

James Aitken Wylie

**A Journey of
Fulfilled Prophecy**



"The history of the Church confirms and illustrates the teachings of the Bible, that yielding little by little leads to yielding more and more, until all is in danger; and the tempter is never satisfied until all is lost. – Matthias Loy, *The Story of My Life*

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A

J O U R N E Y

OVER THE

REGION OF FULFILLED PROPHECY.

BY

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P R E F A C E.

THE writer, having been led lately, by circumstances which it is unnecessary here to explain, to compile a short account of the nations and countries of antiquity, so far as the fulfilment of prophecy is concerned, now offers the following pages to the public, in the hope that they may be useful to those who may not have time to peruse larger treatises on this important subject.

The plan adopted in this little work is that of an imaginary journey—a form which the writer conceived best calculated to impress especially the youthful mind, and which afforded him peculiar facilities for the attainment of two ends, which he thinks may be combined with great advantage, namely, that of presenting a picture of Bible countries, and that of exhibiting the fulfilment of the more remarkable predictions of the Bible on these countries.

In a treatise so elementary as the present, the

writer has not thought it necessary to cite authorities, especially at the bottom of the page ; but he is not conscious of having introduced any fact or statement for which he is not prepared to produce a proper voucher.

C O N T E N T S .

	Page
Introduction	7
Assyria—Nineveh	15
Mesopotamia—Babylon	35
Arabia—The Ishmaelites	66
Egypt	75
Edom	97
Moab	113
Ammon	119
Gilead and Bashan	123
Tyre	129
Judea	139
Conclusion	155

APPENDIX.

Ruins of Nineveh	161
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A JOURNEY, & c.

INTRODUCTION.

It may be thought by some a very bootless undertaking to attempt the discussion of so extensive a subject within the limits we have prescribed to ourselves. The region of fulfilled prophecy includes so many countries, once fair and flourishing, and so many cities, once great and populous, that to visit them all, and to tell how they have been broken down, as the word of the Lord foretold, may appear an impossible task in so short a treatise. Materials might be found here to fill many volumes; and how is it possible, in the few pages that follow, to arrange and illustrate these materials so as to give, we do not say a complete view—for that is not at all times either necessary or possible—but a sat-

isfactory view of so important a subject? It is in the details that much of the interest and beauty of fulfilled prophecy lies; and our present limits do not allow us to enter much into details. But while this is true, still it will be our own fault if our present journey, rapid though it be, be wanting either in interest or profit. By carefully husbanding our time and resources—by taking the most direct road to the country, or city, or locality we are in quest of—by entering into no useless controversies, and no profitless speculations by the way—by laying down the resolution at starting, and rigidly adhering to it, not to go out of our way a foot-breadth to see any thing of mere general interest, and which does not bear on the great subject of prophecy—we shall see much in a short time, and far more than may suffice to satisfy us that there is the most complete and perfect accordance, in all respects, between the aspect of these regions and the prophetic pages of the Bible. Here it may be truly affirmed, that he who runs may read. But if any one, from the glimpses we are now to afford him of these countries, seen under the light which the

Bible sheds upon them, shall be desirous of going over the ground again more leisurely, we have to remind him that there are other guides to be had on this now much frequented road, who will take him to any spot which he wishes to visit, who will remain with him there as long as he pleases, and will answer every question regarding any mountain, or valley, or ruin in his path which he chooses to put.

That our limits are narrow, then, is no valid objection to the attempt we are now making to bring under the eye at once the whole region of fulfilled prophecy. Do we wish to have our minds impressed with the *circumstantiality* of prophecy—the unerring precision with which it disclosed the future state of nations and countries in their most minute particulars? In that case we must confine our attention to one branch of the subject—we must select one particular nation or country, and minutely and patiently compare its past and present condition with ancient predictions. But if we wish to be able to form some idea of the *extent* and *grandeur* of prophecy, we must do as we are now doing—we must contrive to survey the whole

region at one time—we must take our stand so as that we shall be able to look from the hoary mounds which stud the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates on the east, to the gigantic ruins which rise beside the Nile on the west, with all the monuments of departed glory and present desolation that lie between.

Suppose, now, that we were to meet one who had never seen the universe, and that we wished to convey to him some idea of the power, wisdom, and goodness of Him who made the universe, how should we proceed? Whether should we take a plant, for instance, or an insect, and expatiate upon the skill and delicacy with which its structure has been arranged? or, would it not be better to take the universe as a whole, and attempt to convey to him some idea of its vastness and magnificence? No doubt the preferable way would be to unite both plans, did circumstances allow; but if this were impossible, and if we were constrained to make our choice between the flowers of the field and the stars of the firmament—between those parts of creation whose short-lived beauty is only for a day, and those whose glory lasts

through all ages—we would certainly give the preference to the latter, as being, at first view, at least, the most impressive and eloquent preachers of the greatness and glory of Him who made all things. Now we are so situated, in some respects, at present. We have it in our power either to confine our attention to one particular country—in which case we should be able to show that the most minute and incidental circumstances relating to its future state were fully foreseen, and clearly predicted—or we may survey the vast range which prophecy takes in, the numerous nations and countries to which it relates, and the long cycles of time which it embraces; and this, we are satisfied, is the better way for estimating the force of that majestic proof which arises from prophecy of the divinity of the Holy Scriptures.

We have, further, to remark, that our subject calls us to a quarter of the world which possesses an extraordinary interest, independently of its being the region of fulfilled prophecy. “The parts we speak of,” to use the eloquent words of Sandys, the first English traveller who surveyed the East with

the eye of sober observation,—“ the parts we speak of are the most renowned countries and kingdoms, once the seats of the most glorious and triumphant empires ; the theatres of valor and heroical actions ; the soils enriched with all earthly felicities ; the places where nature hath produced her wonderful works ; where arts and sciences have been invented and perfected ; where wisdom, virtue, policy, and civility have been planted—have flourished ; and lastly, where God himself did place his own Commonwealth—gave laws and oracles—inspired his prophets—sent angels to converse with men ; above all, where the Son of God descended to become man—where he honored the earth with his beautiful steps—wrought the work of our redemption—triumphed over death, and ascended into glory.” So illustrious is the region we are now to visit. It is closely connected with all our recollections of the past, and scarcely less so with our hopes of the future. It is pregnant with lessons of wisdom to individuals and nations ; but we mean at present to view it only in one light, namely, as the land in which the Bible was written,

and which is covered, to this hour, with solemn monumental evidence of its truth.

We shall begin our journey on the plains of Chaldea, the renowned site of Nineveh and Babylon. Having surveyed the monuments of ruin with which this region abounds, we shall pass westward across those deserts where the sons of Ishmael are still found dwelling. We shall next go down into Egypt, and survey those venerable monuments which lend an air of solemn grandeur to a country which otherwise would be accounted the most degraded land on the face of the earth. Re-crossing the Nile, we shall traverse the deserts of Sinai, and journey eastward to where the hoary mountains of Edom look over the sands of the wilderness. Thence, journeying north, we shall traverse the once rich, but now desolate lands of Moab and Ammon. Then, skirting Judea on the north, we shall stretch across to the shore of the Great Sea, where the miserable remains of Tyre, the crowning city, are still to be seen, on a little island, with the Mediterranean chafing its strand, and sending the echoes of its hoarse murmur along the cliffs

of Lebanon, by which the fallen city is overshadowed. And last of all, we shall sketch the outline of those prophecies which relate to that land and people which must ever be to us the most interesting of all the countries and nations of the earth—the land and people of Judea. There will be no time to tarry by the way—to turn out of the high road, and examine the vestiges of the cities which, in former days, illustrated this region by their splendor, and now darken it by their ruins. We must be content to behold from afar, as we pass on, the dark mounds of the fallen Babylon—the desolate palaces of Ammon and Moab—the flowerless plains, the blasted hills, and the prostrate temples of Palestine; and having thus gone round the territory of prophecy, and seen how vast it is, and how strong the towers and bulwarks which defend its frontier, we shall return, we believe, with no mean idea of this goodly land, even though we should not have time to pass far within its border, and to examine, one by one, the numerous monuments of the truth of the Divine Word with which it is occupied and enriched.

ASSYRIA—NINEVEH.



Now, then, we begin our journey. We are on the Plain of Shinar—those rich level plains, of which the patriarchal family of Noah, descending from the mountains of Armenia, took possession soon after the flood. Here flourished the earliest of the Antediluvian races; here were founded the first of the Antediluvian kingdoms; and here, as might be expected, we meet with the most ancient and venerable of those monuments which Providence has left standing on the earth to attest to all who live upon it the truth of his Word. But before speaking of the wrecks with which this plain is covered, let us look at the glory and power of which, in other days, it was the seat and home.

Assyria Proper is bounded on the west by the Tigris. Mesopotamia is the country embraced by the Tigris and Euphrates. But in

the meantime we may be allowed to overlook the geographical divisions of these countries, and to speak of Assyria and Mesopotamia as forming one continuous plain,—which in reality is the case. On this plain flourished the early kingdoms of Nineveh and Babylon. The site was well chosen. Perhaps the earth does not contain another plain better adapted, in all respects, for being the seat of a mighty empire. It is defended on the north by a rampart of lofty mountains, whose snow-clad peaks are seen like a line of white clouds hanging in the blue sky, even when the plains which they overlook are languishing under the heats of summer. The upper part of this noble plain is watered by numerous streams, which have their rise in the high grounds of Armenia. Its middle and southern portions are watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. These rivers have their period of annual overflow, somewhat like the Nile, when their waters cover, for many leagues together, the contiguous part of the plain, converting it into swamps; but in former days their streams were confined by embankments;—side canals, with sluices, served at the period of flood to

draw off the superfluous waters, and to irrigate the plain; and thus its inhabitants had at their command the means of an almost unlimited fertility. A delicious sky, a fertile soil, and abundance of water covered the plain everywhere with such richness and beauty, that it looked like the picture of that celebrated garden which was the crown of the young world, and which, there is every reason to believe, existed somewhere in this very region. The seats of a numerous and industrious population were thickly scattered over its surface, and more especially on the banks of its rivers. The Tigris and Euphrates were embellished with cities whose size and splendor were inferior only to the two renowned capitals—Nineveh and Babylon. In addition to the productive powers of this plain, which were such as to leave its inhabitants nothing to wish for, its situation placed within the reach of its people the delights of the most distant and different regions. The two noble rivers by which this plain is traversed, opened for the inhabitants of Mesopotamia and Assyria a communication with the Indian Seas on the one hand, and the moun-

tains of Armenia on the other ; so that one living in Babylon might attire his person in the stuffs of India, adorn his dwelling with its gems, or replenish his table with the products of the hilly region on the north. Indeed a better proof cannot be had of the amazing productiveness, and the vast resources of this region, than the power to which Nineveh and Babylon, and the empires of which they were respectively the head, attained, and the rapidity with which they rose to it. They were the first great empires the world saw ; and as they were the greatest examples of power the world had yet seen, so were they also of profligacy. Against them were pointed the earliest denunciations of Divine vengeance ; and now the pages of history and the desolate site which they occupied, testify to all how fully and fearfully their doom has been inflicted.

Of Nineveh we shall speak in the first place ; because of the two cities she was the first to rise to eminence. Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, stood on the eastern bank of the Tigris. Its foundations were laid by Asshur, the grandson of Noah. For

many centuries afterwards it continued to be a place of small importance ; and it was not till it was enlarged by its second founder, Ninus, that it became the first city of the world. The historians of antiquity have transmitted several particulars regarding it, from which some idea may be formed of its greatness. Its figure was oblong. It extended southwards along the bank of the Tigris for about twenty miles, and backwards from the river's brink to the eastern hills. Its walls were a hundred feet in height, and so broad it is said, that three chariots could run abreast. Fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high, placed at regular intervals along the wall, still further adorned and strengthened the ramparts of Nineveh. The walls are said to have inclosed a space of sixty miles in circuit. We are not to suppose, however, that all this ground was covered with buildings ; extensive vacant spaces existed, doubtless, inside the walls—as was the case in Babylon, and as is the case in most Oriental towns at this day—occupied as parks, gardens, and pasture-grounds. The city is supposed to have contained about half a million of people. Fertile

provinces lay extended on all sides of it, which supplied the inhabitants with every necessary and luxury. Such was Nineveh, the mistress of the early East. She had stood from almost the period of the flood, and her power was still on the increase, when her overthrow and utter desolation were foretold, contrary to all human probability, by the prophets of Israel, and in particular by the Prophet Nahum.

The Prophecy of Nahum is, in fact, a poem of a regular form. In the opening of it Jehovah is seen approaching to execute vengeance on Nineveh; and never was so awful an event described with more majestic and terrible imagery: "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence; yea, the world and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him." The hurry and jostle of the preparation for the defence; the rattle of the chariot wheels, the clang of armor, and the shouts

and cries of the warriors, as they hasten to the wall to repel the assault of the besiegers—how vividly does the prophet depict it all: “The shield of his mighty men is made red; the valiant men are in scarlet; the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir-trees shall be terribly shaken. The chariots shall rage in the streets; they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings. He shall recount his worthies; they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall.” But in vain should they hasten to the wall—in vain should the warriors of Nineveh crowd her ramparts; their ready and resolute valor should not avert the fate of the city. Nineveh was to be assailed by more terrible agents of destruction than the weapons of her besiegers—an overflowing flood—a devouring fire. Such are the enemies with which the prophet threatens her; and against such enemies how little could the spear or shield of her defenders avail: “With an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof; the fire shall devour

thy bars." The city is taken, "there is a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcasses," and from her smoking ruins the conqueror is seen leading away a long train of captives: "And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts." We are next shown the empty and desolate site which the city once occupied—the utterly darkened spot once irradiated with the glory of Nineveh: "She is empty, and void, and waste. I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock. And it shall come to pass that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste; who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" With what richness and splendor of imagery does Nahum mourn the departed glory of the capital of Assyria: "Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven; the canker worm spoileth and fleeth away. Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day; but when the sun

ariseth they flee away, and the place is not known where they are." And how noble the requiem sounded over the graves of her slain: "Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; thy nobles shall dwell in the dust; thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them." Like a magnificent anthem ending on the same note on which it had begun, the prophet closes his sublime strains, as he had commenced them, with an acknowledgment of the justice of God in overthrowing so wicked a city: "There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous; all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee; for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?" Homer sang the fall of Troy after Troy had fallen. Nahum, with equal boldness and freedom of imagery, and with a much loftier moral sublimity, sang the fall of Nineveh while Nineveh yet stood.

The meagre account of Assyrian affairs which ancient historians have transmitted to us, render us unable to verify the Prophecy of Nahum in some of its minor particulars. Herodotus promised to narrate the manner in

which Nineveh was taken, but this history either was never written, or is now lost. Diodorus Siculus is the only writer, among those whose works have come down to us, who has spoken particularly of the fall of this city. From him we learn not only that Nineveh was taken, but taken in the very manner that Nahum foretold. There is a little discrepancy among those who have spoken of the closing scene of the Assyrian capital as to the names of the leading persons concerned in the siege, and the date of some of the transactions ; but there is no discrepancy among them as regards the leading particulars of this event, in all of which there is a singular coincidence between them and the prophet.

