the family reside. During July and August, they usually sleep on the roof, upon which they erect stages of boughs and grass resting on high poles. By thus raising themselves as much as possible, they avoid the vermin which swarm in the rooms, and catch the night winds which carry away the gnats. Sometimes they build these stages in the branches of high trees around the houses. The winter provision of dried grass and straw for the cattle is stacked near the dwelling, or is heaped on the roof.

As this was the first year that the surviving inhabitants of Asheetha, about 200 families, had returned to the village and had cultivated the soil, they were almost without provisions of any kind. We were obliged to send to Zaweetha for meat and rice, and even milk was scarce, the flocks having been carried away by the Kurds. Garas was all we could find to eat. They had no corn and very little barley. Their bread was made of this garas or millet, and upon it alone they lived, except when on holidays they boiled the grain, and soaked it in melted butter.

The men were now busy in irrigating the land, and seemed to be rewarded by the promise of ample crops of their favourite garas, and of wheat, barley, rice, and tobacco. The boys kept up a continued shrill shriek or whistle to frighten away the small birds, which had been attracted in shoals by the ripe corn. When tired of this exercise, they busied themselves with their partridges. Almost every youth

in the country carries one of these birds at his back, in a round wicker cage, and to make them fight is a favourite pastime. Indeed, whilst the mountains and the valleys swarm with wild partridges, the houses are as much infested by the tame. The women, too, were not idle. The greater part of them, even the girls, were beating out the corn, or employed in the fields. A few were at the doors of the houses working at the loom, or spinning wool for the clothes of the men. I never saw more general or cheerful industry; even the priests took part in the labours of their congregation.

I walked to the ruins of the school and dwelling-house, built by the American missionaries during their short sojourn in the mountains. These buildings had been the cause of much jealousy and suspicion to the Kurds, who believed that the Franks were about to build forts, and to take possession of the country. They stand upon the summit of an isolated hill, commanding the whole valley. A position less ostentatious and proportions more modest might certainly have been chosen; and it is surprising that persons, so well acquainted with the character of the tribes amongst whom they had come to reside, should have been thus indiscreet. They were, however, most zealous and worthy men; and, had their plans succeeded, I have little doubt that they would have conferred signal benefits on the Nestorian Chaldæans. I never heard their names mentioned by the Tiyari, and most particularly that of Dr. Grant, without expressions of profound respect, amounting almost to veneration.*

During the occupation of Asheetha by the Kurds, one Zeinel Bey with a few men fortified himself in the house constructed by the Americans; and the position was so strong, that, holding it against all the attempts of the Tiyari to dislodge him, he kept the whole of the valley in subjection.

* Dr. Grant, who published an account of his visit to the mountains, fell a victim to his humane zeal for the Chaldæans in 1844. After the massacre, his house in Mosul was filled with fugitives, whom he supported and clothed. Their sufferings, and the want of common necessaries before they reached the town, had bred a malignant typhus fever, of which many died, and which Dr. Grant caught whilst attending the sick in his house. Mosul holds the remains of most of those who were engaged in the American missions to the Chaldæans.

Yakoub Rais, who was naturally of a lively and jovial disposition, could not restrain his tears as he related to me the particulars of the massacre. He had been amongst the first seized by Beder Khan Bey ; and having been kept by that chief as a kind of hostage, he had been continually with him, during the attack on the Tiyari, and had witnessed all the scenes of bloodshed which he so graphically described. The descent upon Asheetha was sudden and unexpected. A large number of the inhabitants fell victims to the fury of the Kurds, who endeavoured to destroy every trace of the village. We walked to the church, which had been newly constructed by the united exertions and labour of the people. The door was so low, that a person, on entering, had to bring his back to the level of his knees. The entrances to Christian churches in this part of the East are generally so constructed, that horses and beasts of burden may not be lodged by Mohammedans within the sacred building. A few rituals, a book of prayer, and the Scriptures, all in manuscript, were lying upon the rude altar; but a great part of the leaves were wanting, and those which remained were either torn into shreds, or disfigured by damp and water. The manuscripts of the churches were hid in the mountains or buried in some secure place, at the time of the massacre ; and as the priests, who had concealed them, were mostly killed, the books have not all been recovered. A few English prints and handkerchiefs from Manchester were hung about the walls ; a bottle, a glass, and a tin plate for the sacrament, stood upon the table ; a curtain of coarse cloth hung before the inner recess, the Holy of Holies ; and these were all the ornaments and furniture of the place.

I visited my former workmen, the priests, and those whom I had seen at Mosul; and as it was expected that I should partake of the hospitality of each, and eat of the dishes they had prepared for me—generally *garas* floating in melted rancid butter, with a layer of sour milk above—by the time I returned to Yakoub's mansion, my appetite was abundantly satisfied. At the door, however, stood Sarah, and a bevy of young damsels with baskets of fruits mingled with ice

fetched from the glacier; nor would they leave me until I had tasted of every thing.

We lived in a patriarchal way with the Rais. My bed was made in one corner of the room. The opposite corner was occupied by Yakoub, his wife and unmarried daughters; a third was appropriated to his son and daughter-in-law, and all the members of his son's family; the fourth was assigned to my companion; and various individuals, whose position in our household could not be very accurately determined, took possession of the centre. We slept well nevertheless, and no one troubled himself about his neighbour. Even Ibrahim Agha, whose paradise was Chanak Kalassi, the Dardanelles, to which he always disadvantageously compared every thing, confessed that the Tiyari Mountains were not an unpleasant portion of the Sultan's dominions.

Yakoub volunteered to accompany me during the rest of my journey through the mountains; and as he was generally known, was well acquainted with the by-ways and passes, and a very merry companion withal, I eagerly accepted his offer. We left part of our baggage at his house, and it was agreed that he should occasionally ride one of the mules. He was a very portly person, gaily dressed in an embroidered jacket and wide trowsers, striped red and black, and carrying a variety of arms in his girdle.

The country through which we passed, after leaving Asheetha, could scarcely be surpassed in the beauty and sublimity of its scenery. The patches of land on the declivities of the mountains were cultivated with extraordinary skill and care. I never saw greater proofs of industry. Our mules, however, were dragged over places almost inaccessible to men on foot, but we forgot the toils and dangers of the way in gazing upon the magnificent prospect before us. Zaweetha is in the same valley as Asheetha. The stream formed by the eternal snows above the latter village, forces its way to the Zab. On the mountain-sides is the most populous and best cultivated district in Tiyari. The ravine below Asheetha is too narrow to admit of the road being carried along the banks of the torrent; and we were compelled to climb over a mass of rocks, rising to a considerable height above it. Frequently

the footing was so insecure that it required the united force of several men to carry the mules along by their ears and tails. We, who were unaccustomed to mountain paths, were obliged to have recourse to the aid of our hands and knees.

I had been expected at Zaweetha ; and, before we entered the first gardens of the village, a party of girls, bearing baskets of fruit advanced to meet me. Their hair neatly plaited and adorned with flowers, fell down their backs. On their heads they wore coloured kerchiefs loosely tied, or an embroidered cap. Many were pretty, and the prettiest was Aslani, a liberated slave, who had been for some time under the protection of Mrs. Rassam ; she led the party, and welcomed me to Zaweetha. My hand having been kissed by all, they simultaneously threw themselves upon my companion, and saluted him vehemently on both cheeks ; such a mode of salutation, in the case of a person of my rank and distinction, not being, unfortunately, considered either respectful or decorous. The girls were followed by the Rais and the principal inhabitants, and I was led by them into the village.

The Rais of Zaweetha had fortunately rendered some service to Beder Khan Bey, and on the invasion of Tiyari his village was spared. It had not even been deserted by its inhabitants, nor had its trees and gardens been injured. It was consequently, at the time of my visit, one of the most flourishing villages in the mountains. The houses, neat and clean, were still overshadowed by the wide-spreading walnut-tree ; every foot of ground which could receive seed, or nourish a plant, was cultivated. Soil had been brought from elsewhere, and built up in terraces on the precipitous sides of the mountains. A small pathway among the gardens led us to the house of the Rais.

We were received by Kasha Kana of Lizan, and Kasha Yusuf of Siatha ; the first, one of the very few learned priests left among the Nestorian Chaldæans. Our welcome was as unaffected and sincere as it had been at Asheetha. Preparations had been made for our reception, and the women of the chief's family were congregated around huge cauldrons

at the door of the house, cooking an entire sheep, with rice and garas. The liver, heart, and other portions of the entrails were immediately cut into pieces, roasted on ramrods, and brought on these skewers into the room. The fruit, too, melons, pomegranates, and grapes, all of excellent quality, spread on the floor before us, served to allay our appetites until the breakfast was ready.

Mar Shamoun's letter was read with the usual solemnities by Kasha Kana, and we had to satisfy the numerous inquiries of the company. It was believed that their Patriarch was kept as a prisoner in Mosul, and his return to the mountains was expected with deep anxiety. Everywhere, except in Zaweetha, the churches had been destroyed to their foundations, and the priests put to death. Some of the holy edifices had been rudely rebuilt; but the people were unwilling to use them until they had been consecrated by the Patriarch. There were not priests enough indeed to officiate, nor could others be ordained until Mar Shamoun himself performed the ceremony. These wants had been the cause of great irregularities and confusion in Ti-yari; and the Nestorian Chaldæans, who are naturally a religious people, and greatly attached to their churches and ministers, were more alive to them than to any of their misfortunes.

Kasha Kana was making his weekly rounds amongst the villages which had lost their priests. He carried under his arm a bag full of manuscripts, consisting chiefly of rituals and copies of the Scriptures; but he had also one or two volumes on profane subjects, which he prized highly; amongst them was a grammar of the Chaldæan language spoken by the Nestorians, by Rabba Iohannan bar Zoabee, to which he was chiefly indebted for his learning.* He read

* Although few works on other subjects than those connected with theology and the church services now exist amongst the Nestorians, it must be remembered that, at the time of the Arab invasion, the learning of the East was still chiefly to be found with the Chaldæans. We are indebted to them for the preservation of numerous precious fragments of Greek literature, as the Greeks were, many centuries before, to their ancestors, the Chaldees of Babylon, for the records of astronomy and the elements of Eastern science. They had translated into Chaldee, at an early period, the works of Greek physicians and philosophers, and, at the request of the Caliphs, who were the encouragers and patrons of

to us—holding as usual the book upside down—a part of the introduction, treating of the philosophy and nature of languages, and illustrated the text by various attempts at the delineation of most marvellous alphabets. A taste for the fine arts seemed to prevail generally in the village, and the walls of the Rais's house were covered with sketches of wild goats and snakes in every variety of posture. The young men were eloquent on the subject of the chase, and related their exploits with the wild animals of the mountains. A cousin of the chief, a handsome youth, very gaily dressed, had shot a bear a few days before, after a hazardous encounter. He brought me the skin, which measured seven feet in length. The two great subjects of complaint I found to be the Kurds and the bears, both equally mischievous; the latter carrying off the fruit both when on the trees and when laid out to dry; and the former the provisions stored for the winter. In some villages in Berwari the inhabitants pretended to be in so much dread of the bears, that they would not venture out alone after dark.

The Rais, finding that I would not accept his hospitality for the night, accompanied us, followed by the principal inhabitants, to the outskirts of the village. His frank and manly bearing, and simple kindness, had made a most favourable impression upon me, and I left him with regret. Kasha Kana, too, fully merited the praise which he received from all who knew him. His appearance was mild and venerable; his beard, white as snow, fell low upon his breast; but his garments were in a very advanced stage of rags. I gave him a few handkerchiefs, some of which were at once gratefully applied to the bettering of his raiment, the remainder being reserved for the embellishment of his parish church. The Kasha is looked up to as the physician, philosopher, and sage of Tiyari, and is treated with great veneration by the people.

learning, had re-translated them into the Arabic language. The Caliph Al Mamoun sent learned Nestorians into Syria, Armenia, and Egypt to collect manuscripts, and confided for translation to his Chaldæan subjects, amongst other treatises, those of Aristotle and Galen. Alexander Von Humboldt (*Cosmos*, vol. ii. ch. 5) admits and commends the influence of the Nestorian Chaldæans on the civilisation of the East.

As we walked through the village, the women left their thresholds, and the boys their sports, to kiss his hand—a mark of respect, however, which is invariably shown to the priesthood.

We had been joined by Mirza, a confidential servant of Mar Shamoun, and our party was further increased by several men returning to villages on our road. Yakoub Rais kept every one in good humour by his anecdotes, and the absurdity of his gesticulations. Ionunco, too, dragging his mare over the projecting rocks, down which he continually contrived to tumble, added to the general mirth, and we went laughing through the valley.

From Zaweetha to the Zab, there is almost an unbroken line of cultivation on both sides of the valley. The two villages of Miniyanish and Murghi are buried in groves of walnut-trees, and their peaceful and flourishing appearance deceived me until I wandered amongst their dwellings, and found the same scenes of misery and desolation as at Asheetha. But nature was so beautiful that we almost forgot the havoc of man, and envied the repose of these secluded habitations. In Miniyanish, out of seventy houses only twelve had risen from their ruins; the families to which the rest belonged having been totally destroyed. Yakoub pointed out a spot where, he said, above three hundred persons had been murdered in cold blood; and all our party had some tale of horror to relate. Murghi was not less desolate than Miniyanish, and eight houses alone had been resought by their owners. We found an old priest, blind and grey, bowed down by age and grief, the solitary survivor of six or eight of his order. He was seated under the shade of a walnut tree, near a small stream. Some children of the village were feeding him with grapes, and on our approach his daughter ran into the half-ruined cottage, and brought out a basket of fruit and a loaf of *garas* bread. I endeavoured to glean some information from the old man as to the state of his flock; but his mind wandered to the cruelties of the Kurds, or dwelt upon the misfortunes of his Patriarch, over whose fate he shed many tears. None of our party being able to console the Kasha, I gave some handkerchiefs to his daughter, and we resumed our journey.

Our road lay through the gardens of the villages, and through the forest of gall-bearing oaks which clothe the mountains above the line of cultivation. But it was everywhere equally difficult and precipitous, and we tore our way through the matted boughs of overhanging trees, or the thick foliage of creepers which hung from every branch. Innumerable rills, leading the mountain springs into the terraced fields, crossed our path and rendered our progress still more tedious. We reached Lizan, however, early in the afternoon descending to the village through scenery of extraordinary beauty and grandeur.

Lizan stands on the river Zab, which is crossed near the village by a rude bridge. I need not weary or distress the reader with a description of desolation and misery, hardly concealed by the most luxuriant vegetation. We rode to the graveyard of a roofless church slowly rising from its ruins—the first edifice in the village to be rebuilt. We spread our carpets amongst the tombs, for as yet there were no habitable houses. The Melek, with a few who had survived the massacre, was living during the day under the trees, and sleeping at night on stages of grass and boughs, raised on high poles, fixed in the very bed of the Zab. By this latter contrivance they succeeded in catching any breeze that might be carried down the narrow ravine of the river, and in freeing themselves from the gnats and sand-flies abounding in the valley.

It was near Lizan that occurred one of the most terrible incidents of the massacre; and an active mountaineer offering to lead me to the spot, I followed him up the mountain. Emerging from the gardens we found ourselves at the foot of an almost perpendicular detritus of loose stones, terminated, about one thousand feet above us by a wall of lofty rocks. Up this ascent we toiled for above an hour, sometimes clinging to small shrubs whose roots scarcely reached the scanty soil below; at others crawling on our hands and knees; crossing the gullies to secure a footing, or carried down by the stones which we put in motion as we advanced. We soon saw evidences of the slaughter. At first a solitary skull rolling down with the rubbish; then heaps of blanched

bones ; further up, fragments of rotten garments. As we advanced, these remains became more frequent : skeletons, almost entire, still hung to the dwarf shrubs. I was soon compelled to renounce an attempt to count them. As we approached the wall of rock, the declivity became covered with bones, mingled with the long plaited tresses of the women, shreds of discoloured linen, and well-worn shoes. There were skulls of all ages, from the child unborn to the toothless old man. We could not avoid treading on the bones as we advanced, and rolling them with the loose stones into the valley below. 'This is nothing,' exclaimed my guide, who observed me gazing with wonder on these miserable heaps; 'they are but the remains of those who were thrown from above, or sought to escape the sword by jumping from the rock. Follow me !' He sprang upon a ledge projecting from the precipice that rose before us, and clambered along the face of the mountain overhanging the Zab, now scarcely visible at our feet. I followed him as well as I was able to some distance; but when the ledge became scarcely broader than my hand, and frequently disappeared for three or four feet altogether, I could no longer advance. The Tiyari, who had easily surmounted these difficulties, returned to assist me, but in vain. I was still suffering severely from the kick received in my leg four days before, and was compelled to return, after catching a glimpse of an open recess or platform covered with human remains.

When the fugitives who had escaped from Asheetha, spread the news of the massacre through the valley of Lizan, the inhabitants of the villages around collected such part of their property as they could carry, and took refuge on the platform I have just described and on the rock above; hoping thus to escape the notice of the Kurds, or to be able to defend, against any numbers, a place almost inaccessible. Women and young children, as well as men, concealed themselves in a spot which the mountain goat could scarcely reach.* Beder Khan Bey was not long in discovering their

* When amongst the Bakhtiyari, I saw a curious instance of the agility of the women of the mountains. I occupied an upper room in a tower, forming one of the corners in the yard of the chief's harem. I

retreat ; but being unable to force it, he surrounded the place with his men, and waited until they should be compelled to yield. The weather was hot and sultry; the Christians had brought but small supplies of water and provisions ; after three days the first began to fail them, and they offered to capitulate. The terms proposed by Beder Khan Bey, and ratified by an oath on the Koran, were their lives on the surrender of their arms and property. The Kurds were then admitted to the platform. After they had disarmed their prisoners, they commenced an indiscriminate slaughter; until, weary of using their weapons, they hurled the few survivors from the rocks into the Zab below. Out of nearly one thousand souls, who are said to have congregated here, only one escaped.

We had little difficulty in descending to the village ; a moving mass of stones, skulls, and rubbish carried us rapidly down the declivity. The Melek, who had but recently been raised to that rank, his predecessor having been killed by the Kurds, prepared a simple meal of garas and butter—the only provisions that could be procured. The few stragglers who had returned to their former dwellings collected round us, and made the usual inquiries after their Patriarch, or related their misfortunes. As I expressed surprise at the extent of land already cultivated, they told me that the Kurds of some neighbouring villages had taken possession of the deserted property, and had sown grain and tobacco in the spring, which the Tiyari were now compelled to irrigate and look after.

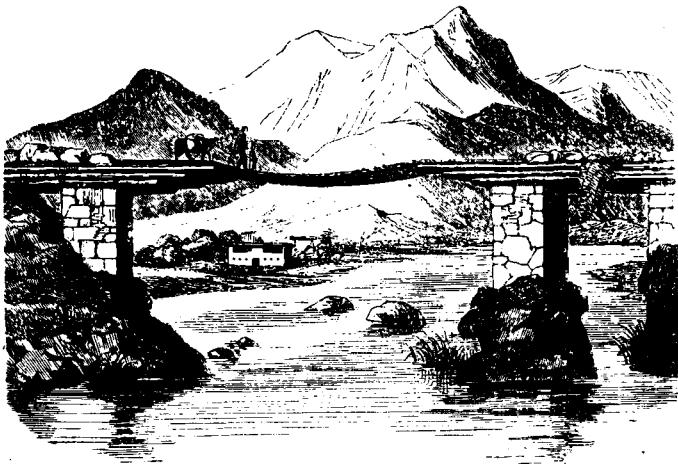
The sun had scarcely set, when I was driven by swarms of insects to one of the platforms in the river. A slight breeze came from the ravine, and I was able to sleep undisturbed.

The bridge across the Zab at Lizan is of basket-work.

was accustomed to lock my door on the outside with a padlock. The wife of the chief advised me to secure the window also. As I laughed at the idea of any one being able to enter by it, she ordered one of her handmaidens to convince me, which she did at once, dragging herself up in the most marvellous way by the mere irregularities of the bricks. After witnessing this feat, I could believe any thing of the activity of the Kurdish women.

Stakes are firmly fastened together with twigs, forming a long hurdle, reaching from one side of the river to the other. The two ends are laid upon beams, resting upon piers and kept in their places by heavy stones heaped upon them. Animals, as well as men, are able to cross over this frail structure, which swings to and fro, and seems ready to give way at every step. These bridges are of frequent occurrence in the Tiyari mountains.

As some of the beams had been broken, the bridge of Lizan formed an acute angle with the stream below and was



A Wicker Bridge across the Zab near Lizan.

scarcely to be crossed by a man on foot. We had consequently to swim the mules and horses, a labour of no slight trouble and difficulty, as the current was rapid, and the bed of the river choked with rocks. More than an hour was wasted in finding a spot sufficiently clear of stones, and in devising means to induce the animals to enter the water. We resumed our journey on the opposite side of the valley. But before leaving Lizan I must mention the heroic devotion of some Tiyari girls from the village of Serspeetho, who, as they were led across the bridge by the Kurds, on their return

from the great massacre,—preferring death to captivity and conversion,—threw themselves simultaneously into the Zab, and were drowned in its waters.

We now entered a valley formed by a torrent which joins the Zab below Lizan. On the opposite side, but far in the distance, were the Kurdish villages of the district of Chal, surrounded by trees and gardens. We passed through the small Chaldæan village of Shoordh, now a heap of ruins, inhabited by a few wretched families, whose priest had been recently put to death by Nur-Ullah Bey, the chief of the Hakkari tribes. From Shoordh we descended into a wild and rocky ravine, opening into the once rich and populous valley of Raola. We soon found ourselves on the outskirts of cultivation. A few feet of soil were rescued from the bed of the torrent, and sown with tobacco and garas. These straggling plots led us into a series of orchards and gardens extending to the district of Tkhoma.

We were nearly two hours in reaching the house of the Melek.* My party having gradually increased as we rode amongst the scattered cottages, I was followed by a large company. Melek Khoshaba† had been apprised of my intended visit; for he met us with the priests and principal inhabitants at some distance from his dwelling. I was much struck by his noble carriage and handsome features. He wore, like the other chiefs, a dress of very gay colours, and a conical cap of white felt, slightly embroidered at the edges, and adorned with an eagle's feather. The men who accompanied him were mostly tall and well made, and were more showily dressed than the inhabitants of other villages through which we had passed. Their heads were shaved, as is customary amongst the Tiyari tribes, a small knot of hair being left uncut on the crown, and allowed to fall in a plait down the back. This tail, with the conical cap, gives them the appearance of Chinese. The boys, in addition to their inseparable partridges, carried cross-bows, with which they molested every small bird that appeared, and almost every one had an eagle's feather in his cap.

* Literally, King, the title given to the chiefs of Tiyari.

† A corruption of Khath Shaba, Sunday.

We followed the Melek to his house, which stood high above the torrent on the declivity of the mountain. The upper, or summer, room was large enough to contain all the party. The Melek and priests sat on my carpets; the rest ranged themselves on the bare floor against the walls. The girls brought me, as usual, baskets of fruit, and then stood at the entrance of the room. Many of them were very pretty, but the daughter of the chief, a girl of fourteen, excelled them all. I have seldom seen a more lovely form. Her complexion was fair; her features regular; her eyes and hair as black as jet; a continual smile played upon her mouth; and an expression of mingled surprise and curiosity stole over her face, as she examined my dress, or followed my movements. Her tresses, unconfined by the coloured kerchief bound loosely round her head, fell in disorder down her back, reaching to her waist. Her dress was more gay, and neater than that of the other women, who evidently confessed her beauty and her rank. I motioned to her to sit down; but that was an honour only reserved for the mother of the Melek, who occupied a corner of the room. At length she approached timidly to examine more closely a pocket compass, which had excited the wonder of the men.

The threatened invasion of Tkhoma by Beder Khan Bey was the chief subject of conversation, and caused great excitement amongst the inhabitants of Raola. They calculated the means of defence possessed by the villagers of the proscribed district; but whilst wishing them success against the Kurds, they declared their inability to afford them assistance, for they still trembled at the recollection of the former massacre, and the very name of the Bohtan chief struck terror into the hearts of the Tiyari. They entreated me to devise some mode of delivering them from the danger. 'It is true,' said the Melek, 'that when Nur-Ullah Bey joined Beder Khan Bey in the great massacre, the people of Tkhoma marched with the Kurds against us; but could they do otherwise?—for they feared the chief of Hakkari. They are our brothers, and we should forgive them; for the Scriptures tell us to forgive even our enemies.' This pious sentiment was re-echoed by all the company.

Several men, whose wives and daughters were still in slavery, came to me, thinking that I could relieve them in their misfortune; and there was scarcely any one present who had not some tale of grief to relate. Several members of the family of Melek Khoshaba, including his cousin, to whom he had succeeded in the chiefship, had been killed in the massacre. The villages in the valley of Raola having, however, suffered less than those we had previously visited, were fast returning to their former prosperity.

The Melek insisted upon accompanying us, with the priests and principal inhabitants, to the end of the valley. As we passed through the village we saw the women bathing at almost every door; nor did they appear at all conscious that we were near them. This simple and primitive mode of washing is thus publicly practised amongst all the Chaldæan tribes, particularly on the Saturday.

Melek Khoshaba accompanied me to a rude monument raised over the bodies of fifty prisoners, who had been murdered at the time of the invasion, and left me at the entrance of the village. We had to pass through a narrow and barren ravine, and a rocky gorge, before entering the district of Tkhoma. Our path was the bed of the torrent; and the mountains rising precipitously on either side, shut in a scene of extraordinary wildness and solitude. This was the only road by which we could reach Tkhoma, without crossing the lofty ranges of rocks surrounding it on all other sides. A resolute body of men might have held the ravine against any numbers. This was one of the most dangerous places we had to traverse during our journey. On the heights above are one or two villages, inhabited by the Apenshai* Kurds, who are always engaged in hostilities with the Tiyari, and fall upon such as are crossing the frontiers of Tkhoma. My party was numerous and well armed, and keeping close together we travelled on without apprehension.

We emerged suddenly from this wild ravine and saw a richly cultivated valley before us. Sheep and goats were browsing on the hill sides, and cattle wandered in the

* By the Kurds they are called Pinainish.

meadows below. These were the first flocks and herds we had seen in the Chaldæan country, and they showed that hitherto Tkhoma had escaped the hand of the spoiler. Two villages occupied opposite sides of the valley; on the right, Ghissa, on the left, Birijai. We rode to the latter. The houses are built in a cluster, and not scattered amongst the gardens, as in Tiyari. We were surrounded by the inhabitants as soon as we entered the streets, and they vied with one another in expressions of welcome and offers of hospitality. Kasha Hormuzd, the principal priest, prevailed upon me to accompany him to a house he had provided, and on the roof of which carpets were speedily spread. The people were in great agitation at the report of Beder Khan Bey's projected march upon Tkhoma. They immediately flocked round us seeking for news. The men were better dressed than any Nestorian Chaldæans I had yet seen. The felt cap was replaced by turbans of red and black linen, and these two favourite colours of the Kurds were conspicuous in their ample trowsers and embroidered jackets. As they carried pistols and daggers in their girdles and long guns in their hands, they could scarcely be distinguished from the Mussulman inhabitants of the mountains. The women wore small embroidered skull-caps from beneath which their hair fell loose or in plaits. Their shirts were richly embroidered, and round their necks and bosoms were hung coins and beads.

They were happy in having escaped so long the fanaticism and rapacity of the Kurds. But they foresaw their fate. All was bustle and anxiety; the women were burying their ornaments and domestic utensils in secure places; the men preparing their arms, or making gunpowder. I walked to the church, where the priests were collecting their books, and the holy vessels to be hid in the mountains. Amongst the manuscripts I saw many ancient rituals, forms of prayer, and versions of the Scripture; the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles on vellum, the first and last leaves wanting, and without date, but evidently of a very early period; and a fine copy of the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles also on vellum, entire, with numerous illuminations, written in the year of

the Seleucidæ 1552;* in the time of ' Mar Audishio, Patriarch of the East, and of the Chaldæans.'

I was much touched by the unaffected hospitality and simple manners of the two priests, Kashas Hormuzd and Khoshaba, who entertained me; a third was absent. Their dress, torn and soiled, showed that they were poorer than their congregation. They had just returned from the vineyards, where they had been toiling during the day; yet they were treated with reverence and respect; the upper places were given to them, they were consulted on all occasions, and no one drew nigh without kissing the hand, scarred by the plough and the implements of the field.

Almost every house furnished something towards our evening repast, and a long train of girls and young men brought us messes of meat, fowls, boiled rice, garas, and fruit. The priests and the principal inhabitants feasted with us, and there remained enough for my servants, and for the poor who were collected on the roof of a neighbouring house. After our meal many of the women came to me, and joined with the men in debating on their critical position, and in forming schemes for the security of their families, and the defence of their village. It was past midnight before the assembly separated.

The following day being Sunday, we were roused at dawn to attend the service of the Church. The two priests officiated in white surplices. The ceremonies were short and simple; a portion of Scripture was read and then interpreted by Kasha Hormuzd in the dialect in use in the mountains — few understanding the Chaldæan of the books.† His

* The era of the Seleucidæ (the Greek or Alexandrian year, or the era of contracts, as it is sometimes called) was once in general use amongst the Christians, and Mussulmans of the East, and is to this day always employed by the Chaldæans. It commences in October, B. C. 312; according to the Chaldæans one year later.

† The language of the Chaldæans is a Semetic dialect allied to the Hebrew, Arabic, and Syriac, and still called the Chaldani or Chaldee. In its written form, it bears a close resemblance to the Chaldee of the book of Daniel. The dialect spoken by the mountain tribes varies slightly from that used in the villages of the plains; the differences arising chiefly from local circumstances. It is an interesting fact that the Chaldæan spoken in Assyria is almost identical with the language of the

companion chanted the prayers—the congregation kneeling or standing and joining in the responses. There were no idle forms or salutations; the people used the sign of the cross when entering, and bowed when the name of Christ occurred in the prayers. The sacrament was administered to all present—men, women, and children partaking of the bread and wine, and my companion receiving it amongst the rest. They were disposed to feel hurt at my declining to join them, until I explained that I did not refuse from any sectarian prejudice. When the service was ended the congregation embraced one another, as a symbol of brotherly love and concord,* and left the church. I could not but contrast these simple and primitive rites with the senseless mummery, and degrading forms, adopted by the converted Chaldæans of the plains—the unadorned and imageless walls with the hideous pictures, and monstrous deformities which encumber the churches of Mosul.

It may not be here out of place to remind the reader of the peculiar doctrine which has earned for the Chaldæans the title of Nestorians, a name probably given to them by the Roman Catholic Church. The Mussulmans term them simply 'Nasara,' or 'the Christians,' whilst they call themselves 'Caldani' and 'Souraiyah,' or in the mountains by the name of the tribe to which they belong. Although they undoubtedly profess the doctrine taught by Nestorius, who is looked upon as one of the great fathers of their church, they deny having derived it from him, asserting that such as it is they received it from the Apostles. It is certain that the opinions preached by Nestorius had already spread before his time widely in the East, and were particularly inculcated in the schools of the Chaldæans. The most important point of difference between the Chaldæan and other Christian churches is the assertion, on the part of the former, of the

Sabæans, or Christians of St. John, as they are vulgarly called, — a remarkable tribe, who reside in the province of Khuzistan, or Susiana, and in the districts near the mouth of the Euphrates, and who are probably descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Babylonia and Chaldæa.

* This custom, it will be remembered, prevailed generally amongst the primitive Christians. The Roman Catholic Church has retained the remembrance of it in the 'Pax.'

divisibility and separation of the two persons, as well as of the two natures, in Christ. This, of course, involves the refusal of the title of 'Mother of God' to the Virgin, which renders them particularly odious to the Church of Rome, and is probably the cause of their being accused of more heresies than they really profess. The profession of faith adopted by their church, and still repeated twice a day in their prayers, differs in few respects from the Nicene creed; and it is evident, not only from it but from the writings of Nestorius himself, and of the earliest fathers of the Eastern Church, that there is nothing to authorise the violent charge of heresy made against the Chaldæans by their enemies. It is admitted, on the other hand, that they have retained in all their purity many of the doctrines and forms of primitive Christianity.

Mosheim, whose impartiality can scarcely be doubted, thus speaks of them:—'It is to the lasting honour of the Nestorian sect, that of all the Christian societies established in the East, they have preserved themselves the most free from the numberless superstitions which have found their way into the Greek and Latin churches.*' A Protestant may, therefore, wish to learn in what respects they differ, otherwise than in the doctrine already alluded to, from other Christian sects, and what their belief and observances really are. The most important points of difference may be summed up in a few words. They refuse to the Virgin those titles, and that exaggerated veneration, which were the origin of most of the superstitions and corruptions of the Romish and Eastern churches. They deny the doctrine of purgatory, and are most averse, not only to the worship of images, but even to their exhibition. Crosses are placed in their churches, and they are accustomed to make the sign of the cross in common with other Christians of the East; not, however, considering this ceremony essential, but rather as a badge of Christianity and a sign of brotherhood amongst themselves, scattered as they are amidst men of a hostile faith. They agree with the reformed church in the rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and in the distribution of the bread

* Mosheim, cent. XVI. sect. iii. part i.

and wine amongst the communicants. There appear to be considerable doubts as to the number and nature of their sacraments; they are generally stated to amount to seven, and to include baptism, marriage, and ordination. The five lower grades of the clergy, under the rank of bishop, are allowed to marry. In the early ages of the church the same privilege was extended to the bishop and archbishop, and even to the patriarch. The fasts of the Nestorian Chaldæans are numerous and very strictly observed, even fish not being eaten. There are 152 days in the year on which abstinence from animal food is enjoined. On Sunday no Nestorian performs a journey, or does any work.

The vestibule of the church of Birijai was occupied by a misshapen and decrepit nun. Her bed was a mat in the corner of the building, and she was cooking her *garas* on a small fire near the door. She inquired, with many tears, after Mar Shamoun, and hung round the neck of my companion when she learnt that he had been living with him. Vows of chastity are very rarely taken amongst the Nestorian Chaldæans; and this woman, whose deformity might have precluded the hope of marriage, was the sole instance we met with in the mountains. Convents for either sex are unknown.

Birijai contained, at the time of my visit, nearly one hundred houses, and Ghissa forty. The inhabitants were comparatively rich, possessing numerous flocks, and cultivating a large extent of land. There were priests, schools, and churches in both villages.

One of the Meleks of the tribe came early from Tkhoma Gowaia (Middle Tkhoma), the principal village in the district, to welcome me to his mountains, and to conduct me to his house. He explained that, as it was Sunday, the Chaldæans did not travel, and consequently the other Meleks and the principal inhabitants had not been able to meet me. We took leave of the good people of Birijai, who had treated us with great hospitality, and followed Melek Putros up the valley.

To our left was the small Kurdish hamlet of Hayshat, high up in a sheltered ravine. An uninterrupted line of

gardens brought us to the church of Tkhoma Gowaiia, standing in the midst of scattered houses, this village being built like those of Tiyari. Here we found almost the whole tribe assembled, and in deep consultation on the state of affairs. We sat in a loft above the church during the greater part of the day, engaged in discussion on the course to be pursued to meet the present difficulties, and to defend the valley against the expected attack of Beder Khan Bey. The men who were all well armed, declared that they were ready to die in the defence of their villages; and that, unless they were overcome by numbers, they would hold the passes against the forces of the Kurdish chief. The Kurds, who inhabited two or three hamlets in Tkhoma, had also assembled. They expressed sympathy for the Christians, and offered to arm in their behalf. After much debate it was resolved to send at once a deputation to the Pasha of Mosul, to beseech his protection and assistance. Two priests, two persons from the families of the Meleks, and two of the principal inhabitants, were chosen; and a letter was written by Kasha Bodaca, one of the most learned and respectable priests in the mountains. It was a touching appeal, setting forth that they were faithful subjects of the Sultan, had been guilty of no offence, and were ready to pay any money, or submit to any terms, that the Pasha might think fit to exact. The letter, after having been approved by all present, and sealed with the seals of the chiefs, was delivered to the six deputies, who started at once on foot for Mosul. At the same time no precaution was to be omitted to place the valley in a state of defence, and to prepare for the approach of the Kurds.

There were in Tkhoma three Meleks, each chosen from a different family by the tribe. The principal was Melek Putros,—a stout, jovial fellow, gaily dressed, and well armed. His colleagues were of a more sober and more warlike appearance. There were no signs of poverty among the people; most of the men had serviceable weapons, and the women wore gold and silver ornaments. All the young men carried cross-bows, and were skilful in their use, killing the small birds as they rested on the trees. A well-armed

and formidable body of men might have been collected from the villages; which, properly directed, could, I have little doubt, have effectually resisted the invasion of Beder Khan Bey.

We passed the night on the roof of the church, and rose early to continue our journey to Baz. The valley and pass, separating Tkhoma from this district, being at this time of the year uninhabited, is considered insecure, and we were accompanied by a party of armed men, furnished by the Meleks. The chiefs themselves walked with us to the village of Mezrai, whose gardens adjoin those of Tkhoma Gowaia. The whole valley, indeed, up to the rocky barrier, closing it towards the east, is an uninterrupted line of cultivation. Above the level of the artificial watercourses derived from the torrent near its source, and irrigating all the lands of the district, are forests of oaks, clothing the mountains to within a short distance of their summits. Galls are not so plentiful here as in Tiyari; they form, however, an article of commerce with Persia, where they find a better market than in Mosul. Rice and flax are very generally cultivated, and fruit-trees abound.

We stopped for a few minutes at Gunduktha, the last village in Tkhoma, to see Kasha Bodaca, whom we found preparing, at the request of his congregation, to join the deputation to the Pasha of Mosul. We took leave of him, and he started on his journey. He was an amiable, and, for the mountains, a learned man, greatly esteemed by the Chaldæan tribes. Being one of the most skilful penmen of the day, his manuscripts were much sought after for the churches. He was mild and simple in his manners; and his appearance was marked by that gentleness and unassuming dignity, which I had found in more than one of the Nestorian priests.*

The torrent enters the valley of Tkhoma by a very narrow gorge, through which a road, partly constructed of rough

* Mr. Ainsworth, writing of Kasha Kana of Lizan, observes that he resembled in his manners and appearance an English clergyman. Kasha Bodaca was murdered by the chief of Chal shortly after our visit.

stones piled up in the bed of the stream, is with difficulty carried. In the winter, when the rain has swollen the waters, this entrance must be impracticable; and, even at this time, we could scarcely drag our mules and horses over the rocks and through the deep pools in which the torrent abounds. All signs of cultivation now ceased. Mountains rose on all sides, barren and treeless. Huge rocks hung over the road, or towered above us. On their pinnacles, or in their crevices, a few goats sought a scanty herbage. The savage nature of the place was heightened by its solitude.

Soon after entering the ravine, we met a shepherd-boy, dragging after him a sheep killed by the bears; and a little beyond we found the reeking carcase of a bullock, which had also fallen a victim to these formidable animals, of whose depredations we heard continual complaints. I observed on the mountain sides several flocks of ibex, and some of our party endeavoured to get within gun-shot; but after sunrise their watchfulness cannot be deceived, and they bounded off to the highest peaks, long before the most wary of our marksmen could approach them.

We were steadily making our way over the loose stones and slippery rocks when a number of horsemen were seen coming towards us. They were Kurds, and I ordered my party to keep close together, that we might be ready to meet them in case of necessity. As they were picking their way over the rough ground like ourselves, to the evident risk of their horses' necks as well as of their own, I had time to examine them fully as they drew near. In front, on a small, lean, and jaded horse, rode a tall gaunt figure, dressed in all the tawdry garments sanctioned by Kurdish taste. A turban of wonderful capacity, and almost taking within its dimensions horse and rider, covered his head, which seemed to escape by a miracle being driven in between his shoulders by the enormous pressure. From the centre of this mass of many coloured rags rose a high conical cap of white felt. This load appeared to give an unsteady rolling gait to the thin carcase below, which could with difficulty support it. A most capacious pair of claret-coloured trowsers bulged out from the sides of the horse, and well nigh stretched from

side to side of the ravine. Every shade of red and yellow was displayed in his embroidered jacket and cloak; and in his girdle were weapons of extraordinary size, and most fanciful workmanship. His eyes were dark and piercing, and overshadowed by shaggy eyebrows; his nose aquiline, his cheeks hollow, his face long, and his beard black and bushy. Notwithstanding the ferocity of his countenance, and its unmistakable expression of villainy, it would have been difficult to repress a smile at the absurdity of the figure and the disparity between it and the miserable animal concealed beneath. This was a Kurdish dignitary of the first rank; a man well known for deeds of oppression and blood; the Mutesellim, or Lieutenant-Governor under Nur-Ullah Bey, the chief of Hakkari. He was followed by a small body of well-armed men, resembling their master in the motley character of their dress; which, however, was somewhat reduced in the proportions, as became an inferiority of rank. The cavalcade was brought up by an individual differing considerably from those who had preceded. His smooth and shining chin, and the rich glow of raki* upon his cheeks, were undoubted evidences of Christianity. He had the accumulated obesity of all his companions; and rode, as became him, upon a diminutive donkey, which he urged over the loose stones with the point of a claspknife. His dress did not differ much from that of the Kurds, except that, instead of warlike weapons, he carried an inkhorn in his girdle. This was Bircham, the 'goulama d'Mira,'† as he was commonly called,—a half renegade Christian, who was the steward, banker, and secretary of the Hakkari chief.

I saluted the Mutesellim, as we elbowed each other in the narrow pass; but he did not seem inclined to return my salutation, otherwise than by a curl of the lip and an indistinct grunt, which he left me to interpret in any way I thought proper. It was of no use quarrelling with him, so I passed on. We had not proceeded far, when one of his

* Ardent spirits, extracted from raisins or dates.

† The servant of the Mir or Prince.

horsemen returned to us, and called away Yakoub Rais, Ionunco, and one of the men of Tkhoma. Looking back, I observed them all in deep consultation with the Kurdish chief, who had dismounted to wait for them. I rode on, and it was nearly an hour before the three Chaldæans rejoined us. Ionunco's eyes were starting out of his head with fright, and the expression of his face was one of amusing horror. Even Yakoub's usual grin had given way to a look of alarm. The man of Tkhoma was less disturbed. Yakoub began by entreating me to return at once to Tkhoma and Tiyari. The Mutesellim, he said, had used violent threats; declaring that as Nur-Ullah Bey had served one infidel who had come to spy out the country, and teach the Turks its mines, alluding to Schultz,* so he would serve me; and had sent off a man to the Hakkari chief to apprise him of my presence in the mountains. 'We must turn back at once,' exclaimed Yakoub, seizing the bridle of my horse, 'or, Wallah! that Kurdish dog will murder us all.' I had formed a different plan; and, calming the fears of my party as well as I was able, I continued my journey towards Baz. Ionunco, however, racked his brain for every murder that had been attributed to Nur-Ullah Bey, and at each new tale of horror Yakoub turned his mule, and vowed he would go back to Asheetha.

We rode for nearly four hours through this wild, solitary valley. My people were almost afraid to speak, and huddled together as if the Kurds were coming down upon us. Two or three of the armed men scaled the rocks, and ran on before us as scouts; but the solitude was only broken by an eagle soaring above our heads, or by a wild goat which occasionally dashed across our path. In the spring and early summer, these now desolate tracts are covered with the tents of the people of Tkhoma and of the Kurds, who find on the slopes a rich pasture for their flocks.

It was mid-day before we reached the foot of the mountain dividing us from the district of Baz. The pass we had to

* This unfortunate gentleman, who was employed by the French Government on a scientific mission in Kurdistan, was murdered by Nur-Ullah Bey.

cross is one of the highest in the Chaldæan country, and at this season there was snow upon it. The ascent was long, steep, and toilsome. We were compelled to walk, and, even without our weight, the mules could scarcely climb the acclivity. But we were well rewarded for our labour when we gained the summit. A scene of extraordinary grandeur opened upon us. At our feet stretched the valley of Baz—its villages and gardens but specks in the distance. Beyond the valley, and on all sides of us, was a sea of mountains—peaks of every form and height, some snow-capped, others bleak and naked; the furthest rising in the distant regions of Persia. I counted nine distinct mountain ranges. Two rocks formed a kind of gateway on the crest of the pass, and I sat between them for some minutes, gazing upon the sublime prospect before us.

The descent was rapid and dangerous, and so precipitous that a stone might almost have been dropped on the church of Ergub, first visible like a white spot beneath us. We passed a rock, called the 'Rock of Butter,' from a custom, perhaps of pagan origin, existing amongst the Chaldæan shepherds, of placing upon it, as an offering, a piece of the first butter made in early spring. As we approached the village, we found several of the inhabitants labouring in the fields. They left their work, and followed us. The church stands at some distance from the houses; and, when we reached it, the villagers compelled all my servants to dismount and to pass it on foot, including Ibrahim Agha, who muttered a curse upon the infidels as he took his foot out of the stirrup. The Christians raised their turbans,—a mark of reverence always shown when a church is passed.

The houses of Ergub are built in a group. We stopped in a small open space in the centre of them, and I ordered my carpet to be spread near a fountain, shaded by a cluster of trees. We were soon surrounded by the inhabitants of the village. The Melek and the priest seated themselves with me; the rest stood round in a circle. The men were well dressed and armed; and, like those of Tkhoma, they could scarcely be distinguished from the Kurds. Many of the women were pretty enough to be entitled to the front places

they had taken in the crowd. They wore silver ornaments and beads on their foreheads, and were dressed in jackets and trowsers of gay colours.

After the letter of the Patriarch had been read, and the inquiries concerning him fully satisfied, the conversation turned upon the expected expedition of Beder Khan Bey against Tkhoma, and the movements of Nur-Ullah Bey, events causing great anxiety to the people of Baz. Although this district had been long under the chief of Hakkiari, paying an annual tribute to him, and having been even subjected to many vexatious exactions, and to acts of oppression and violence, yet it had never been disarmed, nor exposed to a massacre such as had taken place in Tiyari. There was now cause to fear that the fanatical fury of Beder Khan Bey might be turned upon it as well as upon Tkhoma; and the only hope of the inhabitants was in the friendly interference of Nur-Ullah Bey, whose subjects they now professed themselves to be. They had, however, begun to conceal their church-books and property, in anticipation of a disaster.

Both the Melek and the priest pressed me to accept their hospitality. I preferred the house of the latter, to which we moved in the afternoon. My host was suffering much from the ague, and was moreover old and infirm. I gave him a few medicines to stop his fever, for which he was very grateful. He accompanied me to the church; but the bare walls alone were standing. The books and furniture had been partly carried away by the Kurds, and partly removed for security by the people of the village.

After the events of the morning I had made up my mind to proceed at once to Nur-Ullah Bey, whose residence was only a short day's journey distant; but on communicating my intention to Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, he became so alarmed, and so resolutely declared that he would return alone rather than trust himself in the hands of the Mir of Hakkiari, that I was forced to give up my plan. In the present state of the mountains, there were only two courses open to me: either to visit the chief, who would probably, after learning the object of my journey, receive and assist me as he had

done Dr. Grant, or to retrace my steps without delay. I decided upon the latter with regret, as I was thus unable to visit Jelu and Diz, the two remaining Christian districts. Without communicating my plans to any one, I sent for two of Nur-Ullah Bey's attendants who happened to be in the village, and induced them, by a small present, to take a letter to their master. They were led to believe that it was my intention to visit him on the following day, and I sent a Christian to see that they took the road to Julamerik, his residence. The treachery and daring of Nur-Ullah Bey were so well known, that I thought it most prudent to deceive him, in case he might wish to waylay me on my return to Tkhoma. I started therefore before daybreak, without any one in the village being aware of my departure, and took the road by which we had reached Baz the day before.

We crossed the pass as quickly as we were able, hurried through the long barren valley, and reached Gunduktha, without meeting any one during our journey, to the no small comfort of my companions, who could not conceal their alarm during the whole of our morning's ride.

We stopped to breakfast at Gunduktha, and saw the Meleks at Tkhoma Gowaia. The people of this village had felt much anxiety on our account, as the Mutesellim had passed the night there, and had used violent threats against us. I learnt that he was going to Chal, to settle some differences which had arisen between the Kurds of that district and of Hakkari, and that Bircham had been sent to Tkhoma by Nur-Ullah Bey to withdraw his family and friends; 'for this time,' said the chief, 'Beder Khan Bey intends to finish with the Christians, and will not make slaves for consuls and Turks to liberate.'

As I was desirous of leaving Tkhoma as soon as possible, I refused the proffered hospitality of Melek Putros, and rode on to Birijai.

Being unwilling to return to Asheetha by Raola and the villages we had already visited, I determined — notwithstanding the account given by the people of Tkhoma, of the great difficulty of the passes between us and the Zab—to cross the mountain of Khouara, which rises at the back of Birijai.

Their descriptions had not been exaggerated. After dragging ourselves for two hours over loose stones, and along narrow ledges, we reached the summit, weary and breathless. From the crest we overlooked the whole valley of Tkhoma, with its smiling villages, bounded to the east by the lofty range of Kareetha; to the west I recognised the peaks of Asheetha, the valley of the Zab, Chal, and the heights inhabited by the Apenshai Kurds.

The mountain of Khouara is the Zoma—or summer pasture-grounds—of the inhabitants of Ghissa and Birijai. As we ascended we passed many rude sheds and caverns, half-blocked up at the entrance with loose stones—places in which the flocks are kept during the night, to preserve them from wild animals. There is a fountain at a short distance from the top of the pass, and a few trees near it; but the mountain is otherwise naked, and, at this time of the year, without verdure of any kind.

An hour's rapid descent brought us to the Tiyari village of Be-Alatha,—a heap of ruins on the two sides of a valley. The few surviving inhabitants were in extreme poverty, and the small-pox was raging amongst them. The water-courses destroyed by the Kurds had not been repaired, and the fields were mostly uncultivated. Even the church had not yet been rebuilt; and as the trees which had been cut down were still lying across the road, and the charred timber still encumbered the gardens, the place had a most desolate appearance. We were hospitably received by a Shamasha, or deacon; whose children, suffering from the prevailing disease, and covered with discoloured blains, crowded into the wretched cottage. Women and children, disfigured by the malignant fever, came to me for medicines; but it was beyond my power to relieve them. Our host, as well as the rest of the inhabitants, was in extreme poverty. Even a little *garas*, and rancid butter, could with difficulty be collected by contributions from all the houses, and I was at a loss to discover how the people of Be-Alatha lived. Yet the deacon was cheerful and contented, dwelling with resignation upon the misfortunes that had befallen his village, and the misery of his family.

