

REMAINS OF LOST EMPIRES.*



RUINS OF APAMEA.

ONE turns naturally to the East for the ruins of ancient cities and lost empires, and the plains of Mesopotamia and the Syrian deserts offer a long list of fallen marts of commerce and early centres of civilization, hidden beneath their sands, or marked only by a few tall and shattered columns. The Chicagos and Cincinnati of the past once lined the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, or sprang up in the track of the caravan, and wanting chiefly the mental elements of later progress, perished wholly in the midst of their greatness. No modern city has ever met with so complete a ruin as Babylon and Tyre; all the great centres of modern commerce seem gifted with a civic immortality. The printing-press and the school-house, the telegraph and the steam-car, unite to shield London and Paris from decay; and New York and Philadelphia, in nearly the hundredth anniversary of their freedom, are menaced by few of the perils that surround-

ed Carthage and Rome. Men have become somewhat more discreet since the world was governed by Sennacheribs and Nebuchadnezzars. Yet a tour over the ruins of the Eastern capitals, and down those famous rivers where Semiramis labored and Israel sang its immortal lament, has always a strange interest, and no one treads the Mesopotamian plains or speculates upon the site of Babylon without feeling that the deft fingers of the Assyrian weavers have instructed the modern artist, and that the inventions and devices of the merchants and mechanics of Mesopotamia were not lost to the factories of New York. Cities perish, but knowledge never; and the flowered muslins and painted vases of the East live again in the looms of Lyons and the furnaces of Sevres.

Our travelers set out to visit the fallen cities of the East. They land in Syria, cross the desert, visit Palmyra, sail on a raft down the Tigris, and from Babylon and Nineveh cross the sea in a steamer from Bushire to Bombay; rush swiftly in the heat of the Indian summer in the rail-car up the blazing plain to the mountains, find shelter in the fair vale of Cashmere, and at last survey the marvelous architecture, the richest pro-

* *Remains of Lost Empires: Sketches of the Ruins of Palmyra, Nineveh, Babylon, and Persepolis, with some Notes on India and the Cashmerian Himalayas.* By P. V. N. MYERS, A.M. Illustrations. New York: Harper and Brothers.

ductions of ornamental building, at Delhi, and meditate amidst its endless ruins. Their path was from Western to Eastern Asia; the contrast between the two sections is striking; the fate of the former is written in neglect, desolation, and decay. While India is covered with the traits of modern prosperity and progress, the Tigris and the Euphrates flow through the saddest region of the world, and by their side sleep the enormous mounds that mark the scene of former empires, and cities whose buried streets are known only to some ardent explorer.

In Western Asia there is little yet but desolation. Crossing the Syrian deserts, the travelers first explored Palmyra, the City of Palms. Midway between Damascus and the Euphrates, where a few abundant springs awake life in the arid plains, a camp of merchants arose in an early period, and on its site sprang up one of the fairest of the cities of the East. In our Western towns the first traits of progress are the school-house and the church, the railway station, the newspaper, and the telegraph; but the Palmyrenes evidently aimed at a splendor that was chiefly material, and expended their gains in the lavish decoration of their bare and desolate waste. A street lined with columns immense and splendid led up to the magnificent Temple of the Sun. A hundred tall and fluted pillars still remain to tell the traveler of the grandeur of the scene. An infinite throng of porticoes, tombs, forums, temples, lie around his path, and as he wanders down the long colonnade of the Broadway of Palmyra he sees the homes of its merchants lining the narrow streets at its side, and the remains of houses more spacious and substantial than the palaces of Paris or New York. Lost amidst the desert for ages, the memory of Palmyra was preserved by the fame and the misfortunes of Longinus and Zenobia; and the prince of critics still seems to wander through its porticoes and teach in its halls. It was found again toward the close of the sixteenth century. But if there is still danger in visiting the wonderful ruins without a Turkish escort, it will not be long before the railway and the telegraph may span the Syrian desert, and Tadmor become familiar to the people of the West.