Nineveh was besieged by the joint forces of the Medes and Babylonians. Having sat down before the walls, the King of Nineveh, at the head of his army, came forth to fight with the besiegers. He routed them in three successive battles. Elated with his success, and hoping speedily to drive them away, the Assyrian king abandoned himself to sloth, and was intent only on preparing a feast for his army. The besiegers were informed of the

intemperance that reigned in the camp; and falling suddenly on the Assyrian host, while in a helpless condition by darkness and drunkenness, they committed a prodigious slaughter upon it. Those who survived were glad to escape with their king within the walls of Nineveh: "*While they be folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.*"

Instead of trusting to the strong defences within which they had now retired, the besieged, Diodorus informs us, made every preparation for their defence which necessity demanded or prudence could dictate: "*The defence shall be prepared. Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strongholds: go into clay, and tread the mortar; make strong the brick-kiln.*" But the prophet who had foretold that these active measures should be taken, had also foretold that they should be altogether unavailing. The hour of Nineveh was come. The third year of the siege was now running. In this year heavy rains fell out; the Tigris was much swollen; its impetuous current undermined the walls, and the

defences of the city fell for the space of twenty furlongs: "*The gates of the rivers shall be opened.*" The king had trusted hitherto in an ancient oracle, which declared that Nineveh should not be taken till the river had become its enemy—an imperfect version, most probably, of Nahum's prophecy which the king had happened to hear—but now seeing the oracle fulfilled, the monarch abandoned himself to despair, and collecting together his wealth and furniture, he erected an immense funeral pile in his palace, and having placed upon it himself, his eunuchs, and his wives, he fired it with his own hand, and the whole was speedily consumed. These fires accomplished the prediction: "*The palace shall be dissolved.*" Meanwhile the troops of the besiegers entered by the wide breach which the river had made in the walls—"the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies"—and while the palace was blazing, they attacked and put to the sword the soldiers and people whom they found in the city. These, being already panic-struck by the terrors of the fire and flood, offered very little resistance: "*The sword shall cut thee off; it shall eat thee*

up like the canker-worm." Immense quantities of silver and gold were found by the conquerors in the ashes of the palace, and in the rubbish of the city: "*Take ye the spoil of silver; take the spoil of gold.*" The sack of the city was now over, and those of its people who survived were led away into a distant captivity. Thus did Nineveh fall as the prophet had foretold. It was very unlikely, indeed, that a city that had existed since the period of the flood, and which reigned over the cities of the earth, should be so speedily and completely destroyed; it was very unlikely that the three agents of destruction pointed out by the prophet—the sword, the fire, and the flood—should combine all at the same time to lay low the Assyrian capital; yet so had Nahum foretold, and so, as Diodorus Siculus relates, did it fall out.

It is now a long time since the events we have just detailed. It cannot be less than twenty-two centuries. During this period Nineveh has lain in ruins. Many a city, after having suffered as great disasters as the capital of Assyria, has risen again with new splendor; but Nahum had said regarding

Nineveh: "*He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.*" Babylon, though doomed to fall, was yet to fall by slow degrees. A long series of degradations was to separate her meridian splendor from her last and total obscurity. But the proud mistress of the Tigris was to fall at once from the summit of her dominion and glory into the grave of her ruin. Nineveh passed away; and from that day to this she has never lifted up herself to grace with the image of her glory the broad bosom of the Tigris, or to adorn with the magnificence of her towers and battlements the rich plains of Assyria. When the light of history falls on the site of this city, which it sometimes does in the course of centuries, it always presents the very picture which the prophets drew of what it should become while Nineveh was yet "a rejoicing city; dwelling carelessly, and saying in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me." Lucian, who flourished in the second century, says, that no vestige of Nineveh remained, nor could the spot it occupied be easily identified. In the seventh century its vacant site was the scene of a great battle

between Rome and Persia. Thevenot visited it in the very dawn of modern travel. "On the other side of the river," says he, "at the end of the bridge [of boats] begins the place where in ancient times stood the famous city of Nineveh. There is nothing of it now to be seen, but some hillocks." And such to this day is its appearance. The space once covered by the palaces and gardens of the Assyrian capital, is now "*a desolation, and dry like a wilderness.*" There is some uncertainty, however, regarding the precise spot which this city occupied, so utterly waste and desolate has its site been made. The most probable place is, that on the left bank of the Tigris, exactly opposite the modern town of Mosul. Let us visit the spot.

Now are we on the margin of the swift-flowing Tigris. As we gaze on the desolate waters we think of the splendor which this stream has seen flourish and fade on its banks. Gone are now the frowning battlements, the lofty towers, and the imperial palaces, which in other days graced the river; and now we behold it winding its way amid the graves of cities and empires. Its channel is as full,

its floods are as copious, as when they flowed to refresh the palaces of the Assyrian princes ; but nothing is mirrored now on its placid wave save the blue vault, or the grassy hillocks which stud its banks, or the mean dwellings of the little town of Mosul, on the farther shore. And is this green and level expanse, which stretches along to the south as far as the eye can reach, and backwards from the river's brink to the eastern hills, which is diversified with innumerable swellings, green, too, like the plain over which they are sprinkled—is this the grave of the proud capital of Assyria? Are these mounds the sepulchres of her temples and palaces? Yes! this grassy line was once a lofty rampart, from which the warriors of Nineveh looked forth with defiance upon their foes. How are their strongholds fallen! This heap of rubbish, now covered with turf, was once a shrine of the gods of Assyria. How are their altars laid waste, and how are all they confounded who trust in graven images! How low now is she that was once so high! “Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old

lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?"

The principal remains of Nineveh, which are found at a little distance from the bank of the Tigris, are comprised in an oblong inclosure which runs parallel with the river for about four miles by two in breadth. It is marked off from the general plain of the city by a grassy embankment. Within this inclosure are two mounds of ruins, lying a little way apart; the one fifty feet, and the other about forty-three feet above the level of the city's site. On digging into these mounds, they are found to be crossed with wall of masonry and narrow passages. Mr. Rich found in them sun-dried bricks, and pieces of the finest kind of pottery covered with cuneiform writing, and other very curious antiques. The discoveries lately made by M. Botta on the site of Nineveh are very interesting; but they have not yet been particularly described. There is little doubt that this oblong space, with its two central mounds, is the remains of the palace of the Assyrian kings. The space, which is about eight miles square, is not too large to preclude such an idea. In

the grassy mound that forms its confine, we behold the fallen rampart which inclosed the royal buildings and gardens. Let us ascend the ruined heap into which the monarch's palace has now been converted, and from its summit look over the site of Nineveh. Buckingham, who surveyed the ground from the same point, thus describes the prospect: "As far as I could perceive, from our elevated point of view, on the highest summit of Tel Ninoa, there were mounds of ruins, similar to those near us, but less distinctly marked, as far as the eye could reach to the northward; and the plain to the eastward of us, or between the river and the mountains, had a mixture of large brown patches, like heaps of rubbish, seen at intervals, scattered over a cultivated soil." And the same, substantially, is the account of every traveller who has of late visited the spot.

Such is the latter end of that city which repented in sackcloth and ashes at the preaching of Jonah—which Jehovah at that time spared—but which, returning to her former wickedness, was at last fearfully overthrown. Yet, as if the Divine indignation against Nin-

even had begun of late to be mitigated, the aspect of her ruins is now of a less gloomy character than that which belongs to the remains of some other large cities. The scene is almost a pleasant and pastoral one. The dust of Nineveh sleeps beneath a fresh and beautiful turf. On some portions of the plain the plough has been busy for ages; and the ground is covered with crops of grain and cotton, which the niggard soil produces only on the alternate years. The rest of the plain is covered with green sward, dotted here and there with patches of tamarisk bushes. Here there is nothing of the scathed and blasted look which the Plain of Chaldea presents, nor are there here those gigantic and hoary mounds, which give such unspeakable sublimity to the site of Babylon. One has to reflect on the long line of monarchs and princes which flourished here—the stately palaces—the delicious gardens—the multitude of men—the wealth, the luxury, the wickedness of which this plain was once the abode, and to contrast it with its utter desertion now, and the deep and perpetual silence that reigns over it, before he can feel the truly sublime

character of the scene on which he is gazing.

Still, as we have said, there is, to this hour, some doubt regarding the site of Nineveh; which, however, it is probable will be speedily dispelled by the investigations going on there. If the remains we have described *are* the ruins of Nineveh, "*how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in!*" If these are *not* the ruins of Nineveh, no man knows where it stood. In either case, how exact has been the fulfilment of the prophecy: "*He will make an utter end of the place thereof.*"

MESOPOTAMIA—BABYLON.

Now we cross the Tigris, and enter on the patriarchal region of Mesopotamia. Our path lies south, with a just perceptible inclination to the east. Behind us are the ruins of one great city; before us, those of a greater. The tract over which we are now passing was illustrated in other days by the footsteps of the "mighty hunter," Nimrod, and the tower reaching to heaven, which the sons of men attempted to build. This plain was, in early times, the theatre of unrivalled glory—the scene of unexampled wickedness; and now it lies before us a wide-spread ruin. It stretches out and out as we go, with scarce a human habitation or a speck of green on its bosom, and with so few landmarks, that the Arab, in traversing it, is often obliged, like the mariner on the deep, to guide himself by the stars. The heart of the stoutest traveller

becomes oppressed, as he surveys the boundless extent of dreary and dark wilderness around him, diversified only by tufts of reedy grass, by dwarf acacia bushes, and heaps of ruins which swarm with reptiles and ravenous animals. At every step we meet the memorials of the past—the vestiges of the cities, the cultivation, and the men which once flourished here. These grassy mounds, which intersect the plain in long straight lines, are the remains of the ancient canals. By these the waters of the Euphrates were made to irrigate the country ; and this, together with its fat alluvial soil, made it, in past ages, the garden of the East. These black spots which occur, ever and anon, and where the soil is evidently unable to nourish a single pile of grass, and where the ground looks as if it had been scorched by fire, are the sites of ancient cities. We meet them at so short distances, and the desert, right and left, is so thickly dotted with them, that we are forced to the conclusion, that the entire plain between the Tigris and Euphrates, was formerly one continuous town. As we go, and still the dark desolate plain spreads out before

us, and still the monuments of ruin lie thick around us; the feeling of loneliness with which we are at first impressed, rises at last into awe and reverence, at the power and truth of Him who has so signally punished, so utterly overthrown, this region. "Our ride," says Frazer, who was now traversing the country between Seleucia and Babylon, "so long as daylight lasted, served at least to convince us how populous the land must have been in times of old; for scarcely did we traverse a mile of it without passing over the site of some ancient city, or town, or village. Sometimes we found a whole tract covered with fragments of bricks, pottery, and glass; and it was remarkable, that all of these sites are utterly bare of vegetation; so that, even independent of the appearance of debris, we could tell when we were crossing one. Mounds, also, of the same substances were numerous; but low, and altogether shapeless. Sections of funeral vases and coffins, which we observed protruding from them, marked them as receptacles for the relics of the dead. We likewise crossed a number of old canals—all dry and useless now;

and in short, no one who has had any experience in these matters, could doubt, from the vestiges so thickly spread over this day's march, that either some immense city had once flourished here, or, what is more probable, that the whole country, from Seleucia to Babylon, had once been covered with the abodes of men, in every various shape and form of city, town, and village."

Now we draw nigh the site of the mighty Babylon. Our approach to this renowned spot, is notified to us by the signs of greater desolation now visible around us. The earth begins to wear a more scathed and blackened look ; the heaps of ruin are more numerous, and dark-looking and shapeless masses, which, in point of magnitude and height, resemble hills, are seen rising before us at a great distance on the plain. A profound silence reigns throughout the region—not the silence of repose, but of awe and terror, as if nature were conscious that the frown of the Almighty still rests on the spot where his indignation in past ages was poured out to the uttermost. We begin to feel the spirit of the place—to feel as if we had entered the por-

tals of some vast temple consecrated to the vengeance of the Holy One, and where no one ever stood without being constrained to worship—a temple whose floor is the blasted earth on which we are treading ; whose walls and roof are the heavens over us, which are as brass ; whose altars are the hoary mounds before us ; and whose songs are the cries of the doleful creatures by whom it is inhabited. Here is a mass of ruin, shapeless and towering high above the level of the plain ; let us ascend and rest us on its summit. This pile will afford us a prospect of the ruins of Babylon. Who can tell what this mass may have been once ? Perhaps the monarch of Babylon dwelt here ; or it may be that the gods of Babylon were worshipped here ; but whatever it once was, it is now a heap of ruin. Now we are on its summit. Let us open the Prophecy of Isaiah, and read. A BIBLE on the site of Babylon ! Who could deny its divinity here ? But before comparing what Babylon now is, as exemplified in the scene around us, with the predictions of the prophet, let us look back on what Babylon once was, as described in the page both of inspired and

profane history. Before taking a survey of the ghastly relics around us, let us recall the power and magnificence that once flourished on this site.

Between Babylon and Nineveh there is a close resemblance in many particulars. Both were founded in the earliest ages of the world ; both gradually rose to a great height of power and grandeur, though Babylon was some centuries later than Nineveh in reaching the summit of her glory ; both practised enormous oppression on the surrounding nations, especially on the Jews ; both were filled with lewdness, luxury, and idolatry ; and both were doomed by Heaven to desolation.

No sooner had Nineveh declined from the rank she long held as queen of the East, than the sovereignty was transferred to Babylon. The city was the equal of Nineveh in size, and its superior in wealth and splendor. The descriptions which ancient historians—Herodotus, Ctesias, Strabo, Diodorus—have left us are so clear and minute, that there is no difficulty in forming a just idea of the glory of Babylon. This city was a perfect square ; and each of its four sides being fifteen miles

in length, the space included was sixty miles in circuit. Its broad walls were the wonder of the world while they stood, and have since often been the theme of praise. They were a hundred feet in height, according to the most moderate calculation. They were defended outside by a broad ditch, filled with water; were protected by numerous watch-towers; and contained a hundred gates of solid brass. Each gate opened into a street which ran across, straight as a rule, to a gate in the opposite wall. Thus the area of Babylon was occupied by fifty streets, which crossed each other at right angles, the squares formed by their intersections being covered with gardens, plantations and pasture-grounds. Through the middle of the mighty city flowed the noble stream of the Euphrates, and added much to the freshness and beauty of the capital. Nigh the river stood the royal palaces, one on this side, and the other on that. Both were worthy of being the residence of the monarch of Babylon; but the western one was of surpassing size and splendor, and its triple rampart was of prodigious strength. Near to this last, and extending along by the

river, were the Hanging Gardens built by Nebuchadnezzar for the delight of his queen. They were supported on arches, and rose tier above tier, till they resembled natural hills, formed into terraces, and planted with the choicest fruits and the most precious trees. In the middle of one of the divisions—Diodorus says the eastern—of the city rose the Tower of Belus, the under part of which was most probably the same structure which the sons of Noah erected soon after the flood. Whoever ascended this tower saw at his feet the most gorgeous picture which the wealth and labor of man ever created. There, covering the plain in all directions as far as the eye could reach, and reposing proudly beneath the beautiful sky of Chaldea, were the streets and squares, and palaces and gardens, and temples and bulwarks, of “the golden city”—“the glory of kingdoms.” Rennel is disposed to think that Babylon, at its height, may have contained one million two hundred thousand inhabitants. Within the city were provisions for twenty years; and if ever there existed on the earth a city warranted to bid defiance to the prediction of its overthrow,

Babylon might presume, from the strength of her defences and the number of her defenders, that she was entitled to do so. But all these availed her little when her hour had come.

A hundred and sixty years before an enemy entered her gates, the doom of Babylon was foretold by Isaiah. The style of this prophet, sublime at all times, is peculiarly so when predicting the fate of this city. The same may be said of Jeremiah, who also foretold the desolation of Babylon. Even this is no mean evidence of the truth of their predictions. The impostor never attains to sublimity: the consciousness of fraud is altogether incompatible with that expansion of the moral and intellectual nature which gives birth to sublimity. The would-be prophet is perpetually haunted by the dread of detection, and is constantly seeking to hide himself in vague generalities and misty ambiguities; he can never irradiate his page with that moral splendor which comes only from truth. How different is it with the two prophets we have named!—how free, noble, and majestic are the strains in which they foretold, long before she fell, the overthrow of that greatest and proudest

of cities ! The noblest images and metaphors come at their call. Her fall they compare to that of the angels from heaven, seeing the history of nations had then furnished no event which could adequately represent its grandeur and terror : "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning !" The obscuration of her glory they liken to the darkening of the lights of the firmament. The earth, which had groaned beneath her weight, they exhibit as rejoicing at her overthrow. They assemble the most doleful and terrible emblems around her grave ; and having spread the worm under her power and glory, her princes and nobles ; and having breathed a lament full of the deepest tenderness and pathos over her ruin, they retire, bowing reverently down before the holiness of Him who had overthrown her, leaving Babylon to the dragons of the wilderness, by whom she was henceforth to be inhabited. It is only a small part of the prophecy we can here quote.

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be

lvelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!"