On leaving the village, now containing only ten families, I was accosted by an old priest, who had been waiting until we passed, and who entreated me to eat bread under his roof. As his cottage was distant, I was compelled to decline his hospitality, though much touched by his simple kindness and mild and gentle manners. Finding that I would not go with him, he insisted upon accompanying us to the next village, and took with him three or four sturdy mountaineers to assist us on our journey; for the roads, he said, were nearly impassable.

Without the assistance of the good priest our attempt to reach Marth d'Kasra would certainly have been hopeless. More than once we turned back in despair, before the slippery rocks and precipitous ascents. Ibrahim Agha, embarrassed by his capacious boots, which, made after the fashion of the Turks, could have contained the extremities of a whole family, was more beset with difficulties than the rest of the party. When he attempted to ride a mule, unused to a pack-saddle, he invariably slid over the tail of the animal, and lay sprawling on the ground, to the great amusement of Yakoub Rais, with whom his adventures were a never failing source of anecdote in the village assemblies. If he walked, either his boots became wedged in the crevices of the rocks, or filled with gravel, to his no small discomfort. At length, in attempting to cross a bed of loose stones, he lost all presence of mind, and remained fixed in the middle, fearful to advance or retreat. The rubbish yielded to his grasp, and he looked down into a black abyss, towards which he found himself gradually sinking with the avalanche he had put in motion. There was certainly enough to frighten any Turk, and Ibrahim Agha clung to the face of the declivity—the picture of despair. 'What's the Kurd doing?' cried a Tiyari, with whom all Mussulmans were Kurds, and who was waiting to pass on. 'Is there anything here to turn a man's face pale? This is dashta, dashta' (a plain, a plain). Ibrahim Agha, who guessed from the words Kurds and 'dashta,' the meaning of which he had learnt, the purport of the Christian's address, almost forgot his danger in his rage and indignation. 'Gehannem with your dashta!' cried he, still clinging to the moving

stones, 'and dishonour upon your wife and mother. Oh ! that I could only get one way or the other to show this infidel what it is to laugh at the beard of an Osmanli, and to call him a Kurd in the bargain !' With the assistance of the mountaineers he was at length rescued from his perilous position, but not restored to good humour. By main force the mules were dragged over this and similar places ; the Tiyaris seizing them by the halter and tail, and throwing them on their sides.

We were two hours struggling through these difficulties before reaching Marth d'Kasra, formerly a large village, but now containing only forty houses.* Its appearance, however, was more flourishing than that of Be-Alatha ; and the vineyards, and gardens surrounding it, had been carefully trimmed and irrigated. Above Marth d'Kasra, on a lofty overhanging rock, is the village of Lagippa, reduced to ten houses. It is not accessible to beasts of burden. I rode to the house of a priest, and sat there whilst the mules were resting.

The road between Marth d'Kasra and Chonba was no less difficult and dangerous than that we had taken in the morning. The gardens of the former village extend to the Zab, and we might have followed the valley ; but the men who were with us preferred the shorter road over the mountain that we might reach Chonba before night-fall.

The villages in the valley of the Zab suffered more from the Kurds than any other part of Tiyari. Chonba was almost deserted, its houses and churches a mass of ruins, and its gardens and orchards uncultivated and neglected. There was no roof under which we could pass the night ; and we were obliged to spread our carpets under a cluster of walnut trees, near a clear and most abundant spring. Beneath these trees was pitched the tent of Beder Khan Bey after the great massacre ; and here he received Melek Ismail when delivered a prisoner into his hands. Yakoub Rais, who had been present at the murder of the unfortunate chief of Tiyari, thus described the event. After heading his people in their defence of the pass which led into the upper districts,

* In the village were two churches and two priests.

and performing prodigies of valour, Melek Ismail, his thigh broken by a musket-ball, was carried by a few followers to a cavern in a secluded ravine, where he might have escaped the search of his enemies, had not a woman, to save her life, betrayed his retreat. He was dragged down the mountain with savage exultation, and brought before Beder Khan Bey. Here he fell upon the ground. 'Wherefore does the infidel sit before me?' exclaimed the ferocious chief, who had seen his broken limb; 'and what dog is this that has dared to shed the blood of true believers?' 'O Mir,' replied Melek Ismail, still undaunted, and partly raising himself, 'this arm has taken the lives of twenty Kurds; and, had God spared me, as many more would have fallen by it.' Beder Khan Bey rose and walked to the Zab, making a sign to his attendants to bring the Melek to him. By his directions they held the Christian chief over the river, and, severing his head from his body with a dagger, cast them into the stream.

All the family of the Melek had distinguished themselves, at the time of the invasion, by their courage. His sister, standing by his side, slew four men before she fell mortally wounded.

Over the spring, where we had alighted, formerly grew a cluster of gigantic walnut trees, celebrated in Tiyari for their size and beauty. They had been cut down by the Kurds, and their massive trunks were still stretched on the ground. A few smaller trees had been left standing, and afforded us shelter. The water, gushing from the foot of an overhanging rock, was pure and refreshing; but the conduits, which had once carried it into the fields, having been destroyed, a small marsh had been formed around the spring. The place consequently abounded in musquitoes, and we were compelled to keep up large fires during the night, to escape their attacks.

On the following morning we ascended the valley of the Zab, for about three miles, to cross the river. The road led into the district of upper Tiyari, its villages being visible from the valley, perched on the summits of isolated rocks, or half concealed in sheltered ravines. The scenery is sublime. The river forces itself through a deep and narrow gorge, the

mountains rising one above the other in wild confusion, naked, and barren, except where the mountaineers have collected the scanty soil, and surrounded their cottages with gardens and vineyards.

A bridge of wicker-work at this part of the river was in better repair than that of Lizan, and we crossed our mules without difficulty. Descending along the banks of the Zab for a short distance, we struck into the mountains, and passing through Kona Zavvi and Bitti, two Kurdish villages buried in orchards, reached Serspeetho about mid-day. We sat for two hours in the house of the priest, who received us very hospitably. Out of eighty families thirty have alone survived; the rest had been utterly destroyed. The two churches were still in ruins, and but a few cottages had as yet been rebuilt. In the afternoon we resumed our journey, and crossing a high and barren mountain, descended into the valley of Asheetha.

As I was desirous of visiting some copper mines, described to me by the people of the district, I engaged Kasha Hormuzd, and one Daoud, who had been a workman at Nimroud, to accompany me. We left Asheetha, followed by Yakoub Rais, the priests and principal inhabitants, who took leave of us at some distance from the village. We chose a different road from that we had followed on entering the mountains, and thus avoided a most precipitous ascent. Descending into the valley, leading from Berwari to Asheetha, we came upon a large party of travellers, whom we at first took for Kurds. As they discharged their guns, and stopped in the middle of a thicket of rushes growing in the bed of the torrent, we approached them. They proved to be Nestorian Chaldæans returning from Mosul to the mountains. Amongst them, I found Kasha Oraho*, a learned and worthy priest, who had fled from Asheetha at the time of the massacre. On account of his erudition, intimate knowledge of the political condition of the tribes, and acquaintance with the tenets and ceremonies of the Chaldæan church, he had acted as secretary to Mar Shamoun during his exile. Nearly three

* A corruption of Auraham, Abraham.

years had elapsed since he had quitted his mountains, and he pined for his native air. Against the advice of his friends he had determined to leave the plains, and he was now on his return, with his wife and son, to Tiyari. I sat with him for a few minutes, and we parted never to meet again. A few days afterwards, Beder Khan Bey and his hordes descended into Asheetha. Fresh deeds of violence recalled the scenes of bloodshed to which the poor priest had formerly been a witness; and he died of grief, bewailing the miserable condition of the Christian tribes.

Leaving the valley we had ascended on our approach to Tiyari, we entered the mountains to the right, and after a rapid ascent, found ourselves in a forest of oaks. Our guides were some time in discovering the mouth of the mine, which was only known to a few of the mountaineers. At a distance from the entrance, copper ores were scattered in abundance amongst the loose stones. I descended with some difficulty, and saw many galleries running in various directions, all more or less blocked up with rubbish and earth, much of which we had to remove before I could explore the interior of the mine. Nobody was able to inform me by whom these galleries had been made, and the mines had been last worked. They may date back from the Assyrian period. We now entered a deep valley, having the district of Holamoun and Geramoun on our right, and rode for five hours through a thick forest of oak, beech, and other mountain trees. We passed a few encampments of Kurds, who had chosen some lawn in a secluded dell to pitch their black tents; but we saw no villages until we reached Challek. Near our path, as we descended to this place, I observed an extensive ruin of substantial masonry of square stones. I was unable to learn that any tradition attached to the remains; nor could I ascertain their name, or determine the nature of the building. It was evidently a very ancient work, and may have been an Assyrian fort to command the entrance into the mountains. The pass is called Kesta, from a Kurdish village of that name.

Challek is a large village, inhabited partly by Chaldæans and partly by Kurds. It contains about fifteen families of

Christians, who have a church and a priest. The gardens are very extensive and well irrigated, and the houses are almost concealed in a forest of fruit-trees. We passed the night under the roof of the Kiayah, and were hospitably entertained.

In the morning we rode for some time along the banks of the Khabour, and about five hours and a half from Challegforded the Supna, one of its confluent. We stopped at the Kurdish village of Ourmeli during the middle of the day, and found there a Su-bashi—a kind of superintendent tax-gatherer—from Mosul, who received me in a manner worthy the dignity of both. He was dressed in an extraordinary assortment of Osmanlu and Kurdish garments, the greater part of which had been, of course, robbed from the inhabitants of the district placed under his care. He treated me with sumptuous hospitality, at the expense of the Kurds, to whom he proclaimed me a particular friend of the Vizir, and a person of very exalted worth. He brought, himself, the first dish of pillau, which was followed by soups, chicken-kibaubs, honey, yaghort, cream, fruit, and a variety of Kurdish luxuries. He refused to be seated, and waited upon me during the repast. As it was evident that all this respectful attention, on the part of so great a personage, was not intended to be thrown away, when he retired I collected a few of the Kurds, and, obtaining their confidence by paying for my breakfast, soon learnt from them that my host had dealt so hardly with the villages in his jurisdiction, that the inhabitants, driven to despair, had sent a deputation to lay their grievances before the Pasha. This explained the fashion of my reception, which I could scarcely attribute to my own merits. As I anticipated, my host came to me before I left, and commenced a discourse on the character of Kurds in general, and on the way of governing them. ‘Wallah, Billah, O Bey!’ said he, ‘these Kurds are no Mussulmans; they are worse than unbelievers; they are nothing but thieves and murderers; they will cut a man’s throat for a para. You will know what to tell His Highness when he asks you about them. They are beasts that must be driven by the bit and the spur; give them too much bar-

ley,' continuing the simile, 'and they will get fat, and vicious, and dangerous. No, no; you must take away the barley, and leave them only the straw.' 'You have, no doubt,' I observed, eyeing his many-coloured Kurdish cloak, 'taken care that as little be left them to fatten upon as possible.' 'I am the lowest of His Highness's servants,' he replied, scarcely suppressing a broad grin; 'but, nevertheless, God knows that I am not the least zealous in his service.' It was at any rate satisfactory to find that, in the Su-bashi's system of government, Kurds and Christians were placed on an equal footing, and that the Mussulmans themselves now tasted of the miseries they had so long inflicted with impunity upon others.

We soon crossed the valley of Amadiyah, and following the high road between Daoudiyah and Mosul, entered some low hills thickly set with Kurdish villages. In Kuremi, through which we passed, there dwells a very holy Sheikh, who enjoys a great reputation for sanctity and miracles throughout Kurdistan. He was seated in the Iwan, or open chamber, of a very neat house, built, kept in repair, and continually white-washed by the inhabitants of the place. A beard, white as snow, fell almost to his waist; and he wore a turban and long gown of spotless white linen. He was almost blind, and sat rocking himself to and fro, fingering his rosary. He keeps a perpetual Ramazan, never eating between dawn and sunset. On a slab, near him, was a row of water-jugs of every form, ready for use when the sun went down. Ibrahim Agha, who was not more friendly to the Kurds than the Su-bashi, treated the Sheikh to a most undignified epithet as he passed; which, had it been overheard by the people of the village, might have led to hostilities. Although I might not have expressed myself so forcibly as the Cawass, I could not but concur generally in his opinion, when reflecting that this man, and some others of the same class, had been the chief cause of the massacres of the unfortunate Christians; and that, at that moment, his son, Sheikh Tahar,* was urging Beder Khan Bey to prove his

* This fanatic, who was one of Beder Khan Bey's principal advisers, when entering Mosul, was accustomed to throw a veil over his face, that

religious zeal by shedding anew the blood of the Nestorians. We stopped for the night in the large Catholic Chaldæan village of Mungayshi, containing above forty Christian houses, a new church, and two priests.

A pass, over a richly wooded range of hills, leads from Mungayshi into a fertile plain, watered by several streams, and occupied by many Kurdish villages. Beyond, the mountains are naked and most barren. We wandered for some hours amongst pinnacles, through narrow ravines, and over broken rocks of sandstone, all scattered about in the wildest confusion. Not a blade of vegetation was to be seen; the ground was parched by the sun, and was here and there blackened by volcanic action. We came to several hot, sulphurous springs, bubbling up in the valley, and forming large pools. In the spring the Kurds and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages congregate near these reservoirs, and pitch their tents for nearly a month to bathe in the waters, which have a great reputation for medicinal qualities.

A long defile brought us to the town of Dohuk, formerly a place of some importance, but now nearly in ruins. It is built on an island formed by a small stream, and probably occupies an ancient site. Its castle, a mud building with turrets, was held for some time, by the hereditary Kurdish chief of the place, against Injeh Bairakdar Mohammed Pasha; but was reduced, and has since been inhabited by a Turkish governor. Ismail Bey, the Mutesellim, received me very civilly, and I breakfasted with him. The son of a neighbouring Kurdish chief was visiting the Bey. He was dressed in most elaborately embroidered garments, had ponderous jewelled rings in his ears, carried enormous weapons in his girdle, and had stuck in his turban a profusion of marigolds and other flowers. He was a handsome, intelligent boy; but, young as he might be, he was already a precocious pupil of Sheikh Tahar; and when I put him upon a religious topic, he entered most gravely into an

his sight might not be polluted by Christians, and other impurities in the place. He exercises an immense influence over the Kurdish population, who look upon him as a saint and worker of miracles.

argument to prove the obligation imposed upon Mussulmans to exterminate the unbelievers, supporting his theological views by very apt quotations from the Koran.

My horses, which had been sent from Amadiyah, were waiting for me here ; and, leaving our jaded mules, we proceeded to the Christian village of Malthaiyah, about one hour beyond, and in the same valley as Dohuk. Being anxious to visit some Assyrian rock-sculptures near this place, I took a peasant with me and rode to the foot of a neighbouring hill. A short walk up a very difficult ascent brought me to the monuments.

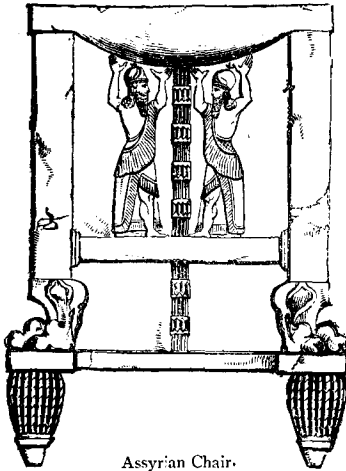
Four tablets have been cut in the rock, each occupied by nine figures. The same subject is represented in each bas-relief, and appears to be an adoration of the gods by two kings. The first god wears the square horned cap, surmounted by a point, or fleur-de-lys ; holds a ring in one hand, and a thong or snake in the other, and stands on two animals, a bull and a kind of gryphon, or lion with the head of an eagle, but without wings. The second divinity is beardless, also carries a ring, and is seated on a chair, the arms and lower parts of which are supported by human figures with tails, and by birds with human heads. The whole rests on two animals, a lion and a bull. The third divinity resembles the first, and stands on a winged bull. The four following have stars with six rays on the horned cap. The first of them has a ring in one hand, and stands on a gryphon without wings ; the second also holds a ring, and stands on a horse caparisoned as in the sculptures of Khorsabad ; the third wields an object precisely similar to the conventional thunderbolt of the Greek Jove, and is supported by a winged lion ; the fourth is beardless, carries a ring, and stands on a lion without wings.



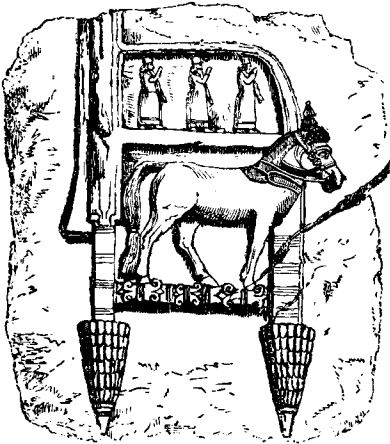
Assyrian Deity. On a Rock Tablet at Malthaiyah.

The two royal figures, probably representing the same king,

who are facing the divinities, have one hand raised, and bear an object resembling a mace, usually carried by the monarch when engaged in religious ceremonies.



Assyrian Chair.



Assyrian Chair.

All the tablets have suffered much from exposure to the atmosphere, and one has been almost destroyed by the entrance into a tomb, which was probably cut in the rock at a period long subsequent to the Assyrian empire.

The details in these bas-reliefs are similar in character to those on the later Assyrian monuments, and are interesting in many respects. The thrones or arm-chairs, supported by animals and human figures, resemble those of the ancient Egyptians, and of the monuments of Kouyunjik, Khorsabad, and Persepolis. They also remind us of the description of the throne of Solomon, which had 'stays (or arms) on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve

lions stood there, on the one side and on the other upon the six steps.'*

* 1 Kings, x. 12, 20.

I returned to the village after sunset. My Cawass and servants had established themselves for the night on the roof of the church, and the Kiayah had prepared a very substantial repast. The inhabitants of Malthaiyah are Catholic Chaldæans, their conversion not dating many years. The greater part joined us in the evening.

Next morning we rode over a dreary plain to Alkosh. In a defile, through the hills behind the village, I observed several rock-tombs,—excavations similar to those of Malthaiyah; some having rude ornaments above the entrance, the doorways of others being simply square holes in the rock.*

Alkosh is a large Christian village. The inhabitants, who were formerly Nestorian Chaldæans, have been converted to Roman Catholicism. It contains, according to a very general tradition, the tomb of Nahum the prophet—the Alkoshite, as he is called in the introduction to his prophecies. It is a place held in great reverence by Mohammedans and Christians, but especially by Jews, who keep the building in repair, and flock to it in great numbers at certain seasons of the year. The tomb is a simple plaster case or sarcophagus, covered with green cloth, and standing at the upper end of a large chamber. On the walls of the room are pasted slips of paper, upon which are written, in distorted Hebrew characters, religious exhortations, and the dates and particulars of the visits of various Jewish families. The house containing the tomb is a modern building. There are no inscriptions, nor fragments of any antiquity about the place; and I am not aware how long the tradition connected with Nahum has attached to the village of Alkosh,† and whether it is of Christian or Jewish origin.

* These rock-tombs abound in the mountains of Kurdistan. It is doubtful to what period they belong, but there is no proof that they are as ancient as the Assyrian period. I am inclined to assign them to the time of the Arsacian or Sassanian dynasties of Persia.

† According to St. Jerome, El Kosh or El Kosha, the birthplace of the prophet, was a village in Galilee; and his tomb was shown at Bethogabra, near Emmaus. As his prophecies were written after the captivity of the ten tribes, and apply exclusively to Nineveh, the tradition which points to the village in Assyria as the place of his death, is not without weight. It is not, however, mentioned by Benjamin of

After visiting the tomb, I rode to the convent of Rabban Hormuzd, built on the almost perpendicular sides of lofty rocks, enclosing a small recess or basin, out of which there is only one outlet,—a narrow and precipitous ravine, leading abruptly into the plains. The spot is well suited to solitude and devotion. Half buried in naked crags, the building can scarcely be distinguished from the natural pinnacles by which it is surrounded. There is scarcely a blade of vegetation to be seen, except a few olive trees, encouraged, by the tender care of the monks, to struggle with the barren soil. Around the convent, in almost every accessible part of the mountain, are a multitude of chambers cut in the rocks, said to have once served as retreats for a legion of hermits, and from which most probably were ejected the dead, to make room for the living ; for they appear to have been, at some remote period, places of burial. The number of them must at one time have been very considerable. They are now rapidly disappearing, as the rocks are crumbling away, and have been so doing for centuries. Still the sides of the ravine are in some places honeycombed by them.

The hermits, who may once have inhabited the place, have left no successors. A lonely monk from the convent may occasionally be seen clambering over the rocks ; but otherwise the solitude is seldom disturbed by the presence of a human being.

The ascent to the convent, from the entrance of the ravine, is partly up a flight of steps rudely constructed of loose stones, and partly by a narrow pathway cut in the rock. We were, therefore, obliged to dismount, and to leave our horses in a cavern at the foot of the mountain.

Rabban Hormuzd was formerly in the possession of the Nestorian Chaldæans; but has been appropriated by the Catholics since the conversion to Rome of the inhabitants of Alkosh, Tel Kef, and other large villages of the plain. It is said to have been founded by one of the early Chaldæan patriarchs, in the latter part of the fourth century. The

Tudela, who does not appear to have visited Alkosh. Had the tomb been a place of pilgrimage for the Jews at the period of his journey, he could scarcely have been at Mosul without going there, and describing it.

saint, to whom the convent is dedicated, is much venerated by the Nestorians, and was, according to tradition, a Christian martyr, and the son of a king of Persia. The convent is partly excavated in the rock, and partly constructed of well-cut stone. Since it was plundered by the Kurds, under the Bey of Rowandiz, no attempt has been made to restore the rich ornaments which once decorated the chapel and principal halls. The walls are now naked and bare, except where hung with a few hideous pictures of saints and holy families, presented and stuck up by the Italian monks who occasionally visit the place. In the chapel are the tombs of several Patriarchs of the Chaldæan church, buried here long before the secession of a part of it to Rome, and whose title, carved upon the monuments, is always 'Patriarch of the Chaldæans of the East.'* Six or eight half-famished monks reside in the building. They depend for their supplies, which are scanty enough, upon the faithful of the surrounding country.

It was night before we reached the large Catholic village of Tel Kef. I had sent a horseman in the morning to apprise the people of my intended visit; and Gouriél, the Kiayah, with several of the principal inhabitants, had assembled to receive me. As we approached they emerged from a dark recess, where they had probably been waiting for some time. They carried a few wax lights, which served as an illumination, and whose motion, as they advanced, was so unsteady, that there could be no doubt of the condition of the bearers.

Gouriél and his friends reeled forwards towards my Cawass, who chanced to be the first of the party; and believing him to be me, they fell upon him, kissing his hands and feet, and clinging to his dress. Ibrahim Agha struggled hard to extricate himself, but in vain. 'The Bey is behind,' roared he. 'Allah! Allah! will no one deliver me from these drunken infidels?' Rejoicing in the mistake, I concealed myself

* The seal used by Mar Shamoun bears the same title; and the Patriarch so styles himself in all public documents. It is only lately that he has been induced, on some occasions, *when addressing Europeans*, to call himself 'Patriarch of the Nestorians,' the name of Nestorian never having been used by the Chaldæans themselves.

among the horsemen. Gouriel, seizing the bridle of Ibrahim Agha's horse, and unmindful of the blows which the Cawass dealt about him, led him in triumph to his residence. It was not before the wife of the Kiayah and some women, who had assembled to cook our dinner, brought torches, that the deputation discovered their error. I had alighted in the meanwhile unseen, and had found my way to the roof of the house, where all the cushions that could be found in the village were piled up in front of a small table covered with bottles of raki and an assortment of raisins and parched peas, prepared in my honour. I hid myself among the pillows, and it was some time before the Kiayah discovered my retreat. He hiccupped out excuses till he was breathless, and endeavouring to kiss my feet, asked forgiveness for the unfortunate blunder. 'Wallah ! O Bey,' exclaimed Ibrahim Agha, who had been searching for a stable, 'the whole village is drunk. It is always thus with these unbelievers. They have now a good Pasha, who neither takes jerums nor extra salian,* nor quarters Hytas upon them. What dirt do they then eat? Instead of repairing their houses, and sowing their fields, they spend every para in raki, and sit eating and drinking, like hogs, night and day.' I was forced to agree with Ibrahim Agha in his conclusions, and would have remonstrated with my hosts; but there was no one in a fit state to hear advice. I was not sorry to see them at midnight scattered over the roof, buried in profound sleep. I ordered the horses to be loaded, and reached Mosul as the gates opened at daybreak.

The reader may desire to learn the fate of Tkhoma. A few days after my return to Mosul, notwithstanding the attempts of Tahyar Pasha to avert the calamity, Beder Khan Bey marched through the Tiyari mountains, levying contributions on the tribes and plundering the villages, on his way to the devoted district. The inhabitants, headed by their Meleks, made some resistance, but were soon overpowered by numbers. An indiscriminate massacre took place. The women were brought before the chief, and murdered in cold

* At Mosul, 'Jerums' mean fines; 'salian,' the property tax, or taxes levied on corporations under the old system.

blood. Those who attempted to escape were cut off. Three hundred women and children, who were flying into Baz, were killed in the pass I have described. The principal villages with their gardens were destroyed, and the churches pulled down. Nearly half the population fell victims to the fanatical fury of the Kurdish chief; amongst them were one of the Meleks and Kasha Bodaca. With this good priest, and Kasha Auraham, perished the most learned of the Nestorian clergy; and Kasha Kana is the last who has inherited any part of the knowledge and zeal which once so eminently distinguished the Chaldæan priesthood.

The Porte was prevailed upon to punish this atrocious massacre, and to crush a rebellious subject who had long resisted its authority. An expedition was fitted out under Osman Pasha; and after two engagements, in which the Kurds were signally defeated by the Turkish troops headed by Omar Pasha, Beder Khan Bey took refuge in a mountain-castle. The position had been nearly carried, when the chief, finding defence hopeless, succeeded in obtaining from the Turkish commander the same terms which had been offered to him before the commencement of hostilities. He was to be banished from Kurdistan; but his family and attendants were to accompany him, and he was guaranteed the enjoyment of his property. Although the Turkish ministers more than suspected that Osman Pasha had reasons of his own for granting these terms, they honourably fulfilled the conditions upon which the chief, although a rebel, had surrendered. He was taken to Constantinople, and subsequently sent in exile to the island of Candia—a punishment totally inadequate to his numerous crimes.

After Beder Khan Bey had retired from Tkhoma, a few of the surviving inhabitants returned to their ruined villages; but Nur-Ullah Bey, suspecting that they knew of concealed property, fell suddenly upon them. Many died under the tortures to which they were exposed; and the rest, as soon as they were released, fled into Persia. This flourishing district was thus destroyed; and it will be long ere its cottages again rise from their ruins, and the fruits of patient toil again clothe the sides of its valleys.

CHAPTER VIII.

Invitation to the feast of the Yezidis—Departure from Mosul—Baadri—Hussain Bey, the Yezidi chief—The birth of his son—History of the Yezidis—Ride to the tomb of Sheikh Adi—Sheikh Nasr—Description of the tomb—Arrival of pilgrims—An incident—Sheikh Shems, or the sun—Votive lamps—Celebration of rites—Yezidi music—The doctrines and religious observances of the sect—The Evil principle—The probable origin of their rites—Their orders of priesthood—Their language and books—Return to Mosul—Departure for the Sinjar—Abou Maria—Tel Afer—Mirkan—Escape of the Yezidis—The village of Sinjar—Wild asses.

A FEW days after my return to Mosul from the Tiyari mountains, a priest of the Yezidis, or, as they are commonly called, 'Worshippers of the Devil,' was sent by Sheikh Nasr, the religious chief of that remarkable sect, to invite Mr. Rassam and myself to their great periodical feast. The Vice-consul was unable to accept the invitation; but I seized with eagerness the opportunity of being present at rites and ceremonies not before witnessed by an European.

The origin of my invitation proves that the Yezidis may lay claim to a virtue which is, unfortunately, not of frequent occurrence in the East,—I mean gratitude. When Keritli Oglu, Mohammed Pasha, first came to Mosul, this sect was amongst the objects of his cupidity and tyranny. By treachery he seized, as he supposed, their high priest; but Sheikh Nasr had time to escape the plot against him, and to substitute in his place the second in authority; who was carried a prisoner to the town. Such is the attachment shown by the Yezidis to their chiefs, that the deceit was not revealed, and the substitute bore with resignation the tortures and imprisonment inflicted upon him. Mr. Rassam having been applied to, obtained his release from the Pasha, on the advance of a considerable sum of money, which the inhabitants of the

district of Sheikhan undertook to repay, in course of time, out of the produce of their fields. They punctually fulfilled the engagement thus entered into, and looked to the British Vice-consul as their protector.

Owing to the disturbed state of the country, and the misconduct of the late Pashas, some years had elapsed since the Yezidis had assembled at Sheikh Adi. The short rule of Ismail Pasha, and the conciliatory measures of the new governor, had so far restored confidence amongst persons of all sects, that the Worshipers of the Devil had determined to celebrate their great festival with more than ordinary solemnity and rejoicings.

I quitted Mosul, accompanied by Hodja Toma (the dragoon of the Vice-consulate), and the Cawal, or priest, sent by Sheikh Nasr. We were joined on the road by several Yezidis, who were, like ourselves, on their way to the place of meeting. We passed the night in a small hamlet near Khorsabad, and reached Baadri early next day. This village, the residence of Hussein Bey, the political chief of the Yezidis, is built at the foot of the line of hills crossed in my previous journey to the Chaldæan mountains, and about five miles to the north of Ain Sifni. We travelled over the same dreary plain, leaving the mound of Jerrahiyah to our right.

On approaching the village I was met by Hussein Bey followed by the priests and principal inhabitants on foot. The chief was about eighteen years of age, and one of the handsomest young men I ever saw. His features were regular and delicate, his eye lustrous, and the long curls, which fell from under his variegated turban, of the deepest black. An ample white cloak of fine texture was thrown over his rich jacket and robes. I dismounted as he drew near, and he endeavoured to kiss my hand; but to this ceremony I decidedly objected; and we compromised matters by embracing each other after the fashion of the country. He then insisted upon leading my horse, which he wished me to remount, and it was with difficulty that I at length prevailed upon him to walk with me into the village. He led me to his salamluk, or reception room, in which carpets and cushions had been spread. Through the centre

ran a stream of fresh water, derived from a neighbouring spring. The people of the place stood at the lower end of the room, and listened in respectful silence to the conversation between their chief and myself.

Breakfast was brought to us from the harem of Hussein Bey ; and the crowd having retired after we had eaten, I was



Hussein Bey, the Chief of the Yezidis, and his Brother.

left during the heat of the day to enjoy the cool temperature of the salamlik.

I was awakened in the afternoon by that shrill cry of the women, which generally announces some happy event. The youthful chief entered soon afterwards, followed by a long retinue. It was evident, from the smile upon his features

that he had joyful news to communicate. He seated himself on my carpet, and thus addressed me :— ‘ O Bey, your presence has brought happiness on our house. At your hands we receive nothing but good. We are all your servants; and, praise be to the Highest! in this house another servant has been born to you. The child is yours; he is our first-born, and he will grow up under your shadow. Let him receive his name from you, and be hereafter under your protection.’ The assembly joined in the request, and protested that this event, so interesting to all the tribe, was solely to be attributed to my fortunate visit. I was not quite aware of the nature of the ceremony, if any, in which I might be expected to join on naming the new-born chief. Notwithstanding my respect and esteem for the Yezidis, I could not but admit that there were some doubts as to the propriety of their tenets and form of worship; and I was naturally anxious to ascertain the amount of responsibility which I might incur, in standing godfather to a devil-worshipping baby. However, as I was assured that no other form was necessary than the mere selection of a name (the rite of baptism being reserved for a future day, when the child could be carried to the tomb of Sheikh Adi, and could bear immersion in its sacred waters), I thus answered Hussein Bey :— ‘ O Bey, I rejoice in this happy event, for which we must return thanks to God. May this son be but the first of many who will preserve, as their forefathers have done, the fame and honour of your house. As you ask of me a name for this child, I could give you many, which, in my language and country, are well-sounding and honourable; but your tongue could not utter them, and they would moreover be without meaning. Were it usual I would call him after his father, whose virtues he will no doubt imitate; but such is not the custom. I have not forgotten the name of his grandfather,—a name which is dear to the Yezidis, and still brings to their memory the days of their prosperity and happiness. Let him therefore be known as Ali Bey; and may he live to see the Yezidis as they were in the time of him after whom he is called.’ This oration, which was accompanied by a few gold coins to be sewn to the cap of the infant, was received

with great applause ; and the name of Ali Bey was unani-
mously adopted, one of the chief's relations hastening to
the harem, to communicate it to the ladies. He returned
with a carpet and some embroidery, as presents from the
mother, and with an invitation to visit her. I found her
with the young chief's second wife, for he had already
taken two. They assured me that the lady, who had just
brought joy to the house, was even more thankful than her
husband ; and that her gratitude to me, as the author of
her happiness, was unbounded. They brought me honey
and strings of dried figs from the Sinjar, and entertained me
with domestic histories until I thought it time to return to
the salamlik.

The Yezidis were some years ago a very powerful tribe.
Their principal strongholds were in the district which I was
now visiting, and in the Gebel Sinjar, a solitary mountain
rising in the centre of the Mesopotamian desert to the west
of Mosul. The last independent chief of the Yezidis of
Sheikhan was Ali Bey, the father of Hussein Bey. He was
beloved by his tribe, and sufficiently brave and skilful in war
to defend them, for many years, against the attacks of the
Kurds and Mussulmans of the plain. The powerful Bey of
Rowandiz, who had united most of the Kurdish tribes of the
surrounding mountains under his banner, and long defied
both Turks and Persians, resolved to crush the hateful sect
of the Yezidis. Ali Bey's forces were greatly inferior in
numbers to those of his persecutor. He was defeated, and
fell into the hands of the Rowandiz chief, who put him to
death. The inhabitants of Sheikhan fled to Mosul. It was
spring; the river had overflowed its banks, and the bridge
of boats had been removed. A few succeeded in crossing
the stream ; but a crowd of men, women, and children
were left upon the opposite side, and congregated on the
great mound of Kouyunjik. The Bey of Rowandiz followed
them. An indiscriminate slaughter ensued ; and the people
of Mosul beheld, from their terraces, the murder of these
unfortunate fugitives, who cried to them in vain for help—
for both Christians and Mussulmans rejoiced in the ex-
termination of an odious and infidel sect, and no arm was

lifted in their defence. Hussein Bey, having been carried by his mother to the mountains, escaped the general slaughter. He was carefully brought up by the Yezidis, and from his infancy had been regarded as their chief.

The inhabitants of the Sinjar were soon after subdued by Mehemet Reshid Pasha, and a second time by Hafiz Pasha. On both occasions there was a massacre, and the population was reduced by three-fourths. The Yezidis took refuge in caves, where they were either suffocated by fires lighted at the mouth, or destroyed by discharges of cannon.

Mohammedans, in their dealings with men of other creeds, make a distinction between such as are believers in the sacred books, and such as have no recognised inspired works. To the first category belong Christians of all denominations, as receiving the two Testaments; and the Jews, as followers of the Old. With Christians and Jews, therefore, they may treat, make peace, and live; but with such as are included in the second class, the good Mussulman can have no intercourse. No treaty nor oath, when they are concerned, is binding. They have the choice between conversion and the sword, and it is unlawful even to take tribute from them. The Yezidis, not being looked upon as 'Masters of a Book,' have been exposed for centuries to the persecution of the Mohammedans. The harems of the south of Turkey have been recruited from them. Yearly expeditions have been made by the governors of provinces into their districts; and, whilst the men and women were slaughtered without mercy, the children of both sexes were carried off, and exposed for sale in the principal towns. These annual hunts were one of the sources of revenue of Beder Khan Bey; and it was the custom of the Pashas of Baghdad and Mosul to let loose the irregular troops upon the ill-fated Yezidis, and to allow them to carry off and sell the children as an easy method of satisfying their demands for arrears of pay. This system was still practised to a certain extent within a very few months of my visit; and gave rise to atrocities scarcely equalled in the better known slave trade.

It was not unnatural that the Yezidis should revenge themselves, whenever an opportunity might offer, upon their

oppressors. They formed themselves into bands, and were long the terror of the country. No Mussulman that fell into their hands was spared. Caravans were plundered, and merchants murdered without mercy. Christians, however, were not molested; for the Yezidis looked upon them as fellow-sufferers for religion's sake.

These acts of retaliation furnished an excuse for the invasion of the Sinjar by Mehemet Reshid and Hafiz Pashas. Since the great massacres which then took place, the Yezidis have been completely subdued, and have patiently suffered under their misfortunes. Their devotion to their religion is no less remarkable than that of the Jews; and I know of no instance of a person of full age renouncing his faith. They invariably prefer death, and submit with resignation to the tortures inflicted upon them.

Sheikh Nasr, the chief priest of the sect, had already left Baadri, and was preparing for the religious ceremonies at the tomb of Sheikh Adi. I visited his wife, and was gratified by the unaffected hospitality of my reception, and struck by the cleanliness of the house and of its scanty furniture. All the dwellings which I entered appeared equally neat, and well built. Some stood in small gardens filled with flowers, and near them were streams of running water, brought from the abundant springs which issue from the hill above the village.

Next morning at dawn, Hussein Bey issued from his harem, armed and dressed in his gayest robes, ready to proceed to the tomb of the saint. The principal people of the village were soon collected, and we all started together, forming a long procession, preceded by musicians with tambourines and pipes. The women were busily employed in loading their donkeys with carpets and domestic utensils. They were to follow leisurely. Hussein Bey and I rode together, and as long as the ground permitted, the horsemen and footmen who accompanied us, engaged in mimic fight, discharging their fire-arms into the air, and singing their war songs. We soon reached the foot of a very precipitous ascent, up which ran a steep and difficult pathway. The horsemen now rode in single file, and we were frequently compelled to dismount and drag our horses over the rocks.

We gained the summit of the pass in about an hour, and looked down into the richly wooded valley of Sheikh Adi. As soon as the white spire of the tomb appeared above the trees, all our party discharged their guns. The echoes had scarcely died away, when our signal was answered by similar discharges from below. As we descended through the thick wood of oaks, we passed many pilgrims on their way, like ourselves, to the tomb; the women seated under the trees, relieving themselves awhile from their infant burdens; the men re-adjusting the loads which the rapid descent had displaced. As each new body of travellers caught sight of the object of their journey, they fired their guns, and shouted the cry of the tribe to those below.

At some distance from the tomb we were met by Sheikh Nasr and a crowd of priests and armed men. The Sheikh was dressed in the purest white linen, as were the principal members of the priesthood. His age could scarcely have exceeded forty; his manners were most mild and pleasing; he welcomed me with warmth; and it was evident that my visit had made a very favourable impression upon all present. After I had embraced the Sheikh, and exchanged salutations with his followers, we walked together towards the sacred precincts. The outer court, as well as the avenue which led to it, was filled with people; but they made way for us as we approached, and every one eagerly endeavoured to kiss my hand.

The Yezidis always enter the inner court of the tomb barefooted. I followed the custom, and leaving my shoes at the entrance, seated myself, with Sheikh Nasr and Hussein Bey, upon carpets spread under an arbour, formed by a wide-spreading vine. The Sheikhs and Cawals, two of the principal orders of the priesthood, alone entered with us, and squatted round the yard against the walls. The trees, which grew amongst and around the buildings, threw an agreeable shade over the whole assembly.

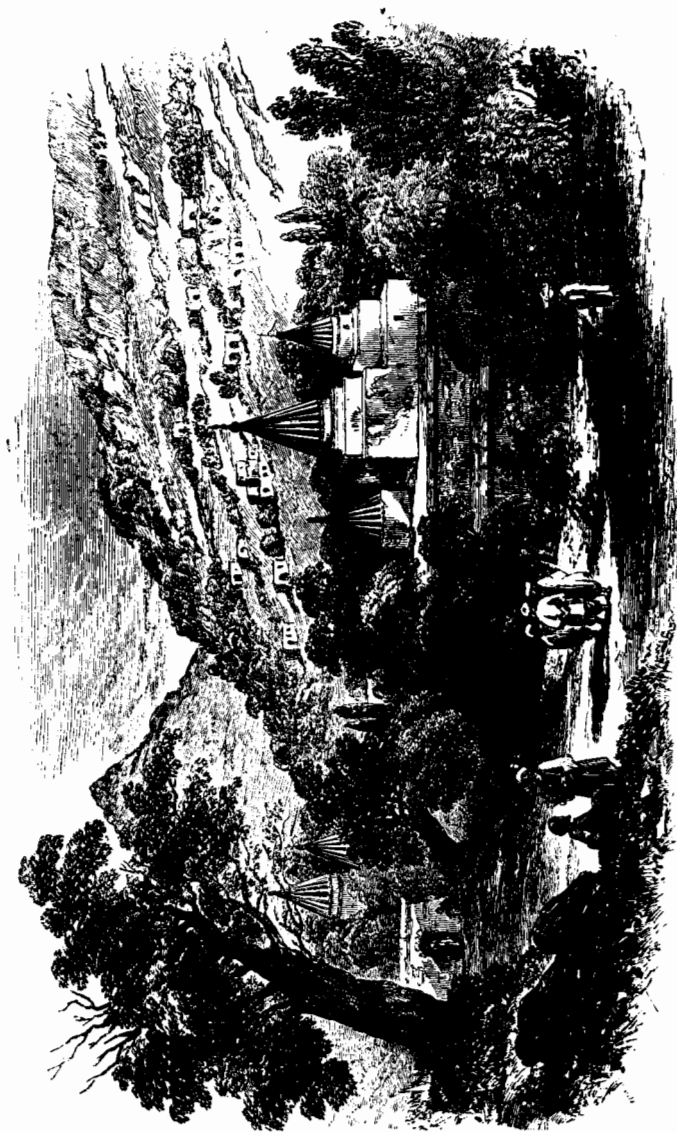
• The tomb of Sheikh Adi is in a narrow valley, or rather ravine, which has only one outlet, as the rocks rise precipitously on all sides, except where a small stream forces its way into a larger valley beyond. It stands in a courtyard,

and is surrounded by a few buildings, inhabited by the guardians and servants of the sanctuary. The interior is divided into a large hall partitioned in the centre by a row of columns and arches. At the upper end is a reservoir filled by an abundant spring issuing from the rock; and two smaller apartments, in which are the tombs of the saint, and of some inferior personage. The water of the reservoir is regarded with peculiar veneration, and is believed by the Yezidis to be derived from the holy well of Zemzem at Mecca. In it children are baptized, and it is used for other sacred purposes. The tomb is covered by a large square case, made of clay and plastered, over which is thrown an embroidered green cloth. It is in the inner room, which is dimly lighted by a small lamp. On it is written the chapter of the Koran, called the *Ayat el Courci*. It is thus made to resemble, as nearly as possible, the tomb of a Mussulman saint, to preserve it from profanation by the Kurds.

In the principal hall a few lamps are generally burning, and at sunset lights are placed in niches scattered over the walls.

Three white spires, rising above the building, form a pleasing contrast with the rich foliage by which they are surrounded. They are topped by gilt ornaments, and their sides are ribbed and fashioned into many angles, causing an agreeable variety of light and shade. On the wall near the doorway are rudely carved a lion, a snake, a hatchet, a man, and a comb. The snake, painted black, is particularly conspicuous. Although these figures are probably emblematical, I could obtain no other explanation from Sheikh Nasr, than that they had been cut by the Christian mason who repaired the tomb some years ago, as ornaments suggested by his mere fancy. I observed the hatchet, comb, and the short hooked stick, such as is generally carried in the country, carved on many stones in the building, but was assured that they were only marks cut at the request of those who had furnished money towards the restoration of the building, or had assisted in the work.

In the centre of the inner court, and under the vine, is a square plaster case, in which is a small recess filled with balls



Valley and Tomb of Sheikh Adi.

of clay taken from the tomb of the saint. These are sold or distributed to pilgrims, and regarded as sacred relics—useful against diseases and evil spirits and to be buried with the dead. Certain members of the priesthood and their families alone inhabit the surrounding buildings. They are chosen to watch over the sacred precincts, and are supported by the tribe.

The outer court is enclosed by low buildings, with open recesses or rooms similar to those in an eastern bazaar. They are intended for the accommodation of pilgrims, and for the stalls of pedlars, during the celebration of the festival. Several gigantic trees throw their shade over the open space, and streams of fresh water are led round the buildings.

Around the tomb, and beneath the trees which grow on the sides of the mountain, are numerous rudely built houses, each belonging to a Yezidi district or tribe. The pilgrims, according to the place from which they come, reside in them during the time of the feast; so that different parts of the valley are known by the name of the country, or tribe, of those who resort to them.

I sat till nearly mid-day with the assembly, at the door of the tomb. Sheikh Nasr then rose, and I followed him into the outer court, which was filled by a busy crowd of pilgrims. In the recesses and on the ground were spread the stores of the pedlars, who, on such occasions, repair to the valley. Many-coloured handkerchiefs, and cotton stuffs from Europe hung from the branches of the trees; dried figs from the Sinjar, raisins from Amadiyah, dates from Busrah, and walnuts from the mountains, were displayed in heaps upon the pavement. Around these tempting treasures were gathered groups of boys and young girls. Men and women were engaged on all sides in animated conversation, and the hum of human voices was heard through the valley. All respectfully saluted the Sheikh, and made way for us as we approached. We issued from the precincts of the principal building, and seated ourselves on the edge of a fountain built by the road-side, and at the end of the avenue of trees leading to the tomb. The slabs surrounding the basin are to some extent looked upon as sacred; and at this time only

Hussein Bey, Sheikh Nasr, and myself were permitted to place ourselves upon them. Even on other occasions the Yezidis are unwilling to see them polluted by Mussulmans, who usually choose this spot, well adapted for repose, to spread their carpets. The water of the fountain is carefully preserved from impurities, and is drunk by those who congregate in the valley. Women were now hastening to and fro with their pitchers, and making merry as they waited their turn to dip them into the reservoir. The principal Sheikhs and Cawals sat in a circle round the spring, and listened to the music of pipes and tambourines.

I never beheld a more picturesque or animated scene. Long lines of pilgrims toiled up the avenue. There was the swarthy inhabitant of the Sinjar, with his long black locks, his piercing eye and regular features—his white robes floating in the wind, and his unwieldy matchlock thrown over his shoulder. Then followed the more wealthy families of the Kochers,—the wandering tribes who live in tents in the plains, and among the hills of ancient Adiabene; the men in gay jackets and variegated turbans, with fantastic arms in their girdles; the women richly clad in silk antaris or long gowns; their hair, braided in many tresses, falling down their backs, and adorned with wild flowers; their foreheads almost concealed by gold and silver coins; and huge strings of glass beads, coins, and engraved stones hanging round their necks. Next would appear a poverty-stricken family from a village of the Mosul district; the women clad in white, pale and careworn, bending under the weight of their children; the men urging on their heavily-laden donkeys. Similar groups descended from the hills. Repeated discharges of fire-arms, and a well-known signal, announced to those below the arrival of every new party.

All turned to the fountain before proceeding to their allotted stations, and laying their arms on the ground, kissed the hands of Hussein Bey, Sheikh Nasr, and myself. After saluting the assembled priests they continued their way up the sides of the mountains, and chose a wide-spreading oak, or the roof of a building, for a resting-place during their sojourn in the valley. They then spread their carpets, and,

lighting fires with dry branches and twigs, busied themselves in preparing their food. Such groups were scattered in every direction. There was scarcely a tree without its colony.

All, before entering the sacred valley, washed themselves and their clothes in the stream issuing from it. They came thus purified to the feast. I never before saw so much assembled cleanliness in the East. Their garments, generally white, were spotless.

During the afternoon, dances were performed before the Bey and myself. They resembled the Arab *Debké* and the Kurdish *Tchopee*. As many young men as could crowd into the small open space in front of the fountain joined in them. Others sang in chorus with the music. Every place, from which a sight could be obtained of the dancers, was occupied by curious spectators. Even the branches above our heads were bending under the clusters of boys who had discovered that, from them, they could get a full view of what was going on below. The manœuvres of one of these urchins gave rise to a somewhat amusing incident, which illustrates the singular superstitions of the *Yezidis*, who never mention the name of the Devil, and look with the greatest awe upon any allusion to the Evil One, and have consequently received the name given to them in the East, of the Devil-worshippers. He had forced himself to the very end of a weak bough, which was immediately above me, and threatened every moment to break under the weight. As I looked up I saw the impending danger, and made an effort, by an appeal to the chief, to avert it. 'If that young *Sheit*—,' I exclaimed, about to use an epithet generally given in the East to such adventurous youths.* I checked myself immediately; but it was already too late; half the dreaded word had escaped. The effect was instantaneous: a look of horror seized those who were near enough to overhear me; it was quickly communicated to those beyond. The pleasant smile, which usually played upon the fine features of the young Bey, gave way to a serious and angry expression.

* The term *Sheitan* (equivalent to Satan) is usually applied in the East to a clever, cunning, or daring fellow.

I lamented that I had thus unwillingly wounded the feelings of my hosts, and was at a loss to know how I could make atonement for my indiscretion—doubting whether an apology to the Evil principle or to the chief was expected. I endeavoured, however, to make them understand, without venturing upon any observations which might have brought me into greater difficulties, that I regretted what had passed; but it was some time ere the group resumed their composure, and indulged in their previous merriment.

My carpets had been spread on the roof of a building of some size, belonging to the people of Semil. About me, but at a convenient distance, were scattered groups of pilgrims from that district. Men, women, and children were congregated round their cauldrons, preparing their evening meal; or were stretched upon their coarse carpets, resting after the long march of the day. Near me was the chief, whose mud castle crowns the mound of the village of Semil. He was a stern-looking man, gaily dressed, and well armed. He received me with every demonstration of civility, and I sat for some time with him and his wives; one of whom was young and pretty, and had been recently selected from the Kochers, or wanderers. Her hair was profusely adorned with flowers and gold coins. They had sacrificed a sheep, and all (including the chief, whose arms, bare to the shoulder, were reeking with blood) gathered round the carcass; and, tearing the limbs, distributed morsels to the poor who had been collected to receive them.