It was in January, the air was soft, the sky magnificent, as our travelers pursued their search in the desert for lost cities, and saw the cloud-capped Lebanon, the vale of Cœle-syria, the ruins of Emesa, and the lonely streets of Apamea: a thousand prostrate pillars lay around them; a city leveled to the ground by the shock of an earthquake. All northern Syria is strewn with fallen capitals, and the wrecks of three hundred towns stretch away unknown, and tenanted only by a few idle Arabs. From Aleppo, covered with its roofs of turf and its grass-

grown terraces, they came to the Euphrates, the fourth river that watered the sacred garden; they tasted the strong black coffee of the Arabs, and visited the evangelical missions; they would gladly have lingered longer at the pleasant mission home, but the emerald tint that began now to creep over the Mesopotamian plain warned them that they had yet to reach the cool retreats of the Himalayas before the rigors of the Indian summer. Accordingly they began a ten days' journey through the heart of Mesopotamia to Mosul, and here saw opposite to them, on the banks of the Tigris, the ruins of Nineveh. The vast city still lies covered with its heap of sand and debris, nor would one suspect that beneath the huge mounds of earth lay the wonderful monuments of Assyrian civilization. It is only when the traveler enters the huge excavations and descends below the surface that he distinguishes the remains of vast palaces and stately buildings, the winged lions or bulls of enormous size, and the walls sculptured with the records of the Assyrian kings. Their annals are told with a fidelity that discloses their singular barbarity. The captives are flayed alive, their eyes torn out, their hands and feet cut off. The civilization of Assyria was the cruel barbarism of the Aztec, and the respect for human life which has slowly made its way among men had no place in the culture of Sennacherib. Yet no one can tread the solemn precincts of these palaces of Assyria, amidst their winged bulls with human heads that still keep watch at the doors in the silent chambers, pictured, vast, solitary, without a thrill of strange excitement. In a series of small apartments are laid away clay tablets a few inches long, inscribed with cuneiform characters, relating, perhaps, the history of Assyria, and from one of them Mr. George Smith, of the British Museum, has translated that account of the Noachic deluge which confirms the Scriptural narrative.

The navigation of the Tigris from Mosul to Bagdad is conducted in the same kind of vessels in which Herodotus must have pursued his travels eastward, and thirty centuries have made no improvement in the sluggish habits of the conservative Assyrians. The raft on which our author set sail on the broad and rapid river was formed of a light frame-work thirty feet square, constructed of poles, beneath which were placed three hundred inflated goat-skins. The buoyancy of the raft enabled it to support twenty tons of wheat and nuts, besides several passengers. A pair of immense sweeps impelled the *kellic*, as it was called, down the wide stream. Nine Arabs and the captain, Mohammed, formed the crew of this strange vessel. Lazily and almost imperceptibly it glided down the stream;



THE DELUGE TABLET.

the Arab crew lay half asleep on the top of the cargo; at night they moored their raft to the shore, and the travelers slept in their little tent on the *kellie*. "Floating down the Tigris," our author relates, "naturally recalled our canoe voyages upon the Rio Napo and the Rio Negro, northern affluents of the Amazon. Drifting along the treeless shores of the Mesopotamian rivers is very different from floating through the tropical forests of South America. There is verdure along the upper Tigris in spring, it is true, covering not only the *havis*, or alluvial deposits, but even at times hiding the baldness of the usually barren sun-burned hills; but there is no tree vegetation—low bushes alone fringe in places the river-banks. Very different is all this from the wild, prodigal luxuriance displayed by the tropical forests that hem the streams of the Amazonian valley with their stately walls of trunk and foliage." But the Tigris is richer in historical memories; it is the river of Darius and Alexander, Chaldean, Babylonian, Roman, Turk; nor can it be long before the railroad spans the valley of the Euphrates, and brings the palaces of Nineveh within reach of the winter travel. Floating down the

Tigris, the travelers saw over its low banks a succession of huge mounds and buried cities. It is easy to conceive what great stores of winged bulls and carved tablets, of gems, vases, and bronzes, await the future explorers of these solitary scenes, and how the modern cabinets and drawing-rooms will be decorated with the spoils of the contemporaries of Sennacherib.