The conqueror of Babylon was foretold by name;—a rare circumstance in prophecy: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus." The forces he was to lead against her were also named: "Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media." The time when Babylon was to be overthrown was also fixed: "*It shall come to pass,*" said Jeremiah, "*when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, saith the Lord.*" This prophecy was delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and seventy years after that date the united hosts of Persia and Media, under Cyrus as their leader, appeared before the walls of Babylon. Cyrus soon became aware that famine would be his most

effective weapon of assault ; accordingly he drew a trench around the city, fortified with towers, to prevent the flight of the inhabitants. The prophet had said : " Let none thereof escape." Weary of the delay which this method of strategy imposed, Cyrus employed every art to draw forth the men of Babylon and join battle in the open plain ; but, as the prophet had foretold, this they declined : "*The mighty men of Babylon have foreborne to fight, they have remained in their strongholds, they have become as women.*" Two years had now been spent before the place, and no progress whatever made in the siege. In the perplexity occasioned by this waste of time, it was suggested that the course of the Euphrates, which flowed through the city, should be turned, and thus the troops would be able, in the dry bed of the river, to march into the city under the walls. This was precisely what the prophet had foretold, although unknown to Cyrus : "*That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers. A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up.*" The task was a Herculean, and almost an impossible one ; for the river was a

quarter of a mile broad, and twelve feet deep: yet no sooner was the proposal made, than Cyrus resolved on attempting it. An immense trench was dug, and all was now ready for turning off the waters of the Euphrates from their accustomed channel which led underneath the walls into the city. All was ready, we say, but Cyrus knew that an annual festival, the night of which the Babylonians were accustomed to spend in revelry and wine, was nigh, and he fixed on this night for the execution of his project. The night came—the revels of the feast began—the inhabitants of Babylon were speedily drowned in wine, and sleep, and darkness; the waters of the Euphrates were turned off—the troops were marched along the dry bed of the river, and without a blow being struck to oppose their entrance, they passed on and stood within those walls which all their strength could never have battered to the ground. Thus the city at last fell an easy prey: “*I will make their feasts,*” said Jehovah by his prophet, “*and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord. I will bring them*

down like lambs to the slaughter. I will make drunken her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men, and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep."

Can any one compare the prophecy with the facts—and to the facts no suspicion can attach; they are given by Herodotus and Xenophon, men who perhaps never saw a copy of the Old Testament—and doubt the inspiration of the prophet? Though any one had been rash enough to hazard a prediction that this great city would be destroyed, who would have ventured to fix the year—to name the conqueror?—who could have pointed to the lands from which the invading armies should come; and especially, who could have hit upon the singular expedient by which the city was taken—an expedient which did not occur to Cyrus himself till after he had spent two years before the place, and tried every other stratagem in vain for taking the city? Although Cyrus had sat down immediately on the capture of the city, and detailed the manner in which it had been taken, he could not have given the particulars more exactly; perhaps not so fully, and certainly

not with so much beauty and sublimity, as they were given a century and a half before by Isaiah.

The history of the city, from the time when it was taken by Cyrus, has been in exact accordance with the prophecy respecting it. The night was to overtake Babylon not all at once—it was to sink down by slow degrees. First she declined from the rank of an imperial to that of a subjugated city: “*Sit in the dust; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans.*” Next came Darius, who, provoked by her disposition to revolt, greatly reduced the height of her walls, and thus gave a presage of the complete fulfilment of the prophecy, now long since accomplished: “*The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken.*” The desecration of her shrines and the demolition in part of her famous temple by Xerxes, fulfilled the prediction: “*I will punish Bel in Babylon.*” Then came the attempt to heal her wound, as had been foretold; which, however, could not be healed. Alexander conceived the design of making Babylon the metropolis of his great empire. Ten thousand workmen were already em-

ployed in the task of its restoration, when the death of the monarch arrested the progress of the undertaking. After this, the rise of Seleucia on the Tigris, which led to the transportation of the materials of Babylon to the new site, rapidly accelerated its decline. A Parthian general is said, about a century before Christ, to have demolished most of the fabrics which remained. At the beginning of the Christian era it was mostly deserted. In the fourth century, its vast area, which was still inclosed by the remains of its walls, was a hunting ground of wild beasts. Thus did her glories wane, as prophecy foretold; shade gathered after shade, till at last the once mighty Babylon disappeared altogether from the eyes of men; and now that modern discovery has lifted up the veil, and allowed us to survey her blackened site and ghastly remains, where shall we find words to describe the scene around us half so forcible and true as employed long since by the prophet: Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons. Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm

is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.”

On the summit of this ruined heap, the page of the prophet open before us, and the ruins of Babylon around us, let us proceed to compare the one with the other. What feature or circumstance of Babylon's desolation have the prophets omitted? Every emblem of terror and devastation on the prophet's page is found to be realized on the gloomy plain around us. In the most minute particulars does the resemblance hold; so that a painter who had never trodden the blasted wilds of Chaldea, and never climbed the hoary mounds of Babylon, could, simply, by studying the prophet, produce a most impressive and truthful picture of Babylon's ruin. Did the prophets foretell that Chaldea should be “a dry land?” Look over that plain. It is crossed, you perceive, by the embankments of its former canals, but these canals are dry—the waters of the Euphrates no longer irrigate its soil; it is a sterile expanse, here sown with nitre, there blackened by the crumbled remains of the bituminous materials which composed its cities. “This country is so dry

and barren," says Rauwolf, "that it cannot be tilled." Did the prophets foretell that Babylon should become "pools of water?"—a prediction apparently inconsistent with the preceding. Look here; the Euphrates at the period of flood, overflows its banks, and forms lakes here and there amidst the ruins. These pools, Mignan informs us, are the resort of flocks of bitterns: "I will also make it a possession for the bittern." Was it foretold that the sower should be cut off from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest?—a most improbable prediction! Herodotus testifies that this plain of Babylon excelled all the countries he had visited, as a land of corn; the returns being two hundred and sometimes three hundred-fold; but now no attempt at cultivation is, or could be made on the site of Babylon, or indeed anywhere almost on the plain. The ruins of Western Asia abound in flocks and shepherds' tents; but in this particular there was to be a marked difference between Mesopotamia and other ruined countries: "*Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.*" The ruins by which

the country is overspread contain an ingredient unfriendly to vegetation, and where there is no pasture there will be no resort of flocks. A passing caravan may at times be seen, their black tents may dot the desert for a night, and the tinkling bell of the browsing camel agreeably break the silence; but here flocks never depasture; and especially does the Arab avoid, above all things, pitching his tent near the ruins of Babylon, or near any of the ruined sites in its neighborhood, so great is his horror of the evil spirits by whom he believes these places are haunted. "The solitary habitation of the goatherd," says Mignan, "marks not the forsaken site." In fine, were the palaces of Babylon to become dens of venomous, doleful, and ravenous animals? Such, on the testimony of every traveller, they have now become. Not only is it true of Babylon, but of all the ruins on the plain of Chaldea, that they abound in cavities and caverns, which are the receptacles of owls, bats, lizards, hyenas, jackals; and occasionally the footprints of lions have been seen. The mouths of these dens are strewn with the bones and other relics of sheep,

goats, and other larger animals. Thus do the wild beasts of the desert lie there ; and their houses are full of doleful creatures ; and owls dwell there, and satyrs dance there.

Before taking our leave of Babylon, let us look around, and survey the general aspect of her ruins. Here, truly, is desolation on a great scale. No one can adequately realize the grandeur of the scene, unless he has been present on the spot. Whole cities have been built from the ruins of Babylon, and yet the mounds in which her glory is entombed look like hills. No one ever stood here without having his mind awed and subdued by the gloomy scenery of the region—so vast as to be sublime—so desolate as to be appalling. Our point of survey is on one of the central mounds, which adjoins the eastern bank of the Euphrates. The plain around is a perfect flat, covered far and near with heaps of ruins. These are of all shapes and sizes. Some are masses of undefined form ; others run on in long lines or embankments ; some terminate in pinnacles ; others are rounded off. But we miss here the green turf which mantles the remains of Nineveh ; the ruins

of Babylon are covered with the black bituminous debris of the materials which compose them, and have all a gloomy aspect. Of these mounds a few, in different quarters of the plain, tower majestically above the rest, and attract the eye by their stupendous size. It is on one of these that we have taken up our position. It rises seventy feet above the level of the plain, and its huge bulk stretches along for upwards of eight hundred yards. It is a rugged mass of ruins ; its surface covered with fragments of bricks and pottery ; its sides deeply furrowed by the rain ; and cleft and torn, moreover, by the Arabs, who have dug into its bowels in search of antiquities. It is named the Kasr or Palace. The current opinion among those who have visited and examined it is, that of all the mounds on the site of Babylon, this has the best claim to be regarded as the ruins of the great palace of the Chaldean monarchs. It is composed, Mignan tells us, of the finest furnace-dried bricks, all inscribed with unknown characters ; and so firmly do they adhere that it is impossible to detach a single brick from the mass. We may state, on

Beauchamp's authority, that alabaster vessels and engraved marbles have been found in it ; as also passages, and a chamber with representations of the sun and moon, and other figures, formed of varnished bricks, on its walls. How solemn the thought that we are walking over the palace of the king of Babylon, and that beneath our feet, now crushed and buried, is the festive hall where the impious Belshazzar assembled his lords and concubines, and where the fingers of a man's hand came forth, and wrote his doom upon the wall !

From two to three hundred yards west of the fallen pile on which we stand, is the Euphrates. Mighty changes have happened here since the night that the halls beneath us rung with the revelry of the king and his nobles ; but that stream is still the same—the same as when it bore on its bosom the glorious image of the "golden city"—the same as when the captive Jews sat down and wept beside its waters. Commencing at the palace and running along to the south, by the brink of the river, is a lofty embankment—the reputed site of the hanging gardens ; all un-

lecked now by flower, or shrub, or tree. The river has encroached on this mound, and its face slopes abruptly to the stream. Along the river's edge, covered by the water, and at either extremity of the embankment, slabs of granite are found of the exact dimensions with those which ancient authors tell us were employed in the construction of these gardens. At the top of the bank are some urns, which have been laid bare by the action of the water, and which contain human bones. May not some part of these gardens have been used as a place of royal sepulture? From our point of survey two rectilinear mounds are seen traversing the plain. They form a triangle, having the river for their base, and their apex at a distance of upwards of two miles on the plain to the east. They inclose an area of about five miles square, on which are the ruins we have just described, with others of less note. We may be allowed to conjecture that this mound forms the remains of the triple rampart by which, as is well known, the great western palace and hanging gardens were inclosed.

There is one feature of Babylon's desola-

tion whice meets us here of a touching kind. On the northern front of the Kasr stands a solitary tree, the only one that is to be seen near these remains. It is a species of the tamarisk, and indubitably of great antiquity. Its trunk is strong and gnarled, and crowned with a tuft of thin leaves. These bend over the ruins gracefully, yet mournfully, as if they bewailed the desolation they strive most ineffectually to hide.

Of the other memorials on the plain before us, the most distinguished are the two which we now proceed to notice. On the north, at the distance of two miles, rises an enormous mass of ruin. It is termed by the Arabs Mujelibé—"the overturned." It is one hundred and thirty-nine feet in height ; its figure is oblong, and its four sides face exactly the cardinal points. Its sides are deeply furrowed, and its top is an uneven flat, covered with broken bricks, pottery, bitumen, and glass. This mound is composed of mud bricks, baked in the sun, and mixed with straw. They are cemented with clay-mortar, and between every course is a layer of reeds. Whatever this edifice was once,

whether the abode of a monarch, or the shrine of an idol, or the dungeon of the captive—and all these several uses have been found for it by some—it is now a den of wild beasts.

Turn we now to the south; here, at the distance of eight miles from where we stand, towering over the plain, and maintaining a kind of majesty even in its overthrow, is by far the most stupendous and imposing of the ruins of Babylon. First in splendor, we may well believe, when the plain around was a gay spectacle of gardens and palaces—now it is first in ruin. The crowning glory of the golden city—now it is the most awful feature of her desolation. The grandest of her piles—now the most terrific of her ruins. Its golden roof, in other days, was the first to proclaim to the traveller that he was approaching the metropolis of the Chaldean Empire—now its dark, and torn, and ruin-tricken top, is the first to tell him that he draws nigh the scene of Babylon's desolation. To the eminence which this fallen pile enjoys, amid the innumerable fabrics which here share its overthrow, not altogether in-

applicable are the words of the great poet, descriptive of the "glory obscured" which shone around the form of the arch-apostate even after he had fallen, and the distinction this gave him amid his compeers :—

He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r.

If, among the heaps of ruin on this plain, there be any representative of the tower which the builders erected after the flood, and which subsequently became renowned as the Tower of Belus, being dedicated by the Babylonians to the worship of their god, Bel, most will agree that this mountain has the best title to be regarded as such: and this honor has, without almost a dissenting voice, been conceded to it, by those who have visited and examined it. It is called by the natives the *Birs Nimrod*. In external aspect it does not differ from the other mounds, unless in its greater size. Like them, it is covered with black debris; its sides, like theirs, are furrowed deeply by the weather. Mignan, in digging into its base,

found it to be composed of coarse sun-dried bricks, fastened together by layers of mortar and reed. It appears, however, to have had a casing of fire-dried bricks, cemented by bitumen; and ancient historians tell us, that of such materials was the Temple of Belus constructed.

There is a surprising agreement between the dimensions of this enormous mound and those of the Tower of Belus, as given by Herodotus and others. Its elevation, which is nearly two hundred feet, is much below that of the tower; but this we would look for in a fallen pile. The area of its base, however, which is seven hundred and sixty-two yards, is almost exactly the same with that of the tower, only a little larger, the materials having spread in falling. On the summit of this mound rises a tower, composed of the finest kiln-burnt bricks, thirty-seven feet high. Its top is broken and cleft. The other parts of the summit of the mound are covered with huge masses of brick, tumbled together, and completely vitrified. These masses have evidently been exposed to the action of the fiercest fire; and, in the

opinion of those who have examined the site, that fire has acted from above, and been, most probably, lightning—a singular corroboration, as it would seem, of the common tradition that the Temple of Belus was destroyed by fire from heaven. At all events, it is impossible to survey the summit of this enormous pile, and to see it thus scathed by fire—whether kindled by the hand of man or shot against it from heaven it is now impossible with certainty to say—without being reminded of Jeremiah's prophecy: "*I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.*"

But though we have said, Here stood the palace, there were the hanging gardens, and yonder rose the Tower of Belus—we are to bear in mind, that all this is to a great degree conjectural. The appearance of the ruins themselves bear out our conclusions; but when we compare the position assigned by ancient historians to the fabrics of which we have supposed the heaps in question to be the remains, we are altogether at fault. The difficulty is removed only in part, by

supposing that the Euphrates had changed its course. No man has succeeded in determining the limits which the city occupied: no trace of its "broad walls" have been found. The precise site of the "mighty Babylon," will, in all likelihood, remain forever unknown. What stronger proof can we demand that God has swept her with the "besom of destruction?"

What a spot for meditation is this! How solemn the lessons taught us here, did our time only allow of our pondering them at length! This plain, once so rich in men and in cities, and in all earthly felicities—how deserted is it now! This site, once irradiated with the glories of Empire, the scene where War first accumulated her spoils, and Superstition first erected her temples—how darkened is it! This is the end of ambition. This is the punishment that awaits pride. Here sleeps the man who made the earth to tremble; and gone down with him into the grave are all his princes and his mighty men. Here sleeps the warrior. His sword, unused, now rusts by his side; and the trumpet's peal falls in vain upon his slumbering ear—he mingles

in the battle no more. Here lies the astrologer; and in vain do the same constellations which, in former days, gave splendor to the midnight sky of Chaldea, still shine down upon this plain. These orbs rise and set; but he who so reverently watched them of old, comes not now to gaze on their glory, or to read what their motions portend. He slumbers here, overtaken by a more terrible doom than the worst augury of his horoscope ever foreshadowed. Silent now in the streets of the fallen metropolis are the sound of the chariot wheel, the noise of the viol, and the voice of the bridegroom. On this desolate site Sorrow weeps not—Mirth rejoices not—both are alike mute. Here is the festive hall, mantled by the dust of ruin—but where are the revellers? The wine-cup is empty—the shouts have ceased—the lights are darkened. And here too is the temple, majestic even in its fall; but no priest, no worshipper is here, and the fire on its altar is long since extinguished. Buried in the same profound repose, to be broken only by the trump of the archangel, here rest side by side, the monarch and his subjects—the conqueror and the conquered

—the prisoner and the man who opened not the house of his prisoners. The dark surface of the plain, like a vast funereal pall, covers all. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken ! How hath the oppressor ceased !—the golden city ceased !