At some distance from the people of Semil were the wife and family of Sheikh Nasr, who had also slain a sheep. The Sheikh himself resided in the sacred building, and was occupied during the day in receiving the pilgrims, and performing various duties imposed upon him on the occasion. I visited his harem; his wife spread fruit and honey before me, and entertained me with a long account of her domestic employments.

Below the cluster of buildings assigned to the people of Semil is a small white spire, springing from a low edifice, neatly constructed, and, like all the sacred places of the Yezidis, kept as pure as repeated coats of whitewash can make

it. It is called the sanctuary of Sheikh Shems, or of the Sun; and is so placed, that the first morning rays should as frequently as possible fall upon it. Near the door an invocation to Sheikh Shems is carved on a slab; and one or two votive tablets, raised by the father of Hussein Bey, and other chiefs of the Yezidis, are built into the walls. The interior, which is a very holy place, is lighted by a few small lamps. At sunset, as I sat in the alcove in front of the entrance, a herdsman led into a pen, attached to the building, a drove of white oxen. I asked a Cawal, who was near me, to whom the beasts belonged. 'They are dedicated,' he said, 'to Sheikh Shems, and are never slain except on great festivals, when their flesh is distributed amongst the poor.' This unexpected answer gave rise to an agreeable musing; and I sat, almost unconscious of the scene around me, until darkness stole over the valley.*

As the twilight faded, the Fakirs, or lower order of priests, dressed in brown garments of coarse cloth, closely fitting to their bodies, and wearing black turbans on their heads, issued from the tomb, each bearing a light in one hand, and a pot of oil, with a bundle of cotton wicks, in the other. They filled, trimmed, and lighted lamps placed in niches in the walls of the courtyard, and scattered over the buildings on the sides of the valley, and even on isolated rocks and in the hollow trunks of trees. Innumerable stars seemed to glitter on the black sides of the mountain, and in the dark recesses of the forest. As the priests made their way through the crowd, to perform their task, men and women passed their right hands through the flame, and then devoutly carried them to their lips, after rubbing the right eyebrow with the part which had been purified by the sacred element. Some, who bore children in their arms, anointed them in like manner, whilst others held out their hands to be touched by those who, less fortunate than themselves, could not reach the flame.

* The dedication of the bull to the sun, so generally recognised in the religious systems of the ancients, probably originated in Assyria, and the Yezidis may have unconsciously preserved a myth of their ancestors. Cawal Yusuf confirmed the statement that this ziareh, or sanctuary, is dedicated to the Sun, who, he informed me, is called by the Yezidis, 'Wakeel el Ardh,' the lieutenant or goverfior of the world.

The lamps are votive offerings from pilgrims, or from those who have appealed to Sheikh Adi in times of danger or disease, and who gave a yearly sum to the guardians of the tomb for oil, and for the support of the priests. They are lighted every evening as long as the supplies last. In the daytime the smoked walls mark where they are placed, and I have observed the Yezidis devoutly kissing the blackened stones.

About an hour after sunset the Fakirs, who are the servants of the tomb, appeared with platters of boiled rice, roast meat, and fruit. They had been sent to me from the kitchen of the holy edifice. The wife of Sheikh Nasr also contributed some dishes towards the repast.

As night advanced, those who had assembled—they must now have amounted to nearly five thousand persons—lighted torches, which they carried with them as they wandered through the forest. The effect was magical; the varied groups could be faintly distinguished through the darkness; men hurrying to and fro; women, with their children, seated on the house-tops; and crowds gathering round the pedlars who exposed their wares for sale in the court-yard. Thousands of lights were reflected in the fountains and streams, glimmered amongst the foliage of the trees, and danced in the distance. As I was gazing on this extraordinary scene, the hum of human voices was suddenly hushed, and a strain, solemn and melancholy, arose from the valley. It resembled some majestic chant which years before I had listened to in the cathedral of a distant land. Music so pathetic and so sweet I had never before heard in the East. The voices of men and women were blended in harmony with the soft notes of many flutes. At measured intervals the song was broken by the loud crash of cymbals and tambourines; and those who were without the precincts of the tomb then joined in the melody.

I hastened to the sanctuary, and found Sheikh Nasr, surrounded by the priests, seated in the inner court. The place was illuminated by torches and lamps, which threw a soft light over the white walls of the tomb and green foliage of the arbour. The Sheikhs, in their white turbans and robes,

all venerable men with long grey beards, were ranged on one side ; on the opposite, seated on the stones, were about thirty Cawals in their dresses of black and white—each performing on a tambourine or a flute. Around stood the Fakirs in their dark garments, and the women of the orders of the priesthood arrayed in pure white. No others were admitted within the walls of the court.



Yezidi Cawals.

The same slow and solemn strain, occasionally varied in the melody, lasted for nearly an hour ; a part of it was called ‘Makam Azerat Esau,’ or the ‘Song of the Lord Jesus.’ It was sung by the Sheikhs, the Cawals, and the women ; and occasionally by those without. I could not catch the words, nor could I prevail upon any of those present to repeat them to me. They were in Arabic ; and as few of the Yezidis can speak or pronounce that language, they were not intelligible, even to the experienced ear of Hodja Toma, who accompanied me. At first the tambourines only interrupted at intervals the song of the priests. As the time quickened they broke in more frequently. The chant gradually gave way

to a lively melody, which, increasing in measure, was finally lost in a confusion of sounds. The tambourines were beaten with extraordinary energy ; the flutes poured forth a rapid flood of notes ; the voices were raised to their highest pitch ; the men outside joined in the cry ; whilst the women made the rocks resound with the shrill *tahlehl*. The musicians, giving way to the excitement, threw their instruments into the air, and strained their limbs into every contortion, until they fell exhausted to the ground. I never heard a more frightful yell than that which rose in the valley. It was midnight. The time and place were well suited to the occasion ; and I gazed with wonder upon the extraordinary scene around me. I did not marvel that such wild ceremonies had given rise to those stories of unhallowed rites and obscene mysteries, which have rendered the name of Yezidi an abomination in the East. Notwithstanding the uncontrollable excitement which appeared to prevail amongst all present, there were no indecent gestures, nor unseemly observances. When the musicians and singers were exhausted, the noise suddenly died away ; the various groups resumed their previous cheerfulness, and again wandered through the valley, or seated themselves under the trees.

Some ceremony took place before I joined the assembly at the tomb, at which no stranger can be present, nor could I learn its nature from the Cawals. Sheikh Nasr gave me to understand that their holy symbol, which they guard with so much veneration and jealousy, the Melek Taous, or King Peacock, as it is called, was then exhibited to the priests ; and he declared that, as far as he was concerned, he had no objection to my witnessing the whole of their rites ; but that many of the Sheikhs were averse to it, and he did not wish to create any ill-feeling in the tribe. Indeed, I found him frank and communicative on all subjects.

After the ceremonies in the inner yard had ceased, I returned with the Sheikh and Hussein Bey to the fountain in the avenue. Around it were grouped men and women with torches, which flung their red gleams upon the water. Several of the Cawals accompanied us to the spot, and sang and played on their flutes and tambourines until nearly dawn.

Daylight had begun to appear before the pilgrims sought repose. Silence reigned through the valley until mid-day, when new parties of travellers reached the tomb and again awakened the echoes by their cries and the discharge of fire-arms. Towards the evening about seven thousand persons must have assembled. The festival was more numerously attended than it had been for many years, and Sheikh Nasr rejoiced in the prospect of times of prosperity for his people. At night the ceremonies of the previous evening were



Yezidi Women at Sheikh Adi.

repeated. New melodies were introduced ; but the singing ended in the same rapid measure and violent excitement that I have described. During the three days I remained at Sheikh Adi, I wandered over the valley and surrounding mountains ; visiting the various groups of pilgrims, talking with them of their dwelling-places, and listening to their tales of oppression and bloodshed. From all I received the

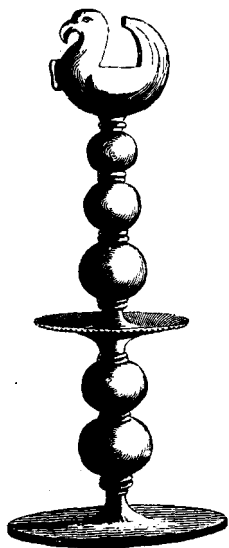
same simple courtesy and kindness; nor had I any cause to change the good opinion I had already formed of the Yezidis. There were no Mohammedans present, nor any Christians, except those who were with me, and a poor woman who had lived long with the sect, and was a privileged guest at their festivals. Unrestrained by the presence of strangers, the women forgot their usual timidity, and roved unveiled over the mountains. As I sat beneath the trees, laughing girls gathered round me, examined my dress, or asked me questions. Some, more bold than the rest, would bring me the strings of beads and engraved stones hanging round their necks, and permit me to examine the Assyrian relics thus collected together; whilst others, more fearful, though not ignorant of the impression which their charms would create, stood at a distance, and weaved wild flowers into their hair.

The men assembled in groups round the fountains and about the tomb. They talked and made merry; but no dissension or angry words disturbed the general good humour. The sound of music and of song rose from all sides above the hum of voices. The priests and sheikhs walked amongst the people, or sat with the families assembled under nearly every tree.

The Yezidis recognise one Supreme Being; but, as far as I could learn, they do not offer up any direct prayer or sacrifice to him. Sheikh Nasr endeavoured to evade my questions on the subject; and appeared to shun, with superstitious awe, every topic connected with the existence and attributes of the Deity. The common Mohammedan forms of expression—half oath, half ejaculation—are nevertheless frequently in the mouths of the people, but probably from mere habit. The name of the Devil is, however, never mentioned; and any allusion to it by others so vexes and irritates them, that it is said they have put to death persons who have wantonly outraged their feelings by its use. So far is their dread of offending the Evil Spirit carried, that they carefully avoid every expression which may resemble in sound the name of Satan, or the Arabic word for 'accused.' When they speak of the Devil, they do so with reverence, as *Melek el Kout*, the mighty angel.

Sheikh Nasr distinctly admitted that they possessed a bronze or copper figure of a bird, which, however, he was careful in explaining was only looked upon as a symbol, or banner, of the house of Hussein Bey and not as an idol. There are four of these figures. One always remains with the great Sheikh, and is carried with him wherever he may journey. When deputies are sent to any distance to collect money for the support of the tomb and the priests, they are furnished with one of these images, which is shown to those amongst whom they go as an authority for their mission. This symbol is called the Melek Taous (King Peacock), and is held in great reverence.

On a subsequent occasion, when travelling in the district



The Melek Taous, or
Copper Bird of the Yezidis.

of Redwan with Cawal Yusuf, one of the principal priests of the Yezidis, I had an opportunity of seeing this mysterious figure. The Cawals who are sent yearly by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr to instruct the Yezidis in their faith, and to collect the revenues of their chief, and of the tomb of Sheikh Adi, were in that district. On these visits they carry with them the Melek Taous. I asked Cawal Yusuf to permit me to see it. He at once acceded to my request, and the other Cawals and the elders offering no objection, I was conducted with much mystery into an inner room of the house of the chief of the village in which the brazen peacock was deposited. It was some time before my eyes had been sufficiently accustomed to the dim light

to distinguish an object from which a large red coverlet had been raised on my entry. The Cawals drew near with every sign of respect, bowing and kissing the corner of the cloth on which it was placed. A stand of bright copper or brass, in shape like the candle-

sticks in common use in Mosul and Baghdad, was surmounted by the rude image of a bird in the same metal, more like an Indian or Mexican idol than a peacock. Its peculiar workmanship indicated some antiquity, but I could see no traces of inscription upon it. Before it stood a copper bowl to receive contributions, and a bag to contain the image and stand, which takes to pieces, when carried from place to place. The Yezidis declare that, notwithstanding the frequent wars and massacres to which they have been exposed, and the plunder and murder of their priests during their journeys, no Melek Taous has ever fallen into the hands of the Mohammedans.

The Yezidis believe Satan to be the chief of the Angelic host, now suffering punishment for his rebellion against the divine will ; but still all-powerful, and to be restored hereafter to his high estate in the celestial hierarchy. He must be conciliated and revered, they say ; for as he now has the means of doing evil to mankind, so will he hereafter have the power of rewarding them. Next to Satan, but inferior to him in might and wisdom, are seven arch-angels,* who exercise a great influence over the world ; they are Gabrail, Michail, Raphail, Azrail, Dedrail, Azrapheel, and Shemkeel. Christ, according to the Yezidis, was also a great angel, who had taken the form of man. He did not die on the cross, but ascended to heaven.

They hold the Old Testament in great reverence, and believe in the cosmogony of Genesis, the Deluge, and other events recorded in the Bible. They do not reject the New Testament, nor the Koran ; but consider them less entitled to their veneration. Still they always select passages from the latter for their tombs and holy places ; but this may be done to preserve them from violation and defacement

* It will be remembered that, in the book of Tobit (xii. 15), Raphael is made to say : ' I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.' ' The seven spirits before the throne of God, are mentioned in Revelations, i. 4 ; iv. 5. This number seven, in the hierarchy of the Celestial Host, and in many sacred things, appears to have been connected with Chaldæan traditions and celestial observations.

by the Mohammedans. Mohammed they look upon as a prophet; as they do Abraham and the patriarchs.

They believe that Christ will come to govern the world, but that, after him, Sheikh (the Imaum) Mehdi will appear, to whom will be given special jurisdiction over those speaking the Kurdish language, including the Yezidis. This appears to be a modern interpolation in their creed; perhaps invented to conciliate the Mohammedans. All who go to heaven must first pass an expiatory period in hell, but no one will be punished eternally. Mohammedans they exclude from all future life, but not Christians. This may have been said to me to avoid giving offence.

Sheikh Adi is their great saint; but I could not learn any particulars relating to him; indeed the epoch of his existence seemed doubtful; and on one occasion Sheikh Nasr asserted that he lived before Mohammed.

As to the origin of their name, it is well known that the Mussulmans trace it to the celebrated Ommiade Caliph, Yezid, who figures as the persecutor of the family of Ali in their own religious history; but there is reason to believe that it must be sought for elsewhere, as it was used long before the introduction of Mohammedanism, and is probably not without connection with the early Persian appellation of the Supreme Being, 'Yezd.*' It is difficult to trace their ceremonies to any particular source. They baptize in water, like the Christians. When a child is born near enough to the tomb of Sheikh Adi to be taken there without great inconvenience or danger, it should be baptized as early as possible after birth. The Cawals, in their periodical visitations, carry a bottle or skin filled with the holy water from the tomb, to baptize those children who cannot be brought to the shrine. They circumcise at the same age, and in the same manner as the Mohammedans, but the ceremony is optional; and

* Cawal Yusuf once mentioned to me that, among the Yezidis, the ancient name for God was 'Azed;' and from it he derived their name. Theophanes (*Chronographia*, p. 492, ed. Bon), mentions a settlement of Iesdem, on the lesser Zab, near which the Emperor Heraclius encamped. They may have been Yezidis, and of the ancestors of the present sect. Sir Henry Rawlinson has pointed out the name as occurring in ancient Adiabene.

they reverence the sun, and have many customs in common with the Sabæans. All these ceremonies and observances may have had a common origin, or may have been grafted at different times on their original creed. They may have adopted circumcision to avoid detection by their Mussulman oppressors, and may have selected passages from the Koran, to carve upon their tombs and sacred places, because, as suggested to me by Sheikh Nasr, they corresponded with their opinions, and were best suited to a country in which Arabic was the spoken language. They have more in common with the Sabæans than with any other sect. I have already alluded to their reverence for the sun, and have described the temple and the oxen dedicated to that luminary.* They are accustomed to kiss the object on which its first beams fall; and I have frequently, when travelling in their company at sunrise, observed them perform this ceremony. For fire, as symbolical, they have nearly the same reverence: they never spit into it, but frequently pass their hands through the flame, kiss them, and rub them over the right eyebrow, or sometimes over the whole face.† The colour blue, to them as to the Sabæans, is an abomination; and never to be worn in dress, or to be used in their houses. Their Kubleh, or the place to which they look whilst performing their holy ceremonies, is that part of the heavens in which the sun rises, or, according to others, the polar star.‡

* I must observe that although the inscriptions, in the sanctuary described, were all addressed to Sheikh Shems, and that both Sheikh Nasr and the Cawals assured me that it was dedicated to the sun, it is just possible that, under the title of Sheikh Shems, some other object than the sun, or some particular person, is designated, and that my informants were unwilling to enter into any explanation.

† I was afterwards assured by Cawal Yusuf, that the Yezidis have no particular reverence for fire; the people passing their hands through the flames of the lamps at Sheikh Adi merely because they belong to the tomb. Some travellers have asserted that the Yezidis will not blow out a candle; but such is not the case; nor is it an insult to spit in their presence, as it has been stated.

‡ Cawal Yusuf, however, declared that their Kubleh was the polar star. All Eastern sects appear to have had some Kubleh, or holy point, to which the face was to be turned during prayer. The Jews looked towards Jerusalem. The Sabæans, according to some, to the north star, or, according to others, towards that part of the heavens in which the sun rises, another point of resemblance between them

In their fondness for white linen, in their cleanliness of habits, and in their frequent ablutions, they also resemble the Sabæans.

The lettuce, the bamiyah,* and some other vegetables, are never eaten by them. Pork is unlawful; but not wine, which is drunk by all. Although they assert that meat should not be eaten, unless the animal has been slain according to the Mosaic and Mohammedan law, they do not object to partake of the food of Christians.

I could not learn that there were any religious observances on marriage. I was informed by the Cawals that the man and woman merely present themselves to a Sheikh, who ascertains that there is mutual consent. A ring is then given to the bride, or sometimes money instead. A day is fixed for rejoicings, on which they drink sherbet and dance, but have no religious ceremonies. The number of wives is limited to one, but the chief has power to transgress the law, and concubines are not forbidden. The wife may be turned away for grave misconduct, and the husband, with the consent of the Sheikhs, may marry again; but the discarded wife cannot remarry. Even such divorces ought only to be given in cases of adultery; for formerly, when the Yezidis administered their own temporal laws, the wife was punished with death, and the husband was thus released.

I witnessed, on one occasion, the ceremonies performed at a Yezidi marriage. They took place in the village of Baashiek-hah, and the bride was a niece of Cawal Yusuf. On the first day the parties entered into the usual contract in the presence of a Sheikh and before witnesses, amidst rejoicings and dances. On the second day the bride was led to the house of the bridegroom, surrounded by the inhabitants dressed in their gayest garments, and by the Cawals playing on their pipes and tambourines. She was covered from head to foot with a thick veil, which completely concealed her features, and was kept behind a curtain in the corner of a darkened

and the Yezidis. The early Christians chose the East. Mohammed, who recognised the general custom, and found it necessary to adhere to it, appointed the Kaaba of Mecca to be the Kubleh of his disciples.

* *Hibiscus esculentus.*

room. Here she remained until the guests had feasted for three days, after which the bridegroom was allowed to approach her. After the expiration of these three days the bridegroom was sought early in the morning, and led in triumph by his friends from house to house, receiving at each a trifling present. He was then placed within a circle of dancers and the guests and bystanders wetting small coins, stuck them on his forehead. The money was collected as it fell in an open kerchief held by his companions under his chin. After this ceremony a party of young men, who had attached themselves to the bridegroom, rushed into the crowd, and carrying off the most wealthy of the guests locked them up in a dark room until they consented to pay a ransom for their release. They all seemed to enjoy the joke, and, after a little resistance, paid the money, which was added to the dowry of the newly married couple. There was feasting, and raki-drinking, and music day and night, as is usual at an Eastern wedding.

After death the body of a Yezidi should be washed in running water, and then buried with the face turned towards the polar star. A Cawal should, if possible, be present at the ceremony, to offer up the necessary prayers; but if one cannot be found, the next Cawal who visits the place should pray over the grave. I have frequently seen funerals when staying in the Yezidi villages. The widow, dressed in white, and throwing dust on her head, which is also smeared with clay, goes forth with her female friends and companions to meet the mourners. She approaches them dancing, and brandishing her husband's sword with one hand, and long locks cut from her own hair in the other.

The Yezidi year begins with that of the Eastern Christians, whom they follow also in the order and names of their months. There is a fast of forty days in the spring, but it is observed by few: one person in a family may fast for the rest. They should abstain during that period from animal food. Sheikh Nasr fasts rigidly for one month in the year, eating only once in twenty-four hours, and immediately after sunset. Some fast three days at the commencement of the year; but this is not considered necessary. They do not observe the

Mohammedan Ramazan. Wednesday is their holiday, and although some always fast on that day, yet they do not abstain from work on it, as Christians do on the Sabbath.

Sheikh Nasr informed me that they had a date of their own, and that, according to their account, we were then in the year 1550. This suggested some connection with Manes; but neither by direct nor indirect questions could I ascertain that they were acquainted with his name, or recognised him in anywise as the author of their peculiar doctrines with regard to the Evil principle.

Their names, both male and female, are generally those used both by Mohammedans and Christians, or such as are common amongst the Kurds, and not strictly of Mussulman origin. The name of *Goorgis* (George) is, however, objectionable; and is never, I believe, given to a Yezidi.

They have four orders of priesthood, the Pirs, the Sheikhs, the Cawals, and the Fakirs; and, what is very remarkable, and, I believe, unexampled in the East, these offices are hereditary, and descend to women, who, when enjoying them, are treated with the same respect and consideration as the men.

The *Pirs*,* or saints, are most revered after the great Sheikh, or religious head of the sect. They are believed to have the power, not only of interceding for the people, but of curing disease and insanity. They are expected to lead a life of great sanctity and honesty; and are looked up to with much reverence. They are not confined, I believe, to any particular fashion of dress. The only Pir I knew was one Sino, who was recognised as the deputy of Sheikh Nasr, and had suffered imprisonment in his stead.

The *Sheikhs* are next in rank. They are acquainted with the hymns, and are expected to know something of Arabic, the language in which the hymns are written. Their dress should be entirely white, except the skull-cap beneath the turban, which is black. As servants of Sheikh Adi, they are the guardians of his tomb, keep up the holy fires, and bring provisions and fuel to those who dwell within its precincts,

* This is a Kurdish (Persian) title,—it means, literally, an old man.

and to pilgrims of distinction. They always wear round their bodies a band of red and black, or red and orange plaid, as the mark of their office; with it they bind together the wood, and other supplies which they bring to the sacred edifice. The women belonging to this order carry the same badge, and are employed in the same services. There are always several Sheikhs residing in the valley of Sheikh Adi. They watch over the tomb, and receive pilgrims; taking charge in rotation of the offerings that may be brought, or selling the clay balls and other relics.

The *Cawals*, or Preachers, appear to be the most active members of the priesthood. They are all of one family, and are sent by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr on periodical missions, going from village to village with the symbol of the bird as teachers of the doctrines of the sect, and to levy contributions, half of which goes to the support of the tomb of Sheikh Adi, the other half being equally divided between Hussein Bey and the Cawals. They alone are the performers on the flute and tambourine, both instruments being looked upon, to a certain extent, as sacred. I observed that before, and after, using the tambourine they frequently kissed it, and then held it to those near them, to be similarly saluted. They are taught singing at a very early age, are skilful musicians, and occasionally dance at festivals. They usually know a little Arabic, but barely more than necessary to get through their chants and hymns. Their garments are generally white, although coloured stuffs are not forbidden; but their turbans, unlike those of the Sheikhs, are black, as are also their skull-caps.

The *Fakirs'* are the lowest in the priesthood. They wear coarse dresses of black, or dark brown cloth, or canvass, descending to the knee and fitting tightly to the person; and a black turban, across which is generally tied a red kerchief. They perform all menial offices connected with the tomb, trim and light the votive lamps, and keep clean the sacred buildings.

Whilst each tribe and district of the Yezidis has its own head, their religious and political hereditary chief, wherever they may reside, is Hussein Bey, who is called the Khalifa

(the Caliph). As he is young and inexperienced he deposes his religious duties, as high-priest, to Sheikh Nasr. He should be the 'Peesh-Namaz,' or leader of the prayers, during sacred ceremonies;* but as a peculiar dress is worn on this occasion, and the Bey is obliged to be in continual intercourse with the Turkish authorities, these robes might fall into their hands, they are, therefore, entrusted to Sheikh Jindi, who officiates for the young chief.† Sheikh Nasr, although now holding the office of high-priest, which was previously held by his father, is, I was assured, only the chief of the Sheikhs of the district of Sheikhan. Still he is treated with the greatest reverence and respect by all the sect, and a gentle and amiable character fully entitles him to the consideration he receives from them.

Neither Hussein Bey nor the Priests ever shave their beards. They ought not to marry out of their own order, and though the men do not observe this rule very strictly, the women are never given in marriage to one not in the rank of the priesthood. Hussein Bey ought to take his wife from the family of Chul Bey.

The language in general use amongst all the Yezidis is a Kurdish dialect, and very few, except the Sheikhs and Cawals, are acquainted with Arabic. The chants and hymns,—the only form of prayer, which, as far as I could ascertain, they possess,—are, as I have already stated, in Arabic. They have a sacred volume, containing their traditions, their hymns, directions for the performance of their rites, and other matters connected with their religion. It is preserved either at Baazini or Baasheikhah, and is regarded with so much superstitious reverence that I failed in every endeavour to obtain a copy, or even to see it. This I much regretted, as its contents would probably throw some light upon the origin and history of this remarkable sect, and would clear

* In the mosque, and when prayers are said by several Mohammedans together, one person, not necessarily a moolah, officiates as leader in reciting the prayers, and going through the necessary prostrations. He is called in Persia, the Peesh-Namaz.

† Ali Bey, Hussein Bey's father, was initiated in the performance of all the Yezidi religious ceremonies.

up many doubts which still hang over their tenets. There are only one or two persons amongst the Yezidis who can read or write: even Sheikh Nasr is unacquainted with the alphabet. Those who know how to read have only been taught in order that they may preserve the sacred book, and may refer to it for the doctrines and ceremonies of the sect. They will not receive converts to their faith.

The Yezidis have a tradition that they originally came from Busrah, and from the country watered by the lower part of the Euphrates; and that, after their emigration, they first settled in Syria, and subsequently took possession of the Sinjar hill, and the districts they now inhabit in Kurdistan. This tradition, with the peculiar nature of their tenets and ceremonies, points to a Sabæan or Chaldæan origin. With the scanty materials which we possess regarding their history, and owing to the ignorance prevailing amongst the people themselves,—for I believe that even the priests, including Sheikh Nasr, have but a very vague idea of what they profess, and of the meaning of their religious forms,—it is difficult to come to any conclusion as to the source of their peculiar opinions and observances. There is in them a strange mixture of Sabæanism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism, with a tincture of the doctrines of the Gnostics and Manichæans. Sabæanism, however, appears to be the prevailing feature; and it is not improbable that the sect may be a remnant of the ancient Chaldees, who have, at various times, outwardly adopted the forms and tenets of the ruling people to save themselves from persecution and oppression; and have gradually, through ignorance, confounded them with their own belief and mode of worship. Such has been the case with a no less remarkable sect, the Sabæans, or Mendai (the Christians of St. John, as they are commonly called), who still inhabit the banks of the Euphrates and the districts of ancient Susiana.

The Yezidis are known amongst themselves by the name of the district, or tribe, to which they respectively belong. Those who inhabit the country near the foot of the Kurdish Hills, are called Dasni or Daseni, most probably from the

ancient name of a province.* Tribes of Yezidis are found in the north of Syria, in Northern Kurdistan, Georgia (where they have migrated), Gebel Tour, the Sinjar, Bohtan, Sheikhan, and Missouri. In the plains, their principal settlements are in the villages of Baazani, Baasheikhah, and Semil.

Having spent three days at Sheikh Adi, and witnessed all the ceremonies at which a stranger could be present, I prepared to return to Mosul. Hussein Bey, Sheikh Nasr, and the principal Sheikhs and Cawals, insisted upon accompanying me about three miles down the valley, as I preferred this road to the precipitous pathway over the mountains. After parting with me, the chiefs returned to the tomb to finish their festival. I made my way to the village of Ain Sifni, and reached Mosul early in the afternoon.

Four years later I was again present at the annual festival held at the shrine of Sheikh Adi, and I will now relate what took place on that occasion, in order that my account of this curious and little-known sect of the Yezidis may be as complete as I can make it.† I was accompanied on this second visit by Mr. Vice-consul Rassam and his dragoman Khodja Toma. We rode the first day from Mosul to Baadri, and were met on the road by Hussein Bey and a large company of Yezidi horsemen. Sheikh Nasr had already gone to the tomb, to make ready for the ceremonies. The young chief entertained us for the night, and on the following morning, an hour after sunrise, we left the village for Sheikh Adi. At some distance from the sacred valley we were met by Sheikh Nasr, Pir Sino, the Cawals, the priests, and the chiefs. They conducted us to the same building in the sacred grove that I had occupied on my former visit. The Cawals assembled round us and welcomed our coming on their tambourines and flutes; and soon about us was formed one of those singularly beautiful and picturesque groups which had struck me so much on my previous visit to the Yezidi festival.

* There is a tribe of Kurds of this name, living in the mountains near Suleimaniyah.

† This account of a visit to the Yezidis was originally contained in the narrative of my second expedition to Assyria. (See 'Nineveh and Babylon,' chap. iv. unabridged edition.)

The Yezidis had assembled in less numbers than when I had last met them in the valley. Only a few of the best armed of the people of the Sinjar had ventured to face the dangers of the road then occupied by the Arabs. The Kochers, and the tribes of Dereboun, were kept away by fear of the Bedouins. The inhabitants of Kherzan and Redwan were harassed by the conscription. Even the people of Baasheikhah and Baazani had been so much vexed by a recent visit from the Pasha of Mosul, that they had no heart for festivities.

About an hour after sunset, Cawal Yusuf summoned Mr. Hormuzd Rassam and myself, who were alone allowed to be present, to the inner yard, or sanctuary, of the temple. We were placed in a room from the windows of which we could see all that took place in the court. The Cawals, Sheikhs, Fakirs, and principal chiefs were already assembled. In the centre of the court was an iron lamp, with four burners—a simple dish with four lips for the wicks, supported on a sharp iron rod driven into the ground. Near it stood a Fakir, holding in one hand a lighted torch, and in the other a large vessel of oil, from which he, from time to time, replenished the lamp, loudly invoking Sheikh Adi. The Cawals stood against the wall on one side of the court, and commenced a slow chant, some playing on the flute, and some on the tambourine, and others accompanying the measure with their voices. The Sheikhs and chiefs now formed a procession, walking two and two. At their head was Sheikh Jindi. He wore a tall shaggy black cap, the hair of which hung over the upper part of his face. A long robe, striped with horizontal stripes of black and dark red, fell to his feet. A countenance more severe, and more imposing, than that of Sheikh Jindi could not well be imagined. A beard, black as jet, fell low on his breast; his dark piercing eyes glittered through his ragged eyebrows, like burning coals through the bars of a grate. The colour of his face was of the deepest brown, his teeth white as snow, and his features, though stern beyond measure, singularly noble and well formed. It was a byword with us that Sheikh Jindi had never been seen to smile. To look at him was to feel that a laugh could not be born in him. As

he moved, with a slow and solemn step, the flickering lamp deepening the shadows of his solemn and rugged countenance, it would have been impossible to conceive a being more eminently fitted to take the lead in ceremonies consecrated to the Evil One. He is the Peesh-Namaz, 'the leader of prayer,' to the Yezidi sect. Behind him were two vene-



Sheikh Nasr, High Priest of the Yezidis.

rable Sheikhs. They were followed by Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr, and the other chiefs and Sheikhs came after. Their long robes were all of the purest white. As they walked slowly round, sometimes stopping, then resuming their measured step, they chanted prayers in glory and honour of the

Deity. The Cawals accompanied the chant with their flutes, beating at intervals their tambourines. Round the burning lamp, and within the circle formed by the procession, danced the Fakirs in their black dresses, with solemn pace timed to the music, raising and swinging to and fro their arms after the fashion of Eastern dancers. To hymns in praise of the Deity succeeded others in honour of Melek Isa and Sheikh Adi. The chants then passed into quicker strains, the tambourines were beaten more frequently, the Fakirs became more active in their motions, and the women made the loud *tahlel*, the ceremonies ending with that extraordinary scene of noise and excitement that I have described. When the prayers were ended, those who marched in procession kissed, as they passed by, the right side of the doorway leading into the temple, where a serpent is figured on the wall; but not, as I was assured, the image itself, which has no typical or other meaning, according to Sheikh Nasr and Cawal Yusuf. Hussein Bey then placing himself on the step at this entrance, received the homage of the Sheikhs and elders, each touching the hand of the young chief with his own, and raising it to his lips. All present, afterwards, gave one another the kiss of peace.

The ceremonies having thus been brought to a close, Hussein Bey and Sheikh Nasr came to me, and led me into the inner court. Carpets had been spread at the doorway of the temple for myself and the two chiefs; the Sheikhs, Cawals, and principal people of the sect, seated themselves, or rather crouched, against the walls. By the light of a lamp, dimly breaking the gloom within the temple, I could see Sheikh Jindi unrobing. During the prayers, priests were stationed at the doorway, and none were allowed to enter except a few women and girls: the wives and daughters of Sheikhs and Cawals had free access to the building, and appeared to join in the ceremonies. The Vice-consul and Khodja Toma were now admitted, and took their places with us at the upper end of the court.

The private and domestic affairs of the sect were then discussed, and various reforms proposed. The mode of contracting marriages required some change. The large sums of

money demanded by parents for their daughters had been the cause that many girls remained unmarried, a state of things rarely found in Eastern countries, and the source of loud complaints amongst the younger members of the community. Rassam suggested that the price paid to the father should be reduced, or he should encourage elopements, and give the fugitives the benefit of his protection. The proposed alternative caused much merriment; but one of the old Sheikhs of Baazani at once consented to take 300 piastres (about 2*l.* 10*s.*) for his daughter, instead of 3000, which he had previously asked. This led to several betrothals on the spot, amidst much mirth and great applause on the part of such young Cawals as were anxious to get married. It was nearly midnight before the assembly broke up. We then went into the outer court, where dances were kept up until daybreak, by the light of torches; all the young men and women joining in the Debka.

Soon after sunrise on the following morning the Sheikhs and Cawals offered up a short prayer in the court of the temple, but without any of the ceremonies of the previous evening. Some prayed in the sanctuary, frequently kissing the threshold and holy places within the building. When they had ended they took the green cloth which covers the tomb of Sheikh Adi, and, followed by the Cawals playing on their tambourines and flutes, walked with it round the outer court. The people flocked about them, and reverently carried the corners of the drapery to their lips, making afterwards a small offering of money. After the cover had been again thrown over the tomb, the chiefs and priests seated themselves round the inner court. The Fakirs and Sheikhs especially devoted to the service of the sanctuary, who are called Kotcheks, now issued from the kitchens of the temple bearing large platters of smoking *harisa*,* which they placed on the ground.

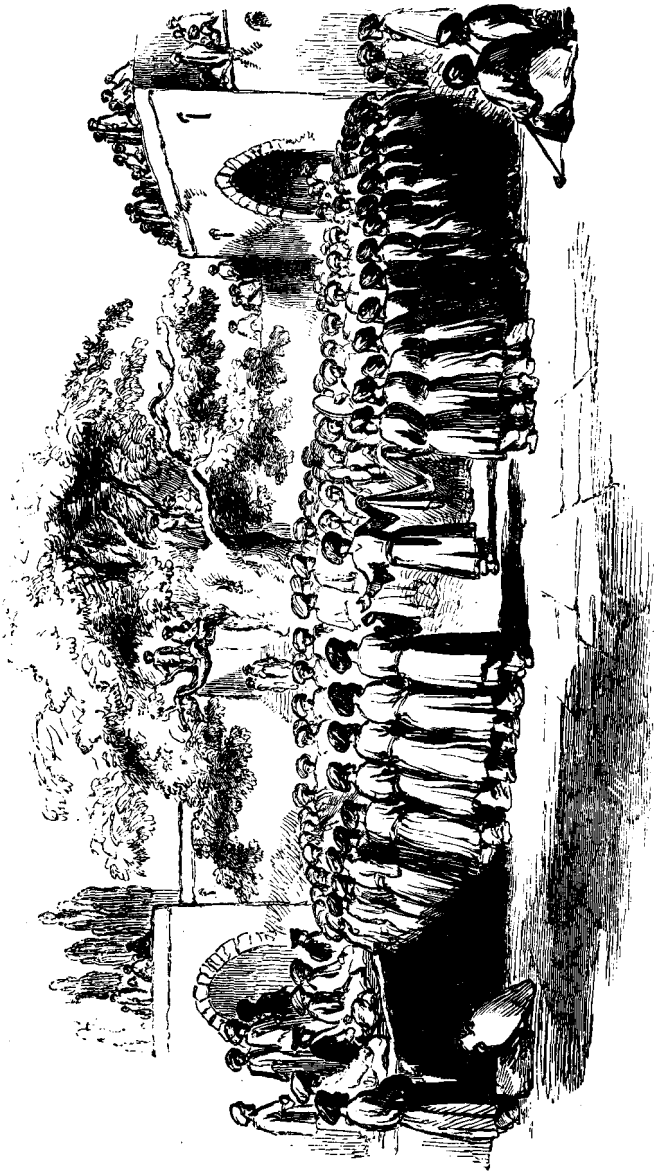
* A mixture of bruised wheat, chopped meat, milk and curds, boiled into a thick pulpy mass, over which melted butter is poured. It is a favourite dish in Syria and Mesopotamia, and is cooked by families on festivals, or on certain days of the year, in consequence of vows made during sickness or in travel. On these occasions it is sent round to friends, and distributed amongst the poor. The wealthy sprinkle it with cinnamon and sugar, and it is then agreeable to the taste, and pala-

The company collected in hungry groups round the messes, and whilst they were eating, the Kotcheks standing by called upon them continually in a loud voice to partake of the hospitality of Sheikh Adi. After the empty plates had been removed, a collection was made towards the support of the temple and tomb of the saint. It is also customary for all families who come to the annual festival to send some dish as an offering to Sheikh Nasr. He merely tastes these contributions to show his acceptance of them, and they are then shared by the servants of the sanctuary.

These ceremonies occupied us until nearly mid-day; we then sat by the fountain in the valley, and the men and women danced before us, the boys climbing into the trees and hanging on the boughs to see the dancers. Sugar, dates, and raisins were afterwards scrambled for by the children; the men soon taking part in the amusement.

In the afternoon the wives and daughters of the chiefs and Cawals called upon me. The families of the Cawals, evidently descended from the same stock, are remarkable for the beauty both of the men and women, all of whom are strikingly like one another. Their complexion is, perhaps, too dark, but their features are regular and admirably formed. The dresses of the girls were elegant, and as rich as the material they could obtain would allow. Some wove flowers into their hair, others encircled their black turbans with a single wreath of myrtle, a simple and elegant ornament. They all wore many strings of coins, amber, coral, agate, and glass beads round their necks, and some had the black skull cap completely covered with gold and silver money. A kind of apron of grey or yellowish check, like a Scotch plaid, tied over one shoulder, and falling in front over the silk dress, is a peculiar feature in the costume of the Yezidi girls, and of some Christians from the same district. Unmarried women have the neck bare, the married conceal it with a white kerchief, which passes under the chin, and is tied on the top of the head. The brightest colours are worn by the girls, but

table enough. It is sold early in the morning in the bazaars of many Eastern towns.



Yezidi Dance at Sheikh Adi.

the matrons are usually clothed in plain white. The women of the Cawal families always wear black turbans and skull caps. Cawal Yusuf, to show how the Frank ladies he had seen at Constantinople were honoured by their husbands, made his young wife walk arm in arm with him before us, to the great amusement of the bystanders.

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

The Kaidi, a Yezidi tribe, perform, at the annual festival, the following curious ceremony, said to be of great antiquity, which we witnessed on the day of our departure from Sheikh Adi. They ascend, in company with those who have firearms, the rocks overhanging the temple, and, placing small oak twigs in the muzzles of their guns, discharge them into the air. After having kept up a running fire for nearly half an hour, they descend into the outer court and again let off their pieces. When entering the inner court they go through a martial dance before Hussein Bey, who stands on the steps of the sanctuary amidst the assembled priests and elders. The dance being ended, a bull, presented by the Yezidi chief, is led out from the temple. The Kaidi rush upon the animal with shouts, and, seizing it, lead it off in triumph to Sheikh Mirza, one of the heads of the sect, from whom they also receive a present, generally consisting of sheep. During these ceremonies the assembled crowd of men, women, and children form groups on the steep sides of the ravine, some standing on the well-wooded terraces, others on projecting rocks and ledges, whilst the boys clamber into the high trees, from whence they can obtain a view of the proceedings. The women make the *tahlel* without ceasing,

and the valley resounds with the deafening noise. The long white garments fluttering amongst the trees, and the gay costumes of some of the groups, produce a very beautiful and novel effect.

The Kaidi were formerly a powerful tribe, sending as many as six hundred matchlock-men to the great feast. They have been greatly reduced in numbers and wealth by wars and oppression.

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

This was the only written work that I was able to obtain from the Yezidis; their Cawals repeated several prayers and hymns to me, which were simply laudatory of the Deity. Cawal Yusuf informed me that, before the great massacre of the sect by the Bey of Rahwanduz, they possessed many books which were lost during the general panic, or destroyed by the Kurds. He admitted that this was only a fragmentary composition, and by no means 'the Book' which contained the theology and religious laws of the Yezidi. He even hinted that the great work did still exist, and I am by no means certain that there is not a copy at Baasheikhah or Baazani. The account given by the Cawal seems to be confirmed by an allusion made in the poem to the 'Book of Glad Tidings,' and 'the Book that comforteth the oppressed,' which could scarcely have been inserted for any particular purpose, such as to deceive their Mohammedan neighbours.

Tahyar Pasha had for some time been planning an expe-

* For a translation of this poem or rhapsody, see the complete edition of my 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 89.

dition to the Sinjar, not with any hostile intention, but for the purpose of examining the state of the country; which had been ruined by the vexatious extortions and cruelty of the late governor of Mosul. He had previously sent an agent to inquire into the condition of the villages; and a deputation of the inhabitants had returned with him to petition for a diminution of taxes, which, from the destitute state of the district, they were unable to pay.

His Excellency had invited me to accompany him on this expedition, the arrangements for which, after numerous delays, were completed on the 8th of October. Three o'clock of that day was declared to be the fortunate hour for leaving the town. The principal inhabitants, with the Cadi and Mufti at their head, were collected in the large square opposite the palace and without the walls, ready to escort the Pasha, as a mark of respect, some distance from the gates. It was with difficulty that I made my way to the apartments of the Governor, through the crowd of irregular troops, and servants which thronged the courtyard of the serai. The attendants of his Excellency were hurrying to and fro, laden with every variety of utensil and instrument; some carrying gigantic telescopes, or huge bowls in leather cases; others labouring under bundles of pipe-sticks, or bending under the weight of calico bags crammed with state documents. The grey-headed Kiayah had inserted his feet into a pair of capacious boots, leaving room enough for almost any number of intruders. Round his fez, and the lower part of his face, were wound endless folds of white linen, which gave him the appearance of a patient emerging from a hospital; and he carried furs and cloaks enough to keep out the cold of the frigid zone. The Divan Effendesi, although a man of the pen, strutted about with sword and spurs followed by clerks and inkstand bearers. At the door of the harem waited a bevy of Aghas; amongst them the lord of the towel, the lord of the washing-basin, the lord of the cloak, the chief of the coffee-makers, and the chief of the pipe-bearers, the treasurer, and the seal-bearer.* At length the Pasha approached; the

* These are all offices in the household of a Turkish pasha.

Cawasses forced the crowd out of the way ; and as his Excellency placed his foot in the stirrup, the trumpet sounded as a signal for the procession to move onwards. First came a regiment of infantry, followed by a company of artillerymen with their guns. The trumpeters, and the Pasha's own standard, a mass of green silk drapery, embroidered in gold with verses from the Koran, succeeded ; behind were six led Arab horses, richly caparisoned in coloured saddle-cloths, glittering with gold embroidery. The Pasha himself then appeared, surrounded by the chiefs of the town and the officers of his household. The procession was finished by the irregular cavalry, divided into companies, each headed by its respective commander, and by the wild Suiters, dressed up in motley garments and foxes' tails, with their small kettle-drums fastened in front of their saddles.

I was accompanied by my Cawass and my own servants, and rode as it best suited, and amused me, in different parts of the procession. We reached Hamayda, a ruined village on the banks of the Tigris, three caravan hours from Mosul, about sunset. Here we had the first proofs of the deficiencies in the commissariat arrangements ; for there was neither food for ourselves nor the horses, and we all went supperless to bed.

On the following day, after a ride of six hours through a barren and uninhabited plain, bounded to the east and west by ranges of low limestone hills, we reached a ruined village, built on the summit of an ancient artificial mound, called Abou Maria. The Aneyza Arabs were known to be out on this side of the Euphrates, and during our march we observed several of their scouts watching our movements. The irregular cavalry frequently rushed off in pursuit ; but the Arabs, turning their fleet mares towards the desert, were soon lost in the distance.

We passed the ruins of three villages. The plain, once thickly inhabited, is now deserted ; and the wells, formerly abundant, are filled up. In spring, the Arab tribe of Jehesh frequently encamp near the pools of water supplied by the rains. The remains of buildings, and the traces of former cultivation, prove that at some period, not very remote,

others than the roving Bedouins dwelt on these lands; whilst the artificial mounds, scattered over the face of the country, show that, long ere the Mussulman invasion, this was one of the flourishing districts of ancient Assyria.

A most abundant spring issues from the foot of the mound of Abou Maria. The water is collected in large, well-built reservoirs. Near them is a mill, now in ruins, but formerly turned by the stream, within a few yards of its source. Such an ample supply of water, although brackish to the taste, must always have attracted a population in a country where it is scarce. The village, which was deserted during the oppressive government of Mohammed Pasha, belonged to the Jehesh.

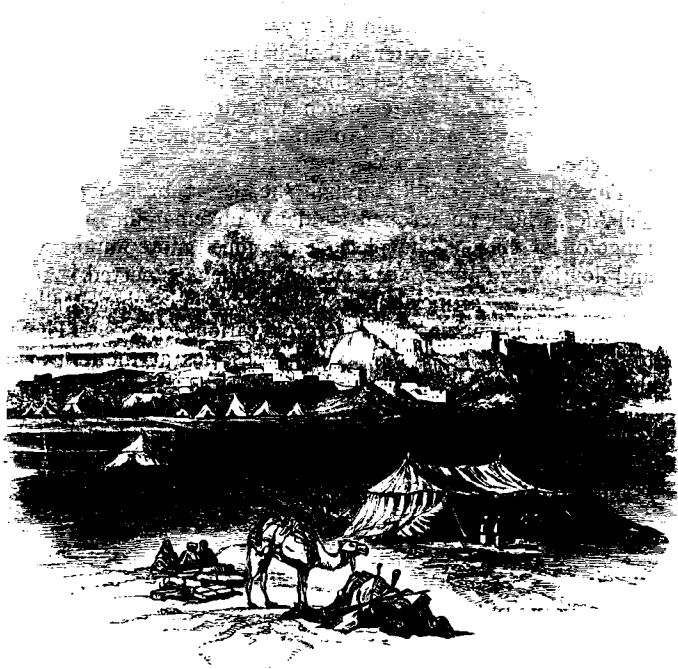
Three hours' ride, still through the desert, brought us to Tel Afer, which we reached suddenly on emerging from a range of low hills. The place had a much more important and flourishing appearance than I could have expected. An eminence, partly artificial, is crowned by a castle whose walls are flanked by numerous towers of various shapes. The town, containing some well-built houses, lies at the foot of the mound, and is partly surrounded by gardens planted with olive, fig, and other fruit trees; beyond this cultivated plot is the broad expanse of the desert. A spring, as abundant as that of Abou Maria, gushes out of a rock beneath the castle, supplies the inhabitants with water, irrigates their gardens, and turns their mills.

Tel Afer was once a town of some importance; it is mentioned by the early Arab geographers, and may perhaps be identified with the Telassar of Isaiah, referred to, as it is, in connection with Gozan and Haran.* It has been three times besieged, within a few years, by Ali Pasha of Baghdad, Hafiz Pasha, and Injeh Bairakdar Mohammed Pasha. On each occasion the inhabitants offered a vigorous resistance. Mohammed Pasha took the place by assault. More than two-thirds of the inhabitants were put to the sword, and the property of the remainder was confiscated. Great wealth is said to have been discovered in the place, on its pillage by

* Isaiah, xxxvii. 12. The name does not occur elsewhere in the Bible; and we have consequently no means of determining its locality.

Mohammed Pasha, who took all the gold and silver, and distributed the remainder of the spoil amongst his soldiers.

The inhabitants of Tel Afer are of Turcoman origin, and speak the Turkish language. They occasionally intermarry, however, with the Arabs, and generally understand Arabic.



TEL AFER.

Towards evening I ascended the mound, and visited the castle, in which was quartered a small body of irregular troops. The houses, formerly inhabited by families whose habitations are now built at the foot of the artificial hill, are in ruins, except that occupied by the commander of the garrison. From the walls I had an uninterrupted view over a vast plain, stretching westward towards the Euphrates, and

losing itself in the hazy distance. The ruins of ancient towns and villages rose on all sides ; and, as the sun went down, I counted above one hundred mounds, throwing their dark and lengthening shadows across the plain. These were the remains of Assyrian civilisation and prosperity. Centuries have elapsed since a settled population dwelt in this district of Mesopotamia. Now, not even the tent of the Bedouin could be seen. The whole was a barren, deserted waste.

We remained two days at Tel Afer. The commissariat was replenished as far as possible from the scanty stores of the inhabitants. The Pasha recommended forbearance and justice ; but his advice was not followed ; nor were his orders obeyed. The houses were broken into, and a general pillage ensued. At length, on the 13th, we resumed our march.

The Sinjar is about thirty miles distant from Tel Afer. A very low range of hills diverges from its southern spur, and unites with that behind the town. The Pasha, with his troops, took the road across the plain.

We passed the first night on the banks of a small salt stream, near the ruins of a village, called, by the people of the Sinjar and Tel Afer, Zabardok ; and by the Arabs simply Kharba, or the ruins. We had seen during the day several other ruins and watercourses. The second day we encamped in the plain, near the southern end of the Sinjar mountain, and under the village of Mirkan, the white houses of which, rising one above the other on the declivity, were visible from below. Here the Pasha was met by all the chiefs of the mountain, except those of the small district in which we had halted.