ARABIA—THE ISHMAELITES.

Now we shall leave the land of Chaldea, with all the glory which its flowerless turf covers, and turn our steps into the desert. We are now on the bosom of the mighty wilderness, which interposes an expanse of naked sands eight hundred miles in breadth, between Babylon and the green banks of the Nile. Here there is no scenery to detain us by its beauty, and no ruins to divert us from the straight course. The country contains only one monument of prophecy, and of that only shall we speak. We mean its people.

Arabia, which we are now traversing, extends from the Euphrates on the east, to the shores of the Red Sea on the west. Its southern boundary, which is about a thousand miles in extent, is washed by the waters of the Indian Ocean. This vast peninsula is commonly divided into three regions: Araby the Stony,

which adjoins on the south the lands of Judea and Moab, and consists, as its name imports, of naked mountains and plains, covered with flints. Araby the Happy, which is a breadth of hilly territory, extending along the shores of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, its fertile soil covered with plantations, pasture-grounds, and corn-fields. It is rich also in various gums and spices; and this has obtained for it the name of the Land of Frankincense. Araby the Sandy, which includes the extensive tract which stretches from the mountains of Edom to the shores of the Persian Gulf. This is a boundless expanse of sand, without shade or verdure, broken at long intervals by a solitary fountain, which creates a little patch of green in the midst of the desert, and nourishes it may be a few palm-trees, whose shade is not less grateful to the traveller in these burning wastes than are the waters which flow beside them. Such is the land which, from the days of their progenitor, has been the dwelling of the Ishmaelites.

Now, as we pass on, we shall open the Volume of Prophecy, and test the truth of what is foretold in it concerning the venerable peo-

ple among whom our path now lies. Here we find it predicted of Ishmael: "I will make him a great nation. He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." "He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." It is admitted that the prophecy regards not so much Ishmael, as the posterity of Ishmael; and in them are we to look for its accomplishment.

It is now four thousand years since the predictions we have just quoted were given. Since that time how many great changes have come to pass! The world has been turned upside down. Many nations not then in existence have come into being, have flourished and gone to their graves. Violence and War have gone round the earth, breaking its kingdoms in pieces, and making an utter end of their inhabitants. Many nations we now search for in vain; they were flourishing once, but their place now is nowhere to be found; and as we pass over the borders of this land, we tremble lest its people also should have passed away. The once rich Plain of Babylon, from which we have just come, is now a desert, without an inhabitant; and af-

ter that can we expect to find this wilderness peopled? The warlike nation of the Chaldeans is now extinct; and is it not too much to hope that these simple children of the desert shall have maintained their existence? Yet so did the word of the Lord foretell: and his word cannot fall to the ground. Here, on the bosom of the same sands which were trodden by their father Ishmael, are the black tents of the roving tribes of his descendants. How astonishing is this! Those who were once the masters of the world have perished; yet the Ishmaelites are still numerous, and powerful, and independent. What a monument are they of the truth of prophecy!

“I will make him a great nation.”—The descendants of Ishmael speedily became numerous and powerful. They were not the first, it is true, to people the Arabian peninsula—its original inhabitants were the descendants of Joktan, the son of Heber; but Ishmael having settled in this part of the world, his posterity soon became, and have ever since continued to be, the most powerful and distinguished branch of the Arabian nation. Their importance as a people may be judged of from

the fact that, when the rest of the nations fell before the four great monarchies as they successively arose, the Ishmaelites alone stood erect. And when the last of these monarchies had fallen, the posterity of Ishmael took their turn in founding an empire, which, in point of greatness, rivalled that of Rome. In little more than a hundred years did this remarkable people carry their arms and their religion, their literature and their science, from the banks of the Euphrates to the shores of the Atlantic—from the borders of India to the confines of France. And even at this day, though they have now retired within their native deserts, indelible traces of their former power and influence are found on many of the nations of Europe.

“He will be a wild man.”—There is no other single term which could depict the whole character of the Arab—“a wild man.” A fact so notorious as this stands in need neither of illustration nor proof. The desert, to this day, is his dwelling. He still spurns the restraints of society, and still prefers the sweets of a roving independence, and the precarious supply which plunder or his flocks

may yield, to the order, security, and plenty of a settled mode of life. Time has mellowed and greatly altered the character of other nations—has induced on them a gravity and sobriety; but it has not tamed the Ishmaelite: his temper is still as fiery, his habits are as lawless, and his manners as patriarchal, as they were four thousand years ago. There is not a single encampment on the face of the desert we are now traversing, the interior of which does not exhibit, at this day, the same domestic scenes which are so beautifully depicted on the first pages of the Bible. His hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against him. Even to this day he is not reconciled to his brethren of mankind. They regard him as an outlaw: he holds them in defiance. Where is the traveller who would venture into his deserts without an escort? where is the people with whom he is in alliance? and where is the nation who has not smarted from his violence, and attempted, but failed, to chastise him?

“He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.”—The precise import of this part of the prophecy is somewhat doubtful. It has

ommonly been understood as intimating that the Ishmaelitic nation should never be conquered. Granting that this is the sense of the prediction—of which, however, we are by no means certain—there can be no doubt as to its fulfilment. The tide of Persian, of Macedonian, of Roman conquest, each in its turn, approached these deserts, but was rolled back from their border. All attempts—and many have been made—to impose upon the free necks of the sons of Ishmael the yoke of foreign dominion, have signally failed. Nothing can be more explicit on this head than the testimony of one whom all will acknowledge to be an unexceptionable witness: “The body of the nation,” says Gibbon, “has escaped the yoke of the most powerful monarchies: the arms of Sesostris and Cyrus, of Pompey and Trajan, could never achieve the conquest of Arabia.” But to us it is not clear that the prophecy refers to the national independence of the Ishmaelites: we are rather disposed to view it—as indeed appears to be most agreeable to the obvious meaning of its terms—as intimating that the inheritance of this people should immediately adjoin, or lie before that

of their brethren. In this sense Ishmael himself dwelt in the presence of all his brethren ; so did his immediate descendants ; and so do his posterity at this day. Arabia is occupied by two races—the descendants of Joktan, and the descendants of Ishmael. These tribes are related to each other, being sprung from the same venerable stock—Heber. In the presence of the Khatan tribe, their brethren, do the Ishmaelites still dwell. But doubtless the prophecy implies, if it does not bear as its first meaning, the continued national existence and independence of the posterity of Ishmael. At war with the world, they have yet defied all attempts to root them out of their patrimony ; and now, after the lapse of four thousand years, we find their tents on the same deserts, pitched in the presence of their brethren.

But now we draw nigh the border of Egypt, and we leave the wilderness behind us, with its black tents and its patriarchal tribes. Alas ! they who never submitted to the arms of the conqueror have long borne the yoke of superstition. Soon may that yoke be broken ! We have seen the fulfilment of one prophecy ; soon may we behold that of another : “ They

that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory!" Bidding adieu, then, to these sands and their benighted children, on whom a blessed day-spring is yet to shine, we go forward to the banks of the Nile—the land from which God brought his vine, whose boughs are yet to fill the earth.

EGYPT.

WE enter Egypt by the great highway of the open desert. On our left are the blue waters of the Arabian Gulf, and before us is a flat expanse of dreary country. We pass hastily over it, and soon the Nile, with its stripe of verdure on either bank, rises before us. We stand beside its waters, and then do we feel that we are indeed in Egypt—in that land over which the angel spread his dark wings when the first-born were destroyed. Solemn remembrances come back on the mind. The miracles of Zoan's field revive before us. Ages are forgotten—and we seem to be moving amid the men and the scenes of which, in ages long gone past, this country was the stage.

We arrive, perhaps, a little after noon. The sky is exquisitely clear, and suffused with a glow of rose-colored light ; a gorgeous sun-

set succeeds ; and next comes a brief but delicious twilight—it is night. The vault above us is bespangled with stars, which to us appear unusually large and brilliant. The moon comes from behind the Arabian mountains ; and as she holds her course through the serene firmament, sheds such a flood of rich and soft radiance on this fallen land as veils its desolation. The bosom of the Nile, its edgings of deep emerald, the groves of date and palm-trees, the minarets of the city, the columns and walls of temples, the summits of the pyramids, all tinted and beautified by the moon's resplendent glory, are blended into one picture of soft and majestic loveliness. We imagine for the moment, that Egypt has come down to us as she existed in the days of the Pharaohs. But soon the illusion is dispelled. The day comes ; the sun emerges from the bosom of the desert, and, under his faithful light, Egypt appears as it is—a gigantic and awe-inspiring picture of commingled grandeur and desolation, fertility and barrenness. The Nile is seen contending with the neighboring desert for the possession of his ancient and lovely valley, but every year is

obliged to retreat a little before the advancing sands ; the fields which were cultivated by the ancient Egyptians are overwhelmed by the wilderness ; the cities lie buried beneath a mass of rubbish and sand ; the sepulchres of the dead are choked up ; and groves of broken columns and roofless walls, covered with paintings, and sculpture, and hieroglyphics, mark the site of the temples and palaces.

A very cursory survey of the monuments which yet remain in this land, is sufficient to convince us that the glowing descriptions which the historians of antiquity have left us of the power, grandeur, and refinement of the ancient Egyptians, are not in the least overcharged. If not the country in which the sciences and arts were invented, there can be no question that Egypt is the land where they were perfected, and where first they flourished. Many of the abstruser sciences were the object of the ardent study of the Egyptians ; and in these they had made great attainments. It was in the Egyptian schools that the sages of other countries gleaned their knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. Their style of architecture they

carried to the highest excellence of which it was capable ; and their public monuments were erected on a scale of size and magnificence which have never been equalled. The ruins of other countries may rival in beauty, or excel in justness and elegance of proportion, those of Egypt ; but none make the least approach to them in their stupendous bulk and solemn grandeur. And as regards its cities, it may be doubted whether Babylon itself greatly exceeded the splendors of Thebes with her "hundred gates." The progress the Egyptians had made in the arts which tend to embellish life, is testified at this day by the paintings still visible in the "Tombs of the Kings," which are distinguished by their spirit, if not their accuracy, and the brilliancy of their coloring, and by the inimitable grace and beauty which they have given to some of their statues, and the air of majesty communicated to others. In the useful arts, they appear to have been very little, if at all, inferior to ourselves. Their chambers were filled with as elegant and luxurious furniture as our own saloons at this day ; and their tables testified also to their great knowledge of the cu-

linary art. Moreover, this singular people were the first to compose what we cannot but regard as great literary works. They had produced volumes of history before Herodotus lived, and works of poetry before the age of Homer. These still survive. Where? it may be asked, in astonishment. Their public monuments were inscribed with the reigns of their kings—the history of their country in symbolical writing; and their temples were covered with the most lifelike representations of the most celebrated exploits of some of the most distinguished of their princes. The one we cannot but regard as a volume of history, and the other as a poem; and no pages are so graphic as these, and none can be more durable. Here, on the walls of this temple, represented in sculpture, are the more brilliant of the warlike achievements of Sesostris. Here is the marshalling—the march—the fight—the agony of the dying—the triumph of the return—all told in marble with a truth, and fire, and splendor, worthy of the great father of bards himself. In fine, nowhere else did power, and science, and art, accumulate so many trophies within the same space; and here,

accordingly, their memorials are met with in a profusion which overwhelms the imagination of the traveller, and fatigues the powers of the narrator.

Let us muse an hour amid the solemn splendors of Luxor and Carnac. But we must not allow the magnificence of these ruins so to engross us as that we shall forget the object of our visit. What evidence have we here of the truth of prophecy? Let us read and compare.

“Son of man, prophecy and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Howl ye, Woe worth the day! For the day is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen. And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundation shall be broken down. Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will make Pathros desolate, and I will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No. And I

will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily. The young men of Aven, and of Phi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity. Thus will I execute judgment in Egypt; and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

The ruins amid which we are at present seated are those of Thebes—the No of the Scriptures, and the earliest capital of Egypt. Its origin is lost in the obscurity of ages. Memphis superseded it as the metropolis of the country, though it never rivalled it in splendor; and even of Memphis, the foundations were laid at a period prior to the dawn of authentic history. So great is the magnificence of these ruins, that every one who has seen them declares that language is utterly

unable to convey any adequate idea of them. The ground here is covered with groves of columns of a colossal size, sphinxes by hundreds, fragments of statues, obelisks, gateways, porticoes, and halls. Here are the remains of four large temples; one of these—the Temple of Carnac—appears to have excelled all the others in point of magnitude and splendor. This temple is universally pronounced to be the greatest ever made by hands. Noble avenues, miles in length, and guarded on both sides by a row of sphinxes, lead up to it from almost every point of the compass. Traversing this approach, we come to the grand entrance, which is formed by two pyramidal moles which ascend to a height of upwards of a hundred feet. Some of these moles, (for the edifice has twelve principal entrances) are constructed of granite, and richly covered with beautiful hieroglyphics and sculpture. Passing through the colossal gateway we find ourselves in a spacious court, once adorned with hundreds of columns, which are now fallen. All round this court, runs a pillared portico. In the interior, is the main sanctuary. It is an immense hall, an hundred and

seventy feet by three hundred and twenty-nine. Its roof is composed of large blocks of granite laid across. It is adorned with clusters of stars, on a green ground. The walls are covered with painted sculpture of a kind suited to the mysterious purposes to which this chamber was devoted. A hundred and thirty-four columns support the roof. Every column is sculptured and painted. The exterior walls exhibit, in sculpture, the wars of Rameses. Around this inner fane rise many inferior temples. Anywhere else these would be accounted magnificent structures: but here they are overshadowed by the enormous bulk of the principal temple. The field of ruins formed by this single temple, is about a mile in diameter. The other three temples, whose remains adjoin those of Carnac, appear to have been of extraordinary dimensions, though inferior to the one we have just described. All agree that they must be seen, before their magnitude can be conceived of, or even credited. It may help to convey to the mind some idea of their size, to state that an Arab village is built on the roof of one of them—the temple at Edfou.

Egypt was a land of idols ; but this appears to have been the high place of her idolatry. How is the prophecy now accomplished upon this land : “ *Behold the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt ; and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence !*” “ *I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease.*”

Thebes—populous No—was watered by the Nile, something in the manner that Babylon was by the Euphrates ; accordingly, the ruins of the city are seen on the west of the river, as well as here on the east. Let us pass over the stream and spend a few moments in surveying them. Here, too, are the remains of temples. Here is the famous statue of Memnon, which is said to have emitted, at sunrise, melodious sounds, which from a low and scarcely perceptible murmur, grew by degrees into the loud and clear tones of the trumpet. Here are colossal statues and sphinxes innumerable, half-buried in the soil, which ages have accumulated around them. These have beheld generations rise and fade on the plains of Egypt ; they have seen dynasties sink at their feet ; on them the day of

glory has shone, and now the night of ruin darkens around them ; still they wait here, to welcome, with the same look of austere majesty, the stranger who comes from a far land to gaze on them ; and here they will remain, no doubt, till the end of time, shedding a dim glory on these plains—the twilight of a day of splendor which has passed away, never more to return. Here, too, separated from the ruins of the city by a range of naked hills, in a low, winding, gloomy valley, shut in by iron rocks, are the “Tombs of the Kings.” They are gorgeous halls, hewn in the heart of the mountain, richly adorned with painting and sculpture, and in point of size and brilliancy, rivaling the halls of living monarchs. In this, the “house of his glory,” lie Pharaoh and his princes.

Retracing our steps over the hills, and returning again to the ruins of the city, one other edifice only shall we direct particular attention to—the Memonnium, or Palace of Sesostris. This is the temple we have already alluded to as exhibiting on its walls the battle-scenes of this great king. The portals stand wide open ; the royal guards are gone :

and we may pass on without challenge into the very presence-chamber of the monarch. But though living guards there are none, we pass between gigantic statues, which line the entrance, with folded arms, and a serene and tranquil look. We enter the halls of the monarch, and beauty and mystery beam upon us from walls and roof. Both are blazoned with symbolical representations—the signs of the zodiac, globes, stars, and other celestial representations. On the northern wall is a representation of Sesostris himself. He is overshadowed by the boughs of the tree of life, and the deities are seen writing his name upon its leaves.

Not only have the Egyptians, by the durable materials which they used in building, and the scale on which their public edifices were constructed, transmitted their temples to us, their very bodies themselves have come down to our day. The art of embalming, as is well known, was universally practised amongst them; and the consequence is, that we may see, at this day, the forms and features of the very men by whom these mighty fabrics were erected—men who lived four thousand years

ago—the kings, the warriors, the sages, and the citizens of Egypt. After a slumber of many ages, their remains are as perfect as when they were newly laid in what were designed to be their last resting-places. But, alas! their bodies have been preserved only to be desecrated. Their tombs have been violated, and now their bones literally “lie scattered about the grave’s mouth;” while by some, the mummies have been carried into lands far distant, and which, when these men lived, and for ages after, were altogether unknown. But the many attractions on this part of our journey, make us forget the resolution we made at starting. We return.

The common dwellings of Thebes, formed probably of brick, have utterly perished ages ago. They have left not a vestige, unless the mounds of earth around us can be regarded as such—a distinction to which we think they may lay claim. On these mounds, and especially adjoining the walls of the temples—looking all the meaner from their close proximity to the memorials of such unrivalled magnificence—are the mud huts of the few poor and miserable Arabs who inhabit the site,

and who live mainly by digging into mummy pits, and selling the antiquities they discover to strangers. To such a base end has the mighty Thebes—"populous No"—come: "*I will execute judgments in No.*" "*I will cut off the multitude of No.*" "*No shall be rent asunder.*"

We cannot visit all the places referred to in the prophecy we have quoted—all of which are now destroyed—but there is one other celebrated site which we must visit—Memphis, the Noph of Scripture, and the scene of Joseph's glory.

We embark on the Nile: The noble river, advancing with a slow and majestic pace towards the ocean, carries us on its bosom. The papyrus—celebrated plant—still fringes the stream; the broad leaf of the lotus, so inseparably connected with all the architecture of this land, swims on the surface—its large, lovely white blossom finely contrasted with the dark waters of the river. As the current bears us along, we pass, at intervals, mud villages, inhabited by Arabs; groves of dates; and not unfrequently a sycamore, whose deep shadow is welcome indeed under

the burning sun of Egypt. We perceive also crops of cotton, and fields of Indian corn, with little canals running off to irrigate the surface; for here the husbandman still waters the ground with his foot. One thing strikes us, and that is the deep rich verdure of the great valley through which the Nile flows—made lovelier, doubtless, by the naked sands on either side of it. But, lo! the pyramids rise before us—those mountains of stone which have excited the astonishment and wonder of all ages. They rise before us veiled in the same mystery as ever—from their sides the clouds seem destined never to break up. Here, adjoining the pyramids, flourished Memphis—Noph—which, after Thebes, became the capital of Egypt. Let us ascend one of the pyramids, and from its summit look over the site of the former metropolis. The ascent is toilsome enough; but the summit once gained, we look far and wide over the surrounding region. On the one side is the desert, arranged in vast steppes or waves, and stretching away into Lybia; on the other is the Valley of the Nile; itself a river of verdure, as Lindsay terms it, flowing through a vast wilderness.

Immediately beneath us is the space once occupied by Memphis. Here were spread forth the dwellings, the palaces, the temples of Noph, interspersed with the groves where her sages taught; here was the prison where Joseph languished, the hall where he interpreted the monarch's dream, and the streets through which he rode in triumph, while they cried before him, "Bow the knee!" But what remains are there here now of the great metropolis that once occupied this site? Thebes, though desolate, can still boast the imperishable remains of her stupendous temples; but here there is nothing but bare sands. Scarce even does a broken column remain to tell that here stood Memphis: "*Noph shall be waste, and desolate without an inhabitant.*"

Pharaoh was "the son of ancient kings;" but it was foretold that his sceptre should pass into the hands of strangers. The Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Saracens, each in their turn have invaded, conquered, and governed this land. It is now more than two thousand years since Egypt was ruled by a native prince: "*There shall*

be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."
"The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."

In the seventh century the Saracens took possession of Egypt. This people have, in every age, shown themselves more fit to conquer than to govern. Their rule oppressed the inhabitants and impoverished the country. To aid them in the task of governing, or rather occupying Egypt, they imported a multitude of slaves from Circassia—the Mamelukes—trained them in military tactics, and formed them into bands, for the purpose of keeping the natives in subjection. These soldiers soon found out their importance; and, rebelling against their masters, usurped the government. This happened in the thirteenth century; and, during the three hundred years following, Egypt was governed by this race of strangers and slaves. The country was next taken possession of by the Turks—strangers, too, like those who preceded them. The sultan governs Egypt by means of a pacha. The person selected for this office is always one who has made his first appearance in Egypt either as an adventurer or a slave. The present pacha, Mehemet Ali, was a native of Ico-

nium, in Asia Minor. He was a tobacco merchant in his youth; and, having been sent into Egypt by the governor of his native town, to assist his son, who was captain of a small troop which he had raised for the service of the sultan, Mehemet raised himself by his services to the distinguished post he presently holds. Thus has the throne of the Pharaohs, if such it can be called, been occupied for centuries by strangers and slaves. The end these rulers have steadily kept in view has been precisely what might have been expected—to get rich, and that by the most direct means; and these they have found to be extortion and oppression. The capabilities of the country are to a great degree destroyed; agriculture languishes; the arts and sciences are extinct; and the land is now empty as the prophecy foretold, of all whereof it was once full—a night of sevenfold ignorance and barbarism has overtaken it: “*I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers.*”

This illustrious land is now the basest of kingdoms. In Egypt, there are only two

classes—the conquerors and the vanquished. The former indulge in every crime which can disgrace the character of rulers—selfishness, rapacity, injustice. The latter are sunk into the most deplorable condition. Brutalized by the wars and revolutions which have for centuries surrounded them, exasperated by the injuries to which they are daily subject, stained by every vice, and groaning under every evil, the people of Egypt have fallen to an ineffable depth of wretchedness and meanness. Every traveller who speaks of them, loads them with a profusion of the vilest terms which language supplies. They are not terms them “exceedingly wicked, great rogues, cowardly, lazy, hypocrites.” Of the Mamelukes, the military body whom the Turks long employed in the government of the country, Volney says: “Educated in ignorance and superstition, they become ferocious, from habitual murder; perfidious, from cabals; seditious, from riot; base, deceitful, and corrupted by every species of debauchery.” Of the people, Volney says: “We may easily conceive that, in such a country, every thing is correspondent with its wretched government.

The peasants are hired laborers. who only get what is barely sufficient to sustain life. Their habitations are mud-walled huts, where they are suffocated with heat and smoke, and often attacked with distempers, arising from uncleanness, dampness, and unwholesome food ; and to these physical evils are added continual alarms, the dread of the robberies of the Arabs, and the extortions of the Mamelukes, family quarrels, and all the miseries of constant civil wars.

“ This is a faithful picture of all the villages, and no less so of the towns. Even at Cairo, the stranger, on his arrival, is struck with the appearance of universal wretchedness and misery. The crowds thronging the streets, present nothing but filthy rags. Every thing he sees or hears, reminds him that he is in the abode of slavery and tyranny. Nothing is spoken of but intestine broils, public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. There is no protection for life or property. Human blood is shed like that of the vilest animals. Justice herself condemns to death without form.” “ *It shall be the basest of the kingdoms ; neither shall it exalt itself*

any more above the nations ; for I will diminish them, and they shall no more rule over the nations."

Can we not in this discern the righteous retribution of Providence ? Egypt was the first to impose a yoke upon the nations ; not a yoke of dominion, but of a kind more degrading—a yoke of polytheism and gross idolatry. From her, as from a fountain, flowed all the superstition by which the earth was corrupted ; and now for ages, every people which have become the masters of the world have oppressed and despised her. But how amazing and inscrutable are the ways of God ! As if to atone for the mischief she inflicted on the world in early times, Egypt is now conferring incalculable benefits upon it. Her monuments, inscribed with the history of the most early ages, are beginning to be deciphered ; her temples and tombs to be explored ; and the first-fruits of a glorious harvest have been reaped, which, when the whole has been gathered in, will make one of the most magnificent offerings ever laid on the altar of Revelation. It was only in the end of the last century that Voltaire affirmed that the Egypt

of the Bible was a mistake ; since that time, Egypt herself has been disinterred—the Egypt of four thousand years ago—and before this awful preacher from the dead the Infidel stands silent and confounded.

EDOM.

WE recross the Nile, and, bidding adieu to that land of mystery and wonders in which we have made so brief a sojourn, we strike into the great wilderness that lies on the east of it. We are now treading on the path of the mighty host which God, with an outstretched arm, led out of Egypt. We have gone round the head of the Red Sea, and are journeying south, over a tract alternately sandy and stony. On our right is a chain of naked heights, and on our left are the blue waters of the gulf on the shore of which the Israelites halted and sang their magnificent triumphal ode, over the destruction of Pharaoh and his army. Our path is not all desert; we alight, at long stages, in some quiet valley, with its springs and palm-trees, and its rich verdure, so refreshing to the eyes after the glare of the sands of the wilderness.

Even here we meet with *mementoes* of scenes which, though long past, are never to be forgotten. Here is Howara, the bitter fountain where the Israelites murmured, encompassed with its sand mounds and its date-trees; and here, a little farther to the south, is Wady Gharendel—the Valley of Elim—where the people encamped, still verdant with waters and palm-trees.

We go forward, and now, at a great distance, just peering above the sands of the desert, is a little point of rock. It grows taller and bigger at every step, till at length, what but a little before was only a small dark protuberance on the bosom of the plain, towers before us a stupendous mountain of granite. The mass before us, whose surface is of naked rock or bare sands, forms a cluster of peaks or mountains, which rise to a great height above the level of the plain. These are the mountains of Horeb and Sinai. We begin to tread reverently, for the desert around these illustrious piles has the profound calm, and we persuade ourselves something also of the holiness, of a magnificent temple. The poor monks have set down their convent on the

back-side of one of these mountains, with a little hollow beneath, in which there is scarce standing-room for a few hundred persons. On this summit, they tell us, was the law given, and in the little ravine at its bottom, stood the hosts of Israel. It is refreshing to turn from man's narrow conceptions to the free majesty of nature. Of the cluster of summits which here tower with such sublimity into the serene firmament over them, we know that Sinai and Horeb are of the number, though we cannot tell to which of these eminences that distinction belongs. But it is something to know that we are now gazing on the scenery of Sinai—on the summits and the valleys which then lay veiled in the darkness, or glowed beneath the lightnings, which attended that awful event—on the plains which rung to the trumpet which waxed louder and louder, and quaked beneath the still more awful Voice which proclaimed the law.

But our present destination is not yet reached. We leave the bottom of these mountains, and as their venerable peaks sink behind us, an interminable ocean of sand spreads out in

our front. Our course lies to the north-east; and after traversing many a league of wilderness, we hail with joy the rugged peaks of Mount Seir, which now begin to be seen above the desert. Seir, to which we are now approaching, is a chain of mountains, terminating in a crest of romantic peaks, which runs in a straight line across the desert, from a point a little south of the Dead Sea to the head of the Gulf of Akaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. This magnificent chain—for though stripped of its ancient fertility, Mount Seir retains to this day a desolate grandeur which well entitles it to be regarded as magnificent—comprises the ancient realm of Edom. His devotion to the chase often led Esau thither in his youth, and there did he ultimately settle; his posterity, in course of time, expelling the Horites,—the first inhabitants of these mountains. The Edomites greatly enlarged their domain in after ages; but the mountainous region before us, which is about thirty-six miles in breadth, with part of the eastern plain immediately adjoining, must be viewed as forming strictly their patrimonial inheritance. In ancient times, the

climate of these hills was most salubrious—their dews were abundant; the mountains, up to their spiky pinnacles, were clothed with the olive and the vine; the valleys and the rocky clefts were covered with the richest mould; the mountain-torrents were numerous; and the sun being warm, the produce of these hills was very great. “Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.” Such were the words in which Isaac, by the Spirit of prophecy, described the future inheritance of Esau and his posterity. The mingled grandeur, beauty, and fertility, which the region of Seir exhibited, while occupied by the Edomites, amply verified the words of Isaac.

Established in this mountainous region—a fit home for a hardy, brave, and industrious people—the posterity of Esau rapidly outstripped in their progress to distinction, their brethren, the descendants of Jacob. While the Israelites, enthralled in Egypt, had neither a country nor a national existence, the Edomites, under the sway of their own princes, and enjoying in their mountain fastnesses the sweets of freedom and peace, were busily

engaged in laying the foundations of that greatness as a nation to which they were destined to attain. Their father Esau had been distinguished as a "cunning hunter;" but his posterity were not slow to acquire the knowledge of other pursuits than those in which their ancestor had excelled. They rapidly achieved no mean eminence in arts and in arms, in science and in commerce, and in the wealth, refinement, luxury, and wickedness which extensive and prosperous commerce brings along with it. It was at this era of their nation that numerous and magnificent cities began to rise amid those mountains, on whose sides, in early times, their simple progenitor had chased the prey. Of these cities, the most distinguished was Petra, the capital of the nation. This city was the centre of a commerce that ramified as far as India on the east, and Spain on the west; and the importance and splendor of this city were such as befitted the gigantic traffic of which it was the emporium. Its romantic position, and the singular character and beauty of its buildings, excited the admiration, and received the praise, both of Greek

and Roman writers. It stood in a little hollow in the very heart of the mountains. To it there was only one way of approach—a frightful chasm of some two miles long, narrow, and overhung by gloomy precipices. Traversing this defile, the visitor emerged on a plain of about two miles in circuit occupied by dwellings, temples, triumphal arches, a theatre, and numerous tombs. These last added not a little to the beauty of the city. They were hewn in the mountains which inclosed Petra, they were ornamented with elegant façades, and resembled, though on a much smaller scale, those princely halls which the kings of Egypt prepared for the reception of their bodies. The city, moreover, being much exposed to the reflection of the sun's rays from the mountains that encompassed it, was cooled by artificial fountains, and beautified by gardens. Such was Petra—it was the abode of royalty—the home of wisdom—the mart of the world—to replenish which all the climes of the earth sent their treasures; India, her gems; Arabia, her frankincense; Kedar, her lambs; Persia, her robes; Armenia, her horses; Lebanon, her cedars;

Tyre, her purple ; and Judea, her balm and honey. Against this region, occupied then by a warlike and enterprising people, and covered with towns—for though we have specified only Petra, almost every valley had its city, which shared in the importance and wealth of the capital—against this flourishing region did the prophets pronounce the doom of utter desolation ; and we are here to see whether that doom has been inflicted.