Mirkan is one of the principal Yezidi settlements in the Sinjar. Its inhabitants had been exposed to great extortions, and many had been even put to death by Mohammed Pasha. They expected similar treatment at the hands of Tahyar Pasha. No promises could remove their fears, and they declared their intention of resolutely defending their village. The Pasha sent up an officer of his household, with a few irregular troops, to reassure them, and to restore obedience. I accompanied him. As we entered the village we were received by a general discharge of fire-arms. Two horsemen,

who had accidentally,—and as I thought at the time somewhat disrespectfully,—pushed forward before the officer and myself, fell dead at our feet, and several of our party were wounded. The Pasha, exasperated at this unprovoked and wanton attack, ordered an advance of the Hytas and Arab irregulars ; who, long thirsting for plunder, hastened towards the village. The Yezidis had already deserted it, and had taken refuge in a narrow gorge abounding in caverns and isolated rocks,—their usual place of refuge on such occasions.

The village was soon occupied ; the houses were entered, and plundered of the little property that had been left behind. A few aged women and decrepit old men, too infirm to leave with the rest, and found hiding in the small dark rooms, were murdered, and their heads severed from their bodies. Blazing fires were made in the neat dwellings, and the whole village was delivered to the flames. Even the old Pasha, with his grey hair and tottering step, hurried to and fro amongst the smoking ruins, and helped to add the torch where the fire was not doing its work.

The old Turkish spirit of murder and plunder was roused ; the houses were soon burnt to the ground ; but the inhabitants were still safe. When the irregulars had secured all the property they could discover, they rushed towards the gorge, scarcely believing that the Yezidis would venture to oppose them. But they were received by a steady and well-directed fire. The foremost fell, almost to a man. The caverns were high up amongst the rocks, and all attempts to reach them completely failed. The contest was carried on till night ; when the troops, dispirited and beaten, were called back to their tents.

In the evening the heads of the miserable old men and women, taken in the village, were paraded about the camp ; and those who were fortunate enough to possess such trophies wandered from tent to tent, claiming a present as a reward for their prowess. I appealed to the Pasha, who had been persuaded that every head brought to him was that of a powerful chief, and after some difficulty prevailed upon him to have them buried ; but the troops were not willing to obey his orders, and it was late in the night

before they were induced to resign their bloody spoil, which they had arranged in grim array, and lighted up with torches.

On the following morning the contest was renewed ; but the Yezidis defended themselves with undiminished courage. The loss of the Hytas was very considerable ; not a cavern had been carried ; nor a Yezidi, as far as the assailants could tell, killed, or even wounded.

The next day the Pasha ordered a fresh attack. To encourage his men he advanced himself into the gorge, and directed his carpet to be spread on a rock. Here he sat, with the greatest apathy, smoking his pipe, and carrying on a frivolous conversation with me, although he was the object of the aim of the Yezidis ; several persons within a few feet of us falling dead, and the balls frequently throwing up the dirt into our faces. Coffee was brought to him occasionally as usual, and his pipe was filled when the tobacco was exhausted ; yet he was not a soldier, but what is termed 'a man of the pen.' I have frequently seen similar instances amongst Turks of calm indifference in the midst of danger, when such displays were scarcely called for, and would be very unwillingly made by an European. Notwithstanding the example set by his Excellency, and the encouragement which his presence gave to the troops, they were not more successful in their attempts to dislodge the Yezidis than they had been the day before. One after another, the men were carried out of the ravine, dead or dying. The wounded were brought to the Pasha, who gave them water, money, or words of encouragement. The 'Ordou cadesi,' or Cadi of the camp, reminded them that it was against the infidels they were fighting ; that every one who fell by the enemies of the Prophet was rewarded with instant translation to Paradise ; whilst those who killed an unbeliever were entitled to the same inestimable privilege. The dying were comforted, and the combatants animated by the promises and exhortations of the Cadi ; who, however, kept himself well out of the way of danger behind a rock.

Attempts were made during the day to induce the Yezidis to surrender, and there was some chance of success. How-

ever, night drew near, and hostilities still continued. The regular and irregular troops were then posted at all the known places of access to the gorge. The morning came, and the attack was recommenced. No signs of defence issued from the valley. The Hytas rushed in, but were no longer met by the steady fire of the previous day. They paused, fearing some trick or ambuscade; they then advanced cautiously, but still unnoticed. They reached the mouths of the caves;—no one opposed them. It was some time, however, before they ventured to look into them. They were empty. The Yezidis had fled during the night, and had left the ravine by some pathway known only to themselves, and which had escaped the watchfulness of the Turkish soldiery.

Whilst attempts were being made to discover the retreat of the fugitives, the Turkish camp remained near the village of Mirkan. I took this opportunity of visiting other parts of the Sinjar. The residence of the governor of the district is in the village built amongst the ruins of the old city—the Singara of the Romans, and the ‘Belled Sinjar’ of the Arabs. A small mud fort, raised a few years ago, stands on a hill in the midst of the remains of walls and foundations; but the principal part of the ancient city appears to have occupied the plain below. Around this fort, at the time of my visit, were congregated about two hundred families. The Yezidi inhabitants of the village, unlike those of the other districts, are mixed with Mussulmans. The latter, however, are so lax in their religious observances, and in dress so like the Yezidis, that it is difficult to distinguish them from the unbelievers. I was continually falling into mistakes, and eliciting a very indignant exclamation of ‘God forbid!’

It would not be easy to point out, with any degree of certainty, ruins at Belled Sinjar more ancient than the Mohammedan conquest. It became a place of some importance in the early days of Islam, and had its own semi-independent rulers. There are the remains of several fine buildings; and the lower part of a fallen minaret, constructed, like that of the great mosque of Mosul, of coloured tiles and bricks, is a conspicuous object from all parts of the plain. There are very abundant springs within the circuit of the

old walls ; the air is declared to be salubrious, and the soil around is rich and productive.

All the villages of the Sinjar are built upon one plan. The houses rise in stages on the hill-sides, and are surrounded by terraces, formed of rough stones piled one above the other as walls to confine the scanty earth. These terraces are planted with olive and fig trees ; vineyards are found near some of the villages. The houses, which are flat-roofed, are exceedingly clean and neat, and frequently contain several rooms. The walls of the interior are full of small recesses, like pigeon-holes, which are partly ornamental, and partly used to hold domestic utensils and other property. They give a very singular and original appearance to the rooms ; and the oddity of the effect is considerably increased by masses of red and black paint daubed in patches on the white wall.

The principal, and indeed now the only, trade carried on by the inhabitants of the Sinjar is in dried figs, which are celebrated, and supply the markets in the neighbouring provinces. The soil is fertile, and, as the means of irrigation are abundant, corn and various useful articles of produce might be raised in great plenty from the extensive tracks of arable land belonging to the villages. But the people have been almost ruined by misgovernment ; they can now scarcely cultivate corn enough for their own immediate wants.*

The Pasha still lingered at Mirkan ; and as I was anxious to return to Mosul, to renew the excavations, I took my leave of him, and rode through the desert to Tel Afer. I was accompanied by a small body of irregular cavalry, — a necessary escort, as the Aneyzâ Arabs were hanging about the camp, and plundering stragglers and caravans of supplies. As evening approached, we saw, congregated near a small stream, what appeared to be a large company of dismounted Arabs, their horses standing by them. As we were already near them, and could not have escaped the watchful eye of the Bedouin, we prepared for an encounter. I placed the baggage in the centre of my small party, and spread out the

* A further account of the district of Sinjar will be found in my 'Nineveh and Babylon,' ch. iv. and v.

horsemen as widely as possible to exaggerate our numbers. We approached cautiously, and was surprised to see that the horses still remained without their riders: we drew still nearer, when they all galloped off towards the desert. They were wild asses. We attempted to follow them. After running a little distance they stopped to gaze at us, and I got sufficiently near to see them well; but as soon as they found that we were in pursuit, they hastened their speed, and were soon lost in the distance.*

I reached Mosul in two days, taking the road by Kessi Kupri, and avoiding the desert beyond Abou-Maria, which we had crossed on our march to the Sinjar.

* Xenophon mentions these beautiful animals, which he must have seen during his march over these very plains. He faithfully describes the country, and the animals and birds which inhabit it, as they are to this day, except that the ostrich is not now to be found so far north. 'The country,' says he, 'was a plain throughout, as even as the sea, and full of wormwood; if any other kinds of shrubs or reeds grew there they had all an aromatic smell; but no trees appeared. Of wild creatures, the most numerous were wild asses, and not a few ostriches, besides bustards and roe deer (gazelles), which our horsemen sometimes chased. The asses, when they were pursued, having gained ground of the horses, stood still (for they exceeded them much in speed); and when these came up with them, they did the same thing again; so that our horsemen could take them by no other means but by dividing themselves into relays, and succeeding one another in the chase. The flesh of those that were taken was like that of red deer, but more tender.' (Anab. lib. i. c. 5.) In fleetness they equal the gazelle; and to overtake them is a feat which only one or two of the most celebrated mares have been known to accomplish. The Arabs sometimes catch the foals during the spring, and bring them up with milk in their tents. I endeavoured in vain to rear a pair. They are of a light fawn colour—almost pink. The Arabs still eat their flesh. The 'wild asses of the desert' are mentioned in Job, xxiv. 5, xxxix. 5.

CHAPTER IX.

Excavations undertaken by the British Museum—Choice of workmen—Dwelling-houses built at Nimroud—Discovery of bas-reliefs—Of armour and helmets—Of vases—Of new chambers—Of the obelisk—Discoveries in the south-west corner of the mound—Winged lions—Crouching sphinxes—Discovery of tombs in the south-east corner of the mound—Arab workmen—Mode of irrigation—Customs of the Arabs—Facility of divorce—Arab women—The Tiyari or Chaldæans—A raft plundered—Seizure of an Arab Shaikh—Departure of sculptures for Busrah.

ON my return to Mosul, I received letters from England, informing me that Sir Stratford Canning had made over his share in the discoveries in Assyria to the British nation; and that the British Museum had received a grant from Parliament for the continuation of the researches commenced at Nimroud, and elsewhere. The grant was small, and scarcely adequate to the objects in view. There were many difficulties to contend with, and I was doubtful whether, with the means placed at my disposal, I should be able to fulfil the expectations which appeared to have been formed as to the results of the undertaking. The sum given to M. Botta for the excavations at Khorsabad alone, greatly exceeded the whole grant to the Museum, which was to include private expenses, those of carriage, and many extraordinary outlays inevitable in the East, when works of this nature are to be carried on. I determined, however, to accept the charge of superintending the excavations, to make every exertion, and to economise as far as it was in my power—that the nation might possess as extensive and complete a collection of Assyrian antiquities as, considering the smallness of the means at my command, it was possible to bring together.

It was, in the first place, necessary to organise a band of workmen best fitted to carry on the work. A general scarcity

of corn had driven the Arab tribes to the neighbourhood of the town, where they sought to gain a livelihood by engaging in labours not very palatable to a Bedouin. I had no difficulty in finding workmen amongst them. There was, at the same time, this advantage in employing these wandering Arabs—they brought their tents and families with them, and, encamping round the ruins and the village, formed a very efficient guard against their brethren of the desert, who look to plunder, rather than to work, to supply their wants. To increase my numbers I chose only one man from each family; and, as his male relations accompanied him, I had the use of their services, as far as regarded the protection of my sculptures. Being well acquainted with the Sheikhs of the Jebours, I selected my workmen chiefly from that tribe. The chiefs promised me protection; and I knew enough of the Arab character not to despair of bringing the men under proper control. The Arabs were selected to remove the earth—they were unable to dig; this part of the labour required stronger and more active men; and I chose for it about fifty Nestorian Chaldæans, who had sought work for the winter in Mosul; and many of whom, having already been employed, had acquired some experience in excavating. They went to Nimroud with their wives and families. I engaged at the same time one Bainan, a Jacobite or Syrian Christian, who was a skilful marble-cutter, and a very intelligent man. I also made a valuable addition to my establishment in a standard-bearer of the irregular troops, of whose courage I had seen such convincing proofs during the expedition to the Sinjar, that I induced his commander to place him in my service. His name was Mohammed Agha; but he was generally called, from the office he held in his troop, the 'Bairakdar,' or Standard-bearer. He was a native of Scio, and had been carried off when a child, at the time of the massacre, by an irregular trooper, who had brought him up as a Mussulman. In his religious opinions and observances, however, he was as lax as men of his profession usually are. He served me faithfully and honestly, was of great use to me during the excavations, and became a general favourite with all my people, even with the Arabs, who hate

the Turks in general. Awad still continued in my employ ; my Cawass, Ibrahim Agha, returned with me to Nimroud ; and I hired a carpenter and two or three men of Mosul as superintendents.

I was again amongst the ruins by the end of October. The winter season was fast approaching, and it was necessary to build a proper house for the shelter of myself and servants. I marked out a plan on the ground, in the village of Nimroud, and in a few days our habitations were complete. My workmen built the walls with mud bricks dried in the sun, and the roof with beams and branches of trees. A thick coat of mud was laid over the whole, to exclude the rain. Two rooms for



The Author's House at Nimroud.

my own accommodation were divided by an Iwan, or apartment, entirely open on one side, the whole being surrounded by an outer wall. In a second court-yard were huts for my Cawass, Arab guests, and servants, and stables for my horses. Ibrahim Agha displayed his ingenuity by making equidistant loopholes, of a most warlike appearance, in the outer walls ; which I immediately ordered to be filled up, to avoid any suspicion of being the constructor of forts and castles, with

the intention of making a permanent Frank settlement in the country. We did not, however, neglect precautions, in case of an attack from the Bedouins, of whom Ibrahim Agha was in constant dread. Unfortunately, the only shower of rain that I saw during the remainder of my residence in Assyria, fell before my walls were covered in, and so saturated the mud bricks that they did not dry again before the following spring. The consequence was that my house was very damp, and the only verdure on which my eyes were permitted to feast before my return to Europe, was furnished by my own property, the walls of the rooms being continually clothed with a crop of grass.

On the mound itself, and immediately above the great winged lions first discovered, I built a house for my Nestorian workmen and their families, and a hut, to which any small objects discovered among the ruins could at once be removed for safety. I divided my Arabs into three parties, according to the branches of the tribe to which they belonged. About forty tents were pitched on different parts of the mound, at the entrances to the principal trenches. Forty more were placed round my dwelling in the village of Nimroud, and the rest on the bank of the river, where the sculptures were deposited previous to their embarkation on the rafts. The men were all armed. I thus provided for the defence of my establishment.

Mr. Hormuzd Rassam lived with me ; and to him I confided the payment of the wages and the accounts, and the general management of the workmen. He soon obtained an extraordinary influence over the Arabs, and his fame spread through the desert.

The workmen were divided into bands. In each band were generally eight or ten Arabs, who carried away the earth in baskets ; and two, or four, Nestorian diggers, according to the nature of the soil and rubbish which had to be excavated. They were overlooked by a superintendent, whose duty it was to keep them to their work, and to give me notice when the diggers approached any slab, or exposed any small object to view, that I might myself assist in its uncovering and removal. I scattered a few Arabs of a hostile tribe amongst

the rest, and by that means I was always made acquainted with what was going on, could easily learn if there were plots brewing, and could detect those who might attempt to appropriate any relics discovered during the excavations. The smallness of the sum placed at my disposal, compelled me to follow the same plan in the excavations that I had hitherto adopted. I dug along the walls of the chambers, and exposed the whole of the slabs with which they were panelled, without removing the earth which filled up the rest of the room. Thus, few chambers were fully explored; and many small objects of great interest may have been left undiscovered. As I was directed in the instructions from the Trustees of the British Museum to re-bury the buildings with earth after they had been examined, I filled up the trenches, to avoid unnecessary expense, with the rubbish taken from those subsequently opened, having first copied the inscriptions, and drawn the sculptures.

The excavations were recommenced, on a large scale, by the 1st of November. My working parties were distributed over the mound—in the ruins of the N. W. and S. W. palaces; near the gigantic bulls in the centre; and in the south-east corner, where no traces of buildings had as yet been discovered.

It will be remembered that the greater number of slabs forming the southern side of the large hall in the N. W. palace had fallen with their faces to the ground.* I was, in the first place, anxious to raise these bas-reliefs, and to pack them for transport to England. To accomplish this, it was necessary to remove a large accumulation of earth and rubbish—to empty, indeed, nearly the whole hall, for the fallen slabs extended almost half-way across it. The sculptures on nine slabs were found to be in admirable preservation, although the slabs had been broken by the fall. They were divided, as those already described, into two compartments, by the usual standard inscription.

The sculptures were of the highest interest. They represented the wars of the king, and his victories over foreign nations. The upper bas-reliefs, on the first two slabs, formed

* See p. 86.

one subject—the king, with his warriors, in battle under the walls of a hostile castle. He stood, gorgeously attired, in a chariot drawn by three horses richly caparisoned, and was discharging an arrow either against those who defended the walls, or against a warrior, who, already wounded, was falling from his chariot. An attendant protected the person of the king with a shield, and a charioteer held the reins, and urged



Emblem of the Deity.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

on the horses. Above the king was the emblem of the supreme Deity, represented as at Persepolis by a winged man within a circle,* and wearing a horned cap resembling that of the human-headed lions. Like the king, he was shooting an arrow, the head of

which was in the form of a trident.

Behind the king were three chariots ; the first belonging to an enemy, drawn by three horses—one of which was rearing and another falling—and occupied by a wounded warrior asking for quarter. In the others were two Assyrian warriors, one discharging an arrow, the other guiding the horses, which were at full speed. In each Assyrian chariot was a standard—the devices, which were enclosed in a circle ornamented with tassels and streamers, being on one an archer, with the horned cap but without wings, standing on a bull ; and on the other two bulls, back to back. At the bottom of the first bas-relief were wavy lines, to indicate a river or water, and trees were scattered over both. Assyrian footmen, fighting with and slaying the enemy, were introduced in several places ; and three headless bodies above the principal figures in the second bas-relief represented the dead in the background.†

On the upper part of the two slabs following the battle-scene was represented the triumphal return of the Assyrians after victory. In front of the procession were warriors throw-

* The circle, and not the figure, may be winged.

† These bas-reliefs are now in the British Museum.

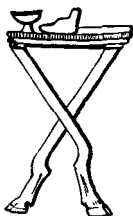
ing the heads of the slain at the feet of the conquerors. Two musicians, playing on stringed instruments, preceded the charioteers, who were now seen unarmed, but still bearing their standards; above them hovered an eagle with a human head in its talons. The king came next in his chariot, raising in one hand his bow, and in the other two arrows—an attitude in which he is frequently represented on Assyrian monuments, and one probably denoting triumph over his enemies. Above his horses was the presiding divinity; also holding a bow. The attendant, who in war bore his shield, was now replaced by an eunuch, raising an open parasol—an Eastern attribute of royalty. The horses were led by grooms, although the charioteer still held the reins. Behind the king's chariot was a horseman leading a second horse, gaily caparisoned.



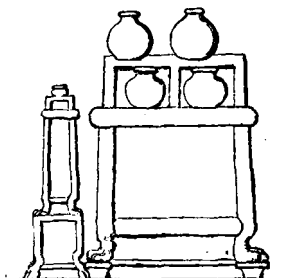
Emblem of the Deity. (N.W. Palace, Nimroud.)

After the procession, were seen the castle and pavilion of the victorious king—the former represented by a circle, divided into four equal compartments, and surrounded by towers and battlements. In each compartment were figures evidently engaged in preparing the feast: one was slaying a sheep; another baking bread; and others stood before bowls and utensils placed on tables and stools, and probably containing wine. The pavilion was supported by three columns; one surmounted by a fir-cone—the emblem so frequently seen in the Assyrian sculptures; the other two by figures of the ibex or mountain goat. It was probably of silk or woollen stuff, and was richly ornamented and edged with a fringe in the shape of fir-cones and tulip flowers. Beneath the canopy was a groom cleaning a horse; other horses, picketed by their halters, were feeding at a trough. An eunuch stood at the entrance of the tent, to receive four prisoners, who, with

their hands bound behind their backs, were brought to him by an Assyrian warrior. Above this group were two singular



A Table.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

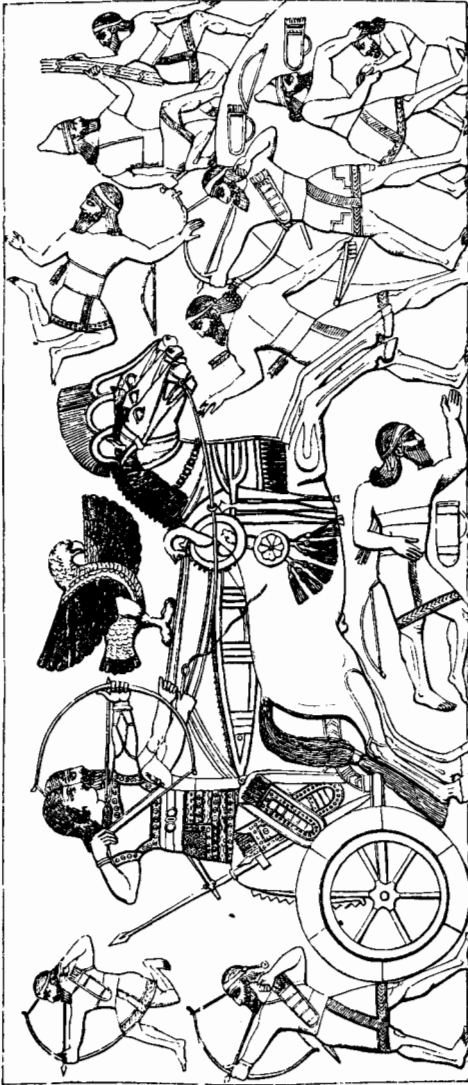


Tables, or Stands for Jars.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

lion-headed human figures, one holding a whip or thong in the right hand, and grasping his under-jaw with the left, the other raising both hands. They were clothed in tunics descending to the knees, and skins falling from the head, over the shoulders, to the ankles, and were accompanied by a man raising a stick.

The four following bas-reliefs recorded a battle, in which were represented the king, two warriors with their standards, and an eunuch in chariots, and four warriors, amongst whom was also an eunuch, on horses. The enemy were on foot, and were discharging their arrows against the pursuers. Eagles hovered above the victors, and were feeding on the slain. The winged divinity in the circle was again seen above the king.

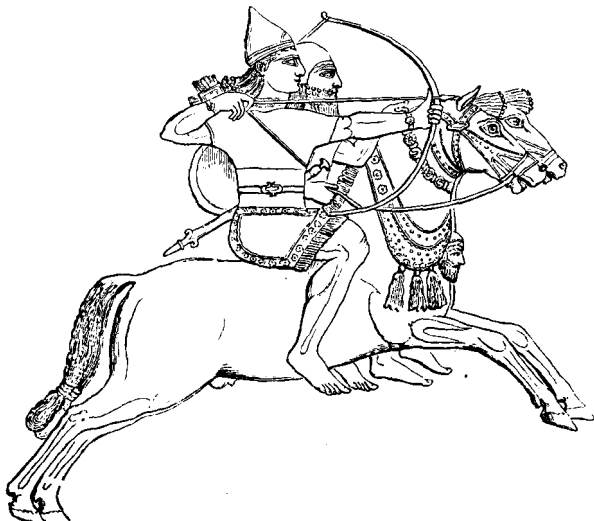
These bas-reliefs furnish interesting illustrations of the manners and civilisation of the Assyrians. We find the eunuch represented as commanding in war and engaging with the enemy in combat, as we have before seen him ministering to the king at religious ceremonies, or waiting upon him as his arms-bearer during peace. That eunuchs rose to the highest rank among the Assyrians, and were even generals over their armies, we learn from the Old Testament, where the 'Rabsaris,' or chief of the eunuchs, is mentioned as one of the three principal officers of Sennacherib, and as



Eunuch Warrior in Battle. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

one of the princes of Nebuchadrezzar.* They appear, indeed, to have held the same important posts, and to have exercised the same influence in the Assyrian court, as they have since enjoyed in Turkey and Persia, where they have even risen to the rank of vizir or prime minister.

In the bas-reliefs the horses of the archers, who are fighting with the enemy, and who have consequently both hands engaged, are represented as led by mounted warriors who ride by their side. They wear skull-caps, probably of



Mounted Archer drawing the Bow, whilst a Second Horseman guides his Horse.
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

iron. Judging from the sculptures, cavalry must have formed a large and important portion of the Assyrian armies. The Assyrian horsemen are frequently mentioned in the Bible. Ezekiel (xxiii. 6) describes 'the Assyrians clothed in blue, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses;' and Holofernes is declared to have had no less than 12,000 archers on horseback. The

* 2 Kings, xviii. 17; Jeremiah, xxxix. 3.

rider is represented as seated on the naked back of the horse, which is only adorned with a cloth when led behind the chariot of the king.

The horses represented in the sculptures appear to be of noble breed. Assyria, and particularly that part of the empire which was watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, was celebrated at a very early period for its horses, as the same plains are to this day for the noblest breeds of Arabia. The Jews probably obtained horses for their cavalry from this country; and horses were offered to them by the general of the Assyrian king, as an acceptable present.* On Egyptian monuments, horses are continually mentioned amongst the spoil or tribute from Mesopotamia. The horses of the Assyrian bas-reliefs were evidently drawn from the finest models; and the Assyrian sculptor has not been altogether unsuccessful in their delineation. The head is small and well-shaped, the nostrils large and high, the neck arched, the body long, and the legs slender and sinewy. The prophet exclaims of the horses of the Chaldæans, 'They are swifter than the leopards, and more fierce than the evening wolves;'† and the magnificent description of the war-horse in the book of Job is familiar to every reader.‡ At a later period the plains of Babylonia furnished horses to the Persians, both for the private use of the king and for his troops. The rich pastures of Mesopotamia must have always afforded them ample sustenance, whilst in those vast plains, exposed to the heats of summer and the cold winds of winter, they were inured to hardships and fatigue.

The lower series of bas-reliefs contained three subjects—the siege of a castle, the king receiving prisoners, and the king, with his army, crossing a river. The first occupied the under compartments of three slabs. The castle had equidistant towers, and apparently several walls, one behind the other, all surmounted by triangular pointed battlements. The besiegers having brought a battering-ram to the outer

* 'Now, therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.' (2 Kings, xviii. 23.)

† Habakkuk, i. 8.

‡ Chap. xxxix. 19.

wall, one of the besieged was endeavouring to catch the ram, and to break the blows, by a chain lowered from the walls; whilst two warriors of the assailing party were seeking to hold the ram in its place by hooks. This part of the bas-relief illustrates the account in the book of Chronicles and in Josephus, of the *machines for battering walls, instruments to cast stones, and grappling irons* made by Uzziah.* A warrior on the castle walls was throwing fire (traces of the red paint with which the flame was coloured, being still visible in the sculpture) from above upon the battering-ram; whilst the besiegers endeavoured to quench the flames, by pouring water upon them from the moveable tower. Two soldiers, in full armour, were undermining the walls with instruments like blunt spears; whilst two others appear to have found a secret passage into the castle. Wounded men were falling from the battlements; and upon one of the towers were women, tearing their hair and extending their hands to ask for quarter. The enemy were mounting to the assault, by scaling ladders placed against the walls. The king, discharging an arrow, and protected by a shield held by a warrior in complete armour, stood on one side of the castle. He was attended by two eunuchs, one holding an open umbrella over his head, the other his quiver and mace. Behind them was an Assyrian warrior driving away three women, a child, and three bullocks, forming part of the spoil. It was thus that the Assyrians carried away captive the people of Samaria, replacing the population of the conquered country by colonies of their own.† The women were represented as tearing their hair and throwing dust upon their heads, the usual signs of grief in the East.

On the other side of the castle were two kneeling soldiers, one using his bow, the other holding a shield for his companion's defence. Behind them was the vizir, also discharging an arrow, and protected by the shield of a second warrior, an archer kneeling, and an archer and his shield-bearer in complete armour, standing. They were followed by a chariot, in which a charioteer was standing, whilst the horses were

* 2 Chron. xxvi. 15, and Josephus, lib. ix. c. 10.

† 2 Kings, xvii. 6.

held by a groom. Behind the chariot were two warriors, each carrying a bow and a mace. The shields represented in this bas-relief were probably made of wicker-work, and were chiefly used during a siege. They were large enough to cover the whole person of the archer, who was thus able to discharge his arrows in comparative security. Such may have been the bucklers which Herodotus describes as forming a complete fence before the Persian archers at the battle of Plataea.*

The three following bas-reliefs represented the king receiving captives, apparently of the same nation as those portrayed in another part of the hall, and already described. Behind the chariot of the king were two other chariots, each containing a charioteer, passing under the walls of a castle, on which were women, apparently viewing the procession.

In these bas-reliefs the harness and trappings of the horses and chariots are remarkable for their richness and even elegance. The heads of the horses are adorned with plumes and fanciful crests, and with long ribands or streamers, which were probably of many colours. Like the Arabs and Persians of the present day, the Assyrians appear to have been lavish of tassels of silk and wool, which were attached to all parts of the harness, as were also small bells and ornaments in ivory, many of which were afterwards found in the ruins. The bridle consisted of a headstall, a strap divided into three parts joining the bit, and straps over the forehead, under the cheeks, and behind the ears. We find sacred emblems used as ornaments in the trappings of horses, as on the robes of figures; the winged bull, the sun, moon, stars, and horned cap being frequently introduced. They were probably of ivory, gold, and copper, or sometimes worked on cloth or silk.

Three richly embroidered straps, passing round the body of the horse, kept the harness and chariot-pole in their places, and were attached to a highly decorated breast-band. To the yoke was suspended an elegant ornament, in the form of the head of an animal, and a ring which generally enclosed a winged bull, a star, or some other sacred device.

* Lib. ix. c. 61.

Embroidered trappings, such as are described by Ezekiel* as *the precious clothes for chariots*, coming from Dedan, covered the backs of the horses. Their bits, as well as the metal used in the harness, may frequently have been of gold and other precious materials, like those of the ancient Persians.† Their manes were either allowed to fall loosely on the neck or were plaited, and their tails were tied in the middle with ribands adorned with tassels.

In the Bible frequent mention is made of the use of chariots and horsemen both in sieges and battles, as represented in the Assyrian sculptures. ‘The choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall *set themselves in array against the gate.*’‡ Amongst the tributaries of the Assyrians, the Elamites were celebrated for their *chariots carrying archers.*§ The Jewish kings appear to have granted certain privileges to cities equipping chariots, hence called ‘chariot cities,’ which in the time of Solomon supplied no less than one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen.|| It is probable that these chariots were similar in form to those represented in the Assyrian sculptures. Chariots of iron were used in Palestine from the earliest period, and before the Jewish occupation of the country. They appear to have been so formidable in war, that the Israelites were long unable to contend against them.¶

The three remaining bas-reliefs, representing the passage of a river, were highly interesting and curious. In the first was a boat containing a chariot, in which stood the king. In one hand he held two arrows, in the other a bow. An eunuch, standing in front of the chariot, appeared to point to some object in the distance, perhaps the stronghold of the enemy. Behind the chariot was a second eunuch, holding a bow and mace. The boat was towed by two naked men; four men sat at the oars, and another rowed and steered with an oar with a broad flat end, attached to a thick wooden pin at the stern. This is precisely the kind of vessel used by the

* Chap. xxvii. 20.

† 1 Esdras, iii. 6; Xenophon, Cyrop. lib. i. c. 3.

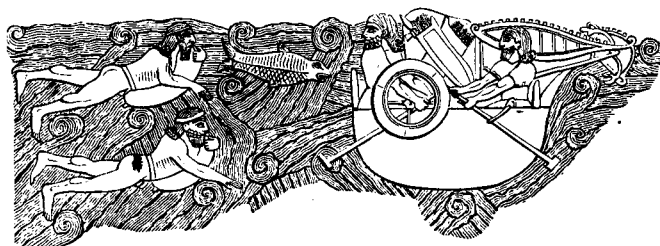
‡ Isaiah, xxii. 7.

§ Isaiah, xxii. 6.

|| 2 Chron. i. 14; Isaiah, xxii.

¶ Judges, i. 19, and iv. 3.

natives of Mosul to this day for crossing the Tigris ; and such probably were the Babylonian boats described by Herodotus, constructed of willow-boughs and covered with skins. A man, standing in the vessel, held the halters of four horses, which were swimming over the stream. In the water was a naked man supporting himself on an inflated skin, and paddling with his hands. This bas-relief, with the exception of the king and the chariot, might represent a scene daily witnessed, even now, on the banks of the Tigris, —probably the river here represented. On the next slab were two smaller boats ; one carrying the couch of the king and a jar or large vessel ; the other an empty chariot : they were impelled by two rowers, seated face to face. Five men, two leading horses by their halters, were swimming, supported



A Boat carrying a Chariot, and Men swimming on inflated Skins
(N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

on inflated skins. On the third slab was represented men embarking chariots and preparing to cross the river. Their proceedings were superintended by officers, one of whom, an eunuch, held a whip, which was probably used—as in the army of Xerxes—to keep the soldiers to their duty, and prevent them flying from the enemy.*

On the opposite side of the hall, between the entrances, only one slab was discovered in its original position. The upper compartment was almost completely defaced ; in the

* Herod. lib. vii. ch. 56, in which Xerxes is described as seeing his troops driven by blows over the bridge across the Hellespont ; it was also the custom for the officers to carry whips to drive the soldiers to battle (lib. vii. ch. 223).

lower was represented a battle between Assyrian warriors, in chariots, and the cavalry of the enemy. The conquered people wore high boots, turned up at the toes, and conical caps, probably of felt or linen. One of the mounted archers turned back, whilst his horse was at full speed, to discharge an arrow against his pursuers. This mode of fighting is de-



Flying Warrior turning back to discharge an Arrow. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

scribed by ancient authors as peculiar to the Parthian and Persian tribes, and is still practised by the irregular cavalry of Persia.*

* Anab. lib. iii. ch. 3.

‘Fidentemque fugâ Parthum, versisque sagittis.’

and Hor. Carm. lib. i. ode xix.

Virg. Georg. 3.

The Arabs employed in removing the rubbish from the chamber with the kneeling winged figures,* discovered a quantity of objects in iron, in which I soon recognised the scales of the armour represented in the sculptures. These scales were from two to three inches in length, rounded at one end, and square at the other, with a raised or embossed line in the centre, and had probably been fastened to a shirt of linen or felt. The iron was so eaten by rust, that I had much difficulty in detaching it from the soil. Two or three baskets were filled with these relics, which must have belonged to several suits of armour.●

As more earth was removed, other portions of armour were found. At length a perfect helmet of iron inlaid with copper bands, resembling in shape and in the ornaments the pointed helmet represented in the bas-reliefs, was discovered.

Several helmets of other shapes, some with arched crests, were also dug out; but they fell to pieces almost as soon as exposed to the air; and I was only able to collect a few of the fragments. This armour had probably belonged to Assyrian warriors who had fallen in defence of the palace I was exploring, when Nineveh was captured for the last time and destroyed never to rise again.†

Several slabs in this chamber had fallen from their places, and were broken. Beneath them were the fragments of

Inscription on Fragment of Pottery from Nimroud.

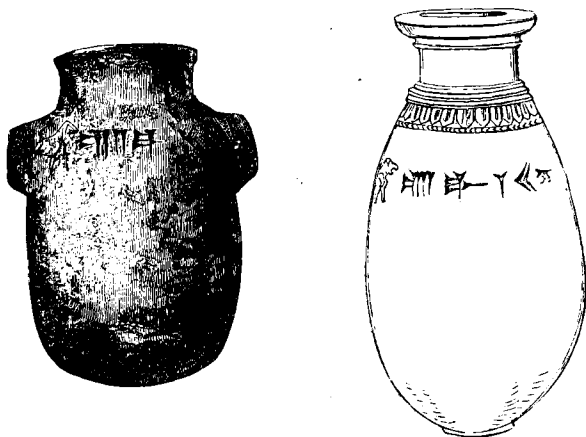
several alabaster vases and vessels of baked clay. Upon bits of pottery were painted characters resembling the rounded letters of Babylonia and Phœnicia, probably a cursive writing in common use in Assyria, like the demotic character in Egypt; whilst the cuneiform, like the hieroglyphic, was prin-

* Chamber I, Plan II. p. 42.

† Such remains of the armour and helmets as could be preserved are now in the British Museum.

cipally reserved for monumental inscriptions. The earthen vases were of a light yellow colour, with bars, zig-zag lines, and simple designs in black rudely painted upon them.

Whilst I was collecting and examining these curious relics, a workman found a perfect vase; but, unfortunately, broke the upper part by striking it with his pick. I took the instrument, and, working cautiously myself, was rewarded by the discovery of two perfect vases, one in alabaster, the other in glass. On each were engraved the name and title, written in cuneiform characters, of Sargon, the king who built the Khorsabad palace, and the figure of a lion. They may have



Glass and Alabaster Vases bearing the name of Sargon. (From Nimroud.)

been used to hold some ointment or cosmetic. The glass vase is the most ancient specimen of *transparent* glass with which we are acquainted, the inscription upon it enabling us to fix its date, about 720 B.C. No Egyptian glass of the same kind is believed to be older than the time of the Psamettici, or the end of the sixth or beginning of the fifth century B.C. Opaque coloured glass was, however, manufactured at a much earlier period, some existing specimens being referred to the 15th century B.C. The Sargon vase was blown in one solid

piece, and then shaped and hollowed out by a turning machine, of which the marks are still visible. A kind of exfoliation had taken place on its surface, which was incrustated with thin, semi-transparent lamina, glowing with the brilliant colours of the opal. This beautiful appearance is a well-known result of age, and is found on glass from Egyptian, Greek, and other early tombs. Both the glass and alabaster vases are now in the British Museum.*

In the lower compartment of a slab in the same chamber were two beardless figures, which, from a certain feminine character in the features, and from a cluster of long curls falling down their backs, appeared to be women. They wore the usual horned cap and had wings. They faced one another, and between them was the sacred tree. In one hand they held a garland or chaplet; and wore round their necks a necklace, with seven stars.†

The adjoining chamber was panelled with unsculptured slabs, and contained no object of particular interest.

About this time a most remarkable discovery was made in the centre of the mound, where, as I have already mentioned,‡ a pair of gigantic winged bulls appeared to form the entrance to a building. The inscriptions upon them contained a royal name, differing from that of the king of the N.W. palace. On digging further I found a brick, on which was a genealogy, the new name occurring first, as that of the son of Sardana-palus, the founder of the earlier edifice.§

I dug round these sculptures, expecting to find the remains of walls, but there were no other traces of building. As the backs of the slabs were completely covered with inscriptions, in large and well-formed characters, it was possible that these bulls might originally have stood alone. Suspecting that there must have been other sculptures near them, I

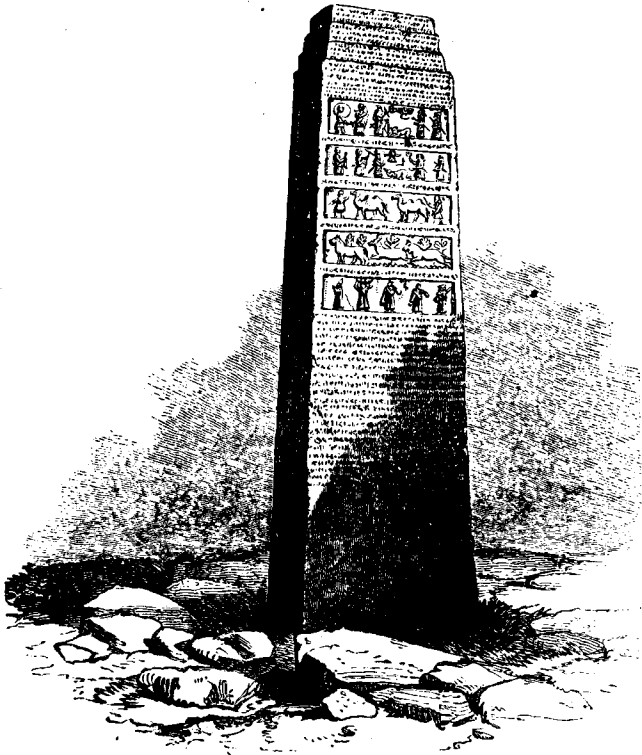
* The glass vase is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches high; the alabaster vase 7 inches.

† This bas-relief is in the British Museum.

‡ Pp. 32, 33.

§ The name of this king, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, is 'Shalman-ussur' (Shalamezar); according to Dr. Hincks, 'Divanubara'; according to M. Oppert, 'Salman-Asir.' A similar royal name occurs in earlier inscriptions, and this king is believed to be the second, or even the third, who bore it.

directed a deep trench to be opened, at right angles, behind the northern bull. After digging to the distance of about ten feet, the workmen came upon a colossal winged deity or priest in low relief, lying flat on the brick pavement. Beyond was a similar figure, still more gigantic in its propor-

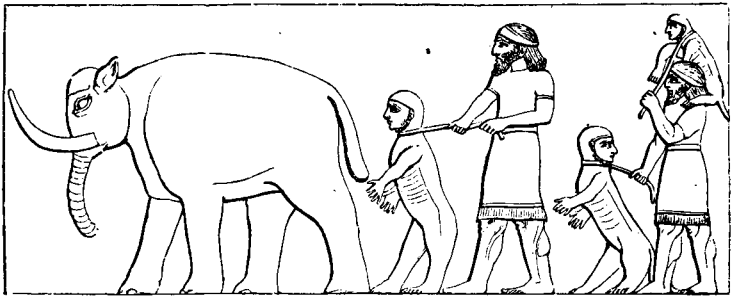


The Obelisk in Black Marble, discovered at Nimroud.

tions, being about fourteen feet high. The beard and part of the legs of a winged bull, in yellow limestone, were next found. The trench was carried in the same direction to the distance of fifty feet, but without any other discoveries being made. I had business in Mosul, and was giving directions to the workmen to guide them during my absence. Stand-

ing on the edge of the hitherto unprofitable trench, I doubted whether I should carry it any further; but made up my mind at last not to abandon it until my return, which would be on the following day. I mounted my horse, but had scarcely left the mound when the corner of an object in black marble was uncovered, ten feet below the surface.

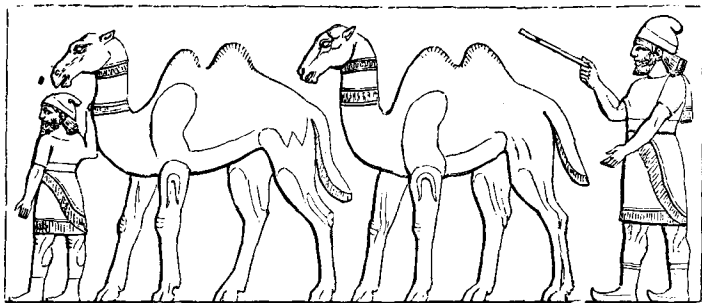
An Arab was sent after me without delay, to announce the discovery; and on my return I found, completely exposed to view, and lying on its side, an obelisk, about six feet six inches in height, terminated by three steps or gradines and flat at the top. I descended eagerly into the trench, and was immediately struck by the singular appearance, and evident antiquity, of the remarkable monument before me. We raised it and speedily dragged it out of the ruins. On each of the four faces were five small bas-reliefs, and above, below, and between them was carved an inscription 210 lines in



Elephant and Monkeys. (Obelisk, Nimroud.)

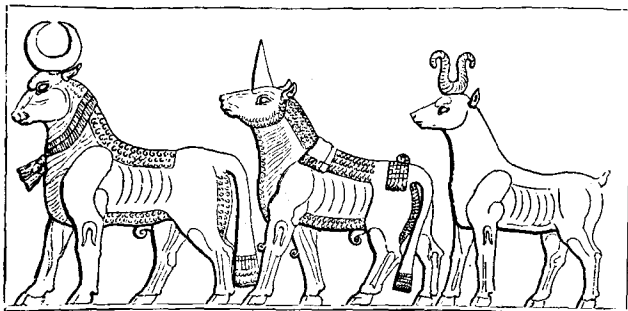
length, the whole in the most perfect preservation. The king was twice represented followed by his attendants; a prisoner crouched at his feet, and his vizir and eunuchs were bringing before him captives and tributaries carrying bars of gold and silver, and other metals, vases, shawls, bundles of rare wood, elephant's tusks, and other objects of tribute, and leading various animals, such as the elephant, rhinoceros, Bactrian or two-humped camel, antelope, horse, wild bull, and several kinds of monkeys. In one bas-relief were two lions hunting a stag in a wood, probably to denote the nature of one of

the countries conquered by the king. From the animals portrayed, particularly the double-humped camel*, and the



Bactrian or Two-humped Camels. (Obelisk, Nimroud.)

elephant, which, from the size of the ear and other distinctive characteristics, is evidently of the Indian and not of the



The Bull, the Rhinoceros, and an Antelope. (Obelisk, Nimroud.)

African species, the obelisk appears to commemorate the conquest of nations far to the east of Assyria, extending to the Indian peninsula. The king, whose deeds it records,

* This animal is a native of the great steppes inhabited by the Tatar tribes. It is almost unknown to the Arabs, and is rarely seen to the west of Persia, except amongst a few isolated families of Turcomans, who now pitch their tents in the north of Syria, and probably brought this camel with them on their first migration.

raised the centre palace at Nimroud, and his name is found on the great human-headed bulls which I had previously



Baboon and Ape. (Obelisk, Nimroud.)

discovered amidst its ruins. He is believed to have been called Shalmaneser, but he must not be confounded with the Assyrian king of the same name mentioned in the Book of Kings, who led away into captivity the people of Samaria, and reigned about one hundred years later.

It would appear that the inscription on the obelisk records, in brief and terse phraseology, the annals of thirty-two years of his reign, and twenty-five successful campaigns against the nations and tribes bordering on the Assyrian empire, including the Babylonians, Chaldæans, Armenians, Hittites, and the people of Damascus, and other parts of Syria; and the monarch claims to have received tribute from the cities of Tyre and Sidon, and from the Israelites. Amongst the royal names belonging to this period, which are familiar to us from their mention in the Bible, two are found in the inscription—that of Hazael, king of Syria, and of Jehu, king of Samaria, who is called the son, probably meaning the descendant, of Omri. The city of Samaria is termed, after a common Eastern figure of speech, ‘Beth Omri,’ the house of Omri, after its founder.* Jehu is declared to have

* In another inscription, similar in other respects to a part of the inscription on the obelisk, we have the name of Samaria instead of Beth Omri; thus affording a striking corroboration of the general accuracy of the interpretation of the cuneiform character.

sent tribute consisting principally of gold and silver in bars, and vessels in the precious metals, to Shalmanezar, and two of the bas-reliefs on the obelisk are believed to represent the



Captive, supposed to be a Jewish Chief, before Assyrian King.

chief ambassador of Jehu prostrating himself before the Assyrian king, and Israelites bearing the various objects of tribute sent by him to Nineveh.*



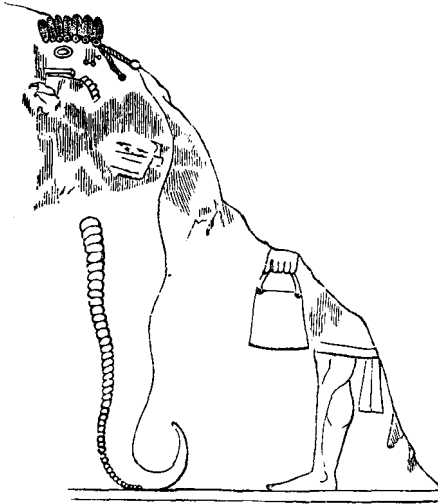
Captives, supposed to be Jews, bearing Tribute.

But the identification appears to me very questionable. I doubt whether this peculiar head-dress—the pointed cap

* Rawlinson's 'Ancient Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 365.

turned back at the top, and the boots with the toes turned up—were worn by the Israelites. It belonged more probably to some race living to the north of Assyria.* The turban, or a fillet round the temples, seems to have been more characteristic of the inhabitants of southern Syria.

In the S.W. corner, discoveries of scarcely less interest and importance were made almost at the same time. The southern entrance to the palace was formed by a pair of winged human-headed lions, of which the upper parts, including the heads, had been almost entirely destroyed. They differed in many respects from those in the N.W. palace. They had four legs instead of five; the material in which they were sculptured was a coarse limestone, and not alabaster; and



Figures on Lions. (S. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

behind the body of the lion, and in front above its wings, upon the same slab, were several figures, which were unfortunately greatly injured, and could with difficulty be traced. The figures behind were a kind of dragon with the head of

* Captives or tributaries bringing monkeys were represented in this dress on a slab in the north-west palace (see p. 88).

an eagle and the claws of a bird, followed by a man carrying the usual square vessel, standing above a human figure, the upper part of which was destroyed in all the sculptures; and a priest bearing a pole surmounted by a fir cone. Those in front were a human figure, and a monster with the head of a lion, the body of a man, and the feet of a bird, raising a sword.

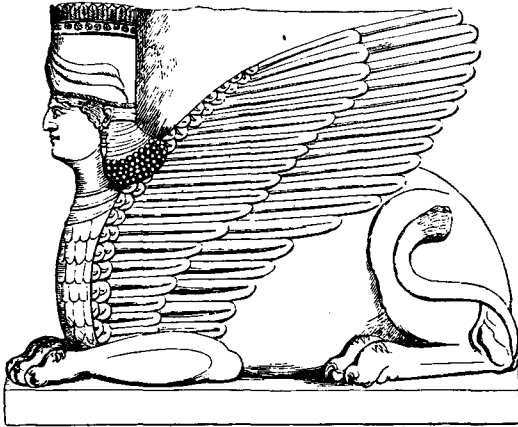


Figures on Lions. (S. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

Between the two human-headed lions, forming this entrance, were a pair of crouching sphinxes, not in relief, but entire. The human head was beardless; and the horned cap square, and highly ornamented at the top, like that of the winged bulls of Khorsabad. The body was that of a winged lion. These sphinxes may have been altars for sacrifice or offerings, or they may have been the bases of wooden columns.

The whole entrance was buried in charcoal, and had evidently been destroyed by fire. One of the sphinxes had been nearly reduced to lime; but the other, although cracked into a thousand pieces, was still standing when uncovered.

I endeavoured to secure it with rods of iron and wooden planks ; but the alabaster was too much calcined to resist exposure to the atmosphere. I had scarcely time to make a drawing of it before the whole fell into fragments, too small to admit of their being collected with a view to future restoration. The sphinxes, when entire, were about five feet in height, and the same in length.



Sphinx from S. W. Palace. (Nimroud.)

Buried in the charcoal was found a small head in alabaster, with the high horned cap, precisely similar to that of the large sphinxes ; and subsequently the body was dug out, giving thus a complete model of the larger sculptures.* In the same place I discovered the figures of two lions, united and forming a kind of pedestal, like the crouching sphinx ; but the human heads were wanting, and the rest of the sculpture had been so much injured by fire, that I was unable to preserve it.

The plan of the edifice in which these discoveries were made could not yet be determined. All the slabs uncovered had evidently been brought from another building ; chiefly from the N. W. palace. The entrance I have just described

* Now in the British Museum.

proved this beyond a doubt, as it enabled me to distinguish between the back and front of the walls. I was now convinced that the sculptures hitherto found had not been exposed to view in the ancient building; but had been placed *against* the wall of sun-dried bricks; the backs of the slabs, smoothed preparatory to being sculptured, having been turned towards the interior of the chambers. This showed that the materials used in the palace I was exploring had been employed in ornamenting another edifice.

There were no inscriptions between the legs of the lions just described, as in other buildings at Nimroud and Khorsabad. I had not before found sculptures unaccompanied by the name and genealogy of the founder of the edifice in which they had been placed. When no inscription was on the face, it was invariably on the back of the slab. I dug, therefore, at the back of the lions, and was not disappointed in my search; a few lines in the cuneiform character were discovered, containing the names of three kings in genealogical series. The name of the first king nearly resembled that of the builder of the N. W. palace, or Sardanapalus; that of his father was identical with the name on the bricks found in the ruins opposite Mosul; and that of his grandfather with the name of the founder of Khorsabad. These royal names are well-known to be those of Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esar-haddon, who was consequently the founder of the south-west palace at Nimroud.*

Whilst excavations were thus successfully carried on amongst the centre ruins, and those of the two palaces first uncovered, discoveries of a different nature were made in the S. E. corner, which was much higher than any other part of the mound. I dug to a considerable depth, without meeting with any other remains than fragments of inscribed bricks and pottery, and a few entire earthen vessels. At length part of a slab bearing a royal name similar to that on the bull in the centre of the mound, was found at some depth beneath the surface. On raising it to copy the inscription, I found that it had been used as a lid to an

* The Assyrian form of Esar-haddon appears to be Asshur-akh-iddina, or Assur-akh-iddin.

earthen sarcophagus, which, with its contents, was still entire beneath. The sarcophagus was about five feet in length, and very narrow. The skeleton was well preserved, but fell to pieces almost immediately when exposed to the air ; by its sides were two jars in baked clay of a red colour,



Nestorian and Arab Workmen, with Jar discovered at Nimroud.

and a small alabaster bottle, such as were used by the ancients to hold ointments. There was no clue to the date of the sepulchre, but there is reason to believe that it belonged to a period much more recent than the Assyrian ;

probably to the time of the Roman occupation, when the ruins of Nineveh had long been buried. Many similar tombs were subsequently discovered in the Assyrian mounds and above Assyrian ruins.

The sarcophagus was too small to contain a man of ordinary size if stretched at full length; and it was evident, from the position of the skeleton, that the body had been doubled up. A second earthen case was soon found, resembling a dish-cover in shape, and scarcely four feet long. In it were also vases of baked clay, and it was closed by an inscribed slab like the sarcophagus first discovered. Although the skulls were entire when first exposed to view, they crumbled into dust as soon as an attempt was made to move them.

The six weeks following the commencement of excavations upon a large scale were amongst the most prosperous, and fruitful in results, during my researches in Assyria. Every day produced some new discovery. The Arabs entered with zeal into the work, and felt almost as much interested in it as I did myself. They were now well organised, and I had no difficulty in managing them. Even their private disputes and domestic quarrels were referred to me. They found this a cheaper fashion of settling their differences than litigation; and I have reason to hope that they received an ampler measure of justice than they could have expected at the hands of his reverence the Cadi. The tents had greatly increased in numbers, as the relatives of those who were engaged in the excavations came to Nimroud and swelled the encampment; for although they received no pay, they managed to live upon the gains of their friends. They were, moreover, preparing to glean,—in the event of there being any crops in the spring,—and to take possession of little strips of land along the banks of the river, for the cultivation of millet during the summer. They already began to make water-courses, and machines for irrigation. The mode of raising water in Mesopotamia is very simple. In the first place a high bank, which is never completely deserted by the river, is chosen, and a broad recess is cut in it down

to the water's edge. Over this recess are fixed three or four upright poles, according to the number of oxen to be employed, united at the top by rollers turning on a swivel, and supporting a large framework of boughs and grass, which extends to some distance behind, and is intended as a shelter from the sun. Over each roller are passed two ropes, one fastened to the mouth, and the other to the opposite end, of a leather sack, formed out of an entire bullock skin. These ropes are attached to oxen, who throw all their weight upon them by descending an inclined plane. A trough formed of wood, and lined with bitumen, or a shallow trench coated with matting, is constructed at the bottom of the poles to receive the water, and leads to a channel running into the fields. When the skin is drawn up to the roller, the ox turns round at the bottom of the inclined plane. The rope attached to the lower part of the bucket being fastened to the back part of the animal, he raises, in turning, the bottom of the skin, and the contents are poured into the trough. As the ox ascends, the bucket falls again, by its own weight, into the stream. Although this mode of irrigation is very toilsome, and requires the constant labour of men and animals, it is generally adopted on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. In this way all the gardens of Baghdad and Busrah are watered; and by such means the wandering Arabs, who condescend to cultivate the soil near the rivers—when famine is staring them in the face—raise a little millet to supply their immediate wants.

The principal public quarrels, over which my jurisdiction extended, related to property abstracted, by the Arabs, from one another's tents. This I disposed of in a summary manner, as I had provided myself with handcuffs; and Ibrahim Agha and the Bairakdar were always ready to act with energy and decision, to show how much they were devoted to my service. But the domestic dissensions were of a more serious nature, and their adjustment offered far greater difficulties. They related, of course, always to the women. As soon as a workman saved a few piastres, his thoughts were turned to the purchase of a

new wife, a striped cloak, and a spear. To accomplish this, his ingenuity was taxed to the utmost extent. The old wife naturally enough raised objections, and picked a quarrel with the intended bride, which generally ended in an appeal to physical force. Then the fathers and brothers were dragged into the affair; from them it extended to the various branches of the tribe, always anxious to fight for their own honour, and for the honour of their women. At other times, a man repented himself of his bargain, and refused to marry the woman to whom he had engaged himself; or a father, finding his future son-in-law increasing in wealth, demanded a higher price for his daughter—a breach of faith which would naturally lead to violent measures on the part of the disappointed lover. Then a workman, who had returned hungry from his work, and found his bread unbaked, or the water-skin still lying empty at the entrance of his tent, or the bundle of faggots for his evening fire yet ungathered, would, in a moment of passion, pronounce three times the awful sentence, and divorce his wife;* or, avoiding such extremities, would content himself with inflicting summary punishment with a tent-pole. In the first case he probably repented himself of the act an hour or two afterwards, and wished to be remarried; or endeavoured to prove that, being an ignorant man, he had mis-pronounced the formula, or omitted some words—both being good grounds to invalidate the divorce, and to obviate the necessity of any fresh ceremonies. But the mullah had to be summoned, witnesses called, and evidence produced. The beating was generally the most expeditious, and really, to the wife, the most satisfactory way of adjusting the quarrel. I had almost nightly to settle such questions as these. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who had obtained an immense influence over the Arabs, and was known amongst all the tribes, was directed to ascertain the merits of the story, and to collect the evidence. When this process had been completed, I summoned the elders and gave judgment in their presence. The culprit was

* According to the Mohammedan law, if a man pronounce three times the words, 'I divorce thee,' the marriage bond is dissolved.

punished summarily, or, in case of a disputed bargain, was made to pay more, or to refund, as the case required.

When I first employed the Arabs, the women were sorely ill-treated, and subjected to great hardships. I endeavoured to introduce some reform into their domestic arrangements, and punished severely those who inflicted corporal chastisement on their wives. In a short time the number of domestic quarrels was greatly reduced ; and the women, who were at first afraid to complain of their husbands, now boldly appealed to me for protection. They had, however, some misgivings as to the future, which were thus expressed by a deputation sent to return thanks after an entertainment :—‘ O Bey ! we are your sacrifice. May God reward you ! Have we not eaten wheaten bread, and even meat and butter, since we have been under your shadow ? Is there one of us that has not now a coloured kerchief for her head, bracelets, and ankle-rings, and a striped cloak ? But what shall we do when you leave us, which God forbid you ever should do ? Our husbands will then have their turn, and there will be nobody to help us.’

These poor creatures, like all Arab women, were exposed to constant hardships. They were obliged to look after the children, to make the bread, to fetch water, and to cut wood, which they brought home from afar on their heads. Moreover they were entrusted with all the domestic duties, wove their wool and goats’ hair into clothes, carpets, and tent-canvass ; and were left to strike and raise the tents, and to load and unload the beasts of burden when they changed their encamping ground. If their husbands possessed sheep or cows, they had to drive them to the pastures, and to milk them at night. When moving, they carried their children at their backs during the march, and were even troubled with this burden when employed in their domestic occupations, if the children were too young to be left alone. The men sat indolently by, smoking their pipes, or listening to the gossip of some stray Arab of the desert. At first the women, whose husbands encamped on the mound, brought water from the river ; but I relieved them from this labour by employing

horses and donkeys. The weight of a large sheep or goat's skin filled with water, is not inconsiderable. It is hung on the back by cords strapped over the shoulders, and upon it is frequently seated the child, who cannot be left in the tent, or is unable to follow its mother on foot. The bundles of fire-wood, brought from a considerable distance, were enormous, completely concealing the head and shoulders of those who tottered beneath them. And yet the women worked cheerfully, and it was seldom that their husbands had to complain of their idleness. Some were more active than others. There was a young girl named Hadla, who particularly distinguished herself, and was consequently sought in marriage by all the men. Her features were handsome, and her form erect, and exceedingly graceful. She carried the largest burdens, was never unemployed, and was accustomed, when she had finished the work imposed upon her by her mother, to assist her neighbours in completing theirs.

The dinners or breakfasts (for the meal comprised both) of the Arab workmen were brought to them at the mound, about eleven o'clock, by the children. Few had more than a loaf of millet bread, or millet made into a kind of paste, to satisfy their hunger: wheaten bread was a luxury. Sometimes their wives had found time to gather a few herbs, which were boiled in water with a little salt, and sent to them in wooden bowls; and in spring, curds and sour milk occasionally accompanied their bread. The little children, who carried their father's or brother's portion, came merrily along, and sat smiling on the edge of the trenches, or stood gazing in wonder at the sculptures, until they were sent back with the empty platters and bowls. The working parties eat together in the trenches in which they had been employed. A little water, drank out of a large jar, was their only beverage. Yet they were happy and joyous. The joke went round; or, during the short time they had to rest, one told a story, which, if not concluded at a sitting, was resumed on the following day. I have frequently heard the Arabian Nights' tales told in this manner. Sometimes a pedlar from Mosul, driving before him his donkey, laden with raisins or dried dates, would appear on the mound. Buying up his store, I would

distribute it amongst the men. This largess created an immense deal of satisfaction and enthusiasm, which any one, not acquainted with the character of the Arab, might have thought almost more than equivalent to the consideration.

The Arabs are naturally hospitable and generous. If one of the workmen was wealthy enough to buy a handful of raisins, or a piece of camel's or sheep's flesh, or if he had a cow, which occasionally yielded him butter or sour milk, he would immediately call his friends together to partake of his feast. I was frequently invited to such entertainments; the whole dinner, perhaps, consisting of a dozen dates or raisins spread out wide, to make the best show, upon a corn-sack; a pat of butter upon a corner of a flat loaf; and a few cakes of dough baked in the ashes. And yet the repast was ushered in with every solemnity;—the host turned his dirty keffieh, or head-kerchief, and his cloak, in order to look clean and smart; appearing both proud of the honour conferred upon him, and of his means to meet it in a proper fashion.

I frequently feasted the workmen, and sometimes their wives and daughters were invited to separate entertainments, as they would not eat in public with the men. Generally of an evening, after the labours of the day were finished, some Kurdish musicians would stroll to the village with their instruments, and a dance would be commenced, which lasted through the greater part of the night. Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman, or some Sheikh of a neighbouring tribe, occasionally joined us; or an Arab from the Khabour, or from the more distant tribes of the desert, would pass through Nimroud, and entertain a large circle of curious and excited listeners with stories of recent fights, plundering expeditions, or the murder of a chief. I endeavoured, as far as it was in my power, to create a good feeling amongst all, and to obtain their willing co-operation in my work. I believe that I was to some extent successful.

The Nestorian diggers resided chiefly on the mound, where I had built a large hut for them. A few only returned at night to the village. Many of them had brought their wives from the mountains. The women made bread, and cooked

for all. Two of the men walked to the village of Tel Yakoub, or to Mosul, on Saturday evening, to fetch flour for the whole party, and returned before the work of the day began on Monday morning; for they would not journey on the Sabbath. They kept their holidays and festivals with as much rigour as they kept the Sunday. On these days they assembled on the mound or in the trenches; and one of the priests or deacons (for there were several amongst the workmen) repeated prayers, or led a hymn or chant. I often watched these poor creatures, as they reverentially knelt—their heads uncovered—under the great bulls, celebrating the praises of Him whose temples the worshippers of those frowning idols had destroyed,—whose power they had mocked. It was the triumph of truth over paganism. Never had that triumph been more forcibly illustrated than by those who now bowed down in the crumbling halls of the Assyrian kings.

I experienced some difficulty in settling disputes between the Arabs and the Nestorians, which frequently threatened to finish in bloodshed. The Mussulmans were always ready, on the slightest provocation, to bestow upon the Chaldæans the abuse usually reserved in the East for Christians. But the hardy mountaineers took these things differently from the humble Rayahs of the plain, and retorted with epithets very harsh to a Mohammedan's ear. This, of course, led to the drawing of sabres and priming of matchlocks; and it was not until I had inflicted a few summary punishments, that some check was placed upon these disorders.

On Sunday, sheep were slain for the Nestorian workmen, and they feasted during the afternoon. When at night there were music and dances, they would sometimes join the Arabs; but generally performed a quiet dance with their own women, with more decorum, and less vehemence, than their more excitable companions.

As for myself I rose at day-break, and, after a hasty breakfast, rode to the mound. Until night I was engaged in drawing the sculptures, copying and taking casts of the inscriptions, and superintending the excavations, and the removal and packing of the bas-reliefs. On my return to the village, I was occupied till past midnight in comparing the

inscriptions I had copied with the paper impressions, in finishing drawings, and in preparing for the work of the following day. Such was our manner of life during the excavations at Nimroud ; and I owe an apology to the reader for entering into such details. They may, however, be interesting, as illustrative of the character of the genuine Arab, with whom the traveller is seldom brought so much into contact as I have been.

Early in December a sufficient number of bas-reliefs were collected to load another raft, and I consequently rode into Mosul to make preparations for sending a second cargo to Baghdad. I had soon procured all that was necessary for the purpose ; and loading a small raft with spars and skins for the construction of a larger raft, and with mats and felts for packing the sculptures, I returned to Nimroud.

The raft-men having left Mosul late in the day, and not reaching the Awai until after nightfall, were afraid to cross the dam in the dark ; they therefore tied the raft to the shore, and went to sleep. They were attacked during the night, and plundered. I appealed to the Turkish authorities, but in vain. The Arabs of the desert, they said, were beyond their reach. If this robbery passed unnoticed, the remainder of my property, and even my person, might run some risk. Besides, I did not relish the reflection, that the mats and felts destined for my sculptures were now furnishing the tents of some Arab Sheikh. Three or four days elapsed before I ascertained who were the robbers. They belonged to a small tribe encamping at some distance from Nimroud—notorious in the country for their thieving propensities, and the dread of my Jebours, whose cattle were continually disappearing in a very mysterious fashion. Having learnt the position of their tents, I started off one morning at dawn, accompanied by Ibrahim Agha, the Bairakdar, and a horseman, who was in my service. We reached the encampment after a long ride, and found the number of the Arabs to be greater than I had expected. The arrival of strangers drew together a crowd, which gathered round the tent of the Sheikh, where I seated myself. A slight bustle was apparent in the part of it reserved for the women. I soon perceived that attempts

were being made to hide various ropes and felts, the ends of which, protruding from under the canvass, I had little difficulty in recognising. 'Peace be with you!' said I, addressing the Sheikh, who showed by his countenance that he was not altogether ignorant of the object of my visit. 'Your health and spirits are, please God, good. We have long been friends, although it has never yet been my good fortune to see you. I know the laws of friendship; that which is my property is your property, and the contrary. But there are a few things, such as mats, felts, and ropes, which come from afar, and are very necessary to me, whilst they can be of little use to you; otherwise God forbid that I should ask for them. You will greatly oblige me by giving these things to me.' 'As I am your sacrifice, O Bey,' answered he, 'no such things as mats, felts, or ropes were ever in my tents (I observed a new rope supporting the principal pole). Search, and if such things be found, we give them to you willingly.' 'Wallah! the Sheikh has spoken the truth,' exclaimed all the bystanders. 'That is exactly what I want to ascertain; and as this is a matter of doubt, the Pasha must decide between us,' replied I, making a sign to the Bairakdar, who had been duly instructed how to act. In a moment he had handcuffed the Sheikh, and, jumping on his horse, dragged the Arab, at an uncomfortable pace, out of the encampment. 'Now, my sons,' said I, mounting leisurely, 'I have found a part of that which I wanted; you must search for the rest.' They looked at one another in amazement. One man, more bold than the rest, was about to seize the bridle of my horse; but the weight of Ibrahim Agha's courbatch across his back, drew his attention to another object. Although the Arabs were well armed, they were too much surprised to make any attempt at resistance; or perhaps they feared too much for their Sheikh, still jolting away at an uneasy pace in the iron grasp of the Bairakdar, who had put his horse to a brisk trot, and held his pistol cocked in one hand. The women, swarming out of the tents, now took part in the matter. Gathering round my horse, they kissed the tails of my coat and my shoes, making the most dolorous supplications. I was not to be moved, however; and extricating myself with difficulty from the crowd,

I rejoined the Bairakdar, who was hurrying on his prisoner with evident good will.

The Sheikh had already made himself well known to the authorities by his dealings with the villages, and there was scarcely a man in the country who could not bring forward a specious claim against him—either for a donkey, a horse, a sheep, or a copper kettle. He was consequently most averse to an interview with the Pasha, and looked with evident horror on the prospect of a journey to Mosul. I added considerably to his alarm, by dropping a few friendly hints on the advantage of the dreary subterranean lock-up house under the governor's palace, and of the pillory and sticks. By the time he reached Nimroud, he was fully alive to his fate, and deemed it prudent to make a full confession. He sent an Arab to his tents; and next morning an ass appeared in my court-yard bearing the missing property, with the addition of a lamb and a kid, by way of a conciliatory offering. I dismissed the Sheikh with a lecture, and had afterwards no reason to complain of him or of his tribe,—nor indeed of any tribes in the neighbourhood; for the story got abroad, and was improved by several horrible details of the tortures inflicted upon the chief, which could only be traced to the imagination of the Arabs, but which served to produce the effect I desired—a proper respect for my property.

During the winter Mr. Longworth,* and two other English travellers, visited me at Nimroud. They were the only Europeans (except Mr. Ross) who saw the ruins when uncovered.†

I was riding home from the ruins one evening with Mr. Longworth. The Arabs returning from their day's work were following a flock of sheep belonging to the people of the village, shouting their war-cry, flourishing their swords, and indulging in the most extravagant gesticulations. My friend, less acquainted with the excitable temperament of the children of the desert than myself, was somewhat amazed

* Now H. M. Consul-General at Belgrade, and the author of an interesting work on Circassia.

† Mr. H. Danby Seymour was also with me at Nimroud, but before the excavations were in an advanced stage.

at these violent proceedings, and desired to learn their cause. I asked one of the most active of the party. 'O Bey,' they exclaimed almost all together, 'God be praised, we have eaten butter and wheaten bread under your shadow, and are content—but an Arab is an Arab. It is not for a man to carry about dirt in baskets, and to use a spade all his life; he should be with his sword and his mare in the desert. We are sad as we think of the days when we plundered the Aneyza, and we must have excitement, or our hearts would break. Let us then believe that these are the sheep we have taken from the enemy, and that we are driving them to our tents!' And off they ran, raising their wild cry and flourishing their swords, to the no small alarm of the shepherd, who, seeing his sheep scampering in all directions, did not seem inclined to enter into the joke.

By the middle of December, a second cargo of sculptures was ready to be sent to Baghdad. I was again obliged to have recourse to the buffalo-carts of the Pasha; and as none of the bas-reliefs and objects to be moved were of great weight, these rotten and unweildy vehicles could be patched up for the occasion. On Christmas-day I had the satisfaction of seeing a raft, bearing twenty-three cases, in one of which was the black obelisk, floating down the river. I watched them until they were out of sight, and then galloped into Mosul to celebrate the festivities of the season, with the few Europeans whom duty or business had collected together in this remote corner of the globe.

CHAPTER X.

Death of Tahyar Pasha—Discoveries in the north-west palace—Ivory ornaments and cartouches with hieroglyphics—Painted chambers—Pottery—Discovery of upper chambers—Paintings on the walls—Pavement slabs—Discoveries in the centre of the mound—Tombs containing vases and ornaments—Sculptures—Further discoveries in the south-west edifice—Sculptures—Discovery of more tombs in the south-east corner—Of chambers beneath them—Of a vaulted room.

As I was drawing one morning at the mound, Ibrahim Agha came to me, with his eyes full of tears, and announced the death of Tahyar Pasha. The Cawass had followed the fortunes of the late Governor of Mosul almost since childhood, and was looked upon as a member of his family. Like other Turks of his class, he had been devoted to the service of his patron, and was treated more like a companion than a servant. In no country in the world are ties of this nature more close than in Turkey; nowhere does there exist a better feeling between the master and the servant, and the master and the slave.

I was much grieved at the sudden death of Tahyar Pasha; for he was a man of gentle and kindly manners, just and considerate in his government, and of considerable information and learning for a Turk. The cause of his death showed his integrity. His troops had plundered a friendly tribe, falsely represented to him as rebellious by his principal officers, who were anxious to have an opportunity of enriching themselves with the spoil. When he learnt the truth, and that the tribe, so far from being hostile, were peaceably pasturing their flocks on the banks of the Khabour, he exclaimed, 'You have destroyed my house' (*i. e.* its honour); and, without speaking again, died of a broken heart. He was buried in the court-yard of the principal mosque at

Mardin. A simple but elegant tomb, surrounded by flowers and evergreens, was raised over his remains ; and an Arabic inscription records the virtues and probable reward of one of the most honest and amiable men that it has been my lot, in a life of some experience amongst men of various kinds, to meet. I visited his monument when returning to Constantinople. From the lofty terrace, where it stands, the eye wanders over the vast plains of Mesopotamia, stretching to the Euphrates,—in spring one great meadow, covered with the tents and flocks of Kurdish and Arab tribes.

The Kiayah, or chief secretary, was chosen Governor of the province by the council, until the Porte could name a new Pasha, or take other steps for the administration of affairs. Essad Pasha, who had lately been at Beyrout, was at length appointed to succeed Tahyar, and soon after reached his pashalic. These changes did not affect my proceedings. Armed with my vizirial letter I was able to defy the machinations of the Cadi and the Ulema, who did not cease their endeavours to throw obstacles in my way.

After Christmas I returned to Nimroud, and the excavations were again carried on with activity.

The N. W. palace was naturally the most interesting portion of the ruins, and to it were principally directed my researches. I had satisfied myself beyond a doubt that it was the most ancient building yet explored in Assyria ; although, not having been destroyed by fire, it was in a better state of preservation than any edifice hitherto discovered.

When the excavations were resumed after Christmas, eight chambers had been discovered. There were now so many outlets, and entrances, that I had no trouble in finding new chambers—one leading into another. By the end of the month of April I had uncovered almost the whole building ; and had opened twenty-eight halls and rooms cased with alabaster slabs. Although many new sculptures of considerable interest were found in them, still the principal part of the edifice seemed to have been that previously explored, where the best artists had evidently been employed upon the walls of the chambers, and the bas-reliefs excelled all those that had yet been discovered, in the elegance and finish of

the ornaments, and in the spirited delineation of the figures. In the other chambers were either winged figures, separated by the sacred tree, and resembling one another in every respect, or the standard inscription carved upon slabs without sculpture.

The colossal figure of a woman with four wings, carrying



The King. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

a garland, now in the British Museum, was discovered in a chamber on the south side of the palace,* as was also the

* In Chamber L, Plan II. In front of this figure was an earthen pipe connecting the floor of the chamber with a drain—the whole cemented

fine bas-relief of the king leaning on a wand or staff, one of the best preserved and most highly finished specimens of Assyrian sculpture in the national collection.

In the centre of the palace was a great hall, or rather court, for it had probably been without a roof, and open to the air, with entrances on the four sides, each formed by colossal human-headed lions and bulls. The slabs which panelled the walls were unsculptured, but upon each was the standard inscription.

To the south of this hall was a cluster of small chambers, opening into each other. At the entrance to one of them were two winged human figures wearing garlands, and carrying a wild goat and an ear of corn.* In another chamber were discovered a number of beautiful ivory ornaments now in the British Museum. These interesting relics adhered so tenaciously to the soil, and were so completely decomposed, that it was a task of great difficulty to remove them even in fragments. The ivory separated in flakes, or fell into powder. Consequently many were irretrievably lost, notwithstanding the care which was taken to collect the smallest pieces. Those preserved were restored in England by an ingenious process, which, replacing the gelatinous matter, and thus reuniting the decaying particles into one solid body, gave them the appearance and consistency of recent ivory.

The most interesting and important of these ivories are two small tablets, one nearly entire, the other much injured, on each of which are carved two sitting figures, holding in one hand the Egyptian sceptre or symbol of power. Between the figures is the cartouche or oval, which, in ancient Egyptian inscriptions, always surrounds a royal name. It contains a group of hieroglyphics, and is surmounted by a feather or plume, such as is seen on monuments of the eighteenth and subsequent dynasties of Egypt.† The robes of the figures,

with bitumen. It may have been used to carry off the blood of the sacrifices.

* One of these figures is in the British Museum.

† A 'cartouche' is the oval which contains a royal name in Egyptian inscriptions. Amongst the fragments of ivory described in the text were two cartouches, one in perfect preservation, and containing a name which



Figures and Cartouche with Hieroglyphics, on an Ivory Panel. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

the chairs on which they are seated, the hieroglyphics in the cartouche, and the feather above it, were enamelled with a blue substance let into the ivory; and the uncarved portions of the tablet, the cartouche, and part of the figures, were originally gilded,—remains of the gold leaf having been found still adhering to them. The forms, and style of art, have an Egyptian character; although there are certain peculiarities in the execution, and mode of treatment, that would seem to mark the work of a foreign, perhaps a Phœnician or Assyrian, artist. The same peculiarities characterised all the other ivory objects discovered. Several small human heads in frames, supported by low pillars, and the heads of lions and bulls, show not only a considerable acquaintance with art, but an intimate knowledge of the process of working in ivory. Upon some oblong tablets, found with them, were sculptured, with great delicacy, standing figures, with one hand elevated, and holding in the other a stem or staff, surmounted by an ornament resembling the Egyptian lotus. Scattered about were fragments of winged sphinxes, the head of a lion of singular beauty, which unfortunately fell to pieces, human heads, hands, legs, and feet, bulls, flowers, and scroll-work, all in ivory. In these fragments the spirit of the design and the delicacy of the workmanship are equally to be admired. Some may have belonged to a throne or chest, or may have decorated the walls or ceilings of the room. In the Old Testament we find frequent allusion to the employment of this beautiful material for ornaments both in architecture and on furniture. Ahab had an ivory house, and ivory palaces are mentioned in the Psalms. Solomon made a throne of ivory, and ivory beds are spoken of by the prophets.* The hands and feet probably belonged to entire

reads Aubnu-ra, or Auvnu-ra (? the shining sun); the other partly destroyed, and in which only three symbols, reading NTA, or NATH, remain. It is doubtful whether these cartouches contain the names of Assyrian kings expressed in Egyptian hieroglyphics, or the names of Egyptian deities. The names have not yet, I believe, been identified. These ivory tablets, together with other remains in the same material, are now in the British Museum.

* Compare 1 Kings, x. 18, and xxii. 39; Psalms, xlv. 8; Amos, iii. 15 and vi. 4.

human figures, the draped part of which was in wood or metal, like the chryselephantine statues of the Greeks, for which they may have originally furnished the model.

On two slabs, forming an entrance to a small chamber in this part of the building,* were inscriptions containing the name of Sargon, the king who built the Khorsabad palace. They had been cut above the usual standard inscription, to which they were evidently posterior, which proves, if further proof were needed, that the Nimroud palace is more ancient than that of Khorsabad.

In all the chambers to the south of the centre court were found copper vessels of peculiar shape ; but they fell to pieces almost immediately on exposure to the air, and I was unable to preserve one of them entire.

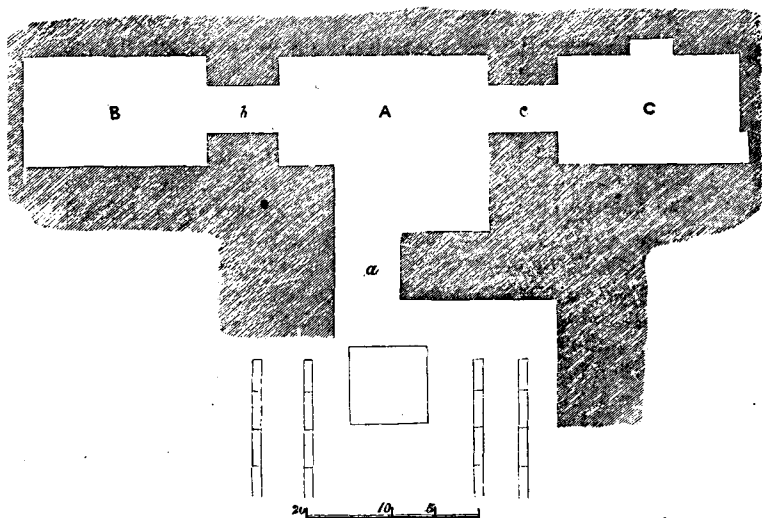
When the chambers panelled with alabaster slabs ceased, I was unable for some time to trace any remains of the building beyond. A brick pavement proved that the ruins did not end here, and on a careful examination it was found that we had entered chambers, the walls of which were of sun-dried bricks, covered with a coating of plaster, and painted with figures and ornaments. The colours had faded so completely, that scarcely any of the subjects or designs could be traced. It required the greatest care to separate the rubbish from the walls, without removing, at the same time, the thin plaster which fell off in flakes, notwithstanding all my efforts to preserve it. The subject of the paintings, as far as could be ascertained from the few fragments preserved, was the king, followed by eunuchs and warriors, receiving prisoners and tribute. The figures appear to have been merely drawn in black outline upon a blue ground, and I was unable to distinguish any other colours.

As the means at my disposal did not warrant any outlay in making mere experiments, without the certainty of the discovery of removable objects, I felt myself compelled, much against my inclination, to abandon the excavations in this part of the mound, after uncovering portions of two chambers. The doorway, which united them, was paved with one large

* Chamber U, Plan II. p. 42.

slab, ornamented with flowers and scroll-work. The flooring was of baked bricks.

On the western face of the great mound, to the south of the N. W. palace, there is a considerable elevation. To ascertain its contents, a trench was opened on a level with the platform. It was some time before I found that we were cutting into a kind of tower, or nest of upper chambers, constructed entirely of unbaked bricks, the walls being plastered, and elaborately painted. I explored three rooms, and part of a fourth on the southern side of this building.



PLAN III. Upper Chambers on the West Side of the Mound. (Nimroud.)

It is probable that there were four similar groups of chambers, facing the cardinal points. In front of the southern entrance* was a large square slab with slightly raised edges, similar to those frequently found in the N. W. palace. On two sides of it were laid narrow pieces of alabaster, forming parallel lines, which I can only compare to the rails of a rail-

* Entrance *a*, Plan III.

road. I cannot form any conjecture as to their use. The rooms had been more than once painted, and two distinct coats of plaster were visible on the walls. The outer coating, when carefully detached, left the under, on which the designs were different.

These painted ornaments were remarkable for their elegance. The Assyrian bull was introduced into them, sometimes with wings, sometimes without. Above the animals was a border resembling the battlements of castles in the sculptures, and below another border formed by squares and circles, tastefully arranged. The colours were blue, red, white, yellow, and black; and, although thus limited in number, were arranged with much taste and skill, the contrasts being carefully studied, and the combinations generally agreeable to the eye. The pale yellow ground, on which the designs were painted, resembled the tint on the walls of Egyptian monuments. A strong well-defined black outline is a peculiar feature in Assyrian as in Egyptian painting; black frequently combining with white alone, or alternating with other colours.

But the most important discovery, connected with these upper chambers, was that of the pavement slabs at two entrances. The inscriptions upon them contained the names of several kings, most of which were new, and are of much interest, as adding to the list of Assyrian monarchs.*

I could not ascertain whether there were any chambers, or remains of buildings, beneath this upper edifice; or whether it was part of a tower constructed on the solid outer wall. A deep trench was opened on the eastern side of it, and, about twenty feet below the surface, a pavement of brick and several square slabs of alabaster were uncovered; but these remains did not throw any light upon the nature of the building above; nor were they sufficient to show that the N. W. palace had been carried under it. To the south of it there were no re-

* One of these slabs is in the British Museum. According to Mr. Rawlinson ('Ancient Monarchies,' vol. ii. p. 381), the king who built the upper chambers, and whose name is found on these slabs, was called 'Iva-lush.' Sir Henry Rawlinson calls him at one time Vul-lush, at another, Yama-zala-khus; M. Oppert, Hu-likh-khus. There were, it would seem, three earlier kings bearing the same name.

mains of building, the platform of unbaked bricks being continued up to the level of the flooring of the chambers.

I had in vain endeavoured to find the walls and other remains of the palace which must at one time have stood in the centre of the mound. Except the colossal bulls, the obelisk, two winged figures, and a few fragments of yellow limestone, which appeared to have formed part of a gigantic human-headed bull or lion, no sculptures had yet been discovered there. Excavations to the south of the bulls disclosed a tomb built of bricks and closed by a slab of alabaster. It was about five feet in length, and scarcely more than eighteen inches in breadth in the interior. On removing the lid, parts of a skeleton were exposed to view; the skull and some of the larger bones were still entire, but soon crumbled into dust. A vase of reddish clay, with a long narrow neck, stood near the body, in an earthen dish of such delicate fabric, that I had great difficulty in moving it entire. Over the mouth of the vase was placed a bowl or cup, also of red clay. In the dust, which had accumulated round the skeleton, were found beads and small ornaments of opaque-coloured glass, agate, cornelian, and amethyst, apparently belonging to a necklace, to the end of which had been attached a small crouching lion of lapis lazuli. With the beads was a cylinder, on which was represented an Assyrian king in his chariot, hunting the wild bull, as in the bas-relief from the N. W. palace; a copper ornament resembling a modern seal, two bracelets of silver, and a pin for the hair. These remains show the tomb to be that of a female.*

On digging beyond this tomb, I found others, similarly constructed, and of the same size. In them were vases of highly glazed green pottery, elegant in shape, and in perfect preservation, copper mirrors, and copper lustral spoons. All these tombs probably belong to the Roman or Parthian period.†

* Most of the small objects discovered in the tombs, and described in the text, are now in the British Museum.

† The Rev. Mr. Rawlinson (*'Ancient Monarchies,'* vol. ii. pp. 207, 220) has given an engraving of one of these mirrors, and of a lustral spoon, and has assumed that they are Assyrian; but I have no doubt

About five feet beneath these tombs, I found the remains of a building. Walls of unbaked bricks could still be traced; but the alabaster slabs, with which they had been panelled,



Pottery found in the Tombs above the Ruins at Nimroud.*

had been removed and were heaped on the pavement. Slab succeeded to slab; and when I had removed nearly twenty tombs, and had cleared a space about fifty feet square, the ruins presented a very singular appearance. Above one hundred slabs were uncovered, placed in rows, one against the other, like the leaves of a gigantic book. Every slab was sculptured; and as they followed each other according to the subjects upon them, it was evident that they had been moved, in the order in which they stood, from their original positions; and had been left as they were found, preparatory to their removal elsewhere. That they had not been thus collected prior to their arrangement against the walls, was evident from the fact, that the Assyrian sculptors carved the bas-reliefs,

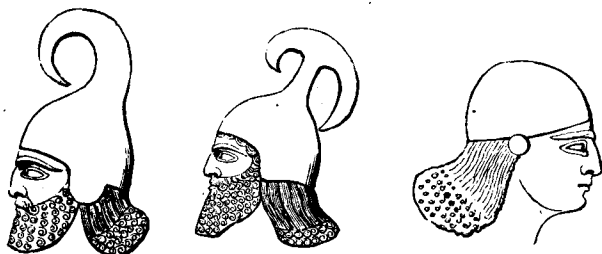
that all the contents of these tombs must be referred to the Roman or Parthian occupation of the country on the banks of the Tigris.

* The Rev. Mr. Rawlinson has reproduced this wood-cut in his 'Ancient Monarchies' (vol. i. p. 479), as indeed he has reproduced almost every illustration in my two works on Nineveh, and has called this pottery 'Assyrian.' They are, I have no doubt, of a comparatively late period, probably Roman or Parthian.

though not the great bulls and lions, after the slabs had been placed. The backs of the slabs had also been cut away, in order to reduce their dimensions, and to render their transport more easy. To the south of the centre bulls were two colossal figures in relief, similar to those discovered to the north.

The bas-reliefs resembled, in many respects, some of those discovered in the S. W. palace, in which the sculptured faces of the slabs were turned, it will be remembered, towards the walls of unbaked brick. It would appear, therefore, that the one building had been destroyed, to supply materials for the construction of the other.

The subjects of the sculptures thus found collected together, with the exception of a few colossal figures of the king and his attendant eunuchs, and of the winged priests or divinities, were principally battle-pieces and sieges. In some of these bas-reliefs cities were seen standing on a river, in the midst of groves of date-trees, and amongst the people with whom the Assyrians were represented as fighting were warriors mounted on camels. It may be inferred, therefore, that one series of sculptures recorded the conquest of an Arab nation, or perhaps of a part of Babylonia—the inhabitants of the cities being assisted by auxiliaries from the neighbouring desert.



Helmets. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

The conquered races, as in the bas-reliefs of the N. W. palace, were generally represented without armour or helmets, their hair falling loosely on their shoulders. Some, however, wore helmets, which differed in shape from those of the Assyrians.

The battering-rams seen in these sculptures also differed



Assyrian Horsemen pursuing a Man, probably an Arab, on a Camel. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

in form from those represented on the earlier monuments. The besieged castles, like those of the Assyrians, appear to have been built upon artificial mounds. The battering-ram was rolled up to the walls on an inclined plane constructed of earth, stones, and trees, which appears to have been sometimes paved with bricks or squared stones, to facilitate the ascent of the engine. This mode of besieging a city, as well as the various methods of attack portrayed in the sculptures, is frequently alluded to in the Old Testament. Ezekiel,* prophesying of Jerusalem, exclaims, 'Lay siege against it, and *build a fort against it, and cast a mound against it*; set the camp also against it, and set *battering-rams* against it round about:' and Isaiah, 'Thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: he shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, *nor cast a bank against it.*'† The shields here mentioned by the prophet are probably those of wicker-work, represented in the bas-reliefs as covering the whole person and resting on the ground. Some of the battering-rams were not provided with towers for armed men, and some were without wheels; the latter were probably 'the forts' which Nebuchadnezzar built round about Jerusalem.‡ These forts appear to have been mere temporary erections of wood and wicker-work; and the Jews were expressly forbidden to use in their construction trees affording sustenance to man,—'only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and *thou shalt build bulwarks against the city* that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.'§ Ezekiel, in prophesying the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, has faithfully recorded the events of an Assyrian siege, and the treatment of the conquered people; his description illustrates, in a remarkable manner, the bas-reliefs of Nimroud:—

'Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings,

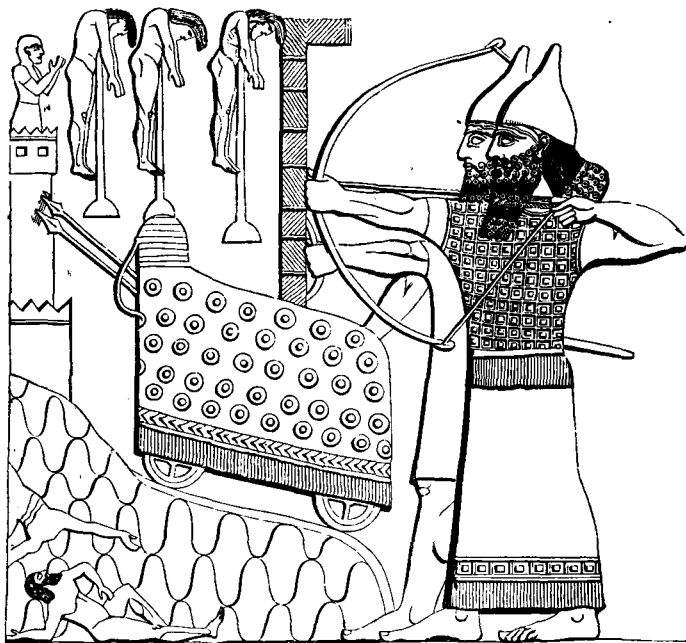
* Chap. iv. 2.

† Isaiah, xxxvii. 33; compare 2 Kings, xix. 32; Jeremiah, xxxii. 24. and xxxiii. 4; Ezekiel, xvii. 17.

‡ Jeremiah, lii. 4.

§ Deut. xx. 19, 20.

from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field : and he shall make a fort against thee, and cast a mound against thee, and lift up the buckler against thee. And he shall set engines of war against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance



Warriors before a besieged City. A Battering-ram drawn up to the Walls, and Captives impaled. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

of his horses, their dust shall cover thee : thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets : he shall slay thy people by the sword, and thy

strong garrisons shall go down to the ground. And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.*

The battering-ram appears to have been directed by men within the framework, which was frequently covered with drapery or hides, ornamented with fringes and even with devices.



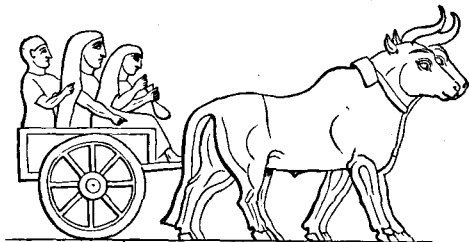
Assyrian Warriors fighting with the Enemy. An Eagle is carrying away the Entrails of the Slain. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

On two slabs was a bas-relief of considerable interest, representing the sack of a city.† The conquerors were seen carrying away the spoil, and two eunuchs, standing

* Ezek. xxvi. 7-12.

† Now in the British Museum.

near the gates, wrote down with a pen, probably an iron stylus, on rolls of parchment, papyrus, or leather, the number of sheep and cattle driven away by the soldiers. In the lower part of the bas-relief were carts drawn by oxen, and carrying women and children. Near the gates



Captive Women in a Cart drawn by Oxen. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

were two battering-rams, which, as the city had been taken, had been abandoned.

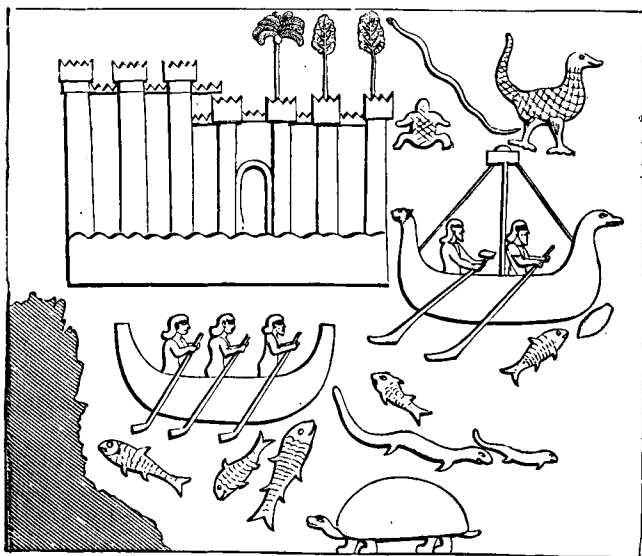
Amongst other bas-reliefs may be mentioned the king seated on his throne, receiving prisoners with their arms bound behind them; eunuchs registering the heads of the enemy, laid at their feet by the conquerors; idols borne on the shoulders of men; and a walled city standing on the sea, or on a river.

The spoil represented in these bas-reliefs as carried away from the conquered nations, consisted chiefly of cattle, sheep, and camels. The cattle were evidently of two kinds, probably the buffalo and common ox, distinguished in the sculptures by horns curved towards the back of the head, and horns projecting in front. The sheep also appear to have been of two species; one with the broad tail which is still found in the country, and is described by Herodotus as peculiar to Mesopotamia.* The goats have long spiral horns. The camel is faithfully delineated. This valuable animal formed at the remotest period the riches of the inhabitants of Assyria and Arabia, and was no doubt by

* Lib. iii. c. 113. This broad tail is mentioned in Leviticus, iii. 9, vii. 3, where it is rendered 'rump.'

them, as it still is by the Bedouins, ranked amongst the most desirable objects of plunder. The fleet camel, or dromedary, was used even in those days by couriers, and for posts, and flocks of camels were possessed by Abraham and Jacob.*

To the east of the centre bulls several slabs were discovered, still standing in their original position. The lower part of the bas-reliefs alone remained, the upper having



Walled City standing on a River, or on the Sea. (Centre Palace, Nimroud.)

been completely destroyed. They represented colossal winged figures, carrying the usual square vessel, and sacred flowers of various forms.

The only part of the S. W. palace sufficiently well preserved to give any idea of its original form, was one large hall curiously constructed. It had two entrances, formed by human-headed bulls and lions sculptured in a coarse

* Esther, viii. 10, 14; Genesis, xii. 16, xxx. 43; and compare Genesis, xxiv. 19, xxxi. 34; 1 Samuel, xxx. 17.

grey limestone ; and, in the centre, was a portal, or a kind of partition (also formed by winged bulls), which divided the hall into four distinct parts, but appears to have been merely intended to support beams for the roof. Between the bulls forming this centre portal were a pair of sphinxes.*

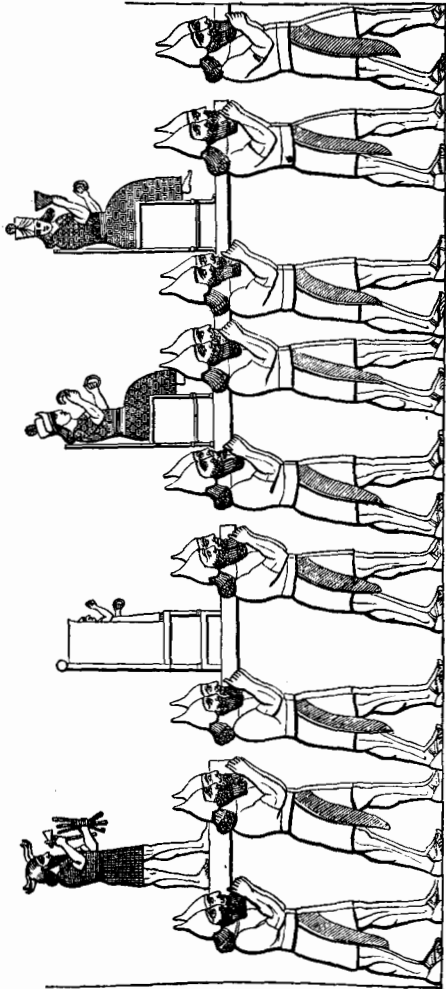
The whole of this hall was panelled with slabs brought from other buildings. Some, and by far the greater number, were from the N. W., others from the centre, palace. But there were many bas-reliefs which differed in the style of art from the sculptures discovered in either of those ruins. From whence they came I am unable to determine ; whether from a palace of another period once existing at Nimroud, and still concealed in a part of the mound not yet explored, or from some edifice in the neighbourhood. †

All the walls had been exposed to a great conflagration, which seems to have destroyed the whole palace ; and the slabs, nearly reduced to lime, were too much injured to bear removal. They were not all sculptured ; the bas-reliefs being scattered here and there, and always turned towards the wall of sun-dried brick, so that in no instance could they have been intended as a part of the ornamentation of the building.

Amongst the most interesting bas-reliefs discovered were the following :—A king seated on his throne, receiving his vizir, and surrounded by his attendants, within the walls of a castle ; a warrior wearing a crested helmet on a rearing horse, asking quarter of Assyrian horsemen ; a spearman on horseback hunting the wild bull ; the king of the N. W. palace (Sardanapalus) in his chariot fighting with the enemy ; the siege of a castle, in which was represented a bucket attached to a pulley ; a pair of human-headed bulls in low relief ; and a king placing his foot on the neck of a captive, and raising a spear in his right hand—(the only instance in which he is represented at

* See Plan I. *b*, p. 22.

† It seems probable that these sculptures had been brought from a palace built by Tiglath-Pileser, the ruins of which were subsequently discovered beneath the remains of a building in the south-east corner of the mound.



Idols carried in procession by Assyrian Warriors. (S. W. Ruins, Nimroud.)

may be those of Hera and Rhea, who were worshipped in a temple of Babylon; whilst the god may be identified with Baal or Belus, the supreme deity of the Semitic races, who, according to Diodorus Siculus, was represented in the act of walking. The bas-relief illustrates more than one passage in the Bible. Hosea prophesied that the idols of Samaria *should be carried away* by the Assyrians;* and Jeremiah declares that the Babylonians should burn the gods of the Egyptians, and *carry them away captive*.† In the epistle supposed to have been written by the prophet Jeremiah to the captive Jews, to warn them against the idolatries of the Babylonians, we find the following remarkable description of the gods represented in the Assyrian sculptures. 'Now shall ye see, in Babylon, gods of silver, and of gold, and of wood, *borne upon shoulders*. And he that cannot put to death one that offendeth him holdeth a sceptre, as though he were a judge of the country. He *hath also in his right hand a dagger and an axe*'‡ (like the figure in the bas-relief). We learn from the same epistle that these idols were of wood laid over with gold, and that parts of them were polished by the workmen, that crowns were placed on their heads, and that they were decked out in garments and purple raiment, and that fires or lamps were kept burning before them. Jeremiah describes the gods of the heathen as cut out of a tree of the forest, decked with silver and gold fastened with nails, and with blue and purple garments.§ The star surmounting the horned cap of the figures in the bas-relief appears to point to an astral system personified in the idols; and it is to this custom of placing the star on the head of the god to which the prophet Amos probably alludes, when he condemns the house of Israel for having 'borne the tabernacle of Moloch and Chiun, their images and *the star* of their god, which they had made for themselves.'||

Some of the sculptures had been carefully erased, and only a few traces of the figures remained. Several of the

* Chap. x. 6.