We cannot tarry long here, therefore let us select a good point of view, and have the whole country under the eye at once. Here, in the middle of the chain, is a summit which overtops all the rest. Let us ascend it. This is the very mountain on which Aaron died and was buried. Now we are on its top, and prepared to bring the prophets of Israel to the test of actual facts. But, first, let us think what it was which they foretold regarding this land. They foretold, 1st. That its soil should be utterly wasted ; 2d. That its cities should all perish ; 3d. That its commerce should be annihilated ; 4th. That its people should be cut off. Now, let us begin our survey :—If Edom be at this day a fertile

and flourishing region—if her mountains be occupied by men and cities, as of old, then let it be acknowledged that the prophets did not speak by the Spirit of inspiration. But if Edom be a desolation, then let it be confessed that they were inspired. Now, look all around, you see the bare sides of the hills—you see how they offer to the winter's tempest and the summer's sun nothing but naked flint. Observe the rugged crests of the mountains, how they range around us like the waves of a tumultuous sea vexed by the winds. Turn now to the west—look immediately beneath, you observe that broad valley which runs along the foot of the hills; you see how its bosom is entirely covered with sand and flints. Could that valley be cultivated? And yet that valley in former times was, in part, at least, clothed with vineyards and watered by streams from Mount Seir. Hath not Jehovah, as he said, "*stretched out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness?*" Turn now to the east. You perceive, looking over the summits of the mountains, that level plain on the east of them. You can still trace the inclosures of

its ancient fields, and the heaps of its former cities. These are the fields to which the Edomite, in days gone by, went forth to sow, and to which in autumn he returned to reap. The southern winds have buried them beneath the sands of the wilderness, and never more, to the end of time, shall they be either sown or reaped. Is not this what the prophets said, "*From generation to generation it shall lie waste?*" Look next, and look narrowly among the mountains, whether any of its cities remain. You may search them all without finding one of them—scarcely will you find even ruins, so completely have they been destroyed: "*I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.*" Listen next, if perchance we may hear the hum of its busy people. All is silent. Nothing disturbs the stillness, unless, perchance, the eagle's scream, or the wild shout of the Arab as he urges his camel to quicken its pace, and pass on through this desolate country. And in the awful solitude of these hills, it seems as if we still heard the echoes of that voice which cried of old: "*There shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau.*" Of the two brothers

who grew up together on the plain of Beer-sheba—how different has been the fate of their posterity! yet that fate is in exact accordance with prophecy. We find the descendants of the younger son in every country under heaven; but the descendants of the elder are nowhere to be found. None can claim descent from Esau: "*Esau shall be cut off forever.*" And as to the trade of this country: had we stood where we now stand eighteen centuries ago, we would have seen lines of camels innumerable, approaching Edom on the east—some with the stuffs of India, others with the spices of Arabia, and others with the ivory and other merchandise of Armenia; while, on the west of Edom, we would have seen them departing with their wares—some to Egypt, some to Greece, some to Italy, and some to more distant lands; but now, how completely has that traffic come to an end! Throughout the whole extent of wilderness, now under the eye, you cannot see a single merchant caravan either going or returning from Edom: "*I will cut off from Edom him that passeth out, and him that returneth.*"

Now we shall descend. But stay—what ruins are these immediately beneath us? Look directly down. You see a little plain, with a stream crossing it, and on the plain some heaps of rubbish, a broken arch, a few prostrate columns; and all around the plain you see a perpendicular wall of rock formed by the mountains; and you see, moreover, that the rock is hewn into dwellings and tombs—that it is covered with the most magnificent structures, not erected by the hand, but hewn in the mountains by the chisel. What ruins are these? Ah! these are the ruins of Petra, the capital of Edom. In the palaces that stood on that plain dwelt the Edomite while living; and in these tombs in the face of the cliff he reposed when dead. There is not now a single inhabitant on the spot.

We are scarce near enough to see the brambles and creeping plants with which the ruins on the plain beneath us are mantled; but the hootings of the owl come drearily up the mountain, and the eagle's scream is sounding fiercely among the hills. These are now the only tenants on the site of Petra. Every thing we see and hear testifies to the exact and fearful

accomplishment of the doom pronounced on his city of old: "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill. Though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses hereof; and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls."

Singular indeed is the history of this city, and solemn the lesson which it reads to the infidel. It teaches him that, though no new miracles are now to be looked for, to attest the truth of revelation, proofs marvellous and manifold are laid up in the earth around him, and are to be brought forth, each at its appointed hour, to shed a new beauty on the pages of the Bible, and to add to the evidence

by which its divinity is supported. May not a resurrection, not of dead prophets, but of dead cities, be awaiting the world? Those who spoke these predictions can never return; but may not those against whom they were spoken yet appear before us, to tender their evidence of the complete accomplishment of the predicted doom? Here is Petra brought up from the grave, to preach to the nations of the earth. Here, on her ancient site, standing in sackcloth, is the metropolis of Edom, bearing her testimony to the truth of the prophets. That Petra, and not Isaiah—not the prophet who predicted the doom, but the city on which the doom has fallen—should be summoned from the grave, is surely the more satisfactory kind of evidence, and the more consistent way of dealing with our understandings. It is only in our own day that this witness to the inspiration of the prophets has been raised up. Thirty-six years ago no man knew where Petra had stood. She had passed from the earth more than a thousand years before, and left no trace of her existence, save the brief notices of her former grandeur which are to be found in the pages of Strabo and

his contemporaries. Her doom remained inscribed in the scroll of prophecy, but we wanted circumstantial evidence to verify that doom in all its particulars. The Infidel was entitled to ask, Do owls dwell in her palaces? do brambles and nettles come up in her fortresses? But our knowledge did not extend beyond the general fact that Petra had disappeared. But Providence opened to Burckhardt the gates of Mount Seir, and brought Petra forth from the grave in which she had been hid for upwards of a thousand years, with every particular of the predicted doom accomplished upon her. This is but the harbinger of many such discoveries. Already the progress of discovery has brought to light many a novel and surprising proof; but much yet remains to be done. The mounds of Nineveh and Babylon have yet to be explored; and we venture to predict, that, on being so, they shall be found to be vast repositories of facts preserved by Providence for the confirmation of those who live in the last age. The ruins of Syria have yet to be more carefully examined; the graven monuments of Egypt to be deciphered—her sculptured tem-

ples and painted tombs more closely inspected ; and, when this has been done, we shall find ourselves in possession of many a historic document, many a voucher to the truth of the prophets, which, meanwhile, we dream not of, and which will astonish the world, and cover the gainsayer with confusion.

MOAB.

WE shall now go to Moab ; but how lies the country of Moab, as regards Edom ? Well, then, turn to the north. You perceive, at the distance of two days' journey—for here the skies are clear, and you can see far—the motionless surface of the Dead Sea, glowing like a molten mirror under the sun's rays, and encompassed all round by a margin of black mountains : that level country on the east of the Dead Sea is the country of Moab. Moab in ancient times was emphatically a land of vineyards ; it was also a land of cities. What a goodly prospect did the little hill of Heshbon afford in former days ! The traveller who looked from thence counted the cities of the Moabites lying around him, not in scores simply, but in hundreds ; each sitting queen-like upon its little eminence, encompassed by vineyards, and fields of golden

grain ; while streams intersected the country, like threads of silver woven into the deep verdure of its plains. Let us hasten forward ; perhaps the beauty of Moab may make some amends for the frightful sterility of Edom. Now we are on the banks of the brook Zered. Here ends the territory of Edom, and here begins that of Moab. Let us sit down on the banks of the stream, and read what the prophets spake concerning this land.

“O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer. The spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage : and joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab ; and I have caused wine to fail from the wine-presses. None shall tread with shouting ; their shouting shall be no shouting. Woe unto Nebo ! for it is spoiled. Kiriathaim is confounded and taken. Misgab is confounded and dismayed. There shall be no more praise of Moab. The spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape. Give wings unto Moab that it may flee and get away : for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.”

Now we shall close the book, and go forward. We have crossed the stream, and are in the land of Moab. We are in the land of Moab, but where are the vineyards of Moab? where are her harvests, her cities, her people? All are as completely vanished as if they had never been. How evident is it that the turf beneath our feet has not been disturbed by the plough for ages! How evident is it that in this land men neither sow nor reap—neither build houses nor plant vineyards! The whole country is covered with sward which is green with luxuriant herbage during the winter rains, but brown and parched when the heats of summer set in: and beneath that turf slumbers a soil which, were it cultivated, would yield an hundred-fold. We do not mean that this was its productive power of old—it is what it is able still to produce. Small patches are sometimes cultivated in the northern part of this plain; and Burckhardt was assured by an Arab husbandman that sometimes he reaped eighty-fold, and sometimes even an hundred or an hundred and twenty-fold! Well, then, the harvests and the vintage of this land have come to an

end. And what has been the fate of her cities? Let their ruins testify. Wherever we go we behold nothing but ruins. Every little eminence had its city of old; every little eminence has its heap of ruins now. Here, on this little mount on the left, you see the ruins of a temple; a gate, with the edifice into which it led gone; two Corinthian columns; and in a plain a little to the west, a stone altar, but without a worshipper. This was once Ar, the capital of Moab; and as the traveller passes it by he casts a glance on these memorials, and remembers the prediction: "*Ar of Moab is laid waste and brought to silence.*"

From these ruins to the banks of the Arnon is a distance of twenty-five miles. The rich soil exhibits not a trace of cultivation, and is covered everywhere with ruins. The Bedouins and their flocks have trodden these ruins under foot for ages, and now they are mere heaps of rubbish. A prostrate column or the façade of a fallen temple may yet grace some of these sites; but this is rare. The glory of Moab is now trodden down as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. The pal-

ace is gone, and the Arab's tent is pitched where it stood. The citizens of Moab are cut off, and flocks are folded where they dwelt. Now are we on the banks of the Arnon. We descend the steep declivity, pass over the stripe of verdure by which the bottom of the valley is inlaid, and climbing the Roman road which leads up the opposite slope, emerge on the northern bank. We proceed on our way, the path lying, as before, over wasted fields and amid ruined cities. Here, on the edge of the precipice which overhangs the Arnon valley, are the ruins of Aroer. Before us are the plains of Moab, which once bore on their bosom the encampment of the Israelites, who rested amid its vineyards and beside its streams after their journey of forty years in the wilderness. We behold it now crossed with dry torrent beds, and without a single shrub or tree to screen its soil from the rays of a scorching sun. We go forward, the path skirting the base of Dejebel Attarous, which rises on our left—the supposed Pisgah of the Scriptures. We pass the ruins of Kiria-thaim, and Medeba, and Beth-meon, and Ele-aleh, and at last we ascend the little eminence

on which stood, in former days, the beauteous Heshbon. Here, amid the few remaining memorials of Heshbon's splendor, we shall halt and take a last look of Moab. Under our eye is now a vast extent of undulating country, extending to the Jordan on one side and the desert on the other ; its soil rivalling, nay, excelling, in fertility, the finest lands in Europe ; yet the country is a wilderness. The vines that covered it are perished from its soil ; the cities that beautified it have sunk into the earth ; its people, too, are extinct, and to complete its calamities, the desert has sent its children forth to perpetuate its desolation. These swarthy bands which you see roaming over it in every direction, and which, refusing to cultivate the soil themselves, will not allow others to do so, are now the only inhabitants of Moab : *" I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the Lord. Moab is spoiled and gone up out of her cities ! They shall cry, saying, How is it broken down !"*

A M M O N .

Now let us pass on to Ammon. Our course is due north; and as we go, we catch at times glimpses of the mountain-peaks of Judea, telling us that there, on the west of the Jordan, are scenes of still greater desolation than any on this side of that stream. Our course, we say, is due north; and now we are in Ammon. The Ammonites, like their neighbors, the Moabites, cherished an implacable hatred of the chosen people; and that exposed them to a doom not very dissimilar. The sum of what

- the prophets foretold regarding this country was, 1st, That the land of Ammon should be a couching-place for flocks; and, 2d, That the capital of Ammon, (Rabbah) should be a stable for camels. Well, we pass the boundary, and survey the country. It looks as if, at some former period, a gentle wind had put its soil in motion—something like the sea; and

while it was rolling on in broad billows, it had been suddenly arrested. Buckingham pronounces it the best corn land in the world; but what avail the riches of its soil?—it lies untilled; and being covered with a rich spontaneous herbage, it has drawn hither countless swarms of Bedouins. Thus as you journey over Ammon, you behold only shepherds, with their flocks. The country has become one wide fold; every part of it is thus occupied—its ruins, the banks of its streams, the open plain, all are a couching-place for flocks. And here you will note the nice distinction between the prophecy as it relates to the land of Chaldea. Both, at the time when the prophecy was given, were equally rich and flourishing; but it was foretold that there should be a distinction between the future desolation of each. Of Ammon, it was said that it should be a land of flocks; of Chaldea, that the shepherd's tent should not be seen upon it: and so is it now. The plain of Babylon is so utterly wasted, that the shepherd's tent is never seen upon it; but the fields of Ammon are still depastured by flocks.

The ruined sites of Ammon are not quite

so numerous as those of Moab; but they are in a better state of preservation. The cities of the latter country are now mere heaps; those of the former still exhibit considerable signs of their former importance—the walls of dwellings and temples, theatres, Roman arches, columns, sarcophagi—such are the memorials still found on the sites of the country we are traversing. We call attention to its capital, because it was said: “I will make Rabbah a stable for camels.” Let us take its ruins in our way, and see whether the prophecy has been fulfilled. Traversing, then, the rolling plain, which has a downward slope all the way, we join the highway, or paved road, which leads to the ruins; this is one of those vestiges which Rome has left of her greatness on the countries which, like Ammon, became ultimately subject to her sway. Passing by many an Arabian flock, and not a few ruined sites, we come at length to the valley which contains the ruins of Rabbah. Descending over the brow of the rocky eminence that shuts in the valley on the east, we find ourselves in the Necropolis of Ammon. The valley runs off to the west; and is about

two hundred yards in breadth ; a stream of clear water runs through it, and it is inclosed all round by low flinty hills, on which stood the ancient fortifications of the city. The principal street ran along by the river ; for here are the remains of the public buildings—temples, a large theatre, a portico, and other monuments, which, in point of size and architecture, give one no mean idea of the strength and magnificence of this metropolis. The rest of the valley is covered with the foundations of private dwellings—not one of which remains entire. But how are the ruins of Rabbah now occupied ? Exactly as the prophet foretold. The hollow valley, the stream, and the sheltering walls are strong attractions for the Bedouins. They drive their camels down hither by hundreds, not only to drink, but to be stabled in the ruins. The place, Lord Lindsay informs us, has an intolerable stench, from the bones and carcasses of dead camels that lie rotting in it, and the valley is covered everywhere with their litter. Thus do camels dwell where princes once dwelt : *“ I will make Rabbah a stable for camels.”*

GILEAD AND BASHAN.

Now we bid adieu to the City of Waters, and pursue our way over the fertile and level plain which lies on the north of it. The magnificence of the view which here bursts on the sight almost baffles description. The elevation of this tract is great, and beneath us are the vast plains of the Hauran, besprinkled with towns (not one of which, however, is habited), and walled in on the north by the snowy peaks of Anti-Libanus. The country has now ceased to be a plain, and become mountainous. This region of wooded hills, and green slopes, and dells into which the mountain torrents descend, on which we now enter, is the ancient Mount Gilead. We are charmed by the variety and beauty of the scenery—these noble forests of oaks and pines—these open glades, covered with luxuriant herbage—these valleys, with their cas-

cedes and stream—these ruins, which bespeak this region in former days the seat of opulent towns. We are evidently in a land of amazing natural fertility; for, without the hand of man to deck or culture it, it is beautiful and rich. We feel it to be healthful, too, as well as beautiful. Over head is a clear deep blue sky, and around us is a breezy atmosphere, which tempers the heat of noon. But we must go on our way. We leave this hilly region behind us, and descend on the plains of Bashan. These plains slope gradually down to the Jordan on the west; while on the east, by an easy ascent, they grow into the vast level territory of the Hauran; in front, at the distance of some eighteen miles, they swell into a series of little heights, which rise gradually one above another, till at last they grow into those mighty and snow-clad masses which constitute the Anti-Lebanon mountains. Immediately before us, its top glittering with snow, and its foot murmuring with streams, is the mighty form of Hermon, which of all the mountains of Palestine, has the best claim to be considered the scene of the Transfiguration. The plain we are now traversing was

famous of old for its pastures. We cannot call it barren at this day; but it suffers by contrast with the well-wooded and watered region which we have just left: "*Bashan languisheth.*" As we pursue our way over these faded plains, and think of the solitude which reigns now where men and cities were formerly so abundant, we sigh for the day when

The virgin's song,
The shepherd's pipe, the bridegroom's evening harp,
May yet be heard, in mingled consonance,
On Gilead's mountains, and on Bashan's plains.

On the east of Bashan are the great plains of the Hauran. One would think, to look at them, that of all the regions on the earth this is the most populous; so numerous are the towns with which it is covered throughout. But it is rare, indeed, to find dwellers in these cities. Many of them are in ruins, no doubt; but not a few of them are entire as when their inhabitants left them—houses, constructed of enormous blocks, so that no length of time almost would suffice to reduce them to decay—churches with steeples on them—streets and gates. The traveller feels as if it were an

unreal or unearthly scene on which he is gazing—this picture of a populous country, but without people. Nothing convinces us more that this region is groaning under the curse, and that this country is an interdicted one to all people on the earth save one. Are there not thousands pent up in the crowded cities of Britain, earning barely a miserable subsistence? and when forced to quit their native shores, they go to seek homes in the woods of the Western World, or on the wilds of the South Sea Islands; yet, here, at our very doors almost, is a country without inhabitants—having cities ready to be occupied—fields ready to be ploughed—soils that would yield a hundredfold, and a climate unrivalled, either in the west or in the south; yet no nation seems willing or able to take possession of it. Surely an invisible barrier has been raised round this country, and till the period of the curse shall expire, it cannot be possessed or cultivated; and even then, only by its ancient people: “Therefore, ye mountains of Israel hear the word of the Lord God; Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains and to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys, to

the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about; therefore thus saith the Lord God; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I have spoken in my jealousy, and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, I have lifted up mine hand, surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be

builded : and I will multiply upon you man and beast ; and they shall increase and bring fruit : and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings : and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

TYRE.

BUT we linger too long on the east of the Jordan. Now we cross that celebrated stream. Our course lies due west, having on our right the cedar forests and the snowy peaks of Lebanon, and on our left the green swellings of the Upper Galilee. Now we have gained the brow of an eminence which overlooks the Mediterranean; we have been too late by several centuries in arriving here; otherwise we should have seen a sight, as the saying is, worth seeing. From this height we should have looked down upon the walls, the palace roofs, the warehouses, the workshops, and the spacious harbors of Tyre. Here we should have been greeted by the city's hum, the rattle of the chariot wheel, and the anvil of the artisan; and here we should have seen the seas, to their utmost verge, whitened by the sails of her ships—some voyaging westward,

others returning with the merchandise of distant lands. But no one who looks from hence at this day, and surveys the silent shore and the solitary seas beneath him, could imagine that such a sight as we have now described could ever have been here beheld.

With Ezekiel's magnificent prediction of the ruin of Tyre we are all acquainted—we shall give Volney's version of the passage; not because he has succeeded in transfusing more of the spirit and sublimity of the prophet into his translation than our translators have done into theirs—he falls, we apprehend, far beneath them; but because he has substituted the modern names of places for the old Hebrew ones, and has thus thrown great light on the commerce of Tyre—a commerce which more nearly resembles that which Britain is carrying on at this day, than any thing else of the kind which the world has ever seen:—

“Proud city, that art situate at the entry of the sea! Tyre, who hast said, My borders are in the midst of the seas; attend to the judgments pronounced against thee! Thou hast extended thy commerce to (distant) islands, among the inhabitants of (unknown)

coasts. Thou makest ships of fir-trees of Sanir (the highest summit of Lebanon); the cedars of Lebanon are masts to thee; the poplars of Bisan, oars. Thy sailors are seated upon the box-wood of Cyprus, inlaid with ivory. Thy sails and streamers are woven with fine flax from Egypt; thy garments are dyed with blue and purple of Hellas (the Archipelago). Sidon and Arvad send their rowers to thee; Djabal (Djebila) her skilful ship-builders; thy mathematicians and thy sages guide thy barks; all the ships of the sea are employed in thy commerce. The Persian, the Lydian, and Egyptian, receive thy wages: thy walls are hung round with their bucklers and their cuirasses. The sons of Arvad line thy parapets; and thy towers, guarded by the Djimeddeans (a Phœnician people), glitter with their brilliant quivers. Every country desires to trade with thee. Tarsus sends to thy markets iron, tin, and lead. Yonia, the country of the Mosques and Teblis, supply thee with slaves and brazen vessels. Armenia sends thee mules, horses and horsemen. The Arab of Dedan (between Aleppo and Damascus) conveys thy

merchandise. Many isles exchange with thee ivory and ebony. The Aramean (the Syrian) brings thee rubies, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and agate. The children of Israel and Judah sell thee cheese, balm, myrrh, raisins, and oil; and Damascus furnishes the wine of Halboun (perhaps Halab, where there are still vines), and fine wool. The Arabs of Oman offer to thy merchants polished iron, cinnamon, and the aromatic reed; and the Arabians of Dedan bring thee rich carpets. The inhabitants of the Desert, and the sheiks of Kedar, exchange their lambs and their goats for thy valuable merchandise. The Arabs of Saba and Rama (in the Yemen) enrich thee with aromatics, precious stones, and gold. The inhabitants of Haran, of Kalana (in Mesopotamia), and of Adana (near to Tarsus), the factors of the Arabs of Sheba (near the Dedan), the Assyrians, and the Chaldeans, trade also with thee, and sell thee shawls, garments artfully embroidered, silver, masts, cordage, and cedars; yea, the boasted vessels of Tarsus are in thy pay. O Tyre! elated with the greatness of thy glory, and the immensity of thy riches, the waves

of the sea shall rise up against thee, and the tempest plunge thee to the bottom of the waters. Then shall thy wealth be swallowed up with thee ; and with thee in one day shall perish thy commerce, thy merchants and correspondents, thy sailors, pilots, artists, and soldiers, and the numberless people who dwell within thy walls. Thy rowers shall desert thy vessels. Thy pilots shall sit upon the shore, looking mournfully toward the land. The nations whom thou enrichedst, the kings whom thou didst gratify with the abundance of thy merchandise, trembling at thy ruin, shall cry bitterly in despair ; they shall cut off their hair ; they shall cast ashes on their heads ; they shall roll in the dust, and lament over thee, saying, What city shall equal Tyre, that queen of the sea !”

Now we are in circumstances to feel how completely the prediction 'has been verified. Look down, then. You see this little clump of miserable houses immediately beneath, all huddled together on this low island, which scarcely rises above the surface of the water. This is all that remains of the crowning city. You see that basin for ships on the north,

well-nigh choked up with sand. There the fleets of the world were wont to cast anchor. A stranger from a far distant land passed this way not many years ago. He tells, that when he passed by, there was only a single fishing-boat in the harbor of Tyre. On the sandy plain which you perceive running up on the north of the town stood Old Tyre. The army of Nebuchadnezzar lay thirteen years on that plain. Every head was made bald—every shoulder was peeled in the siege; but at last the city was taken.

Before the banners of the Chaldean army were seen on the plain before Tyre, and even before Nebuchadnezzar had projected the expedition, with what beauty had the prophet described the result of the siege? “Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring upon Tyrus Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, a king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and companies, and much people. He shall make a fort against thee, and cast a-mound against thee, and lift up a 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 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. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard."

Old Tyre was now in ruins. The inhabitants had fled to a little island a very short distance from the shore. There they proceeded to erect a new city which became the heir of the fame and the vast commerce of that which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. New Tyre continued to flourish till the times of Alexander; but, as she stood in the way of the scheme of universal conquest which that monarch had formed, her reduction was necessary. In order to bring his engines of war close up to her walls, he found it necessary to construct a mound between the shore and the island on which the city stood. For this purpose he chose the materials which the place most readily offered. These were the dust, the timber, and the stones of Old Tyre,

which had lain here since the period of her destruction by Nebuchadnezzar: "*They shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.*" "*I will also scrape her dust from her.*" The arms of the conqueror prevailed, and the queen of the seas sank. She was soon rebuilt; but to suffer new calamities, and to come, in the course of ages, into the miserable state in which we now find her. "When you come to it," says Maundrell, "you find no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times, and which the Prophet Ezekiel describes. On the north side of it, it has an old Turkish ungarrisoned castle; besides which you see nothing here but a mere Bable of broken walls, pillars, vaults, &c., there being not so much as one entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harboring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly upon fishing."

Before we quit the eminence where we now stand, and from which we look down on the shadow of Tyre, let us observe how God has here inflicted his threatenings to the very letter. Here is the site of Old Tyre, a

sandy plain with the waves tumbling over it :
“When I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee ; I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more : though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.” Adjoining the peninsula on which the miserable village beneath us is seated, you perceive what you take to be dark rocks rising out of the waves ; these are very convenient for the fishermen, who here spread their nets in order to be dried. These are not rocks ; they are the stones of Tyre tumbled into the sea by her successive destroyers : *“I will make thee like the top of a rock ; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon.”* Who now remembers this great city whose fall resounded over the seas, and caused this song of lamentation to be heard among its isles—a song which the prophet had prepared beforehand, and taught the kings and cities of the earth to sing, when the mournful event should have come ? We quote part of this hymn of lamentation and depart :—*“Thus saith the Lord God to Tyrus ; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall ? Then all the princes of the sea shall*

come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it."

JUDEA.

Now we turn our face towards a more glorious land than any we have yet traversed—the land of Israel. What is it which other countries glory in in which this land does not far excel them? Is it variety and beauty of scenery? This was the home of beauty. It was garnished, by Him who made the earth, with every attribute of grandeur, every form of loveliness—the tall mountain, rising proudly to heaven in its snowy mantle—the little hill, on whose humble summit the heavens delighted to pour down their dew—the broad plain, whose bosom, investured with gardens, pastures, and forests, was spread out to heaven—the little dell, which drew its veil of woods and rocks close around it, as if it feared lest its beauty should be seen by the eye of man—the river, which made glad the valleys—the streamlet, which made the ravine vocal

with its music—the naked crag—the richly terraced hill—the billowy shore, with its white sails—the waveless lake, with its fringe of olives and vines—its ramparted cities—its palm-embowered homes. But if this land is entitled to claim a superiority above every other on the score of its physical beauty, much more is it entitled to do so on the ground of its moral importance and grandeur. Were other countries the abode of science?—the lamp of revelation burned here. Have other countries laid the world under obligations by the volumes of poetry and philosophy which they produced?—here the Bible was written. Have other countries been the seat of important transactions?—here the work of redemption was wrought; that mighty event which links together the counsels of the past eternity with the glories of the coming one. Have other lands been the abode of sages and wise men?—here prophets lived—here “God manifest in the flesh” sojourned—dwelt beneath its roofs, walked by its shores, preached the Gospel in its cities, and prayed upon its mountains. Such is the renown of this land—a renown which can neither be increased nor di-

minated by any event which may henceforward take place within it. But why do we linger at a distance?—let us draw nigh. As we approach its border, we can discern no signs of its ancient beauty and importance. The naked peaks of its mountains are before us, their sides marked by the ghastly scars which the hand of Ruin has impressed upon them; its valleys are open to the eye, but they are lovely no longer. Everywhere on its plains the mounds of its buried cities are seen rising dimly, darkening still more the aspect of this once happy and beautiful land. The olive mourns; for the hand that tended it has long been absent. The vine languishes; for it hears no more the songs of its happy children. The cedar fears to display its stately proportions, as of old, on the sides of Lebanon—its mighty arms bend beneath the doom that presses upon them. Ruin has overwhelmed all things, and sits, as on a throne, on these hoary mountains in stern majesty.

The prophets foretold the desolation of this land; and with such a fulness of particulars, and variety of metaphors and images, as puts it out of our power to quote their words here.

We would refer the reader to the prophets themselves; and the more he examines and compares, the more will he be satisfied that there is a perfect accordance between the *predicted* and the *existing* state of this country. The various prophecies regarding it may be classed under the three following heads: 1st, The desolation of its soil; 2d, The ruin of its cities; 3d, The expatriation of its people.

We stand on the northern border of the land. Behind us are the mountains of Lebanon; they run across from the eastern to the western border of the country. We stand towards the eastern side of the land. Here, from the mighty trunk of Lebanon, runs off, at right angles, a branch of hills, which, traversing the country in a southward direction, divides it into two nearly equal halves. As we look along, summit rises after summit, like the successive links of a chain designed to bind together the snowy peaks that guard the country on the north to the burning sands that defend it on the south. The central line of summits is the highest. Alongside of it, and on either hand, run successive mountain-

ous lines, which sink lower and lower as they recede from the central one, till at last the hills disappear, and the country spreads out into an extensive plain. From the bottom of the last and lowest line of heights on the west, the land slopes gradually down to the shore of the Mediterranean; but on the east, the hills, as if unwilling to give way, maintain their height to the very brink of the Jordan valley; and then, stooping abruptly down, they form into dark overhanging masses, as if they were desirous of covering with their shadows the desolate and ruined bosom of the plain beneath them.

We are on our way southward; but as yet we have not fairly disentangled ourselves from the roots of Lebanon. The numerous streams which that mountain sends down to refresh the plains, make the country here look much greener than we may expect to find it when we have gone farther to the south. We are now amongst the hills of Galilee. They are of considerable size. We alight occasionally on an Arab village, with patches of cultivation adjoining; but the general covering both of hill and valley is a lux-

uriant herbage, which grows neglected. On our left, adjoining the Jordan, is the region of Cæsarea Philippi—now a territory of swamps and boggy ground. On our right, adjoining the sea-shore, are the “fat” valleys of Asher, overgrown with thistles so intolerably rank, that the traveller is scarce able to force his way through them, even on horseback. Nothing, we may here remark, is a more common production of this land; its hill sides are covered with briers, its valleys are choked up with thistles. The vine did not mantle it more completely of old than do these useless plants now. “Why should I ascend Mount Tabor,” said a person who had visited Palestine, to the Deputation from the Church of Scotland—“why should I ascend Mount Tabor, to see a country of thorns?” He might have done so, if only to behold more extensively, with his own eyes, the fulfilment of the prediction: “*All the land shall become briers and thorns. And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briers and thorns.*”

We go forward. Now climb we the hill—

now rest we in the valley. We force our way through the long grass, or the tall thistles; paths here there are none: "*The highways lie desolate; the wayfaring man ceaseth.*" Now we are amongst the mountains of Nazareth, with their clumps of stunted oaks. Approach the edge of this bare hill, and look down into the valley; it is circular as a cup, and at its bottom reposes a little white-looking town. These are the remains of Nazareth. There is scarce a pile of grass or a green leaf to be seen on the rocky sides of the mountains that inclose it. Over these chalky hills, at a distance of about six miles to the north-east, is the modern representative of Cana; while amongst the mountains on the west are the ruins of Zippor, and other towns.

But what mountain is this in front, directly in our path, which rises like a garland among the hills of Palestine? How proudly does it exalt the symmetry of its form and the green beauty of its summit amid the desolate wastes around it! This is Tabor. At its foot, stretched far and wide, from the gleaming waters of Galilee on the one hand, to the

wooded heights which border the plain of Acre on the other, is the Valley of Esdraelon—a vast expanse of uncultivated fields and ruined cities, deserted and solitary as the desert. The cities are wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land is utterly desolate. The Lord has removed men far away, and there is a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

We descend the beautiful Tabor, and, going straight across the plain, we leave on our left the unblessed hills of Gilboa, and strike into the mountains of Samaria. The prospects that open on us amid these hills are softer than we had expected to meet here—green slopes and woods of olives; so that, were this region peopled and cultivated, neither of which it is at this day, its beauty and produce would exceed all calculation. Threading the valleys of Samaria for some time in this manner, we come at length to a more open space. We have now before us a circular mount, with fruitful valleys running round it, and these encompassed with not unfruitful hills. The central hill is decorated with a profusion of marble ruins, whose ap-

pearance indicates that they once formed part of sumptuous edifices. This mount was the seat of Samaria, the capital of the Ten Tribes. Its foundations are now poured down into the valley, and the "glorious flower" on the head of "the fat valleys" of Israel is faded.

From the site of Samaria a mule-track leads over a range of barren hills in front. Traversing these mountains, we descend into the Vale of Shechem. Here is the well beside which Christ discoursed to the woman of Samaria, and the town within whose gates he was kindly welcomed. The curse which has fallen so heavily on all around would seem to have spared the beauty of this region. We would linger long amid its groves of orange and fig-trees, its streams, and its rich cultivation, did our time permit; but we must leave it. Passing between Ebal and Gerizim, we bid it adieu; and in doing so, we leave behind us the last scene of beauty we are to see in this land.

Here ends the region of Samaria. We pass over the boundary, and enter on the inheritance of Ephraim. At this point begins the more awful desolation of the country.