† Chap. xliiii. 12.

‡ That the Jews looked upon this epistle as genuine, may be inferred from the reference to it in 2 Maccab. xi. 2, 3.

§ Chap. x. 4, 9.

|| Chap. v. 26.

bas-reliefs were accompanied by descriptive inscriptions ; and on the pavement was discovered a tablet recording the conquests of a king whose name had not been previously found on any Assyrian monument.*

The three entrances on the south side of the palace appear to have led into a magnificent court, about 220 feet in length, the northern entrance to which was also formed by a pair of human-headed bulls. The side walls had in some places completely disappeared, and the sculptures which were still standing had all suffered more or less from the conflagration and subsequent long exposure to the atmosphere.

As the level of the S. W. palace was considerably above that of the N. W., and as the site from which many sculptures in it had been brought had not been discovered, it appeared to me possible that it had been built over the ruins of some more ancient building. By way of experiment, therefore, I directed long and very deep trenches to be opened in three different directions : nothing, however, was found, but a box or square hole, twenty feet beneath the surface, formed by bricks carefully fitted together, and containing several small idols in unbaked clay. They were bearded figures, wearing high pointed mitres, and had probably been placed, for some religious purpose, beneath the foundations of the building. Objects somewhat similar, and in the same material, were discovered at Khorsabad, under the pavement slabs, between the great bulls.

Near the southern entrance to the great hall was found, amidst a mass of charred wood and charcoal, and beneath a fallen slab, part of a beam in good preservation, apparently of mulberry wood.

It may be inferred that there was a very long interval between the time of the construction of the N.W. and of the

* The name of this king has been since identified with that of Tiglath-Pileser, mentioned in the Book of Kings and in Isaiah. Its Assyrian form, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, is 'Tukulti-pal-zira ;' or, according to Dr. Hincks, 'Tiklat-pal-isri ;' and it was borne by two earlier kings. His wars against Menahem, king of Samaria, and Hiram, king of Tyre, are described in the inscriptions discovered at Nimroud.

S.W. palaces. A considerable period must have elapsed before a monarch destroyed the monuments of his predecessors to raise out of the materials a new habitation for himself or his gods. Some great change must have taken place before such an event could have happened. It seems highly probable that a new dynasty of kings had ejected the older royal family; and, as conquerors, had introduced a new element into the nation. There are remarkable differences in the costume of the king, the forms of the chariots, the trappings of the horses, and the arms and armour of the warriors, which tend to prove that some such change had taken place in Assyria between the destruction of the N.W. palace at Nimroud and the erection of that at Khorsabad. The state of art, as shown in the sculptures, and the religious emblems, differed materially during the two periods, and further point to a change in manners, the state of civilisation, and religion.

The south-east corner of the mound, which was considerably above the level of any other part, appears to have been used as a burying-place by those who occupied the country after the destruction of the Assyrian palaces. Besides the tombs already described, many others were subsequently discovered there. The earthen sarcophagi were mostly of the shape of a dish-cover; but there were other tombs constructed of bricks well fitted together and covered by slabs, similar to those above the ruins in the centre of the mound. In nearly all were found bowls, vases, copper and silver ornaments, and small alabaster bottles. The skeletons, as soon as uncovered, crumbled to pieces, although entire when first exposed, and one skull alone has been preserved. Scattered amongst these tombs were vases of all sizes, lamps, and small objects of pottery—some uninjured, others broken into fragments.*

Removing the tombs, I discovered beneath them the remains of a building, and explored seven chambers. No sculptures or inscriptions were found in them; the lower part of the walls being panelled with plain slabs of limestone,

* Many of the small objects are in the British Museum.

three feet seven inches high and from two to three feet wide, and the upper being built of sun-dried bricks, covered by a thick coat of white plaster.

In the rubbish, near the bottom of the chambers, were found several small objects ; amongst them a female head in white alabaster, now in the British Museum.

It only remains for me to mention a singular discovery on the eastern face of the mound, near its northern extremity. A trench having been opened from the outer slope, the workmen came upon a small vaulted chamber, about ten feet high, and the same in width, fifteen feet below the level of the mound, and in the centre of a wall of sun-dried bricks, nearly fifty feet thick. The vault, constructed on the true principle of the arch, and thus proving that the Assyrians, like the Egyptians, were acquainted with it at that remote period, was built of baked bricks. The chamber was filled with rubbish, the greater part of which was a kind of slag, and the bricks forming the vault and walls were almost vitrified, evidently from exposure to intense heat. The chamber had thus the appearance of a large furnace for making glass or fusing metal. I am unable to account for its use, as there was no access to it, as far as I could ascertain from any side.

Much, of course, remained to be explored in the mound ; but with the limited means at my disposal I was unable to pursue my researches to the extent that I could have wished. If, after carrying a trench to a reasonable depth and distance, no remains of sculpture or inscription were discovered, I abandoned it and renewed the experiment elsewhere. I could thus ascertain, whether any considerable ruins of an edifice not yet explored were beneath the surface. There was sufficient to be done in uncovering the remains already discovered, and in removing the sculptures, to render it inexpedient to incur unnecessary expense in mere experiments which might lead to no immediate results ; and a great part of the mound of Nimroud was left to be explored, when the ruins of Assyria could be further examined.

CHAPTER XI.

Excavations at Kalah Sherghat—Departure for the ruins—The bitumen pits—Abd'rubbou—My reception—Discovery of a sitting figure—Arab encampment—Arab life—Excavations in the mound—Discovery of tombs—Return to Nimroud.

I HAD long wished to excavate in the great mound of Kalah Sherghat, an Assyrian ruin on the right bank of the Tigris, about forty miles below Mosul, which rivalled in extent those of Nimroud and Kouyunjik. An Arab, from the Shammar Bedouins, would occasionally spend a night amongst my workmen, and entertain them with accounts of idols and sculptured figures of giants, which had long been the cause of wonder and awe to the wandering tribes, who pitch their tents near this spot. On my first visit, I had searched in vain for such remains; but the Arabs, who are accustomed to seek for pasture during the spring in the neighbourhood, persisted in their assertions, and offered to show me where these strange statues, carved, it was said, in black stone, were to be found. As scarcely a ruin in Mesopotamia is without its wondrous tale of apparitions and Frank idols, I concluded that these sculptures only existed in the fertile imagination of the Arabs. I determined, however, to dig at Kalah Sherghat, but as the vicinity is notoriously dangerous, being a place of rendezvous for plundering parties of the Shammar, Aneyza, and Obeid Bedouins, I had deferred a visit to the spot until I could remain there for a short time under the protection of some powerful tribe. This safeguard was also absolutely necessary in the event of my leaving workmen there to excavate.

There being no pasture in the neighbourhood of Mosul this year on account of the want of rain, the three great divisions of the Jebour Arabs sought the jungles on the banks of the Tigris. Abd'rubbou with his tribe descended

the river, and first pitching his tents at Senidij, near the confluence of the Tigris and the Zab, subsequently moved towards Kalah Sherghat. I thought this a favourable time for excavating in the great mound; and the Sheikh having promised to supply me with Arabs for the work, and with guards for their defence, I sent Mansour, one of my superintendents, to the spot. I followed some days afterwards, accompanied by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, the Bairakdar, and several well-armed men, chosen from amongst the Jebours who were employed at Nimroud.

We crossed the Tigris on a small raft,—our horses having to swim the river. Striking into the desert by the Wadi Jehainah, we rode through a tract of land, at this time of year usually covered with vegetation; but then, from the drought, a barren waste. During some hours' ride we scarcely saw a human being, except a solitary shepherd in the distance, driving before him his half-famished flock. We reached at sunset a small encampment of Jebours. The tents were pitched in the midst of a cluster of high reeds on the banks of the Tigris, and nearly opposite to the tomb of Sultan Abd-Allah. They were so well concealed, that it required the experienced eye of a Bedouin to detect them* by the thin smoke rising above the thicket. The cattle and sheep found scanty pasturage in a marsh formed by the river. The Arabs were as poor and miserable as their beasts; they received us, however, with hospitality, and killed a very lean lamb for our entertainment.

Near the encampment was a quadrangle, formed by low mounds, resembling on a small scale the great inclosures of Nimroud and Kouyunjik, and evidently marking the site of an Assyrian town or fort. I searched for some time, but without success, for fragments of pottery or brick inscribed with cuneiform characters.

On the following day we passed the bitumen pits, or the 'Kiyara,' as they are called by the Arabs. They cover a con-

* In the desert, the vicinity of an encampment is generally marked by some sign well known to the tribe. It would otherwise be very difficult to discover the tents, pitched, as they usually are, in some hollow or ravine to conceal them from hostile plundering parties.

siderable extent of ground; the bitumen mixed with water bubbling up in springs from crevices in the earth and forming small pools. The Jebours, and other tribes encamping near the place, carry the bitumen for sale to Mosul, and other parts of the pashalic. It is used for building purposes, for coating boats, and particularly for smearing camels, when suffering from certain diseases of the skin to which they are liable. Before leaving the pits, the Arabs, as is their habit, set fire to the bitumen, which sent forth a dense black smoke, obscuring the sky, and visible for many miles. We reached the tents of Abd'rubbou early in the afternoon. They were pitched about ten miles to the north of Kalah Sherghat, at the upper end of a long tongue of rich alluvial soil, lying between the river and a range of low hills. The great mound was visible from this spot, rising high above the Zor, or jungle, which clothes the banks of the Tigris.

No Sheikh could have made a more creditable show of friendship than did Abd'rubbou. He rode out to meet me, and, without delay, ordered sheep enough to be slain to feast half his tribe. I declined, however, to spend the night with him, as he pressed me to do, on the plea that I was anxious to see the result of the excavations already commenced at Kalah Sherghat. He volunteered to accompany me to the ruins after we had breakfasted, and declared that if a blade of grass were to be found near the mound, he would move all his tents there immediately for my protection. In the meanwhile, to do me proper honour, he introduced me to his wives, and to his sister, whose beauty I had often heard extolled by the Jebours, and who was not altogether undeserving of her reputation. She was still unmarried. Abd'rubbou himself was one of the handsomest Arabs in Mesopotamia.

We started for the ruins in the afternoon, and rode along the edge of the jungle. Hares, wolves, foxes, jackals, and wild boars continually crossed our path, and game of all kinds, especially partridges and francolins, seemed to abound. The Arabs gave chase; but the animals were able to enter the thick brushwood, and conceal themselves before my greyhounds could reach them. Lions are sometimes found near

Kalah Sherghat, rarely higher up on the Tigris.* As I floated down to Baghdad a year before, I had heard the roar of a lion not far from this spot: they are, however, seldom seen, and we beat the bushes in vain for such noble game.

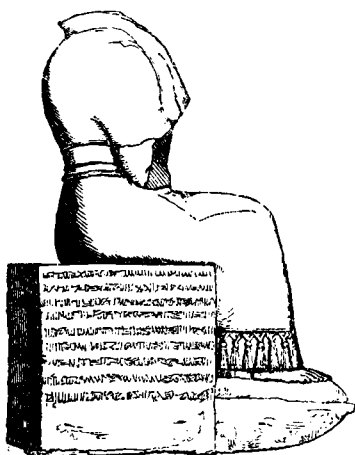
As for grass, except in scanty tufts at the foot of the trees in the jungle, there appeared to be none at all. The drought had been felt all over the desert: in the place of the green meadows of last year, covered with flowers, and abounding in natural reservoirs of water, there was a naked yellow waste, in which even the abstemious flocks of the Bedouin could scarcely escape starvation. As we road along, Abd'rubbou examined every corner and ravine in the hope of finding an encamping place, and a little pasture for his cattle, but his search was not attended with much success.

The workmen on the mound, seeing horsemen approach, made ready for an encounter, under the impression that we were a foraging party from a hostile tribe. As soon, however, as they recognised us, they threw off the few superfluous garments they possessed. Dropping their shirts from their shoulders, and tying them round their waists by the arms, they set up the war-cry, and rushed in and out of the trenches like madmen.

The principal excavations had been made on the western side of the mound. After I had succeeded in obtaining silence, and calming the sudden fit of enthusiasm which had sprung up on my arrival, I descended into the trenches. A sitting figure in black basalt, of the size of life, had been uncovered. It was, however, much mutilated. The head and hands had been destroyed, and other parts of the statue had been injured. The square stool, or block, upon which the figure sat, was covered on three sides with cuneiform inscription. The first line, containing the name and titles

* The lion is frequently met with on the banks of the Tigris, below Baghdad, rarely above. On the Euphrates it has been seen, I believe, almost as high as Bir, where the steamers of the first Euphrates expedition, under Colonel Chesney, were launched. In the Sinjar, and on the banks of the Khabour, they are frequently caught by the Arabs. They abound in Khuzistan, the ancient Susiana: I have frequently seen three or four together, and have hunted them with the chiefs of the tribes inhabiting that province.

of the king, was almost defaced ; but one or two characters enabled me to identify them with those on the great bulls in the centre of the mound at Nimroud. On casting my eye down the first column of the inscription, I found the names of Sardanapalus, this king's father (the builder of the most ancient palace of Nimroud), and of his grandfather.* An Arab soon afterwards brought me a brick bearing a short



Sitting Figure in Basalt from Kalah Sherghat.

legend, which contained the three names together. The newly discovered ruins were consequently those of a building contemporaneous with the centre palace of Nimroud.

The figure probably represented the king. The hands appear to have rested on the knees, and a long robe, edged with tassels, reached to the ankles. The Arabs declared that this statue had been seen some years before; and it is possible that, at some period of heavy rain, it may have been for a short time exposed to view, and subsequently reburied

* The name of this king, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson, is Tiglath-Ussur ; according to Dr. Hincks, Shimish-Bar.

It stood on a spur of the mound, and probably in its original position. Mansour had dug trenches at right angles with it on four sides, in the expectation of finding a corresponding figure; but he was disappointed in his search, and no remains of building were discovered near it.*

In other parts of the mound there were ruins of walls, but we found no more sculptures. Several tombs, similar to those above the palaces of Nimroud, had been opened; and Mansour brought me earthen vases and cups taken from them. He had also picked up, amongst the rubbish, a few fragments of black stone with small figures in relief, and cuneiform characters, and a piece of copper similarly inscribed.

Having made a hasty survey of the trenches, I rode to my tent, which had been pitched in the midst of those of my workmen. The Arabs had chosen for their encampment a secure place in the jungle at the northern foot of the mound, and not far from the Tigris. A ditch, leading from the river, nearly surrounded the tents, which were completely concealed by the trees and shrubs. Abd'rubbou remained with me for the night. Whilst I was examining the ruins, he had been riding to and fro, to find a convenient spot for his tents, and grass for his cattle. Such is the custom of the Arabs. When the grass, within a certain distance of their encampment, has been exhausted, they prepare to seek new pastures. The Sheikhs, and the principal men of the tribe, mount their mares, and ride backwards and forwards over the face of the country, until they find herbage sufficient for the wants of their flocks. Having fixed on a suitable spot, they return to acquaint their followers with their success, and announce their intention of moving thither on the following morning. The Sheikh's tent is generally the first struck; and the tribe, if they feel inclined, follow his example. If any have cause of complaint against their chief and wish to desert him, they seize this occasion; they leave their tents standing until the others are gone, and then wander in another direction.

Abd'rubbou having, at length, found a convenient site on

* This statue is now in the British Museum.

the banks of the river, to the south of the mound, marked out a place for his tents, and sent a horseman to his tribe, with orders for them to move to Kalah Sherghat on the following morning. These preliminaries having been settled, he adjourned to my tent to supper. It was cold and damp, and the Arabs, collecting brushwood and trunks of trees, made a great fire, which lighted up the recesses of the jungle. As the night advanced, a violent storm broke over us; the wind rose to a hurricane—the rain descended in torrents—the thunder rolled in one long peal—and vivid streams of lightning, almost incessant, showed the surrounding landscape. When the storm had abated, I walked to a short distance from the tents to gaze upon the scene. The huge fire we had kindled threw a lurid glare over the trees around our encampment. The great mound could be distinguished through the gloom, rising like a distant mountain against the dark sky. From all sides came the melancholy wail of the jackals, who had issued from their subterranean dwellings in the ruins, as soon as the last gleam of twilight was fading in the western horizon. The owl, perched on the old masonry, occasionally sent forth its mournful note. The shrill laugh of the Arabs would sometimes rise above the cry of the jackal. Then all earthly noises were buried in the deep roll of the distant thunder. It was desolation such as those alone who have witnessed such scenes can know—desolation greater than the desolation of the sandy wastes of Africa, for there was the wreck of man, as well as that of nature.

Soon after sunrise, on the following morning, stragglers on horseback from Abd'rubbou's late encampment began to arrive. They were soon followed by the main body of the tribe. Long lines of camels, sheep, laden donkeys, men, women, and children, such as I have described in the account of my visit to Sofuk, covered the small plain, near the banks of the river. A scene of activity and bustle ensued. Every one appeared desirous to outdo his neighbour in vehemence of shouting and violence of action. A stranger would have fancied that there was one general quarrel; in which, out of several hundred men and women concerned, no two persons

took the same side of the question. Every one seemed to differ from every one else. All this confusion, however, was but the result of a friendly debate on the site of the respective tents; and when the matter had been settled to the general satisfaction, without recourse to any more violent measures than mere yelling, each family commenced raising their temporary abode. The camels being made to kneel down, and the donkeys to stop in the place fixed upon, their loads were rolled off their backs. The women next spread the black goat-hair canvass. The men rushed about with wooden mallets to drive in the stakes and pegs; and in a few minutes the dwellings, which were to afford them shelter, until they needed shelter no longer, and under which they had lived from their birth upwards, were complete. The women and girls were then sent forth to fetch water, or to collect brushwood and dry twigs for fire. The men, leaving all household matters to their wives and daughters, assembled in the tent of the Sheikh; and crouching in a circle round the entire trunk of an old tree, which was soon enveloped in flames, they prepared to pass the rest of the day in that desultory small talk, relating to stolen sheep, stray donkeys, or successful robberies, which fills up the leisure of an Arab, unless he be better employed in plundering or in war.

Leaving Abd'rubbou and his Arabs to pitch their tents and settle their domestic matters, I walked to the mound. The trenches dug by the workmen around the sitting figure were almost sufficiently extensive to prove that no other remains of building existed in its immediate vicinity. Had not the figure been in an upright position, I should have concluded, at once, that it had been brought from elsewhere; as I could not find traces of pavement, nor any fragments of sculpture or hewn stone, near it. Removing the workmen, therefore, from this part of the mound, I divided them into small parties, and employed them in making experiments in different directions. Wherever trenches were opened, remains of the Assyrian period were found, but only in fragments; such as bits of basalt, with small figures in relief, portions of slabs bearing cuneiform inscriptions, and bricks similarly inscribed. Many tombs were also discovered. Like those

of Nimroud, they belonged to a period long subsequent to the destruction of the Assyrian edifices, and were in the rubbish and earth which had accumulated above them. The sarcophagi resembled those I have already described—large cases of baked clay, some square, others in the form of a dish-cover: as at Nimroud, they were all much too small to hold a human body stretched out at full length. That the bodies had not been burned, was proved by the bones being found entire. In the sarcophagi were found numerous small vases, metal ornaments, and a copper cup, resembling in shape and in the embossed designs one held by the king, in a bas-relief from the N.W. palace of Nimroud.*

Above these ancient tombs were graves of more recent date; some of them, indeed, belonging to the tribes which had, but a few days before, encamped amongst the ruins.† The tenant of one had been removed from his last resting-place by the hungry hyenas and jackals, who haunt these depositories of the dead. The rude casing of stones, forming the interior of an Arab grave, had been opened; and the bones and skull, still clothed with shreds of flesh, were scattered around.

Although I spent two days at Kalah Sherghat I was unable to discover the platform of sun-dried bricks upon which the edifice, now in ruins, and covered with earth, must originally have been built. Remains of walls were found in abundance; but they were evidently of a more recent period than the Assyrian building, to which the inscribed bricks and the fragments of sculptured stone belonged. The ruins were consequently not thoroughly explored. I found no fragments of the alabaster or Mosul marble, so generally employed in the palaces to the north of Kalah Sherghat. Unbaked bricks alone may have been used in the edifice; and if so, the walls

* This cup was taken out entire, but was unfortunately broken by the man who was employed to carry it to Mosul.

† The Arabs generally seek some elevated spot to bury their dead. The artificial mounds, abounding in Mesopotamia and Assyria, are usually chosen for the purpose, and there is scarcely one whose summit is not covered with Arab graves. On this account I frequently experienced great difficulty whilst excavating, and was compelled to leave unexamined one or two ruins.

built with them could no longer, without very careful examination, be distinguished from the soil in which they are buried.

The Tigris has been gradually encroaching upon the ruins, and is undermining and wearing away the mound, a large part of which has already been carried away by the river. Large masses of earth are continually falling into the stream, especially during the floods, leaving exposed to view vases, sarcophagi, and remains of building. Along the banks of the river, several shafts of circular brick masonry, like wells, had been thus uncovered. At the time of my first visit, we observed similar wells, and were at a loss to account for their use. I now opened two or three of them. They were filled with earth, mixed with human bones and fragments of vases and pottery,* which may have been originally deposited there, or may have fallen in from above with the rubbish. It is possible that these wells may have been constructed, at a very early period, for purposes of irrigation, or to supply water to the inhabitants of the city.

The principal ruin at Kalah Sherghat, like those of Nimroud, Khorsabad, and other ancient Assyrian sites, is a large square mound, surmounted by a cone or pyramid, which rises nearly in the centre of the north side of the great platform. Immediately below it, and forming a facing to the mound, is a wall of well-hewn dressed stones, carefully fitted together, and bevelled. The battlements, which still exist, are cut into gradines, or steps, and resemble those of castles and towers represented in the Nimroud sculptures. The wall is therefore evidently Assyrian.† It is not improbable that much of the masonry, still visible on the summit of the mound, may be the remains of an Arab fort. Long lines of smaller mounds or ramparts stretching from the great mound form a quadrangle, and are the remains of the walls which once enclosed the city.

The mound of Kalah Sherghat is one of the largest with

* I found similar wells, containing human remains and pottery, amongst the ruins on the banks of the rivers of Susiana.

† A similar wall was subsequently discovered in the great mound of Nimroud. (See 'Nineveh and Babylon,' p. 37.)

which I am acquainted in Assyria. I was unable to measure it accurately during this visit; but when on the spot some years before with Mr. Ainsworth, we carefully paced round it; and the result, according to that gentleman's calculation, gave a circumference of 4685 yards.* A part of it, however, is not artificial. Irregularities in the soil, and natural eminences, have been united into one great platform by earth and layers of sun-dried bricks. It is, nevertheless, a stupendous structure. In height it is unequal; to the south it slopes off nearly to the level of the plain, whilst to the north, where it is most lofty, its sides are perpendicular, in some places rising to nearly one hundred feet.

I will not attempt to connect, without better materials than we now possess, the ruins of Kalah Sherghat with any ancient city whose name occurs in the Old Testament, or has been preserved by ancient geographers. That it was one of the oldest cities of Assyria, is proved by the identification of the name of the king found on its monuments and bricks, with that on the centre bulls and obelisk of Nimroud.†

Having given directions to Mansour for the continuation of the excavations, I prepared to return to Mosul. Abd'rubbou offered to accompany me; and as the desert between Kalah Sherghat and Hammum Ali was infested by roving parties of the Shammar and Aneyza Arabs, I deemed it prudent to accept his escort. He chose eight horsemen from his tribe, and we started together for the desert.

We slept the first night at the tents of a Seyyid, or descendant of the Prophet, of some repute for sanctity, and for the miraculous cure of diseases, which he effects by merely touching the patient. The Arabs were fully persuaded of the existence of his healing power; but I never saw any one who even pretended to have been cured by it, although there was certainly no lack of subjects for the Seyyid to practise upon. The old gentleman's daughter, a dark, handsome girl,

* Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. xi. p. 5.

† Chap. x. 11. Sir H. Rawlinson is of opinion that Kalah Sherghat represents a city called Asshur, which was the primitive capital of Assyria, founded many centuries before Nineveh. But, as far as I can judge, this theory is not founded upon any reliable evidence.

was claimed by a Sheikh of the Jebours, to whom, according to some accounts, she had been betrothed. The greater part of the night was spent in quarrelling and wrangling upon this subject. The Seyyid resolutely denied the contract, on the mere plea that one of such holy descent could not be united to a man in whose veins the blood of the Prophet did not flow. Abd'rubbou and his friends, on the other hand, as stoutly contended for the claims of the lover, not treating, I thought, so great a saint with a proper degree of respect. Although my tent was pitched at some distance from the assembly, the discordant voices, all joining at the same time in the most violent discussion, kept me awake until past midnight. Suddenly the disputants appeared to have talked themselves out, and there was a lull. Vainly flattering myself that they had sunk into sleep, I prepared to follow their example. But I had scarcely closed my eyes, when I was roused by a fresh outbreak of noises. An Arab had suddenly arrived from the banks of the Khabour—the old pasture grounds of the tribe: he was overwhelmed with a thousand questions, and the news he brought of struggles between the Aneyza and the Asai, and the defeat of the former enemies of the Jebours, led to continual bursts of enthusiasm, and to one or two attempts to raise a general shouting of the war-cry. Thus they passed the night to my great discomfort.

On the morrow I started early with Abd'rubbou and his horsemen. We struck directly across the desert, leaving my servants and baggage to follow leisurely along the banks of the river, by a more circuitous but safer road. When we were within four or five miles of that part of the Tigris at which a raft was waiting to take me across, I requested the Sheikh to return, as there appeared to be no further need of an escort. Mr. Hormuzd Rassam and myself galloped over the plain. We disturbed, as we rode along, a few herds of gazelles, and a solitary wolf or jackal; but we saw no human beings. Abd'rubbou and his Arabs, however, had scarcely left us when they observed a party of horsemen in the distance, whom they mistook for men of their own tribe returning from Mosul. It was not until they drew nigh that they discovered their mistake. The horsemen were plunderers from the

Aneyza. The numbers were pretty equal. A fight ensued, in which two men on the side of the enemy, and one of the Jebours, were killed; but the Aneyza were defeated, and Abd'rubbou carried off in triumph a couple of mares.

A few days after my return to Nimroud, the Jebours were compelled, by want of pasturage, to leave the neighbourhood of Kalah Sherghat. The whole desert, as well as the jungle on the banks of the river, which generally supplied, even in the driest seasons, a little grass to the flocks, having been completely dried up, Abd'rubbou, with his tribe, moved to the north of Mesopotamia. A few of his people came to Nimroud to cultivate millet; but the Sheikh himself, with the greater part of his followers, left the district of Mosul altogether, migrating to the sources of the Khabour and to the Nisibin branch of that river—the ancient Mygdonius. The desert to the south of Mosul was now only frequented by wandering parties of plunderers, and the position of my workmen at Kalah Sherghat became daily more insecure. After they had been once or twice exposed to molestation from the Aneyza and the Obeid, I found it necessary to withdraw them—had I not, they would probably have run away of themselves. I renounced the further examination of these ruins with regret, as they had not been properly explored; and I have little doubt, from the fragments discovered, that many objects of interest, if not sculptured slabs, exist in the mound.*

* Further excavations were subsequently made in the mound of Kalah Sherghat by myself (see 'Nineveh and Babylon,' chap. xiii.), and by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam. The principal discoveries made there consisted of clay tablets and cylinders with inscriptions containing the annals of a king, whose name is believed to be Tiglath-pileser, and who is supposed to have reigned about 1130 B. C.

CHAPTER XII.

Artificial irrigation of Assyria—Want of rain—Preparations for the removal of a winged bull and lion—The cart—Lowering the winged bull—Its removal from the ruins—Excitement of the Arabs—Removal of the lion—Rafts for the transport of the sculptures to Busrah—Embarkation of the lion and bull—General description of the ruins.

ASSYRIA PROPER, like Babylonia, owed its ancient fertility as much to artificial irrigation, as to the rains which fall during the winter and early spring. The Tigris and Euphrates do not, like the Nile, overflow their banks and deposit a rich manure over the face of the land. They rise sufficiently at the time of the melting of the snows in the Armenian mountains, to fill the small watercourses led from them into the adjacent country; but these canals are above the level of the stream when the rivers are low in summer and autumn, and then water can only be raised by artificial means.

The vast networks of canals and watercourses dug in the prosperous period of the Assyrian empire, and used for many centuries by the inhabitants of the country—even after the Arab invasion—have long since been choked up, and are now useless. I have already described the rude machines constructed on the banks of the Tigris for the purpose of irrigation. Even these are scarce, for the government, or rather the local authorities, levy a considerable tax upon them, and the simple buckets of the Arabs become, in many cases, the pretence for exaction and oppression. Few being, consequently, bold enough to make use of them, the lands near the rivers, as well as the interior of the country, are entirely dependent for their fertility upon the winter rains, which are, in average years, amply sufficient to ensure the most plentiful crops; such being the richness of the soil, that even a few

heavy showers in winter and spring, at the time of sowing the seed, and when the corn is about a foot above the ground, are all that is required to ensure a good harvest.

Herodotus* describes the extreme fertility of Assyria, and its abundant harvests of corn, the seed producing two and three hundredfold. The blades of wheat and barley, he declares, grew to full four fingers in breadth; and such was the general richness of Babylonia, that it supplied the Persian king and his vast army with subsistence for four months in the year, while the rest of the Persian dominions furnished provisions for the other eight. But in his day the Assyrians depended as much upon artificial irrigation as upon the periodical rains. They were skilful in constructing machines for raising water, and their vast system of canals was as remarkable as a monument of well-directed labour, as for the knowledge of hydraulics which it displayed. In the hills, the vine, olive, and fig tree were cultivated anciently as they are now; and Rabshakeh, to tempt the Jews, describes Assyria as 'a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive-oil and of honey.'†

It sometimes happens that the season passes without rain, and a drought entailing great misery and suffering upon the country is the result. Such was the case this year. During the winter and spring no water fell. The inhabitants of the villages, who had been induced to return by the improved administration and conciliatory measures of the late Pasha, had put their whole stock of wheat and barley into the ground. They now looked in despair upon the cloudless sky. I watched the young grass as it struggled to break through the parched earth; but it was burnt up almost at its birth. Sometimes a distant cloud hanging over the solitary hill of Arbela, or rising from the desert in the far west, led to hopes, and a few drops of rain gave rise to general rejoicings. The Arabs would then form a dance, and raise songs and shouts, the women joining with the shrill *tahlehl*. But disappointment

* Lib. i. c. 192 and 193.

† 2 Kings, xviii. 32. On a black stone, discovered, I believe, amongst the ruins of Nineveh and now in the British Museum, a plough is represented, nearly resembling that still in use in the country.

always ensued. The clouds passed over, and the same pure blue sky was above us. To me the total absence of verdure in spring was very painful. For months my eye had scarcely rested upon a green thing; and that unchanging yellow, barren waste has a depressing effect upon the spirits. The Jaif, which the year before had been a flower garden and had teemed with life, was now as naked and bare as the desert in the midst of summer. I had been looking forward to the return of the grass to encamp outside the village, and had meditated many excursions to ancient ruins in the desert and the mountains; but I was doomed to disappointment like the rest.

The Pasha issued orders that Christians, as well as Mussulmans, should join in a general fast and in prayers for rain. Supplications were offered up in the churches and mosques. The Mohammedans held a kind of three days' Ramazan, starving themselves during the day, and feasting during the night. The Christians abstained from meat for the same length of time. If a cloud were seen on the horizon, the inhabitants of the villages, headed by their mullahs, would immediately walk into the open country to chant prayers and verses from the Koran. Sheikhs—crazy ascetics who wandered over the country, either half clothed in the skins of lions or gazelles, or stark naked—burnt themselves with hot iron, and ran shouting about the streets of Mosul. Even a kind of necromancy was not neglected, and the Cadi and the Turkish authorities had recourse to all manner of mysterious incantations, which were pronounced to have been successful in other parts of the Sultan's dominions on similar occasions.

Still there was no rain, and a famine appeared to be inevitable. It was known, however, that there were abundant supplies of corn in the granaries of the principal families of Mosul; and the fact having been brought to the notice of the Pasha, he at once ordered the stores to be opened, and their contents to be offered for sale in the market at moderate prices. As usual, the orders were given to the very persons who were speculating upon the necessities and sufferings of the poor and needy—to the Cadi, the Mufti, and the head

people of the town. They proceeded to obey them with great zeal and punctuality, but somehow or another overlooked their own stores and those of their friends, and ransacked the houses of the rest of the inhabitants. In a few days, consequently, those who had saved up a little grain for their own immediate wants, were added to the number of the starving; and the misery of the town was increased.

The Bedouins, who are dependent upon the village for supplies, now also began to feel the effects of the failure of the crops, and were preparing to make up for their sufferings by plundering the caravans of merchants, and the peaceable inhabitants of the districts within reach of the desert. Although the spring had already commenced, the Shammar and other formidable tribes had not yet encamped in the vicinity of Mosul; still casual plundering parties had made their appearance among the villages, and it was predicted that, as soon as their tents were pitched nearer the town, the country without the walls would be not only very unsafe, but almost uninhabitable.

These circumstances induced me to undertake the removal of the larger sculptures as early as possible. I determined to embark them for Busrah in the month of March or April, foreseeing that as soon as the Bedouins had moved northwards from Babylonia, and had commenced their plundering expeditions in the vicinity of Mosul, I should be compelled to leave Nimroud.

The Trustees of the British Museum had not then contemplated the removal of either of the winged human-headed bulls or lions, and I had at first believed that, with the means at my disposal, it would have been useless to attempt it. I was directed to leave them, as they had been discovered, until some favourable opportunity of moving them entire might occur; and to heap earth over them to preserve them from wanton injury by the Arabs, after the excavations had been brought to an end. Being loth, however, to abandon all these fine specimens of Assyrian sculpture, I resolved upon attempting the removal and embarkation of two of the smallest and best preserved, and fixed upon a lion and a bull from the great central hall. Thirteen pairs of these gigantic

sculptures, and several fragments of others, had been discovered; but many of them were too much injured to be worth sending to England. I had wished to secure the lions forming the grand entrance to the principal hall of the N. W. palace; the finest specimens of Assyrian sculpture yet discovered in the ruins. But after some deliberation I determined to leave them for the present; as, from their size, the expenses attending their conveyance to the river, and to Busrah and England, would have been greater than I could meet with the means at my disposal.

I formed various plans for lowering the smaller lion and bull, dragging them to the river, and placing them upon rafts. Each step had its difficulties, and a variety of original suggestions were made by my workmen, and by the good people of Mosul. At last I resolved upon constructing a cart sufficiently strong to bear the sculptures. As no wood but poplar could be procured in the town, a carpenter was sent to the mountains with directions to fell the largest mulberry tree, or any tree of equally compact grain, he could find; and to bring back with him beams of it, and thick slices from the trunk.

By the month of March this wood was ready. I purchased from the dragoman of the French Consulate a pair of strong iron axles, which had been used by M. Botta in moving sculptures from Khorsabad. Each wheel was formed of three solid pieces of wood, nearly a foot thick, bound together by iron hoops. Across the axles were laid three beams, and above them several cross-beams. A pole was fixed to one axle, to which were also attached iron rings for ropes, to enable men, as well as buffaloes, to draw the cart. The wheels were provided with hooks for the same purpose.

Simple and rude as this cart was, it became an object of wonder in the town, as carts are unknown in this part of Turkey. Crowds came to look at it, as it stood in the yard of the Vice-consul's khan; and the Pasha's topjis, or artillery-men, who, from their acquaintance with the mysteries of gun carriages, were looked up to as authorities on such matters, daily declaimed on the properties and use of this vehicle, and of carts in general, to a large circle of curious and attentive listeners. As long as the cart was in Mosul, it was examined by every

stranger who visited the town. But when the news spread that it was about to leave the gates, and to be drawn over the bridge, the business of the place was completely suspended. The secretaries and scribes of the Pasha left their divans; the guards their posts; the bazaars were deserted; and half the population assembled on the banks of the river to witness the manœuvres of the cart, which was forced over the rotten bridge of boats by a pair of buffaloes, and a crowd of Chal-dæans and shouting Arabs.*

To lessen the weight of the lion and bull, without in any way interfering with the sculpture, I reduced the thickness and considerably diminished the bulk of the slabs, by cutting away as much as possible from the back, which, being placed against a wall of sun-dried bricks, was never meant to be seen. As, in order to move these sculptures at all, I had to choose between this plan and that of sawing them into several pieces, I did not hesitate to adopt it.

To enable me to move the bull from the ruins, and to place it on the cart in the plain below, a trench or road nearly two hundred feet long, about fifteen feet wide, and, in some places, twenty feet deep, was cut from the entrance, in which stood the sculpture, to the edge of the mound. As I had not sufficient mechanical power at command to raise the bull out of the trenches, like the smaller bas-reliefs, this road was necessary. It was a tedious undertaking, as a very large accumulation of earth had to be removed. About fifty Arabs and Nestorians were employed in the work.

On digging this trench it was found that a chamber had once existed to the west of the great hall. The sculptured slabs had been destroyed or carried away; but part of the walls of unbaked bricks could still be traced. The only bas-relief discovered was lying flat on the pavement, where it

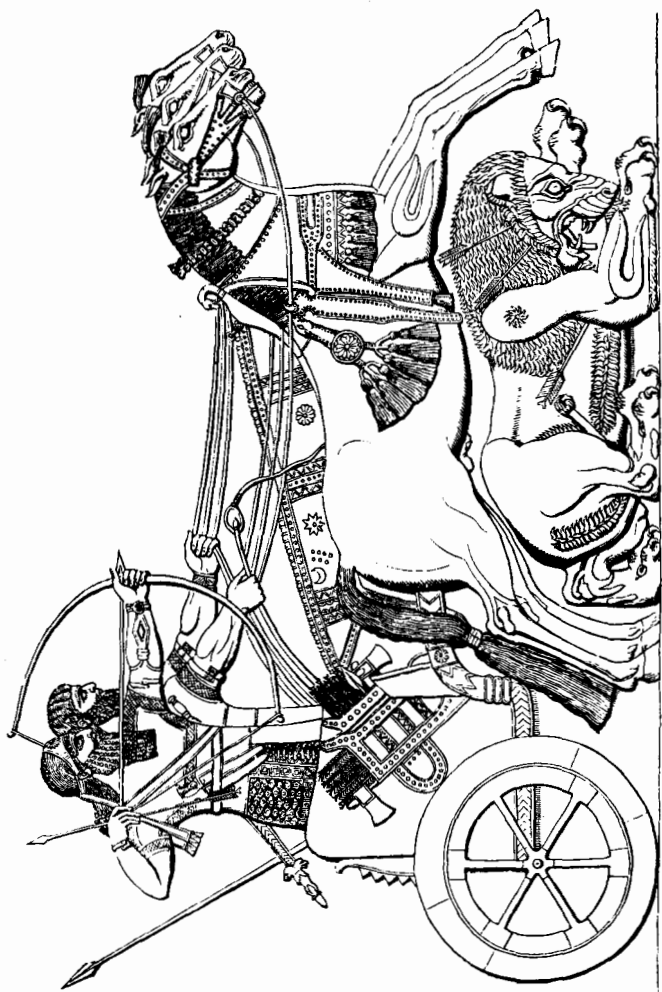
* The bridge of Mosul consists of a number of rude boats bound together by iron chains. Planks are laid from boat to boat, and the whole is covered with earth. During the spring floods this frail bridge would be unable to resist the force of the stream; the chains holding it on one side of the river are then loosened, and it swings round. All communication between the two banks of the river is thus cut off, and a ferry is established until the floods subside, and the bridge can be replaced.

had evidently been left when the adjoining slabs were removed. It was the small relief of the lion-hunt now in the British Museum, and remarkable for its finish, the elegance of the ornaments, and the spirit of the design. It resembles, in its style and details, the battle-scene first discovered in the S. W. palace, and I am inclined to believe that they both belonged to this ruined chamber; in which, perhaps, the bas-reliefs were more elaborate and more highly finished than in any other part of the building. The work of different artists may be plainly traced in the Assyrian sculptures. Frequently when the outline is spirited and correct, and the ornaments designed with considerable taste, the execution is defective or coarse; evidently showing, that, whilst the subject was designed by a master, the carving of the stone had been entrusted to an inferior hand. In many bas-reliefs some parts are more highly finished than others, as if they had been retouched by a more experienced sculptor. 'The figures of the enemy are generally rudely executed and left unfinished, to show probably that, being those of the conquered or captive race, they were unworthy the care of the artist.' It is rare to find an entire bas-relief equally well executed and finished in all its parts. The most perfect hitherto discovered in Assyria, are probably the lion-hunt from the principal chamber, the lion-hunt just described, and the large group of the king sitting on his throne, in the midst of his attendants and winged figures, all now placed in the British Museum.*

Whilst making this trench, I also discovered, about three feet beneath the pavement, a drain, which appeared to communicate with others previously opened in different parts of the building. It was probably the main sewer, through which all the minor watercourses were discharged. It was built of baked bricks, and covered in with large slabs and tiles.

As the bull was to be lowered, so that the unsculptured side of the slab should be placed on rollers, I removed the walls behind it to form a clear space large enough to receive

* Some of the bas-reliefs subsequently discovered at Kouyunjik, and especially those representing the lion-hunts now in the basement room of the British Museum, are equally remarkable for the extraordinary minuteness and finish of even the smallest details.



Assyrian Warriors hunting a Lion. (N.W. Palace, Nimroud.)

it when prostrate, and to leave room for the workmen to pass on all sides of it. The principal difficulty was of course to lower it; when once on the ground, or on rollers, it could be dragged forwards by the united force of a number of men; but, during its descent, it could only be sustained by ropes. If these ropes, not strong enough to bear the weight, chanced to give way, the sculpture would be precipitated to the ground, and would, probably, be broken in the fall. The few ropes I possessed had been sent to me, across the desert, from Aleppo; but they were small and weak. From Baghdad I had obtained a thick hawser, made of the fibres of the palm. In addition I had been furnished with two pairs of blocks, and a pair of jack-screws belonging to the steamers of the Euphrates expedition. These were all the means at my command for moving the bull and lion. The sculptures were wrapped in mats and felts, to preserve them, as far as possible, from injury in case of a fall, and to prevent the ropes chipping or rubbing them.

The bull was ready to be moved by the 18th of March. It had been completely isolated, and was now only supported by beams resting against the opposite wall of earth. Amongst the wood obtained from the mountains were several thick rollers. These were placed upon sleepers, formed of the trunks of poplar trees, well greased and laid on the ground parallel to the sculpture. The bull was to be lowered upon these rollers. A deep trench had been cut behind the second bull, completely across the wall, and, consequently, extending from chamber to chamber. Ropes coiled round this mass of earth served to hold two blocks, two others being attached to ropes wound round the bull to be moved. The ropes, by which the sculpture was to be lowered, were passed through these blocks; the ends, or falls of the tackle, as they are technically called, being held by the Arabs. The cable which was first passed through the trench, and then round the sculpture, was to be gradually slackened by two bodies of men, one at each end. Several of the strongest Chaldæans placed thick beams against the back of the bull, and were directed to use them in checking it in its descent.*

* See frontispiece.

My own people were reinforced by a large number of the Abou-Salman. I had invited Sheikh Abd-ur-rahman to be present, and he came attended by a body of horsemen. The inhabitants of Naifa and Nimroud, having volunteered to assist on the occasion, were placed amongst my Arabs. The workmen, except the Chaldæans who supported the beams, were divided into four parties, two in front of the bull, to hold the ropes, and two at the ends of the cable. They were directed to slack off gradually as the sculpture descended.

The men being ready, and all my preparations complete, I stationed myself on the top of the high bank of earth over the second bull, and ordered the wedges to be struck out from under the sculpture to be moved. Still, however, it remained firmly in its place. A rope having been passed round it, six or seven men easily tilted it over. The thick, ill-made cable stretched with the strain, and almost buried itself in the earth round which it was coiled. The ropes held well. The bull descended gradually, the Chaldæans propping it up with the beams. It was a moment of great anxiety. The drums and shrill pipes of the Kurdish musicians increased the din and confusion caused by the war-cry of the Arabs, who were half frantic with excitement. They had thrown off nearly all their garments; their long hair floated in the wind; and they indulged in the wildest postures and gesticulations as they clung to the ropes. The women had congregated on the sides of the trenches, and by their incessant screams, and by the ear-piercing *tahlehl*, added to the enthusiasm of the men. The bull once in motion, it was no longer possible to obtain a hearing. The loudest cries I could produce were lost in the crash of discordant sounds. Neither the hippopotamus hide whips of the Cawasses, nor the bricks and clods of earth with which I endeavoured to draw attention from some of the most noisy of the group, were of any avail. Away went the bull, steady enough as long as supported by the props behind; but as it came nearer to the rollers, the beams could no longer be used. The cable and ropes stretched more and more. Dry from the climate, as they felt the strain, they creaked and threw out dust. Water was thrown over them, but in vain, for they all broke together when the sculpture

was within four or five feet of the rollers. The bull fell to the ground. Those who held the ropes, thus suddenly released, followed its example, and were rolling one over the other, in the dust. A sudden silence succeeded to the clamour. I rushed into the trenches, prepared to find the bull in many pieces. It would be difficult to describe my satisfaction, when I saw it lying precisely where I had wished to place it, and unbroken! The Arabs no sooner got on their legs again, than, seeing that the sculpture was uninjured and safely placed on the rollers, they darted out of the trenches, and, seizing by the hands the women who were looking on, formed a large circle, and, yelling their war-cry with redoubled energy, commenced a most mad dance. The musicians exerted themselves to the utmost; but their music was drowned by the cries of the dancers. Even Abd-ur-rahman shared in the excitement, and, throwing his cloak to one of his attendants, insisted upon leading off the *debbé*. It would have been useless to endeavour to put any check upon these proceedings. I preferred allowing the men to wear themselves out—a result which, in consequence of the amount of exertion and energy displayed by limbs and throat, was not long in taking place.

I now prepared, with the aid of Behnan, the Bairakdar, and the Nestorians, to move the bull into the long trench which led to the edge of the mound. The rollers were in good order; and as soon as the excitement of the Arabs had sufficiently abated to enable them to resume work, the sculpture was dragged out of its place by ropes.

Sleepers were laid to the end of the trench, and fresh rollers were placed under the bull as it was pulled forwards by cables, to which were fixed the tackles held by logs buried in the earth, on the edge of the mound. The sun was going down as these preparations were completed. I deferred any further labour to the morrow. The Arabs dressed themselves; and, placing the musicians at their head, marched towards the village, singing their war-songs, occasionally raising a wild yell, throwing their lances into the air, and flourishing their swords and shields over their heads.

I rode back with Abd-ur-rahman. Schloss and his horse-

men galloped round us, playing the jerrid, and bringing the ends of their lances into a proximity with my head and body which was far from comfortable; for it was evident enough that had the mares refused to fall almost instantaneously back on their haunches, or had they stumbled, I should have been transfixcd on the spot. As the exhibition, however, was meant as a compliment, and enabled the young warriors to exhibit their prowess, and the admirable training of their horses, I declared myself highly delighted, and bestowed equal commendations on all parties.

The Arab Sheikh, his excitement once cooled down, gave way to moral reflections. 'Wonderful! wonderful! There is surely no God but God, and Mohammed is his Prophet,' exclaimed he, after a long pause. 'In the name of the Most High, tell me, O Bey, what you are going to do with those stones. So many thousands of purses spent upon such things! Can it be, as you say, that your people learn wisdom from them; or is it, as his reverence the Caedi declares, that they are to go to the palace of your Queen, who, with the rest of the unbelievers, worships these idols? As for wisdom, these figures will not teach you to make any better knives, or scissors, or chintzes; and it is in the making of those things that the English show their wisdom. But God is great! God is great! Here are stones which have been buried ever since the time of the holy Noah—peace be with him! Perhaps they were under ground before the deluge. I have lived on these lands for years. My father, and the father of my father, pitched their tents here before me; but they never heard of these figures. For twelve hundred years have the true believers (and, praise be to God! all true wisdom is with them alone) been settled in this country, and none of them ever heard of a palace under ground. Neither did they who went before them. But lo! here comes a Frank from many days' journey off, and he walks up to the very place, and he takes a stick (illustrating the description at the same time with the point of his spear), and makes a line here, and makes a line there. Here, says he, is the palace; there, says he, is the gate; and he shows us what has been all our lives beneath our feet, without our having known anything about it. Won-

derful ! wonderful ! Is it by books, is it by magic, is it by your prophets, that you have learnt these things ? Speak, O Bey ; tell me the secret of wisdom.'

The wonder of Abd-ur-rahman was certainly not without cause, and his reflections were natural enough. Whilst riding by his side I had been indulging in a reverie, not unlike his own, which he suddenly interrupted by these exclamations. Such thoughts crowded upon me day by day, as I looked upon every newly discovered sculpture. A stranger laying open monuments buried for more than twenty centuries, and thus proving to those who dwelt around them, that much of the civilisation and knowledge of which we now boast, existed amongst their forefathers when our 'ancestors were yet unborn,' was, in a manner, an acknowledgment of the debt which the West owes to the East. It is, indeed, no small matter of wonder, that far distant, and comparatively new, nations should have preserved the only records of a people once ruling over nearly half the globe ; and should now be able to teach the descendants of that people, or those who have taken their place, where their cities and monuments once stood. There was more than enough to excite the astonishment of Abd-ur-rahman, and I seized this opportunity to give him a short lecture upon the advantages of civilisation and of knowledge. I will not pledge myself, however, that my endeavours were attended with as much success as those of some may be who boast of their missions to the East. All I could accomplish was, to give the Arab Sheikh an exalted idea of the wisdom and power of the Franks ; which was so far useful to me, that through his means the impression he had received was spread about the country, and was not one of the least effective guarantees for the safety of my property and person.

This night was, of course, looked upon as one of rejoicing. Abd-ur-rahman and his brother dined with me ; although, had it not been for the honour and distinction conferred by the privilege of using knives and forks, they would rather have exercised their fingers with the crowds gathered round the wooden platters in the court-yard. Sheep were as usual killed, and boiled or roasted whole ; they formed the es-

sence of all entertainments and public festivities. They had scarcely been devoured before dancing was commenced. There were fortunately relays of musicians; for no human lungs, without frequent repose, could have furnished the requisite amount of breath. When some of the dancers were nearly falling from exhaustion, the ranks were recruited by others. And so the Arabs went on until dawn. It was useless to preach moderation, or to entreat for quiet. Advice and remonstrances were received with deafening shouts of the war-cry, and outrageous antics as proofs of gratitude for the entertainment and of ability to resist fatigue.

After passing the night in this fashion, these extraordinary beings, still singing and capering, started for the mound. Everything had been prepared on the previous day for moving the bull, and the men had now only to haul on the ropes. As the sculpture advanced, the rollers left behind were removed to the front, and thus in a short time it reached the end of the trench. There was little difficulty in dragging it down the precipitous side of the mound. When it was within three or four feet of the bottom, sufficient earth was removed from beneath it to admit the cart, upon which the bull itself was then lowered by still further digging away the soil. It was soon ready to be dragged to the river. Buffaloes were first harnessed to the yoke; but, although the men pulled with ropes fastened to the rings attached to the wheels, and to other parts of the cart, the animals, feeling the weight behind them, refused to move. We were compelled, therefore, to take them out; and the Nestorians, in parties of eight, lifted the pole by turns, whilst the Arabs, assisted by the people of Naifa and Nimroud, dragged the cart. The procession was thus formed. I rode first, with the Bairakdar, to point out the road. Then came the musicians, with their drums and fifes, drumming and fifing with might and main. The cart followed, dragged by about three hundred men, all screeching at the top of their voices, and urged on by the Cawasses and superintendents. The procession was closed by the women, who kept up the enthusiasm of the Arabs by their shrill cries. Abd-ur-rahman's horsemen performed

divers feats round the group, dashing backwards and forwards, and charging with their spears.

We advanced well enough, although the ground was very heavy, until we reached the ruins of the former village of Nimroud.* The villagers of Assyria dig deep pits in which they store their corn, barley, and straw for the autumn and winter. These pits generally surround the villages. Being only covered by a light framework of boughs and stakes, plastered over with mud, they become, particularly when half empty, a snare and a trap to the horseman, who, unless guided by some one acquainted with the localities, is pretty certain to find the hind legs of his horse on a level with its ears, and himself suddenly sprawling in front. The corn-pits around Nimroud had long since been emptied of their stores, and had been concealed by the light sand and dust, which, blown over the plain during summer, soon fill up every hole and crevice. Although I had carefully examined the ground before starting, one of these holes thus filled had escaped my notice, and into it two wheels of the cart completely sank. The Arabs pulled and yelled in vain. The ropes broke, but the wheels refused to move. We tried every means to release them, but unsuccessfully. After working until dusk, we were obliged to give up the attempt. I left a party of Arabs to guard the cart and its contents, suspecting that some adventurous Bedouins, attracted by the ropes, and by the mats and felts, with which the sculpture was enveloped, might turn their steps towards the spot during the night. My suspicions did not prove unfounded; for I had scarcely got into bed before the whole village was thrown into commotion by the reports of fire-arms and the war-cry of the Jebours. Hastening to the scene of action, I found that a party of Arabs had fallen upon my workmen. They were beaten off, leaving behind them, however, their mark; for a ball struck and indented the side of the bull. I was anxious to learn who the authors of this wanton attack were, and had organised a scheme for taking summary vengeance.

* The village was moved to its present site after the river had gradually receded to the westward, as the inhabitants had been left at a very inconvenient distance from water.



Procession of the Bull beneath the Mound of Nimroud.

But they were discovered too late; for, anticipating punishment, they had struck their tents, and had moved off into the desert.

Next morning we succeeded in clearing away the earth, and in placing thick planks beneath the buried wheels. After a few efforts the cart moved forwards amidst the shouts of the Arabs; who, as was invariably their custom on such occasions, indulged, whilst pulling at the ropes, in the most outrageous antics. The procession was formed as on the previous day, and we dragged the bull triumphantly down to within a few hundred yards of the river. Here the wheels buried themselves in the sand, and it was night before we contrived, with the aid of planks and by increased exertions, to place the sculpture on the platform prepared to receive it, and from which it was to slide down on the raft. The tents of the Arabs, who encamped near the river, were pitched round the bull, until its companion, the lion, should be brought down; and the two embarked together for Baghdad. The night was passed in renewed rejoicings, to celebrate the successful termination of our labours. On the following morning I rode to Mosul, to enjoy a few days' rest after my exertions.

The bull having thus been successfully transported to the banks of the river, preparations were made, on my return to Nimroud, for the removal of the second sculpture; and I ordered the trench, already opened for the passage of the bull, to be continued to the entrance formed by the lions, or about eighty feet to the north.

My arrangements were completed by the middle of April. I determined to lower the lion at once on the cart, and not to drag it out of the mound over the rollers. This sculpture, during its descent, was supported in the same manner as the bull had been; but, to avoid a second accident, I doubled the number of ropes and the coils of the cable. Enough earth was removed to bring the top of the cart to a level with the bottom of the lion. Whilst clearing away the wall of unbaked bricks, I discovered two alabaster tablets. On each of them was the standard inscription, and they had evidently been placed in the foundations of the palace; probably, as

coins and similar tablets are now buried under the first stone of an edifice, to record the period and object of its erection.

As the lion was cracked in more than one place, considerable care was required in lowering and moving it. Both, however, were effected without accident. The Arabs assembled as they had done at the removal of the bull. Abdur-rahman and his horsemen rode over to the mound. We had the same shouting and the same festivities. The lion descended into the place I had prepared for it on the cart, and was easily dragged out of the ruins. It was two days in reaching the river, as the wheels sank more than once into the loose soil, and were with difficulty extricated. It was, however, at length placed by the side of the bull, on the banks of the Tigris, ready to proceed to Busrah, where they would be embarked for England when an opportunity occurred, and as soon as I could make the necessary arrangements for their transport.

The sculptures, which I had hitherto sent to Busrah, had been floated down the river on rafts, as far only as Baghdad, where they had been transferred to boats built by the natives for the navigation of the lower part of the Tigris and Euphrates. These vessels were much too small and weak to carry either the lion or the bull; and, indeed, had they been large and strong enough, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, in the absence of proper machinery, to lift such heavy masses into them. I resolved, therefore, to attempt the navigation of the lower, as well as of the upper, part of the river with rafts made of inflated skins; and to send the lion and bull, at once, upon them to Busrah. The raftmen of Mosul, who are accustomed to descend the Tigris only as far as Baghdad, but never venture further, declared the scheme to be impracticable, and refused to attempt it. Even my friends at Baghdad doubted of my success; principally, however, on the ground that the prejudices and customs of the natives were against me,—and every one knows how difficult it is to prevail upon Easterns to undertake anything in opposition to their established habits. Such has been their nature for ages. As their fathers have done, so have they done after them, forgetting or omitting many things, but

never adding or improving. As rafts meet with no insurmountable difficulties in descending, even from the mountainous districts of Diarbekir, to Baghdad, there was no good reason why they should not continue their voyage to Busrah. Obstructions might occur in the upper part of the river, which abounds in rapids, rocks, and shallows; but not in the lower, where there is depth of water and nothing to impede the passage of large boats. The stream below Baghdad is sluggish in many parts, and the tide ascends nearly sixty miles above Busrah: these were the only valid objections, and they merely affected the time to be employed in the descent, and not its practicability.

It was impossible by the most convincing arguments, even though supported by the exhibition of a heap of coins, to prevail upon the raftmen of Mosul to construct such rafts as I required, or to undertake the voyage. I applied therefore to Mr. Hector, a British merchant established at Baghdad, and thoroughly well acquainted with the country, and through him found a man of that city, who declared himself willing to make the great sacrifice generally believed to be involved in the attempt. He was indebted in a considerable sum of money, and being the owner of a large number of skins, now lying useless, he preferred a desperate undertaking to the prospect of a debtor's prison.*

Mullah Ali—for such was the name of my raft-contractor—at length made his appearance at Nimroud. He was followed by a dirty half-naked Arab, his assistant in the construction of rafts; and, like those who carried on his trade some two thousand years before, by a couple of donkeys laden with skins ready for use. A genuine native of Baghdad, he had exhausted his ingenuity in the choice of materials for the composition of his garments. There could not have been a more dexterous mixture of colours than that displayed by his antari or flowing gown, cloak, and voluminous turban. He began, of course, with a long speech, protesting, by the Prophet, that he would undertake for no one else in the

* Almost all the trade from Mosul to Baghdad is carried on by means of rafts on the Tigris. The owners of these rafts are usually natives of Mosul, Tekrit, and Baghdad.

world what he was going to do for me; that he was my slave and my sacrifice, and that the man who was not, was worse than an infidel. I cut him short in this complimentary discourse. He then, as is usual in such transactions, began to make excuses, to increase his demands, and throw difficulties in the way. On these points I declined all discussion, directing Ibrahim Agha to give him an insight into my way of doing business, to recommend him to resign himself to his fate, as the contract had been signed, and to hint that he was now in the power of an authority from which there was no appeal.

Mullah Ali made many vain efforts to amend the conditions of his contract, and to induce, on my part, a fuller appreciation of his merits. He expected that these endeavours might, at least, lead to an additional amount of bakshish. At last he resigned himself to his fate, and slowly worked, with his assistant, at the binding together of beams and logs of wood with willow twigs to form a framework for a raft. There were still some difficulties and obstacles to be surmounted. The man of Baghdad had his own opinions on the building of rafts in general, founded upon immemorial custom and the traditions of the country. I had my theories, which could not be supported by equally substantial arguments. Consequently, he, who had all the proof on his side, may not have been wrong in declaring against any method, in favour of which I could produce no better evidence than my own will. But, like many other injured men, he fell a victim to the 'droit du plus fort,' and had to sacrifice, at once, prejudice and habit.

I did not doubt that the skins, once blown up, would support the sculptures without difficulty as far as Baghdad, a voyage of eight or ten days under favourable circumstances. But there they would require to be opened and refilled, or they would scarcely sustain so heavy a weight during the longer voyage to Busrah. However carefully the skins are filled, the air gradually escapes, and rafts, bearing merchandise, are generally detained several times during their descent, to enable the raftmen to examine and inflate the skins.

It may interest the reader to know how these rafts, which

have probably been for ages the only means of traffic on the upper parts of the rivers of Mesopotamia, are constructed. The skins of full-grown sheep and goats, taken off with as few incisions as possible, are dried, prepared, and then sewn up, one aperture being left at the neck, through which they are inflated. A framework of poplar beams, branches of trees, and reeds, having been constructed of the size of the intended raft, the skins are tied to it by osier twigs. The raft is then complete, and is moved to the water and launched. Care is taken to place the skins with their mouths upwards, that, in case any should burst or require refilling, they can be easily reached. Upon the framework of wood are piled bales of goods, and property belonging to merchants and travellers. When persons of rank or wealth descend the river, small huts are constructed for them on the raft by covering a common wooden *takht*, or bedstead of the country, with a hood formed of reeds and lined with felt. The poorer passengers seek shade or warmth, by burying themselves amongst the bales and other cargo, and sit patiently, almost in one position, until they reach their destination. They carry with them an earthen *mangal*, or chafing-dish, containing a charcoal fire, which serves to light their pipes, and to cook their coffee and food. The only real danger to be apprehended on the river is from the Arabs; who, when the country is in a disturbed state, invariably attack and pillage the rafts.

The progress is, of course, very slow, except during the floods, when the rafts are carried along rapidly by the swollen stream. The raftmen impel and guide them with long poles, to the end of which are fastened a few pieces of split cane.* They skilfully avoid the rapids; and, seated on the bales of goods, row continually, even in the hottest sun. They will seldom travel after dark before reaching Tekrit, on account of the rocks and shoals, which occur in the upper part of the river; but when they have passed that place, they resign themselves, night and day, to the sluggish stream. During the floods in the spring, or after heavy rains, small rafts may float from Mosul to Baghdad in about eighty-four hours; but

* These oars are precisely the same in shape as those represented in an Assyrian bas-relief described at p. 239.

the larger are generally six or seven days in performing the voyage. In summer, and when the river is low, they are frequently nearly a month in reaching their destination. When they have been unloaded, they are broken up, and the beams, wood, and twigs are sold at Baghdad at a considerable profit. The skins are washed and afterwards rubbed with a preparation of pounded pomegranate skins, to keep them from cracking and rotting. They are then brought back, either upon the shoulders of the raftmen or upon donkeys, to Mosul and Tekrit, where the men engaged in the navigation of the Tigris usually reside. The right of navigating the Tigris with rafts is a monopoly of the Turkish government, and is sold annually to the highest bidder. This, of course, makes the price of transport higher than it ought to be, and acts as a tax upon commerce.

On the 20th of April, there being fortunately a slight rise in the river, and my arrangements being complete, I determined to attempt the embarkation of the lion and bull. The two sculptures had been so placed on beams of poplar wood that, by withdrawing wedges from under them, they would slide nearly into the centre of the rafts. The high bank of the river had been cut away into a rapid slope to the water's edge. The beams having first been well greased, a raft supported by six hundred skins was brought opposite the bull, which, on the wedges being removed, immediately glided into its place. To prevent its moving too rapidly, and bursting the skins by the sudden pressure, the Arabs checked it by ropes, and it was placed without accident. The lion was then embarked, with equal success, upon a second raft of the same size; in a few hours the two sculptures, with several large bas reliefs from the same ruins, were properly secured, and before night they were ready to float down the river to Busrah.

When the labours of the day were over, sheep were slaughtered for the entertainment of Abd-ur-rahman's Arabs, who had assisted on the occasion, and for the workmen. The Abou-Salman returned to their tents after dark. Abd-ur-rahman took leave of me, and we did not meet again before my departure for Europe; the next day he moved towards the district of Jezirah in search of pasture. I heard of him

on my journey to Constantinople ; the Kurds by the road complaining that his tribe were making up the number of their flocks by appropriating the stray sheep of their neighbours. I had seen much of the Sheikh during my residence at Nimroud ; and although, like all Arabs, he was not averse to ask for what he thought there might be a remote chance of getting by a little importunity, he was, on the whole, a very friendly and useful ally.

On the morning of the 22nd, the rafts being ready, I gave two sheep to the raftmen to be slain on the bank of the river, as a sacrifice to ensure the success of their voyage. The carcases were distributed, as is proper on such occasions, amongst the poor. A third sheep was reserved for a propitiatory offering to be immolated at the tomb of Sultan Abd-Allah—a saint who appears to interfere considerably with the navigation of the Tigris, and who closed the further ascent of the river against the infidel crew of the Frank steamer the ‘Euphrates,’ because they had neglected to make the customary sacrifice. All ceremonies having been duly performed, Mullah Ali kissed my hand, placed himself on one of the rafts, and slowly floated, with the cargo under his charge, down the stream.*

As I watched the rafts, until they disappeared behind a projecting bank forming a distant reach of the river, I could

* It is not improbable that the great obelisk which, according to Diodorus Siculus (lib. ii. c. 1), was brought to Babylon from Armenia by Semiramis, was floated down on rafts supported by skins, in the same way that I transported the sculptures of Nineveh to Busrah. It was 130 feet in height, and 25 feet square at the base ; and being cut out of the solid rock, if the account be not a little exaggerated, must have been of prodigious weight. The principal difficulty might probably appear to have been to place it on the raft ; but this could have been accomplished by a simple method—by putting the beams forming the framework of wood, and fastening the skins under the obelisk, in some dry place, which would be overflowed during the periodical floods. When the water began to rise, by gradually removing the earth from beneath the skins, they could easily be filled with air ; and when the stream had reached the raft they would lift up the obelisk, which could then be floated into the centre of the river. I should have adopted this method of moving the larger lions and bulls, had I been required to send them to Busrah without being provided with any mechanical contrivance sufficiently powerful to embark such large weights by a simpler process.

not forbear musing upon the strange destiny of their burdens ; which, after adorning the palaces of the Assyrian kings, the objects of the wonder, and may be the worship of millions, had been buried unknown for nearly twenty-five centuries beneath a soil trodden by Persians under Cyrus, by Greeks under Alexander, and by Arabs under the first successors of their Prophet. They were now to visit India, to cross the most distant seas of the southern hemisphere, and to be finally placed in a British Museum. Who can venture to foretell how their strange career will end ?

After the departure of the Abou-Salman, the plain of Nimroud was a complete desert. The visits of armed parties of Arabs became daily more frequent, and we often watched them from the mound, as they rode towards the hills in search of pillage, or returned from their expeditions driving the plundered flocks and cattle before them. We were still too strong to fear the Bedouins ; but I was compelled to put my house into a complete state of defence, and to keep patrols round my premises during the night to avoid surprise. The Jebours were exposed to constant losses, in the way of donkeys or tent furniture, as the country was infested by petty thieves, who issued from their hiding-places, and wandered to and fro, like jackals, after dark. Nothing was too small or worthless to escape their notice. I was roused almost nightly by shoutings and the discharge of fire-arms, when the whole encampment was thrown into commotion at the disappearance of a copper pot or an old grain sack. I was fortunate enough to escape their depredations.

The fears of my Jebours increased with the number of the plundering parties, and at last, when a small Arab settlement, within sight of Nimroud, was attacked by a band of Aneyza horsemen, who murdered several of the inhabitants, and drove away the sheep and cattle, the workmen protested in a body against any further residence in so dangerous a vicinity. I found that it would not be much longer possible to keep them together, and I determined, therefore, to bring the excavations to an end.

I therefore commenced covering with earth those parts of the ruins which still remained exposed, according to the in-

structions I had received from the Trustees of the British Museum. Had the numerous sculptures been left, without this precaution having been taken to preserve them, they would have suffered, not only from the effects of the atmosphere, but from the spears and clubs of the Arabs, who are always ready to knock out the eyes, and to otherwise disfigure, the idols of the unbelievers. The rubbish and earth removed during the excavations was accordingly brought back in baskets, thrown into the chambers, and heaped over the slabs until the whole was again covered over.

But before leaving Nimroud and reburying its palaces, I would wish to lead the reader once more through the ruins of the principal edifice, and to convey as distinct an idea as I am able of the excavated halls and chambers. Let us imagine ourselves issuing from my tent near the village in the plain. On approaching the mound, not a trace of building can be perceived, except a small mud hut covered with reeds, erected on its summit for the accommodation of my Chaldæan workmen. We ascend this artificial hill, but still see no ruins, not a stone protruding from the soil. There is only a broad level platform before us, perhaps covered with a luxuriant crop of barley, if in spring; if in summer or autumn, yellow and parched, without a blade of vegetation, except a scanty tuft of camel-thorn. Low black objects, surrounded by brushwood and dried grass, a thin column of smoke rising from the midst of them, are scattered here and there. These are the tents of the Arabs; and a few miserable old women are groping about them, picking up camel's-dung or dry twigs. One or two girls, with firm step and erect carriage, are just reaching the top of the mound, with the water-jar on their shoulders, or a bundle of brushwood on their heads. On all sides of us, issuing from underground, are long lines of wild-looking beings, with dishevelled hair, their limbs only half covered by a short loose shirt, some jumping and capering, and all hurrying to and fro shouting like madmen. Each one carries a basket, and as he reaches the edge of the mound, or some convenient spot near, empties its contents, raising a cloud of dust. He then returns at the top of his speed, dancing and yelling as before, and flourishing his basket over

his head; again he suddenly disappears in the bowels of the earth, from whence he emerged. These are the workmen employed in removing the soil and rubbish from the ruins.

We will descend into the principal trench by a flight of steps rudely cut in the earth, near the western face of the mound. As we approach it, we find a party of Arabs bending on their knees, and intently gazing at something beneath them. Each holds his long spear, tufted with ostrich feathers, in one hand; and in the other the halter of his mare, which stands patiently behind him. The party consists of a Bedouin Sheikh from the desert, and his followers; who, having heard strange reports of the wonders of Nimroud, have made several days' journey to remove their doubts and satisfy their curiosity. He rises as he sees us approach, and if we wish to escape the embrace of a very dirty stranger we had better at once hurry into the trenches.

We descend about twenty feet, and suddenly find ourselves between a pair of colossal lions, winged and human-headed, forming a portal. I have already described my feelings when gazing for the first time on these majestic figures. Those of the reader would probably be the same, particularly if caused by the reflection, that before those wonderful forms Ezekiel, Jonah, and others of the prophets may have stood, and Sennacherib bowed.

In the subterranean labyrinth which we have reached, all is bustle and confusion. Arabs are running to and fro; some bearing baskets filled with earth, others carrying water-jars to their companions. The Nestorians or Tiyari, in their striped dresses and conical felt caps, are digging with picks into the tenacious earth, raising a dense cloud of fine dust at every stroke. The wild strains of Kurdish music may be occasionally heard issuing from some distant part of the ruins, and if they are caught by the parties at work, the Arabs join their voices in chorus, raise the war-cry, and labour with renewed energy. Leaving behind us a small chamber, in which the sculptures are distinguished by a want of finish in the execution, and considerable rudeness in the design of the ornaments, we issue from between the winged lions, and enter the

remains of the principal hall.* On both sides of us are colossal winged human figures, some with the heads of eagles, and carrying mysterious symbols in their hands. To the left is another portal, also formed by winged lions. One of them has fallen across the entrance, and there is just room to creep beneath it. Beyond this portal is a winged figure, and two slabs with bas-reliefs; but they have been so much defaced by exposure to the weather that we can scarcely trace the subject upon them. Further on there are no traces of wall, although a deep trench has been opened. The opposite side of the hall has also disappeared, and we only see a high wall of earth. On examining it attentively, we can detect the marks of masonry; and we soon find that it is a solid structure built of bricks of unbaked clay mixed with chopped straw, now of the same colour as the surrounding soil, and scarcely to be distinguished from it.

The slabs of alabaster, which once panelled this hall, but which have fallen from their original position, have, however, been raised; and we tread in the midst of a maze of small bas-reliefs, representing chariots, horsemen, battles, and sieges. Perhaps the workmen are about to raise a slab for the first time; and we watch, with eager curiosity, what new event of Assyrian history, or what unknown custom or religious ceremony, may be illustrated by the sculpture beneath.

Having walked for about one hundred feet amongst these scattered monuments of ancient history and art, we reach another doorway, formed by colossal winged bulls in yellow limestone. One is still entire, and standing in its original position; but its companion has fallen, and is broken into several pieces—the great human head is at our feet.

We pass on without turning into the part of the building to which this portal leads. Beyond it we see another winged figure, holding a graceful flower in its hand, and apparently presenting it as an offering to the winged bull. Adjoining this sculpture we find a perfect series of highly-finished bas-reliefs still lining the walls. There is the Assyrian king, slaying the lion and wild bull, engaged in battles and in sieges, and receiving as captives the chiefs of the conquered people. We

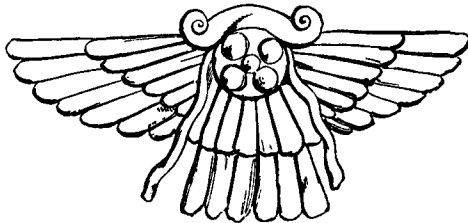
* Hall B, entrance *a*, Plan II. p. 42.

have now reached the end of the hall, and find before us an elaborate and perfectly-preserved sculpture, representing two kings, standing beneath the emblem of the Supreme Deity, and attended by winged figures. Between them is the sacred tree. In front of this bas-relief is the great marble platform, upon which, in days of old, may have been placed the throne of the Assyrian monarch, when he received his captive enemies and his courtiers, or upon which he may have offered up sacrifices to his gods.

As we gaze upon these singular sculptures the description of Ezekiel is brought vividly to our minds. The prophet, in typifying the corruptions which had crept into the religious system of the Jews, and the idolatrous practices they had borrowed from the strange nations with which they had been brought into contact, thus illustrates the influence of the Assyrians. 'She saw men portrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldæans portrayed with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldæa, the land of their nativity.'* The prophet was dwelling on the banks of the Chebar, or Khabour, in the immediate vicinity of Nineveh, previous to the destruction of the Assyrian capital, an event which he most probably witnessed. It may consequently be conjectured that he was well acquainted with the Assyrian palaces and temples, and their sculptured decorations; and that he was describing what he had himself seen. He may, indeed, have entered the very building we are describing. He points out the rich and highly ornamented head-dress of the kings, as we see them to this day in the bas-reliefs, and alludes to the prevalence of that red colour, remains of which are so frequent on the sculptures of Nimroud and Khorsabad. Nor can the resemblance of the winged human-headed lions and

* Chap. xxiii. 14, 15. The literal translation of this remarkable passage is 'she saw men of sculptured (or painted) *workmanship* upon the wall, likenesses of the Chaldæans, pictured (or sculptured) in shashar (red ochre or vermilion); girded with girdles on their loins, with coloured flowing *head-dresses* upon their heads, *with the* aspect of princes all of them, *the* likeness of the sons of Babel-Chaldæa, the land of their nativity.'

bulls and other symbolical figures to those seen by Ezekiel in his vision, fail to strike us. It is highly probable that, when seeking to typify certain divine attributes, and to describe the divine glory, he chose forms that were not only familiar to himself, but to the people whom he addressed, captives like himself in the land of Assyria.* He chose the four living creatures, with four faces, *four wings, and the hands of a man under their wings on the four sides*, the faces being those of a man, and of a lion, an ox, and an eagle—the four creatures continually introduced on the sculptured walls—and by them was a wheel, the appearance of which ‘was as a wheel in the middle of a wheel.’† May not this wheel have been the winged circle, or globe, which, hovering above the head of the king, typifies in the sculptures the Supreme Deity of the Assyrian nation?



Emblem of the Deity. (N. W. Palace, Nimroud.)

To the left of the great bas-relief at the eastern end of the hall is a fourth outlet formed by another pair of human-headed lions. We pass between them, and find ourselves on the edge of a deep ravine, to the north of which rises, high above us, the lofty pyramid. Figures of captives bearing objects of tribute—earrings, bracelets, and monkeys—are sculptured on the walls; and two enormous human-headed bulls, with two winged figures above fourteen feet high, are lying prostrate on the ground.

* Winged human-headed bulls and other remains of an Assyrian palace were subsequently discovered on the river Khabour or Chebar, where part of the captive tribes and Ezekiel were exiled. (See ‘Nineveh and Babylon,’ ch. v.)

† Ezekiel, i. 16.

As the ravine bounds the ruins on this side, we must return to the yellow bulls.* The entrance formed by them leads us into a large chamber surrounded by eagle-headed figures: at one end of it is a doorway guarded by two priests or divinities, and in the centre another portal with winged bulls. Whichever way we turn, we find ourselves in the midst of a nest of rooms; and without an acquaintance with the intricacies of the place, we should soon lose ourselves in this labyrinth. The soil and rubbish not having been removed from the centre of the chambers, the excavations consist of a number of narrow passages, panelled on one side with slabs of alabaster, and shut in on the other by a high wall of earth, half buried in which may here and there be seen a broken vase, or a brick painted with brilliant colours. We may wander through these galleries for an hour or two, examining the strange sculptures, or the numerous inscriptions that surround us. Here we see long rows of kings, attended by their eunuchs and priests—there lines of winged figures, carrying fir-cones and religious emblems, and seemingly in adoration before the mystic tree. On one side representations of battles, sieges, and the triumphs of the Assyrian arms; on the other, illustrations of the manners and domestic life of the inhabitants of ancient Nineveh. Other entrances, formed by winged lions and bulls, lead us into new chambers. In every one of them are fresh objects to excite our curiosity and surprise. At length, wearied, we issue from the buried edifice by a passage on the side opposite to that by which we entered, and find ourselves again upon the naked platform. We look around in vain for any traces of the wonderful remains we have just seen, and are half inclined to believe that we have dreamed a dream, or have been listening to some tale of Eastern romance.

Some, who may hereafter tread on the spot, when the grass again grows over the ruins of the Assyrian palaces, may indeed suspect that I have been relating a vision.

* Plan II. Hall B, entrance *f*, p. 42.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure from Nimroud—Excavations at Kouyunjik—Discovery of a palace—Bas-reliefs—General description of the sculptures—Excavations carried on by Mr. Ross—His discoveries—A sculptured slab and sarcophagus—Preparations for my return to Constantinople—Leave Mosul.

THE palaces of Nimroud had again been covered up with earth, and the sculptures once more concealed from the eye of man. The surrounding country became daily more dangerous from the incursions of the Arabs of the desert, who now began to encamp even on the east bank of the Tigris, close to the ruins. It was time, therefore, to leave the village. As a small sum of money still remained at my disposal, I resolved to devote it to an examination of the ruins opposite Mosul; particularly of the great mound of Kouyunjik. Although excavations on a small scale had already been made there, I had not hitherto had time to superintend them myself, and in such researches the natives of the country cannot be trusted. It is well known that almost since the fall of the Assyrian empire, a city of some extent, representing the ancient Nineveh, although no longer the seat of government, nor a place of great importance, has stood on the banks of the Tigris in this part of its course.* The modern city may not have been built above the ruins of the ancient; but it certainly rose in their immediate vicinity, either on the eastern bank of the river, or on the western, like the modern Mosul. The slabs, which had once lined the walls of the palaces of ancient Nineveh, and still remained concealed within mounds of earth, had been frequently exposed by accident or by design. It was soon found that the ruins were an inexhaustible mine of building materials. The

* There was a Roman city on the ruins of Nineveh, coins of which have been preserved.

alabaster was dug out to be used in the construction of houses, or to be burnt for lime. A few years before my first visit, a bas-relief had been discovered in one part of the ruins, during a search after stones for the repair of a bridge. The removal of slabs, and the destruction of sculptures, for similar purposes, may have been going on for centuries. There might, therefore, have been some reason to doubt whether any important remains, preserved like those at Nimroud, still existed in Kouyunjik. I knew that, under the village containing the tomb of the prophet Jonah, there were Assyrian ruins of considerable importance, probably as entire as those at Nimroud. They owed their preservation to the existence above them, from a very remote period, of the tomb and village, and of a burial ground, considered especially sacred on account of its vicinity to the grave of the prophet, and which had spread over the rest of the surface of the mound. Fragments of sculpture, and inscriptions, had frequently been found when the inhabitants of the place had made the foundations of their dwellings; and I was assured by a grey-beard of the place, that when Ali Pasha of Baghdad caused a well to be dug for the benefit of the mosque, a pair of winged bulls had been discovered at a considerable depth beneath the surface. But the prejudices of the people of Mosul forbade any attempt to explore a spot so venerated for its sanctity.

The palaces of Nimroud, having been far distant from any large town, when once buried were not disturbed. It does not appear that, after the fall of the empire, any place of importance rose near them, except Selamiyah. This village is three miles from the ruins, and there are no remains near it to show that, at any time since the Assyrian period, it was anything more than a small market town. It may, consequently, be inferred that the great mound of Nimroud has never been opened, and its contents carried away for building purposes, since the destruction of the latest Assyrian palace; except, as it has already been mentioned, when a Pasha of Mosul endeavoured to remove one or two slabs to repair the tomb of a Mussulman saint.

There are grounds, I think, for believing that the edifices

of which the remains exist at Nimroud, Kouyunjik, and Khor-sabad, were at one time included within the area to which the name of Nineveh was applied. Each of these palace-temples (for such they appear to have been) was probably the centre of a separate quarter, built at a different period, and having a different name. Thus on the inscribed bricks we find distinct names apparently applying to the localities from which they are obtained; for instance, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, Calah to Nimroud, and Beth-Sargina to Khorsabad; and this will explain the names of Mespila and Larissa assigned by Xenophon, respectively, to the ruins at Kouyunjik and Nimroud, and that of Evorita given to the palace in which Saracus, the last of the Assyrian kings, is said to have destroyed himself. The great mounds and earthen ramparts still existing represent, it may be conjectured, royal residences surrounded by walls and fortifications, within which were enclosed hunting grounds and gardens rather than fixed habitations. They resembled, in fact, the paradises or parks of the Persian kings. The space between these quarters was occupied by private houses standing in the midst of gardens, orchards, and corn-land. Different kings probably built such royal residences or quarters for themselves, giving to them a new name; and thus, in the course of time, different names came to be given to different parts of the city. I can suggest no other way of reconciling the unanimous statements of ancient historians, as well as of the Old Testament, as to the extent of Nineveh, nor of explaining the fact that each of the great edifices explored owed its foundation to a different king, and that there are no remains, either at Kouyunjik or Khorsabad, of the same early period as those at Nimroud. The dimensions of the city, as given by Diodorus Siculus were 150 stadia for the two longest sides of the quadrangle, and 90 for the shortest, the square being 480 stadia or about 60 miles. Jonah calls it 'an exceeding great city of three days' journey,' the number of inhabitants, who did not know their right hand from their left, being six score thousand.* It is certainly remarkable that the three days'

* Various meanings have been assigned to this statement. Some suppose that young children are intended, who would form about one-

journey of Jonah should correspond exactly with the sixty miles of the geographer, and that a square formed by the great ruins on the east bank of the Tigris, taking Nimroud, Kouyunjik, Khorsabad, and Karamless as the four corners, should give very nearly the same result.* These fortified quarters were not all enclosed within one wall, which surrounded the whole area occupied by them; no traces of any such wall have been discovered. The city was probably open, and, in the event of a siege, the population took refuge within the fortifications surrounding the royal palaces. To this day Damascus, Isfahan, and some of the great cities of India, such as Delhi, are built precisely upon this plan.

It would appear, from comparing the relative antiquity of the various ruins hitherto discovered, that the city was originally founded on the spot now occupied by the mounds of Nimroud. No better position could have been chosen than the delta formed by the junction of two large rivers like the Tigris and the Zab. The N. W. palace was the first built; successive monarchs added the centre palace, and other edifices which rose by its side. As the population increased, and conquered nations were brought, like the people of Samaria, from distant lands and settled around the Assyrian capital, the dimensions of the city increased also. A king founding a new dynasty, or anxious to perpetuate his fame, and to record his conquests, chose a new site for the erection of a palace. The city, gradually spreading, at length embraced all these buildings. Thus Nimroud would represent the original site of Nineveh. The son of the builder of the oldest palace there founded a

fifth of the population, which would then have been about 600,000. Others contend that Jonah merely alluded to the general ignorance of the inhabitants.

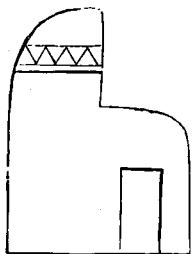
* The distance from Kouyunjik to Nimroud is about eighteen miles; that from Nimroud to Karamless about twelve, the opposite sides of the square the same; these measurements correspond accurately with the elongated quadrangle of Diodorus. Twenty miles is a day's journey in the East, and we have therefore exactly three days' journey for the circumference of the city. These coincidences are, at least, very remarkable. Within this space was fought the great battle between Heraclius and Rhazates (A. D. 627). 'The city, and even the ruins of the city, had long since disappeared: the vacant space afforded a spacious field for the operations of the two armies.' (Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, ch. xlvi.)

new edifice at Baashiekhah. At a much later period subsequent monarchs erected their temple-palaces at Khorsabad and Kouyunjik. Their descendants returned to Nimroud, the principal buildings of which had been allowed to fall to decay. They used the materials taken from their ruins in the construction of new residences for themselves. The city had now attained the dimensions assigned to it by the Greek geographers, and by the sacred writings. The numerous royal residences, surrounded by gardens and parks, and enclosed by fortified walls, each being a distinct quarter called by a different name, and the vast mass of private buildings, fields, and gardens lying between them, formed together the great city known to the Jews and Greeks as Nineveh.

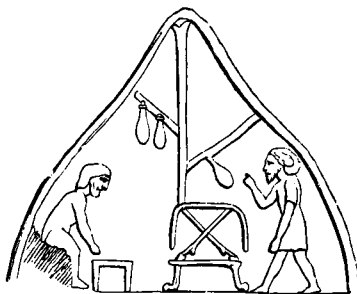
It is not difficult to account for the total disappearance of the dwelling-places which occupied the spaces between the fortified palaces. They were probably little superior to the houses and huts of the present inhabitants of the country, and, like them, constructed entirely of sun-dried bricks. As soon as they were allowed to fall to decay on the capture and destruction of the city, the materials of which they were built again mingled with the soil, and after the lapse of a very few years scarcely a trace of them would exist. Thus the site of a modern village of Assyria, when once deserted, can soon only be traced by a low mound in the plain, and rapidly disappears altogether. There are, however, still sufficient remains to indicate that buildings were once spread over the space I have described; for scarcely a husbandman drives his plough through the soil without turning up the vestiges of former habitations. The larger and more important buildings are fully represented by the numerous mounds which are scattered over the face of the country between the four great ruins I have described. If it be objected that no remains of ancient buildings have been found in these mounds, I may remind the reader that even the palaces would have remained undiscovered had not slabs of alabaster marked their walls.

We cannot identify in any other way than that I have suggested, the different ruins of Nimroud, Khorsabad, and Kouyunjik with Nineveh; unless, indeed, we suppose that there were several cities of that name, built at different periods on

different sites. In this case Nimroud and Kouyunjik may each represent the Nineveh of a different epoch. The dimensions which I have assigned to the city at the time of its greatest prosperity cannot, I think, be deemed extravagant when the nature of Eastern cities is taken into consideration. They do not bear the same proportion to their populations as those of Europe. A place as extensive as London or Paris would not contain one-third of the inhabitants of either. The custom, prevalent from the earliest period in the East, of secluding women from strangers, and in apartments removed.



A House. * (Kouyunjik.)



The Interior of a Tent. (Kouyunjik.)

from those of the men, renders a separate house for each family almost indispensable.† It was probably as rare, in the time of the Assyrian empire, to find more than one family residing under one roof, unless composed of persons very intimately related, such as father and son, as it is at present in an Arab or Turkish city. Moreover, that gardens and

* This house appears to resemble the model of an Egyptian dwelling in the British Museum. (See also Sir Gardiner Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. ii. woodcuts 98 and 99.) From a bas-relief discovered in the centre of the mound at Nimroud, it would appear that the upper part was sometimes of canvas.

† We learn from the book of Esther that such was the custom amongst the early Persians, although the intercourse between the sexes was at that time much less circumscribed than it became after the spread of Mohammedanism. Ladies were even admitted to public banquets, and received strangers in their own apartments, although they resided habitually in dwellings separate from the men.

arable land were attached to the houses and included within the precincts of these great Eastern cities, we learn from Diodorus Siculus and Quintus Curtius, who state that there was space enough, within the walls of Babylon, to cultivate corn for the sustenance of the whole population in case of siege, besides orchards and gardens.* From the expression of Jonah that there was much cattle in Nineveh,† it may be inferred that there was also pasture for them; and we learn from the sculptures that a portion of the population even resided in tents within the city—a custom still prevailing in Baghdad, Mosul, and the neighbouring towns. A larger space must have been required for such encampments than for huts or cottages. The cities of Isfahan, Damascus, and Delhi, with their walled castles and palaces, and their gardens and suburbs, must, during the time of their greatest prosperity, have been little inferior in size to Nineveh.

Existing ruins show that Nineveh had acquired its greatest extent in the time of the Assyrian kings mentioned in the Old Testament. It was then that Jonah visited it, and that reports of its size and magnificence were carried to the West, and gave rise to those traditions from which the Greeks mainly derived the information they have handed down to us concerning the city. It was then, too, that the wealth, luxury, and power of its inhabitants called forth the indignant protests of the prophets, and led to those vices and that effeminacy which ultimately brought about the destruction of Nineveh and the fall of the empire. ‡

By the middle of May, I had finished my work at Nimroud. My house was dismantled. The windows and doors, which had been temporarily fitted up, were taken out; and, with the little furniture that had been collected together, were placed on the backs of donkeys and camels to be carried to Mosul. The Arabs struck their tents and commenced their march. I remained behind until every one had left, and then turned my back upon the deserted village. We were the last to quit

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. c. 9; Quint. Curt. v. cap. 1. † Chap. iv. 11.

‡ Some additional observations on the site and size of Nineveh will be found in the account of my second expedition to Assyria. (See 'Nineveh and Babylon,' ch. XIV.)

the plains of Nimroud ; and, indeed, nearly the whole country to the south of Mosul, as far as the Zab, became, after our departure, a wilderness.

Halfway between Mosul and Nimroud the road crosses a low hill. From its crest, both the town and the ruins are visible. On one side, in the distance, rises the pyramid, in the midst of the broad plain of the Jaif, and on the other may be faintly distinguished the great mound of Kouyunjik, and the surrounding remains. The leaning minaret of the old mosque of Mosul may also be seen springing above the dark patch which marks the site of the town. The river can be traced for many miles, winding in the midst of the plain, suddenly losing itself in the higher lands, and again emerging from them into the level country. The whole space over which the eye ranges from this spot, was probably once covered with the houses and gardens of the Assyrian capital—that great city of three days' journey. At an earlier period, that distant pyramid directed the traveller from afar to Nineveh, when the limits of the city were small. It was then one of those primitive settlements which, for the first time, had been formed by the congregated habitations of men. To me the long dark line of mounds in the distance were objects of deep interest. I reined up my horse to look upon them for the last time—for from no other part of the road are they visible—and then galloped on towards Mosul.

In excavating at Kouyunjik, I pursued the plan I had adopted at Nimroud. I resided in Mosul. The Arabs pitched their tents on the summit of the mound, at the entrances to the trenches. The Nestorians encamped at its foot, on the banks of the Khauser, the small stream which flows through the ruins. The nearness of the ruins enabled the inhabitants of the town to gratify their curiosity by a constant inspection of my proceedings ; and a crowd of gaping Mussulmans and Christians was continually gathered round the trenches. I rode to the mound early every morning, and remained there during the day.

The shape of the great mound of Kouyunjik is very irregular. Nearly square on the south-western side, it narrows almost to a point on the north-eastern. At the northern extremity are

the ruins of the village from which the mound takes its name.* From this spot a steep road leads to the plain, forming the only access to the summit for loaded animals. Not far from the ruined village is a small Mussulman tomb, surmounted by a dome, and covering the remains of some 'Sheikh,' or holy man, whose name and story have long passed away. A little beyond it, to the south-west, the level is higher than that of any other part of the mound; and here may be traced the remains of buildings of an early period, although not Assyrian. They may be assigned to the time of the Roman or Parthian occupation of this part of Assyria. To the south of the tomb the platform suddenly sinks, leaving a crescent-shaped ridge, like an amphitheatre. There are ravines, or narrow steep channels, leading from the foot to the summit of the mound, on all sides of Kouyunjik, except that facing the Tigris. If not entirely formed by the winter rains, they have been worn and deepened by them. They may mark the places where paths, or flights of steps, once led from the plain to the palaces which stood on the platform. They are strewn with bricks and fragments of pottery, and sometimes of stone and calcined alabaster. When the sides, undermined by the winter torrent, fall in, they frequently disclose masses of solid masonry of sun-dried bricks. Through these gullies are carried the pathways to the top of the mound, used by the people of the country.

The river Khausser winds round the eastern base of Kouyunjik, and then makes its way to the Tigris. Although a small and sluggish stream, except when swollen by the winter rains, it has worn for itself a deep bed, and is only fordable near the mound, immediately below the southern corner, where the road to Mosul crosses it; and at the northern extremity, where a flour-mill is turned by its waters. After rain it becomes an impetuous torrent, overflowing its banks, and carrying all before it. It then rises very suddenly, and as suddenly subsides. The Tigris now flows at a distance of about half a mile from the mound, but at one time swept round its foot, traces of the ancient channel still existing.

* 'Kouyunjik' means, in Turkish, 'the little sheep.' The Arabs, however, call the mound 'Armousheeyah.'

Even now, when the river is swollen by extraordinary floods from the hills, it occasionally overflows the whole plain up to Kouyunjik. This small plain is formed by a rich deposit left by the river, and is always under cultivation, being divided into corn-fields, and melon and cucumber beds. Here stands the village of Kouyunjik, which was removed, some years ago, to this more convenient spot, from the summit of the mound.

The French Consul had carried on excavations for some time at Kouyunjik, without finding any traces of building. He was satisfied with digging pits or wells, a few feet deep, and then renouncing the attempt, when no sculptures or inscriptions were uncovered. By excavating in this desultory manner, if any remains of building existed under ground, their discovery would be a mere chance. An acquaintance with the nature and position of the ancient edifices of Assyria, will at once suggest the proper method of examining the mounds which enclose them. The Assyrians, when about to build a palace or temple, first constructed a platform of sun-dried bricks and earth, about thirty or forty feet above the level of the plain. Upon it they raised the edifice. When the building was destroyed, its ruins, already half-buried by the falling in of the upper walls and chambers and the roof, were in process of time completely covered by the dust and dry loose soil, carried about by the hot winds of summer. Consequently, in digging for remains, the first step is to find the platform of sun-dried bricks. When this is discovered, the trenches must be dug down to the level of it, and not deeper; they should then be continued in different directions, care being always taken to keep along the platform. By these means, if there be any ruins, they must necessarily be discovered, supposing the trenches to be carried far enough; for the halls and chambers of the Assyrian edifices were generally narrow, and their walls, or the slabs which cased them, if fallen from their places, must soon be reached.

At Kouyunjik, the accumulation of rubbish and earth was very considerable, and to find the platform of unbaked bricks, trenches were dug to the depth of twenty and even thirty feet. Before beginning the excavations, I carefully examined all

parts of the mound, to ascertain where remains of buildings might most probably exist; and at length decided upon continuing my researches where I had commenced them last summer, near the S. W. corner.

The workmen had been digging for several days without finding any other remains than fragments of calcined alabaster, sufficient, however, to encourage me to persevere in the examination of this part of the ruins. One morning as I was in Mosul, two Arab women came to me, and announced that sculptures had been discovered. They had hurried from the mound as soon as the first slab had been exposed to view; and blowing up the skins, which they always carry with them, had crossed the river upon them. They had scarcely received the present claimed in the East by the bearers of good tidings, and the expectation of which had led to the display of so much eagerness, than one of my overseers, who was generally known from his corpulence as *Toma Shishman*, or *fat Thomas*, made his appearance, breathless from his exertions. He had hurried as fast as his legs could carry him over the bridge, to obtain the reward carried off, in this instance, to his great disappointment, by the women.

I rode immediately to the ruins; and, on entering the trenches, found that the workmen had reached a wall, and the remains of an entrance. The only slab as yet uncovered had been almost completely destroyed by fire. It stood on the edge of a deep ravine, which ran far into the southern side of the mound.

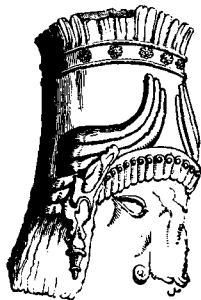
As the excavations at *Kouyunjik* were carried on in precisely the same manner as those at *Nimroud*, I need not trouble the reader with any detailed account of my proceedings. The wall first discovered proved to be one side of a chamber. By following it we reached an entrance formed by winged human-headed bulls, leading into a second hall. In a month nine halls and chambers had been explored.

The palace had been destroyed by fire. The alabaster slabs were almost reduced to lime, and many of them fell to pieces as soon as uncovered. The places, which others had occupied, could only be traced by a thin white deposit, like a coat of plaster, left by the burnt alabaster upon the wall of sun-dried bricks.

In its architecture, the newly discovered edifice resembled the palaces of Nimroud and Khorsabad. The halls were long and narrow; the walls built of unbaked brick, and panelled with sculptured slabs. The alabaster slabs were, however, generally larger in their dimensions than those found at Nimroud, being about ten feet high, and from eight to nine feet broad. The winged human-headed bulls, forming the entrances, were from fourteen to sixteen feet square. The slabs, unlike those I had hitherto discovered, were not divided in the centre by bands of inscription, but were com-



Head of Winged Bull. (Khorsabad and Kouyunjik.)



Head of Winged Monster. (Persepolis.)

pletely covered with figures. The bas-reliefs were inferior in general design, and in the beauty of the details, to those of the most ancient palace at Nimroud; but in many parts they were very carefully and minutely finished: in this respect the sculptures of Kouyunjik yield to no others discovered in Assyria. The winged bulls resembled those of Khorsabad, and not those of the north-west palace at Nimroud, in their head-dress, which consisted of a high horned hat, flat and not rounded at the top, and ornamented with a crest of feathers and rosettes: in this respect they were like the winged monsters of Persepolis. Some of the bulls had four legs,

others five, as at Nimroud.* In the costumes and armour of the warriors, in the trappings and caparisons of the horses, and in the dresses of the priests and winged figures, the sculptures also resembled those of Khorsabad.

Inscriptions were not numerous. They occurred between the legs of the winged bulls, and above the head of the king, and on bas-reliefs representing the siege or sack of a city, in the form of short epigraphs, and on the backs of slabs; but they were all more or less injured. Those on the bulls were long, one inscription being continued on the two sides of an entrance. As four pairs of these colossal figures were discovered, each pair bearing nearly the same inscription, the whole may be restored from the fragments.†

The king, whose name is on the sculptures and bricks from Kouyunjik, was the father of Esarhaddon, the builder of the S.W. palace at Nimroud, and the son of Sargon, the Khorsabad king, and is now generally admitted to be Sennacherib. The name was first interpreted by Dr. Hincks, and is formed by the following cuneiform characters:—



Long before the discovery of the ruins of the palace, I had conjectured, from an examination of a few fragments of sculpture and inscriptions picked up on the mound, that the building which once stood there must be referred to the time of the Khorsabad king, or to one of his immediate predecessors or successors.

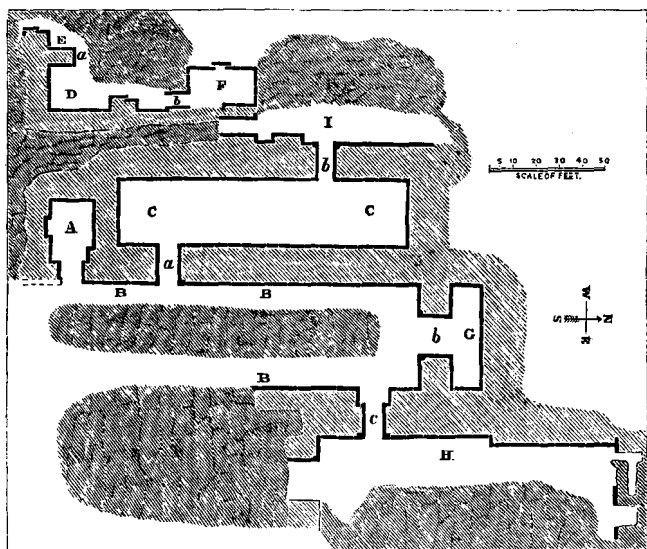
A few vases and fragments of pottery were discovered in the earth, above the ruins; but no sarcophagi, or tombs with human remains, like those of Nimroud and Kalah Sherghat. The foundations of buildings, of roughly hewn stone, and probably of the Roman or Parthian period, were also found above the Assyrian edifice. One or two small glass bottles

* It has already been mentioned that the winged lions and bulls of the N. W. palace at Nimroud were furnished with five legs, that the spectator, according to the position in which he stood, might have a perfect front and side view of the animal.