We are now amid towering mountains, and we may journey for miles together without seeing a single atom of soil upon their sides. No language can adequately describe the frightful sterility of this region; every trace of cultivation, every sign of the dwelling of man, has disappeared. Not that there are not a few wretched inhabitants among these hills, but the aspect of the country is so desolate and appalling, that one wonders where even a bird of the heavens, or an animal of any kind, is here to find sustenance. The Lord has made the land empty and waste; he has turned it upside down; he has scattered abroad the inhabitants thereof: "*The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled; for the Lord hath spoken this word.*" But though such is now the aspect of this part of the country, far otherwise was it in former times. When the "mighty tribe of Ephraim" occupied it, it was a magnificent region of hanging gardens. Every mountain then equalled in beauty, and greatly exceeded in extent, the far-famed gardens of Babylon. Terrace rose above terrace, covered with a profusion of vines and olives, to the cultiva-

tion of which this region was peculiarly devoted ; and here, to this day, on the sides of the now naked hills, are the remains of the stone walls which formed these terraces. We pursue our way, on a rocky track, amid mountains of brass, the path climbing now over their summit, now winding round their base, now lying along the very edge of frightful precipices, and now descending over rugged rocks. Journeying in this manner, we arrive on the high plains of Bethel. We halt beside its ruins—now heaps of rubbish, for Bethel has come to nought—to survey the wide prospect which the place commands. Here Abraham and Lot stood when they chose the quarter of the country to which each was to remove his flocks. This gloomy valley beneath us, with the dull stream creeping sluggishly along its dark bosom, was the region which Lot chose ; but then it was rich in streams, and pastures, and cities ; it was well watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord.

We have yet twelve miles to the capital, where our journey is to terminate. We travel along, amidst scenery which grows only the more desolate the nearer we come to Jerusa-

lem. By the side of the path, and in the desolate valleys which open to our view as we pass on, are numerous ruins. On some of these sites the Arab has erected his hut ; others are entirely forsaken. Now we rest by the Fountain of Beer ; now we go forward. The naked peaks which environ the metropolis of Judea at length come in sight. We hasten forward—the path leads us to the summit of a rocky eminence—and, lo ! the city is before us. “How doth she sit solitary that was full of people !” Notwithstanding all that we have read of the past misfortunes of Jerusalem, and the ruin in which she is now sunk, we bring with us, even to her very gates, all those ideas of magnificence which we have been led to form by the history of her former grandeur. We are unable to lay these ideas aside in a moment, and to accept of this dull, miserable, and forlorn-looking town in the room of the gorgeous picture our imaginations had conceived. We are inexpressibly disappointed and grieved. We pass not now within her gates, but crossing the plain on the north side of the city, which is covered with the foundations of the Jerusa-

lem of other days, though without the walls of the modern town, we traverse the deep Valley of Jehoshaphat, with its gray rocks and its dry torrent bed, and climbing the sides of the Mount of Olives, we sit down on its summit, to take a last look of this land.

Now we look abroad over the wide desolation of Judea. Jerusalem is at our feet. With what accuracy hath Tasso described the position of this city, as respects the surrounding localities !—

By east, among the dusty valleys, glide
 The silver streams of Jordan's crystal flood.
 By west, the midland sea, with boundaries tied
 Of sandy shores, where Joppa whilom stood.
 By north, Samaria stands ; and on that side
 The golden calf was reared in Bethel wood.
 Bethlehem by south, where Christ incarnate was—
 A pearl in steel—a diamond set in brass.

On our north is the desolate mountain region which we traversed on our way thither, and of which, therefore, we need not now speak. Behind us, on the east, are the stupendous and naked piles which separate Jerusalem from the Valley of the Jordan. That valley appears but at a little distance ; it looks as if it

were buried beneath the mountains of Judea on the one hand, and those of Moab on the other. It exhibits no trace of its former cultivation ; it is scathed and blackened, and bears on its bosom the ruins of its cities—Jericho and others. On the south it is shut in by the waters of that mysterious lake which covers the Valley of Siddim and the Cities of the Plain, and which is here distinctly visible. On the south is the hilly region which fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah. Here, “ binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.” The region was equally celebrated for its milk as for its wine ; and vine-stocks are still found here of such size as to justify the renown this part of the land enjoyed as a region of vineyards. All the hills and valleys of this extensive tract, south to the hills of Hebron, are covered with the ruins of towns to an extent which no one could credit who has not actually traversed it. Now, last of all, we turn to the west. Here one rounded summit rises behind another as far as the eye can look, with patches of cultivation in some

of the valleys, and nothing to shade the sides of the hills, save occasionally a wild fig-tree. Beyond these mountains is the Plain of Sharon—a vast garden in former days—a wilderness now. Its face is made up here of sand, there of long grass, and there of swamps, interspersed with a little cultivation—one or two modern towns, half in ruins, and abundance of ancient cities, wholly so. What need of more evidence to show that the prophecy is fulfilled: “ *Your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste?*”

The people, not less than the land of Judea, were the objects of prophecy; and on them not less than on the country, have these prophecies been fulfilled. We find in Palestine at this day few men, and these are not her ancient inhabitants, but strangers. On the former a sentence of expatriation was long since pronounced; and who is so ignorant as not to know that it has been executed? For eighteen centuries the Jew has been an exile; and during that period he has trodden with a weary foot, and with a heart still more weary, every country under heaven, from the islands of Japan in the east to the forests of America

in the far-distant west : And wherever we meet a Jew, there we behold a monument of the truth of prophecy : “ And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you ; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought ; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other ; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the soul of thy foot have rest : but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind : and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee ; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.”

Thus have we gone round the region of fulfilled prophecy ; and here we lay aside our pilgrim staff.

CONCLUSION.

LET us now look back on the track over which we have gone. Which of its cities, doomed to fall, now survives? Is it Babylon?—then what mean these desolate mounds on the Plain of Chaldea? Is it the cities of Edom, or of Moab, or of Judea?—then what mean these ruins with which the lands east and west of the Jordan are overspread? Which of these countries, doomed to desolation, is now fertile and flourishing? or which of the nations, concerning which it was said that they should be cut off, remains to this day? The Jews are still a people; but the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites have perished. Consider, moreover, that what the prophets pronounced concerning these lands was not simply a sentence of general desolation—they particularized the nature of the ruin of each. Regarding one country, they said that its soil

should be destroyed ; regarding another, that, retaining all the riches of its soil, it should cease to be cultivated. Of one city, the prophets foretold that it should be so completely destroyed that its site should not be found ; of another, that it should be tenanted by owls ; of a third, that serpents and wild beasts should lodge in its ruins ; and of a fourth, that it should be a stable for camels. Of one people, it was foretold that they should become exiles ; of another, that they should be cut off forever. Consider, also, that these predictions were given many ages before their fulfilment ; and that, as regards many of the threatenings of the prophets, they were given when the nations by whom they were to be executed were either very insignificant, or not in existence at all. And consider, last of all, the extreme improbability of what was foretold. Suppose any one were to foretell that a day should come, when Europe should cease to be inhabited—when nothing should be seen on the fields of Scotland and England but a few shepherds with their flocks—when a sail should never be seen at the mouth of the Mersey, nor a war steamer in the docks of Plymouth—when

here should not be a single inhabitant in the cities of London and Paris—when the soil of France should be so wasted, that a few flocks should be unable to subsist on it—when ruined heaps only should stud the banks of the Rhine—when, in short, all the cities throughout Europe should be abandoned to ruin, and occupied, some in one way, some in another. This would be deemed a most unlikely event. Any one setting up for a prophet, would never be so mad as to risk his reputation by selecting, as the subject of his random prediction, the most unlikely of all unlikely events; and yet the desolation of the countries we have gone over was far more unlikely when it was foretold. Men in that age had had no experience of countries desolated; and even though they had had, they would never have conjectured that such a calamity would ever overtake these countries—the earliest seats of population, and containing, moreover, the finest cities and the richest soils on the surface of the earth. Assuredly, it would have been thought that these would be the last countries to be abandoned; especially when, abandon-

ing them, men had to seek new homes, in lands then covered, as our own was, with swamps and impenetrable forests.

We ask, too, whether the sagacity of a mortal could have foreseen all these changes? The sagacity of a mortal is not able to foresee the changes which may befall himself during his short life on earth; how then could he have foreseen all these changes? Just think of what would have been required in order to foretell the fall of but one of those cities that now lie mouldering on the wilds of Syria. All the causes which were to operate in the world, and in the manner in which all the beings, living, or yet to live, were to act, between the time when the prediction was given forth and the time when it was to be fulfilled—all, we say, must have been foreseen before the future overthrow of even one of these cities could have been foretold with certainty. No reasoning is needed to convince us that this lies not within the scope of finite sagacity.

But, in the last place, may not all these occurrences, all this singular agreement between

prophecies, countless in number, and the facts we have adduced, have been the result of chance? The man who could propose such a solution, must be driven to the last resort. Could chance have formed the steam-engine? What would be thought of the intellect of that man who could believe that the marvellous piece of mechanism we have just named was brought into being by an artisan simply throwing a few iron rods together? But what opinion are we to form of the intellect of the man who could believe—I do not mean merely profess, but seriously believe—that the magnificent scheme of prophecy which the Bible presents, embracing, as it does, the history of the world from the days of Daniel to the end of time, was formed by a few impostors throwing together a number of hap-hazard predictions? No; there is only one conclusion to which the evidence we have adduced tends, and to that conclusion it tends inevitably and overwhelmingly, namely, that the Bible is the Word of God. And it is utterly useless in any man to cry out for more proofs, or stronger arguments. We state the sober truth, and

we state it in the soberest terms, when we say, that the man who will not believe Moses and the prophets, on the evidence we have adduced, would not believe them although they should rise from the dead.

A P P E N D I X.

EXCAVATIONS ON THE SITE OF NINEVEH.

THE labors of M. Botta on the site of Nineveh have been rewarded with the richest discoveries, and have fulfilled, sooner than the author looked for, the anticipations expressed in the foregoing pages, that many a new and surprising proof of the truth of the Bible has yet to be drawn from the ruins of the scriptural cities of the East. The author begs to append to this edition of his little work a short account of the explorations which have led to such surprising results. M. Botta was consul for the French at Mosul ; and having continually before his eyes the green mounds of the fallen Nineveh, became desirous—as who, in his circumstances, would not ?—of ascertaining, by actual inspection, whether these mounds contained any memorials of the grandeur or the arts of the lost city. He commenced operations on the largest mass—that

to which tradition has assigned the honor of being the tomb of Ninus, the founder of the Assyrian Empire. Here he found nought but insignificant fragments of bricks. He next opened a trench in the side of a mound, on the summit of which stands the village of Khorsabad. Before proceeding far, he discovered, to his unspeakable delight, that the mass on which he was engaged was the covering of an ancient Assyrian edifice. The French government lent its aid, and the excavations of M. Botta were continued, till at last the entire structure, which appears to form only a third of the original building, was laid open. This edifice is the most interesting of all that lie entombed on this celebrated site, being, as is supposed, the palace of the Assyrian kings. It is rich in sculptures and inscriptions; and the marvel is, how so noble a monument, which still shone, even though ruined and deserted, with the embellishments of the most exquisite art, could have come to be so completely buried in the earth. Howsoever it happened, we behold in this the fulfilment of the prophecy: "I will make thy grave."

But Nineveh, in this instance, has returned from her grave ; and we may now survey the halls where princes dwelt, and the trophies of an art that was the pride of that age doubtless, as it is worthy of being the admiration of this. Of this palace, the front, the southern façade, and fifteen halls, with their corresponding esplanades, have been cleared. Six bulls of colossal size, as well as figures of men, also colossal, strangling lions in their arms, adorn the front of the edifice. A gateway of vast dimensions admits into the interior ; and the two central bulls are so placed as to appear to form the pillars of the grand entrance. These sculptures are of great beauty, and as fresh as if executed yesterday.

On entering the halls of the disinterred palace, we find that the walls are cased with alabaster slabs, and covered with sculptures and inscriptions. Two rows of bass-reliefs run round each chamber, and underneath each row are some twenty lines of writing in the arrow-headed character and Babylonian language. The subjects of the bass-reliefs possess great variety as well as interest. They are taken chiefly from the military art, and,

as is supposed, are historical—sieges, naval manœuvres, triumphs, single combats—in short, whatever brilliant exploit fell out to illustrate the annals of the reigning king, appears to have been immediately transferred to the walls of his palace. The writing underneath, in all likelihood, is a description of the scenes exhibited in the sculptures, and form, in fact, a portion of the historical records of a kingdom. The inscriptions on the walls of this palace comprise a greater amount of writing in the arrow-headed character, than all the inscriptions of the sort, previously discovered, taken together.

These sculptures are executed with astonishing spirit and beauty—a circumstance that is the more marvellous, when we take into account the early age in which they were produced. In point of antiquity, they cannot be very much inferior to the monuments of Egypt; but they far surpass them in respect of the fidelity, the ease, and the elegance with which they are executed. The scenes and objects represented are exceedingly varied; but all are characterized by masterly conception and consummate taste. We allude not

only to the spirit and grace thrown into the piece by skilful grouping, and other artistic means, but the genius and taste of the artist have not deserted him, even in the minor objects and minute details with which the piece is filled up. Vases, drinking-cups, sword scabbards adorned with lions, shields decorated with animals and flowers—chairs, tables, and other articles of domestic use—bracelets, ear-rings, and other personal ornaments, occur in the sculptures; and all are designed in so bold a style, and so beautifully finished, that they are said to rival the productions of the best days of the Greek art.

There is one very noticeable circumstance about these chambers. The alabaster lining of their walls is covered on the back with sculptures and inscriptions. This can be satisfactorily accounted for only by supposing that the palace had on some occasion been taken possession of by a new dynasty, and finding it covered with the graven records of its predecessors, which it was natural the new race should wish to conceal, they reversed the tablets, and began to engrave them anew on the other side with the events of their own history.

Underneath the bricks of which the floor is composed stone repositories have been discovered, filled with small clay enamelled figures of men and animals, but unaccompanied by any thing to explain them. In another place have been found great rows of earthen vases of a remarkable size, placed on a brick floor, and filled with human bones, similar to those found at Babylon. The palace has suffered from fire, for its materials are calcined in many places, and has been plundered before being destroyed; for neither gems, nor any thing of value, not even the small cylinders so numerous in the neighborhood, have been found in it—a verification, surely, of the prophet's words addressed to the conquerors of Nineveh: "Take ye the spoil of silver, take ye the spoil of gold."

This discovery is of great importance in an archæological point of view. It supplies a link which has hitherto been wanting, and the want of which has long been felt, between the infancy and the perfection of the arts—between their dawn in Egypt and their noon in Greece. There occur a few brief and incidental allusions to this subject both in

the Old Testament and in the writings of the Greek historians; but these hints are too vague to allow us to draw any certain conclusion as to the state of the arts under the Babylonians and Persians. But this rare discovery, by which we have been put most unexpectedly in possession of a vast number of beautiful specimens from the chisels of the Babylonian and Persian sculptors, promises to make us soon as intimately acquainted with the state of art in the countries in question as we already are with its condition in Egypt and Greece. The intelligent reader will observe how this again sheds light on the Bible. There are not a few points in the scriptural account of Babylon and Nineveh which the sculptures of this subterranean edifice authenticate and verify. Babylon is described in the Bible as a land of graven images—a statement which would lead us to infer, that in the country of Babylonia the arts were universally diffused, and had attained some degree of perfection. There is the most perfect accordance on this point between the pages of the Bible and the walls of this palace. We find mention made, too, of the “pleasant fur-

niture" of Nineveh; and we find articles of this description frequently introduced in the bass-reliefs we have described. Moreover, the absence of every thing of value, and the marks of fire still visible on the edifice, make it apparent that it was first plundered and then burnt, as the prophet foretold. Little did the builders of this edifice imagine the singular fortune that awaited it—that it should long outlast the Assyrian monarchy itself; and after being buried for ages in darkness, should be brought forth to the light, to be the marvel of the last ages of the world, and to bear its testimony to matters of infinitely higher moment to man than the magnificence of the art with which it was so profusely decorated—even the supremacy and truth of that God who foretold by his prophets its destruction, and that of the power that flourished in it, ere yet a stone of it had been overthrown.

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