† An entire inscription is included in the collection of inscriptions printed for the Trustees of the British Museum.

many fragments of glass, several tablets in clay, covered with cuneiform characters, and one or two detached slabs with inscriptions, were taken out of the rubbish.*

The slabs forming the entrance to the chamber† first discovered had been almost entirely destroyed. The colossal figures which had been sculptured upon them were probably those of priests or deities such as had been found at Nimroud. The extremities of these figures were alone preserved. They



PLAN IV. Chambers excavated at Kouyunjik in 1847.

were those of an eagle or vulture : to them were united, it would appear from subsequent discoveries, the body of a man and the head of a lion. The walls of the chamber had suffered no less than the doorway. Upon some of the slabs could be traced processions of warriors, and captives passing through a thickly wooded, mountainous country ; the mountains being conventionally represented, as in the bas-reliefs of Nimroud, by a

* The greater number of these small objects are in the British Museum.
 † Chamber A, Plan IV.

network of lines. On the fragment of a slab was an eunuch carrying an utensil resembling a censer, and standing before an altar, near which were vessels of various shapes.

The southern extremity of the great hall,* into which the chamber just described opened, had been completely destroyed. Its width was about forty-five feet, and the length of the wall to the left of the entrance of the small chamber (it could not be traced on the opposite side), was nearly one hundred and sixty feet. The first bas-relief near the entrance represented the burning and sacking of a city, and was divided into several compartments by parallel lines. In the upper, occupying about half the sculpture, were represented houses, some of which were two and three stories high; they had been fired by the enemy, and flames were issuing from the windows and doors. Beneath were three rows of warriors, marching in regiments, distinguished by different helmets, arms, and shields.



Warrior with Shield
(Kouyunjik.)

Some wore the pointed helmet like that represented in the Nimroud sculptures, but with the addition of lappets covering and protecting the ears. They bore concave oval shields, large enough to cover the greater part of the person—probably of metal, the centre and margin being ornamented with bosses. The conquerors were carrying away the spoil, consisting of furniture, vases, chariots, and horses. Beneath the figures were vines bearing grapes. The captured city stood upon a mountain. Above it was a short inscription, unfortunately almost illegible, containing its name, and a record of the event represented in the bas-relief.

On an adjoining slab was a mountain clothed with forests. Amongst the trees were warriors, some descending in military array, and leading prisoners towards a castle; others ascending the steep rocks with the aid of their spears, or

* Chamber B, Plan IV. p. 347.

resting, seated under the trees. The same subject had evidently been continued on the next slab, which had been destroyed.

After these bas-reliefs came an entrance formed by two winged bulls, nearly sixteen feet and a half square, and each sculptured out of one slab. The human heads of these colossal figures had been entirely destroyed. Of the inscription which once covered the parts of the slabs not sculptured, there remained only a few lines. Notwithstanding the size of the bulls, this entrance scarcely exceeded six feet in width, thus differing in its proportion from those at Nimroud. The pavement was formed by one slab, elaborately ornamented with flowers resembling the lotus in low relief. Behind each sculpture was a short inscription, containing the names and titles of Sennacherib.

Beyond this entrance, to the distance of nearly sixty feet, only two slabs were preserved. On one was the interior of a castle, the walls and towers represented, as at Nimroud, by a kind of ground-plan. The city had been taken by the Assyrians, and the king seated on his throne, within the walls, was receiving the prisoners and spoil brought to him by his vizir. His dress differed in many respects from that of the monarch in the earlier sculptures at Nimroud. His tiara was higher, more pointed, made up of several bands, and more richly ornamented. The ornaments on his robes consisted principally of rosettes and fringes, groups of men and animals not being introduced as in the more ancient sculptures. He was seated on a chair with a high back, and his feet rested on an elegant footstool. Behind the throne stood two eunuchs holding fans over his head. The arms of the prisoners were fastened before them by fetters, probably of metal.* Within the walls of the city, as in the bas-reliefs discovered at Nimroud, were represented houses and tents, in which



Head Dress of the King. (Kouyunjik.)

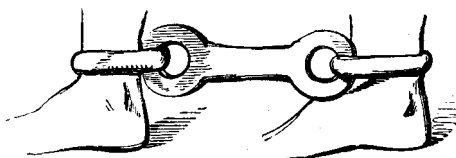
* 'To bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron' (Psalm cxlix. 8). 'They put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound

were seen men engaged in a variety of domestic occupations, and articles of furniture, such as tables, couches, and chairs. Suspended to the tent-poles were vases, probably used for the purpose of cooling drinking water, as is still the custom in the East. Above the head of the king was one line of inscription containing his name and titles. The castle was built on a mountain, and was surrounded by trees.

On the other slab was represented the invasion of a mountainous country. The enemy defended the summit of a wooded hill against Assyrian warriors, who were scaling the rocks, supporting themselves with their spears and with poles, or drawing themselves up by the branches of trees. Others, returning from the combat, were descending the mountains driving captives before them, or carrying away the heads of the slain.

A spacious entrance at the upper, or northern, end of the hall opened into a small chamber, which will be hereafter described.* The winged bulls forming this portal were in better preservation than those previously discovered. Their human heads, with the high and elaborately adorned tiara of the later Assyrian period, although greatly injured, were still entire. The greater part of the inscriptions upon them was also preserved.

Upon the two slabs beyond this entrance was a bas-relief him with fetters of brass, and took him to Babylon' (2 Kings, xxv. 7). Samson was bound with fetters of brass (Judges xvi. 21). In a bas-relief discovered at Khorsabad, were represented captives led before the king by rings of iron passed through their noses and lips, and to which a cord



Manacles for the Feet. (Khorsabad and Kouyunjik.)

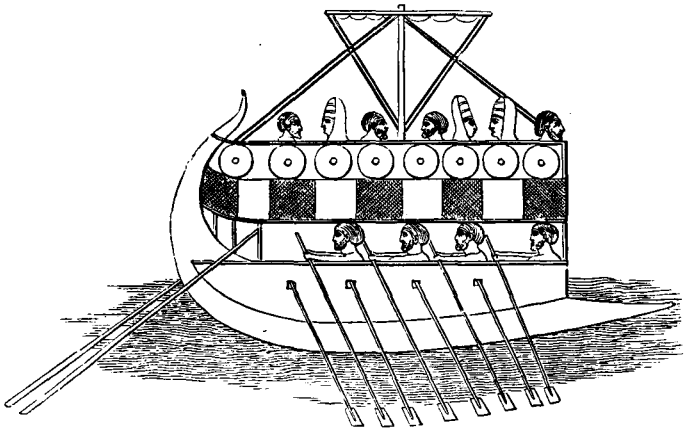


Manacles for the Hands. (Khorsabad and Kouyunjik.)

was attached; thus illustrating the passage, 'I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips.'

* Chamber G, Plan IV. p. 347

of considerable interest. Ships or galleys, filled with warriors and women, were seen leaving a castle, built on the sea-shore at the foot of a mountain. At a gate opening upon the water stood a man placing a child in the open arms of a woman, who had already embarked in one of the ships. The sea was indicated by wavy lines, covering the slab from top to bottom, amongst which were fish, crabs, and turtles. The vessels were of two kinds. The larger had one mast, to the top of which was attached a long yard held in its place by ropes. The sail was furled. It had two, or perhaps three

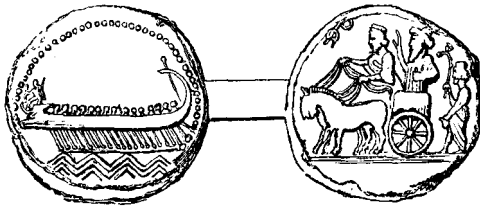


A Galley. (Kouyunjik.)

decks, as there appears to have been a double tier of rowers. On the upper deck, which was high out of the water, were warriors armed with spears, and women wearing high turbans or caps, to the back of which long veils were attached. The fore part of the vessel rose perpendicularly from a low sharp prow, resembling a ploughshare, which may have been a metal ram, like that of the Roman galleys, to disable and sink the enemy's ships. The stern was curved from the keel, and ended in a high point rising above the upper deck. The ship appears to have been steered by two long oars. Eight rowers were seen on a side, but the number represented in the bas-

relief was probably merely conventional. The lower deck, upon which sat the second tier of rowers, was concealed by the sides of the vessel, the oars being worked through small port holes. The smaller vessel had no mast, and the head and stern were similar in shape. It was furnished with a double deck, and had the same number of rowers as the larger. Shields were suspended around the upper decks of both.*

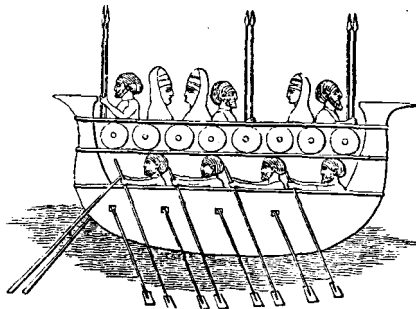
The larger vessel appears to have resembled in form the galleys represented on coins of a very early date, which were



Coin probably of a City on the Syrian Coast during the Persian occupation.

probably struck by Phœnician colonies during the Persian supremacy in western Asia. The reverse of these coins

* In the Khorsabad sculptures, ships differing in form from those described in the text were represented. That they did not belong to the

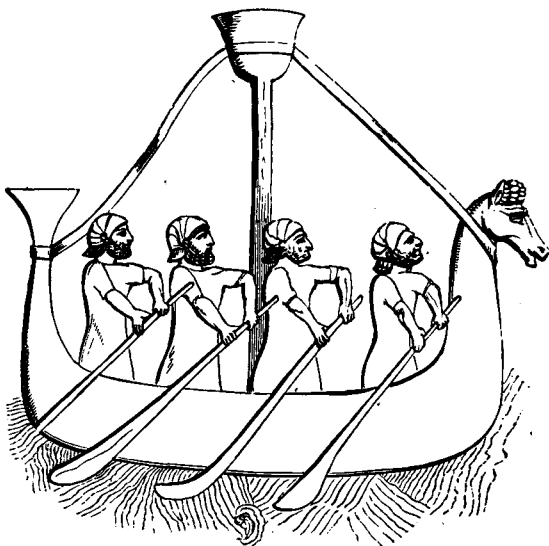


A Galley. (Kouyunjik.)

Assyrians, but to some allied or conquered nation, appears to be indicated by the peculiar costume of the figures in them. They are in the shape

bears the effigy of a Persian king in his chariot, like those of Darius, called 'Darics.' These galleys may further be identified with similar vessels used by the inhabitants of the Syrian coast by the coins of Sidon of a later period, which bear on one side a galley of similar shape, and on the other the head of an Assyrian goddess. It is highly probable, therefore, that the sculptures described represent the siege and capture of Tyre, Sidon, or some other city on the Phœnician coast of the Mediterranean. History has recorded the wars of Shalmaneser with the Tyrians, under their king Elulæus, and the conquest of the whole of Phœnicia by the Assyrian monarch;* and

of a sea-monster, the head of a horse forming the prow, and the tail of a fish the stern. The mast is supported by ropes, and is surmounted by



A Galley. (Khorsabad.)

a kind of stand, or what a seaman would call 'a crow's nest,' which in Egyptian sculptures holds an archer.

* Josephus, lib. ix. c. 14. The Tyrians having revolted, Shalmaneser attacked them with 60 vessels and 800 rowers, furnished by the inhabitants of other maritime cities. The Tyrians, however, defeated this

according to Eusebius, who quotes from Abydenus, Sennacherib defeated the Greek fleet on the Cilician coast. At the mouth of the Nahr-el-Kelb' river near Beyrout, are tablets cut in the face of the rock, containing the effigy of Sennacherib himself, and inscriptions recording his campaign in Syria; and a 'stele,' or isolated tablet, on which are inscribed the records of the Khorsabad king, his father, has been discovered in Cyprus. Moreover, the inscriptions on the bulls at Kouyunjik, and upon clay cylinders and tablets, describe the conquest of parts of Phœnicia and their capital cities by Sennacherib; and there can, I think, be little doubt that these sculptures represent that event.*

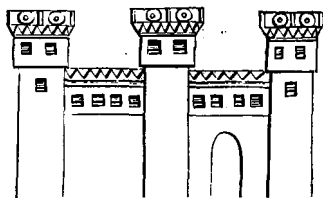
Materials derived from distant countries, and of the most costly description, were employed in the construction of the Tyrian vessels. The 'ship-boards were of the fir-trees of Senir,' the masts of the cedars of Lebanon, the oars of the oaks of Bashan, and the benches of ivory brought from the isles of Chittim, and carved by the Ashurites, probably the Assyrians, of whose skill we have full proof in the beautiful ivories from Nimroud. 'Fine linen, with brodered work from Egypt,' was used for sails, and the ornaments were of 'blue and purple, from the Isles of Elishah.' The men of Sidon and Arvad were employed as mariners, and the management and sailing of the vessels were confided to the pilots of Tyre, who, by long experience, were well versed in the art of navigation, and were consequently looked upon as 'the wise men' in a city of sailors and merchants.† In these vessels the Phœnicians coasted along the shores of the Mediterranean and entered the Ocean, carrying on an active commerce with the most distant nations, establishing colonies, and diffusing far and wide their civilisation, their arts, and their language.

large fleet and took 500 men prisoners. The Assyrians then invested the city for five years, cutting off the inhabitants from the rivers and wells which furnished them with fresh water.

* For an account of the inscriptions discovered at Kouyunjik, which contain the narrative of Sennacherib's campaign against Phœnicia and Judæa, see 'Nineveh and Babylon' (abridged edition), ch. ii.

† The 27th chapter of Ezekiel contains a complete description of the vessels and trade of the Tyrians, and is a most important and interesting record of the commercial intercourse of the nations of antiquity.

The castles of the people, who are taking refuge in the ships, are distinguished by the shields hung round the walls,



Castle of a Maritime People, probably the Tyrians. (Kouyunjik.)

a peculiarity which appears to illustrate a passage in Ezekiel* concerning Tyre: 'The men of Arvad, with thine army, were upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadims were in thy towers: *they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about.*'

On the two slabs adjoining the sea-piece was represented the besieging army. The upper part of both had been destroyed; on the lower were still preserved a few Assyrian warriors, protected by high wicker shields, discharging arrows in the direction of the castle, and rows of prisoners with their hands bound, led away by the conquerors.

On the eastern side of the hall was a third entrance, also formed by human-headed bulls. Adjoining were bas-reliefs representing a battle in a hilly country, wooded with pines or fir-trees.

Beyond this entrance the slabs, although in some places entire, had been so much injured by fire that only one bas-relief was preserved. It represented a battle and the sack of a city, and was divided into six compartments. Warriors were dragging chariots, and driving horses and cattle out of the castle gates, others were combating with horsemen and footmen, and in the two lower compartments were lines of chariots, each holding three warriors. The chariots differed in many respects, especially in their height and size, the wheels reaching almost to the head of a man, from those of the earlier sculptures of Nimroud, and resemble those seen in the Persepolitan bas-reliefs, and in the Mosaic in the museum at Naples, which is supposed to represent Darius defeated by Alexander the Great at the battle of Arbela. The upper part was square, and not rounded, and a projection or case in front, instead of the quivers suspended

* Chap. xxvii. 11.

at the sides, held the arrows of the archer. The panels were carved and adorned with rosettes; the wheels had eight, and not six spokes as in the sculptures of Nimroud, the felloes being bound and strengthened by four metal bands.* The ornamented framework, stretching from the fore part to the end of the pole in the more ancient Assyrian chariots, was replaced by a thin rod, or by a rope or leather thong, knotted in the centre. The harness of the horses also differed.

The western entrance led into a second hall,† the four sides



An Archer. (Kouyunjik.) A Spearman. (Kouyunjik.) A Slinger. (Kouyunjik.)

of which were almost entire, although the bas-reliefs had unfortunately suffered greatly from fire.

The slabs to the left appear to have been divided into three compartments, each occupied by rows of warriors differently armed and accoutred, probably representing nations who were the allies of the Assyrians. In the first row were archers distinguished by their short tunic, richly embroidered, and by their head-dress, consisting of a simple fillet confining their long hair; in the second, were slingers wearing the

* See woodcut, at p. 358.

† Hall C, Plan IV. p. 347.

pointed helmet; and, in the third, spearmen with a circular shield and a crested casque. The slingers held a second stone in the left hand, and in front of them was a pile of stones ready for use. Their slings appear to have been formed by a double rope or leather thong.* They were attired in armour and greaves. The spearmen wore a plain leather or linen tunic, confined round the waist by a belt, probably of metal. A kind of cross-belt passed over their



Scribes writing down the Number of the Slain. (Kouyunjik.)

shoulders, and appears to have been ornamented in front with a metal disk. They also wore greaves.

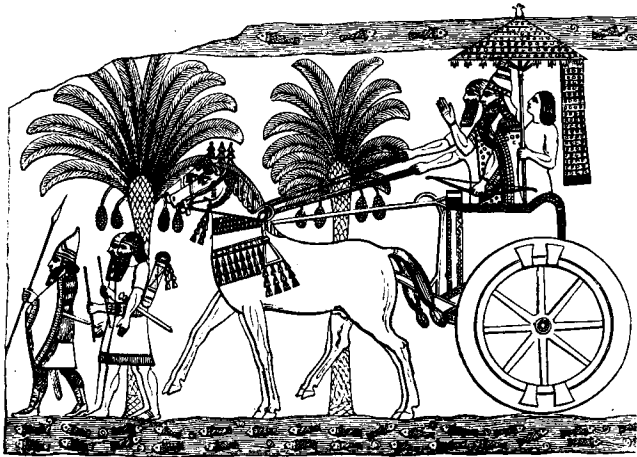
On the following slabs was represented the capture by assault of a city or castle, built near a river in a mountainous country and surrounded by trees. Warriors armed with spears were seen scaling the rocks, slaying the besieged on the housetops, and leading off the prisoners.

On the adjoining corner-stone were represented two scribes, one an eunuch, writing down on rolls of leather or some other

* Xenophon frequently alludes to the expertness of the slingers of Assyria (see particularly *Anab. lib. iii. c. 3*). They used very large stones, and could annoy the enemy, whilst out of reach of their darts and arrows.

flexible material, the number of the heads of the slaughtered enemy laid at their feet by the Assyrian warriors. Thus were the heads of the seventy sons of Ahab brought in baskets to Jezreel and laid 'in two heaps at the entering in of the gate;'^{*} and such is still the mode of reckoning the loss of an enemy in the East.

The sculptures on the remainder of the wall from this slab to an entrance formed by human-headed bulls, had been almost entirely defaced by fire. They appear to have repre-



Sennacherib in his Chariot returning from Battle. (Kouyunjik.)

sented the conquest by the Assyrians of a mountainous and wooded country. Sennacherib in his chariot was receiving the prisoners and the spoil.

Beyond the entrance, as far as the bas-reliefs could be traced, the same subject appears to have been continued. King Sennacherib was again represented standing in his chariot, holding a bow in his left hand, and raising his right in token of triumph. He was accompanied by a charioteer, and by an attendant bearing an open umbrella, from which fell a long curtain to screen him completely from the sun.

* 2 Kings, x. 8.

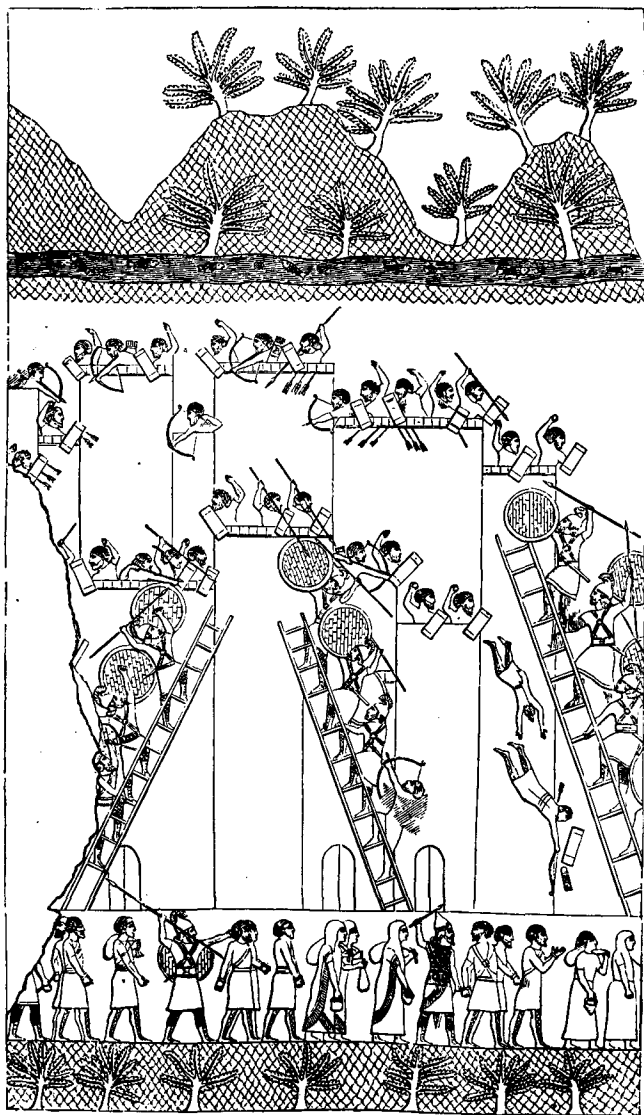
His chariot was drawn by two horses, and was preceded by spearmen and archers. Above the king there had originally been a short inscription, probably containing his name and titles, and the name of the conquered country, but it had been entirely defaced. Horsemen, crossing wooded mountains, were separated from the group just described, by a river abounding in fish.

The remaining bas-reliefs in this chamber appear to have recorded similar events—the victories of the Assyrians, and the triumphs of Sennacherib, their king. Only four of them had been preserved; the rest were almost completely destroyed. On two of them was represented, with great spirit, the capture by assault of a city. Warriors, armed with spears, were seen mounting ladders, placed against the walls; whilst those who manned the battlements and towers were assailed by archers who discharged their arrows from below. The enemy defended themselves with spears, arrows, and stones, and carried small oblong shields. Above the castle a short inscription recorded the name of the captured city. Under the walls were captives, driven off by the conquerors; and above and below were mountains, trees, and a river, to indicate the nature of the country.

The western entrance to this hall* led into a further chamber, a part only of which I was able to explore. On two slabs was seen a mountainous country, with a river running through the midst of it. The higher parts of the mountains were clothed with forests of pines or firs, the middle region by vineyards, and the lower by trees represented in the usual conventional manner. As the king was seen in his chariot, accompanied by many horsemen, in the midst of a forest, it may be conjectured that the Assyrians had opened roads through the mountainous districts of their empire.

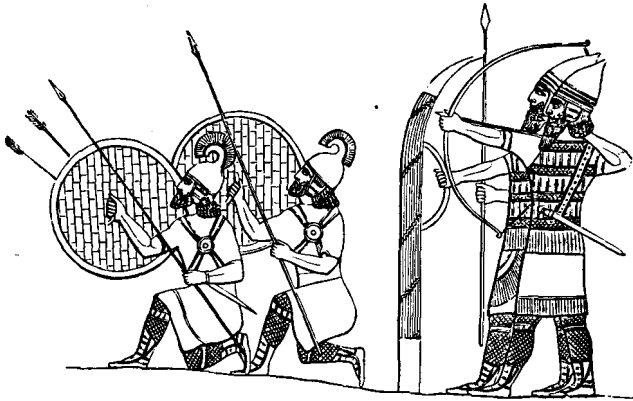
The remaining slabs were covered from top to bottom with rows of warriors, spearmen, and archers, in their respective costumes, and in martial array. Each slab must have contained several hundred small figures, probably representing disciplined troops; for, like the Egyptians, the Assyrians were

* Entrance *b*, Chamber C, Plan IV. p. 347.



A City taken by Assault, and the Inhabitants led away captive.
(Kouyunjik.)

evidently acquainted with military tactics and possessed organised armies. In several bas-reliefs discovered at Kouyun-



Warriors forming a Phalanx before the Walls of a besieged City.
(Kouyunjik.)

jik, troops were represented drawn up in a kind of phalanx, or in the form of the more modern military square.

The three small chambers to the west of the hall last described* had been so much injured by fire that few slabs in them retained traces of sculpture. Amongst the bas-reliefs remaining were the siege and capture of a city standing on the banks of a river in the midst of forests and mountains, with warriors cutting down trees to form an approach to the walls, and carrying away the idols of the conquered people; a fisherman fishing with a hook and line in a pond or lake,† and warriors receiving long lines of captives, amongst whom were women and children riding on mules.

The wide portal, formed by the winged bulls at the upper end of the great hall first discovered, opened into a small chamber, which had no other entrance.‡ One side of it had been completely destroyed. The remaining bas-reliefs represented the siege and sack of a city situated between two rivers,

* Chambers D, E, and F, Plan IV. p. 347.

† In the British Museum. ‡ Chamber G, Plan IV. p. 347.

in the midst of groves of palm trees, and, consequently, it may be conjectured, in some part of Mesopotamia. An inscription above the captured city contains its name. Sennacherib was represented, several times, superintending in his chariot the operations of the siege. The besiegers were cutting down the palms to open and clear the approaches to the walls.

A part only of the chamber to the east of the great hall* was uncovered. Many of the sculptures had been intentionally destroyed with some sharp instrument, and all had suffered, more or less, from fire. On some could be traced warriors urging their horses at full speed, and archers on foot turning backwards to discharge their arrows at their pursuers. Beneath the horsemen were rows of chariots and led horses.

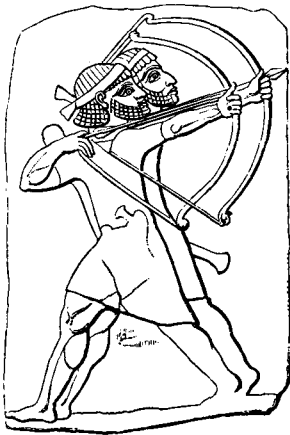


A Horseman pursued by Assyrian Warriors. (Kouyunjik.)

In their trappings and harness the horses of the Kouyunjik bas-reliefs differ from those represented in the sculptures from Nimroud. Their heads are generally surmounted by a high arched crest, and bells or tassels are hung round their necks; or, as at Khorsabad, high plumes, generally three in number,

* Chamber H, Plan IV. p. 347.

rise between their ears. After my departure from Mosul, Mr. Ross continued the excavations in this chamber, and found several other slabs, and an entrance formed by four winged lions. The bas-reliefs appear to have been part of the series previously uncovered, and represented chariots, horsemen, archers, and warriors in mail. The country, in which the events recorded took place, was indicated by a river and palm trees. In front of these bas-reliefs he discovered an immense square slab, which he conjectures to have been a dais or altar,



Enemies of the Assyrians discharging their
Arrows behind them. (Kouyunjik.)



Head-dress of a Riding Horse.
(Kouyunjik.)

resembling that in the great hall of the N. W. palace at Nimroud.*

Such were the discoveries at Kouyunjik, during my first expedition to Assyria.† From the dimensions of some of the halls, and the variety and elaborate character of the sculptures, it was evident that the ruins were those of a palace of great extent and magnificence. The mound upon which it stood was once washed by the river Tigris. Then also the edifice,

* See p. 97.

† The discoveries subsequently made in the mound are fully described in my 'Nineveh and Babylon.'

above which the village of Nebbi Yunus now stands, rose above the stream, and the two palaces were enclosed in one vast square by lofty walls cased with stone, their towers adorned with sculptured alabaster, and their gateways formed by colossal human-headed bulls.

As I have hitherto described the ruins as they were discovered during the excavations, it may not be here out of place to add a few words on the subject of the architecture of the Assyrians, and to endeavour to restore, as far as the remains will permit, the fallen palaces.



Groom leading Horses. (Khorsabad.)

The architecture of a people must naturally depend upon the materials afforded by the country, and upon the object of their buildings. The descriptions, already given in the course of this work of the ruined edifices of ancient Assyria, are sufficient to show that Assyrian architecture differed, in many respects, from that of any other nation with which we are acquainted. Had the Assyrians, so fertile in invention, so skilful in the arts, and so ambitious of great works, dwelt in a country as rich in stone and costly granites and marbles

as Egypt or India, it can scarcely be doubted that they would have equalled, if not excelled, the inhabitants of those countries in the magnitude of their pyramids, and in the magnificence of their temples and palaces. But their principal settlements were in the alluvial plains watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. On the banks of those great rivers, which spread fertility through a vast extent of rich land, and afford the means of easy and expeditious intercourse between distant provinces, they founded their first cities, choosing for their site those beautiful plains, unbroken by a single eminence, which stretch from the feet of the Armenian hills.

The earliest habitations, constructed when little progress had been made in the art of building, were probably but one story in height. In this respect the dwelling of the ruler scarcely differed from the meanest hut. It soon became necessary, however, that the temples of the gods, and the palaces of the kings, depositories at the same time of the national records, should be rendered more conspicuous than the humble edifices by which they were surrounded. The nature of the country also required that the castle, the place of refuge in times of danger, or the permanent residence of a garrison, should be raised above the city so as to afford the best means of resistance to an enemy. As there were no natural eminences in the plains, the inhabitants constructed artificial mounds upon which to erect such public edifices. Hence the origin of those vast, solid structures of earth and brick which have defied the hand of time; and, with their grass-covered summits, and furrowed sides, rise like natural hills in the Assyrian plains.

Let us picture to ourselves the migration of one of the primitive families of the human race, seeking for some spot favourable to a permanent settlement, where water abounded, and where the land, already productive without cultivation, promised an ample return to the labour of the husbandman. They may have followed him who went out of the land of Shinar, to found new habitations in the north;* or they may have descended from the mountains of Armenia; whence came, according to the Chaldæan historian, the builders of

* Genesis, x. 11.

the cities of Assyria.* It was not until they reached the banks of the great rivers, if they came from the high lands, or only whilst they followed their course, if they journeyed from the south, that they could find a supply of water adequate to the permanent wants of a large community. The plain, bounded to the west and south by the Tigris and Zab, from its fertility, and from the ready means of irrigation afforded by two noble streams, may have been first chosen as a resting-place; and there were laid the foundations of a city, destined to be the capital of the Eastern world.

The materials for building were at hand, and in their preparation required neither much labour nor ingenuity. The soil, an alluvial deposit, was rich and tenacious. The builders moistened it with water, and, adding a little chopped straw that it might be more firmly bound together, they formed it into squares, which, when dried by the heat of the sun, served them as bricks. In that climate it required but two or three days to make and dry such bricks. Such were the earliest building materials; and they are used to this day almost exclusively by the inhabitants of the same country. In Egypt, too, they were employed at the remotest period; and the Egyptians, to harass their Jewish captives, withheld the straw without which their bricks could not preserve their form and consistency, and their labour would be vain.†

Huts for the people were speedily raised, and roofed with the branches and boughs of trees from the banks of the river.

The inhabitants of the new settlement now sought to build a place of refuge in case of attack, or a dwelling-place for their leader, or a temple to their gods. In order to raise the edifice above the plain, and to render it conspicuous among the surrounding habitations, it was erected on an artificial mound constructed for the purpose of earth and rubbish, or of sun-dried bricks.‡

* Xithurus and his followers: Berosus, apud Euseb. The similarity between the history of this Chaldæan hero and that of the Scriptural Noah is curious, and points to one and the same tradition.

† Exodus, v.

‡ Such is still the custom amongst the inhabitants of Assyria. When some families of a nomadic tribe wish to settle and to form a village, they choose one of the ancient mounds which abound in the plains. On its

The palaces and temples appear to have been at the same time public monuments, in which were preserved the records or archives of the nation, carved on stone. In them were represented in sculpture the exploits of the kings, and the forms of the divinities; whilst the history of the people, and invocations to their gods, were inscribed in written characters upon the walls. It was necessary, therefore, to use in the building, some material upon which such figures and inscriptions could be carved. The plains of Mesopotamia, as well as the low lands between the Tigris and the hill-country, abound in a kind of coarse alabaster or gypsum. Large masses of it everywhere protrude in low ridges from the alluvial soil, or are exposed in the gullies formed by winter torrents. It yields readily to the chisel, and its greyish colour is agreeable to the eye. Thus whilst offering few difficulties to the sculptor, it was an ornament to the edifice in which it was placed. This alabaster cut into slabs, from eight to ten feet high, four to six wide, and about one foot thick, served as a kind of paneling or wainscoting to the walls of sun-dried bricks. On the back of each slab was carved an inscription recording the name, title, and genealogy of the royal founder of the edifice, and they were kept in their places and held together by iron or copper cramps. The corners of the chambers were generally formed by one stone; and all the walls were either at right angles, or parallel to each other. Upon the slabs were sculptured the bas-reliefs and inscriptions.

At the principal entrances to the chambers were placed gigantic winged bulls or lions with human heads, typical forms of their gods. The smaller doorways were generally guarded by colossal figures of divinities, or priests sculptured in relief. There were no remains of doors or gates; but metal hinges have been discovered and holes for bolts exist in many of the slabs forming the entrances. On all these slabs, in the

summit they erect a rude castle for refuge and defence against the wandering Bedouins, and the huts are built at its foot. The Persians who occupied the country after the fall of the Assyrian empire, and the Arab conquerors who succeeded them, seem to have followed the same plan. There are few ancient mounds containing Assyrian ruins upon which castles, towns, or villages have not at some period been built. Such are Arbela, Tel Afer, Nebbi Yunus, &c.

oldest palace of Nimroud, were marks of some dark fluid, resembling blood, which appears to have been daubed on the stone. I have not been able to ascertain the nature of this fluid; but its appearance cannot fail to call to mind the Jewish ceremony of placing the blood of the sacrifice on the lintel of the doorway. Under the pavement slabs, at the entrances, were deposited small figures of the gods, usually in baked clay, probably as a protection to the building.* Sometimes, as in the N.W. palace at Nimroud, alabaster tablets, on which were inscribed the name and title of the king, with a short notice of the principal events of his reign, as a record of the time of the erection of the building, were buried in the foundations, or embedded in the walls.

The upper part of the walls of the chambers, above the alabaster slabs, was built of sun-dried bricks covered by a thin coat of plaster, on which were painted figures and ornamental friezes, or was faced with kiln-burnt bricks enamelled with bright colours. It is to these upper walls that the complete covering up of the building, and the consequent preservation of the bas-reliefs, may be attributed; for when once the edifice had been deserted they fell in, and the unbaked bricks filled up the rooms and encased the sculptured slabs. The walls of many chambers at Nimroud were built entirely of sun-dried bricks, and painted with figures and ornaments.

The mode of roofing the palaces and lighting the chambers, many of which were in the very centre of the building, with no other apparent inlet for light but the door, is one of the most difficult questions in Assyrian architecture. I am inclined, on the whole, to agree with Mr. Fergusson in thinking that light was admitted through galleries, or open rows of low pilasters at the top of the rooms, and that wooden columns were sometimes used to support the roof in the larger halls.†

* It has already been mentioned, that these small figures in unbaked clay, were found beneath the pavement at all the entrances at Khorsabad. They were only discovered at Nimroud, in the most recent palace, in the S. W. corner of the mound.

† The subject is very fully treated and ably illustrated in his work, entitled 'the Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis restored,' which contains, at the same time, many valuable suggestions on the arts and architecture of the Assyrians.

It is remarkable that no remains of stone columns have been discovered. Unless columns of some kind were employed, the halls exceeding a certain width must have been left open to the sky. Indeed it is very probable that some of the larger halls were more like the open courts of the houses of modern Mosul and Baghdad, the rays of the sun having been excluded from them by awnings and tapestry. As the Assyrians were well acquainted with the principle of the arch, it is not impossible that some of the smaller chambers may have been vaulted.

The halls and rooms were paved with alabaster slabs, frequently covered with inscriptions recording the name and genealogy of the king, and the chief events of his reign, or with large baked tiles, also bearing a short inscription. The alabaster slabs were laid upon bitumen. The bricks or tiles were generally in two layers, one above the other, with sand between and beneath them, probably for the purpose of excluding damp. Between the lions and bulls forming the entrances, was usually one large inscribed or ornamented pavement slab.

The drains discovered beneath almost every chamber in the N.W. palace at Nimroud joined a large or main drain, probably running from under the great hall into the river, which flowed at the foot of the mound when the edifice was built.

The interior of the Assyrian palaces must have been as magnificent as imposing. I have led the reader through their ruins, and he may judge from them of the impression which the buildings when in all their glory were calculated to make upon one who, in the days of old, entered for the first time the abode of the Assyrian kings. Passing through a portal guarded by colossal lions or bulls, he found himself surrounded by the sculptured records of the empire. Battles, sieges, triumphs, the exploits of the chase, and the ceremonies of religion, were portrayed on the walls—sculptured in alabaster, and painted in gorgeous colours. Above the sculptures were painted other events—the king, attended by his eunuchs and warriors, receiving his prisoners, entering into alliances with distant monarchs, or performing holy rites. These pictures

were enclosed in coloured borders or friezes of elaborate and elegant design, in which were introduced the emblematic tree, winged bulls, and fanciful animals. At the upper end of the hall was the colossal figure of the king in adoration before the Supreme Deity, or receiving from his attendants the sacred cup. He was attended by warriors bearing his arms, and ministered to by winged priests or presiding divinities. His robes, and those of his followers, were adorned with groups of human figures, animals, and flowers.

The ceilings were gorgeously painted, or inlaid with ivory and precious woods. The beams were of cedar wood, and gold leaf and plates of gold and silver were probably used with profusion in the decorations.*

These edifices, as has been shown, were great national monuments, upon the walls of which were represented in sculpture, or recorded by inscriptions, the chronicles of the empire. He who entered them might thus read the history, and learn the glory and triumphs of the nation. They served, at the same time, to bring continually to the remembrance of those who assembled within them on festive occasions, or for the celebration of religious ceremonies, the deeds of their ancestors, and the power and majesty of their gods.

The exterior walls of these palaces were either cased with sculptured slabs or painted. On the outside of the principal palace of Babylon, assigned by tradition to Semiramis, were portrayed, according to ancient writers, men and animals, and on the towers hunting scenes, in which were represented Semiramis herself on horseback, throwing a javelin at a panther,

* Sun-dried bricks, with remains of gilding upon them, were discovered at Nimroud. Herodotus states that the battlements of the innermost walls of the royal palace at Ecbatana, the ornaments of which were most probably imitated from the edifices of Assyria, were plated with silver and gold (lib. i. c. 98). The precious metals appear to have been lavishly used in decorating the palaces of the East. Even the roofs of the palace at Ecbatana are said to have been covered with silver tiles. The gold, silver, ivory, and precious woods in the ceilings of the palaces of Babylon, attributed to Semiramis, are frequently mentioned by ancient writers. Zephaniah (ii. 14) alludes to the 'cedar work' of the roof; and in Jeremiah (xxii. 14) chambers 'ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion' are mentioned. Sometimes the walls and ceilings were panelled or wainscoted with this precious wood. (1 Kings, vi. 15, vii. 3.)

and Ninus slaying a lion with his lance.* The seven walls of Ecbatana, according to Herodotus,† were each painted of a different colour; the outer was white, the next black, the third purple, the fourth blue, the fifth orange, and the two inner had their battlements plated, one with silver and the other with gold.‡ Walls thus sculptured and painted must, in the clear atmosphere and brilliant sunshine of Assyria, have been peculiarly pleasing to the eye, and have had a gorgeous appearance even from afar.

Were these magnificent mansions palaces or temples? or, whilst the king combined the character of a temporal ruler with that of high-priest, did his residence unite the palace, the temple, and a national monument raised to perpetuate the memory of the triumphs and conquests of the nation? These are questions which cannot yet be satisfactorily answered. We can only judge by analogy. A very superficial examination of the sculptures will prove the sacred character of the king. The priests or presiding deities (whichever the winged figures so frequently found on the Assyrian monuments may be) are represented as waiting upon, or ministering to, him; above his head are seen the winged figure within the circle, the emblem of Ashur, the Supreme Deity, and the sun, moon, planets, and other symbols of the gods. As in Egypt, he may have been regarded as the representative, on earth, of the Deity, receiving his power directly from the gods, and being the organ of communication between them and his subjects.§ The intimate connection between the public and private life of the Assyrians and their religion is abundantly proved by the bas-reliefs. As amongst most Eastern nations, not only public and social duties appear to have been more or less influenced by religion, or to have been looked upon as typical, but all the acts of the king, whether in peace or war, were

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii.

† Lib. i. c. 98.

‡ Herod. lib. i. c. 98. These colours, with the number seven of the walls, have evidently allusion to the heavenly bodies and their courses. Sir Henry Rawlinson believes that he found these colours on the walls of the different terraces, seven in number, of which remains exist in the well-known ruins of the Birs Nimroud, near Babylon.

§ Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. c. 90; and Wilkinson's 'Ancient Egyptians,' vol. i. p. 245, and vol. ii. p. 67.

evidently connected with the national faith, and were believed to be under the special protection and superintendence of a Deity. Hence the emblem of the Supreme God is represented above his head in battle, during his triumphs, and when he celebrates the sacred ceremonies. The embroideries upon his robes and the ornaments upon his weapons, have likewise mythic meanings. His contests with the lion and other wild animals denote not only his prowess and skill, but his superior power and wisdom. The architectural decorations of his palace have the same religious and typical signification. All the edifices hitherto discovered in Assyria have precisely the same character in this respect; so that we have most probably the palace and temple combined; for in them the deeds of the king, and of the nation, are united with religious symbols, and with the statues of the gods.

We have no means of ascertaining the nature of the private dwellings of the Assyrians, nor of learning any particulars concerning their internal economy and arrangement. No such houses have been preserved either in Assyria Proper or Babylonia, their complete disappearance being attributable to the perishable materials of which they were constructed; for although the palace-temples were of such extraordinary magnificence, the bulk of the people appear to have lodged, as in Egypt, and indeed in Greece and Rome, in dwellings built of sun-dried bricks, for the most part mean and small in size, which, when once abandoned, soon fell to dust, leaving no traces behind.

Of the walls of the city, or rather of its principal quarters (for the entire city was not, I am convinced, surrounded by one continuous wall), nothing now remains but the quadrangles, formed by earthen mounds or ramparts, enclosing the ruins of Nimroud, Khorsabad, and Kouyunjik. In some places the earth and rubbish still conceal the basement of hewn stones, upon which rose the lofty structure of sun-dried brick, the wonder and admiration of the ancients.* The

* Such, according to Xenophon, were the walls of Larissa and Mespila (Nimroud and Kouyunjik), the plinth or lower part of the wall of which was 50 feet high, and the upper 100. The stone, he says, was full of shells, a statement fully borne out by the remains of the walls at Kouyunjik, which are of a fossiliferous limestone. (Anab. lib. 3.)

dimensions of the walls of Nineveh and Babylon, as given by Herodotus, Xenophon, and Diodorus Siculus, may be considered fabulous. According to those authors the walls of Nineveh were 100 feet high, wide enough for three chariots to pass abreast, and furnished with 1500 towers, each 200 feet in height, and those of Babylon nearly 300 feet high and 75 thick.

In the edifices of Assyria reeds and bitumen were not employed, as at Babylon, to cement the layers of bricks, although both materials are found in abundance in the country.* A tenacious clay, moistened and mixed with a little chopped straw, served, as it still does in the neighbourhood of Mosul, for mortar, in the walls of sun-dried bricks. Kiln-burnt bricks were rarely used in Assyria.

Although there is but little difference in the general character of the architecture of the various buildings explored in Assyria, the change which had taken place in the manners, religion, and dress of the inhabitants of the country between the foundation of the N. W. palace at Nimroud and of the edifices at Khorsabad and Kouyunjik is evident from even a cursory examination of the sculptures discovered in those buildings. The difference, indeed, is so considerable that several centuries must have elapsed between the erection of the earliest and latest palaces, and some great change must have taken place in the character of the people, attributable, perhaps, to intermixture with some foreign race. This fact has now been proved beyond question by the interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions. It would seem that the earliest edifices are to be attributed to monarchs who reigned a thousand or nine hundred years before Christ, whilst the latest were built by kings of a dynasty which included the Sennacherib and Esarhaddon of Scripture, and reigned two or three centuries later. As in Egypt, the most ancient monuments show the purest taste and the highest knowledge of art; and we find in Assyria that phenomenon which is to be remarked in the history of all nations, ancient or modern, of a gradual decline of art, after a state of comparative perfection.

* Bitumen was, however, sometimes used as a cement for stones, and even burnt bricks.

In the small objects, such as bronzes and ivories, discovered in the ruins, there is an Egyptian character, unknown in the earlier sculptures. This would indicate a foreign influence, which may have been the principal source of the change I have pointed out, and which may be traced either to conquest or to alliances between the royal families of Assyria and Egypt.

By the middle of the month of June my labours in Assyria had drawn to a close. The funds assigned by Parliament to the Trustees of the British Museum for the excavations had been expended, and further researches were not, for the present at least, contemplated. I prepared, therefore, to turn my steps homewards, after an absence of many years. The ruins of Nimroud had been again covered up, and its palaces were once more hidden from the eye. The sculptures taken from them had been safely removed to Busrah, and were awaiting their final transport to England. The inscriptions, which promise to instruct us in the history and civilisation of one of the most ancient nations of the earth, had been carefully copied. On looking back upon the few months that I had passed in Assyria, I could not but feel some satisfaction at the result of my labours. Scarcely a year before, with the exception of the ruins of Khorsabad, not one Assyrian monument was known. Almost sufficient materials had now been obtained to enable us to restore much of the lost history of the Assyrian empire, and to confirm the vague traditions handed down to us from remote antiquity of the learning and civilisation of its people. The time of the discovery of these remains was singularly opportune. Had these palaces been exposed to view by chance some years before, no European would have been there to protect them from complete destruction, or to preserve a record of their existence. Had they been discovered a little later, it is highly probable that there would have been insurmountable objections to the removal of even any part of their contents. It was consequently just at the right moment that they were disinterred; and we have been fortunate enough to acquire the most convincing and lasting evidence of that magnificence and power, which made Nineveh the wonder of the ancient world, and her fall

the theme of the prophets, as the most signal instance of Divine vengeance. Without the evidence that these monuments afford, we might almost have doubted that the great city ever existed, so completely 'has she become a desolation and a waste.'

Before my departure I was desirous of giving a last entertainment to my workmen, and to those who had kindly aided me in my labours. On the western side of Kouyunjik there is a small village, belonging, with the mound, to a former slave of a Pasha of the Abd-el-Jeleel family, who had received his liberty, and the land containing the ruins, as a reward for long and faithful services. This village was chosen for the festivities, and tents for the accommodation of my guests were pitched around it. Large platters filled with boiled rice, and divers inexplicable messes, only appreciated by Arabs, and those who have lived with them—the chief components being garlic and sour milk—were placed before the various groups of men and women, who squatted in circles on the ground. Dances were then commenced, and were carried on through the greater part of the night, the Tiyari and the Arabs joining in them, or relieving each other by turns. The dancers were happy and enthusiastic, and kept up a constant shouting. The quiet Christian ladies of Mosul, who had scarcely before this occasion ventured beyond the walls of the town, gazed with wonder and delight on the scene; lamenting, no doubt, that the domestic arrangements of their husbands did not permit more frequent indulgence in such gaieties.

At the conclusion of the entertainment I spoke a few words to the workmen, inviting any who had been wronged, or illused, to come forward and receive such redress as it was in my power to afford, and expressing my satisfaction at the successful termination of our labours without a single accident. One Sheikh Khalaf, a very worthy man, who was usually the spokesman on such occasions, answered for his companions. They had lived, he said, under my shadow, and, God be praised! no one had cause to complain. Now that I was leaving, they should leave also, and seek the distant banks of the Khabour, where at least they would be far from the Turks, and be able to enjoy the little they had

saved. All they wanted was each man a teskerè, or note, to certify that he had been in my service. This would not only be some protection to them, but they would show my writing to their children, and would tell them of the days they had passed at Nimroud. Please God, I should return to the Jebours, and live in tents with them on their old pasture grounds, where there were as many ruins as at Nimroud, plenty of plunder within reach, and gazelles, wild boars, and lions for the chase. After Sheikh Khalaf had concluded, the women advanced in a body and made a similar address. I gave a few presents to the principal workmen and their wives, and all were highly satisfied with their treatment.

A few days afterwards, the preparations for my departure were complete. I paid my last visit to Essad Pasha, called upon the principal people of the town, bid adieu to my friends, and on the 24th of June was ready to leave Mosul.

I was accompanied on my journey to Constantinople by Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, Ibrahim Agha, and the Bairakdar, and by several members of the household of the late Pasha; who were ready, in return for their own food and that of their horses, to serve me on the road. We were joined by many other travellers, who had been waiting for an opportunity to travel to the north in company with a sufficiently strong party. The country was at this time very insecure. The Turkish troops had marched against Beder Khan Bey, who had openly declared his independence, and defied the authority of the Sultan. The failure of the crops had brought parties of Bedouins abroad, and scarcely a day passed without the plunder of a caravan and the murder of travellers. The Pasha sent a body of irregular horse to accompany me as far as the Turkish camp, which I wished to visit on my way. With this escort, and with my own party, all well armed and prepared to defend themselves, I had no cause to apprehend any accident.

Mr. and Mrs. Rassam, all the European residents, and many of the principal Christian gentlemen of Mosul, rode out with me to some distance from the town. On the opposite side of the river, at the foot of the bridge, were the ladies who had assembled to bid me farewell. Beyond them

were the wives and daughters of my workmen, who clung to my horse, many of them shedding tears as they kissed my hand. The greater part of the Arabs insisted upon walking as far as Tel Kef with me. In this village supper had been prepared for the party. Old Gouriel, the Kiayah, still rejoicing in his drunken leer, was there to receive us. We sat on the house-top till midnight. The horses were then loaded and saddled. I bid a last farewell to my Arabs, and started on the first stage of our long journey to Constantinople.

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