But a voyage down the Tigris on a float of skins is not without its dangers. At midnight, as the raft was carelessly moored to the shore, its crew on the land and the travelers asleep in their tents, a strong wind arose, the river swelled and heaved, and the current tore the raft from its moorings, and bore it swiftly onward. Two of the Arabs sprang aboard, and with the captain strove to fasten it again; but it broke loose, and went dashing down the river, striking against the rocks and the shore. The skins exploded with a dull sound, the water rose over the raft, and even the captain leaped into the river and fled to the shore. The night was dark, the rain fell heavily, the jackals howled upon the land, and in the deep gloom the frail float plunged over a rocky pass in the river, and was nearly torn

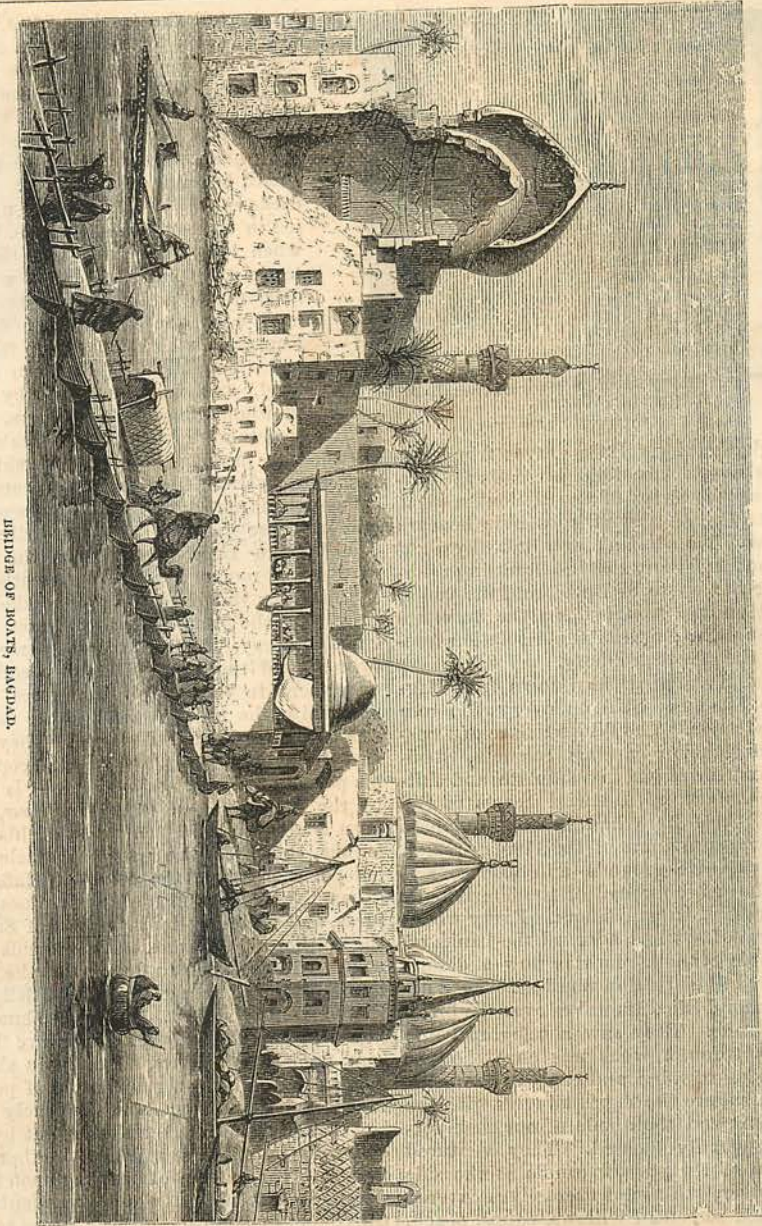
to pieces. Danger and death hung over the explorers. The raft spun like a top in the turbid waters; but happily it soon drifted into a smoother current, and hurried swiftly onward toward Bagdad. The captain at last came in sight, having followed his lost vessel on a pair of inflated skins, and crew and passengers once more gathered on their dangerous float. They paused to repair their sinking craft, and then once more sailed onward amidst a range of ruins to the city of the caliphs. The Tigris spread out sometimes a mile in width, a fair, majestic river, and at length was heard the welcome cry, "Bagdad! Allah be praised!" Beautiful as a vision in the soft moonlight the dark palms and the silent groves waved over the glittering river, and an Arabian night of rare loveliness welcomed the author to the land of Scherezade. Of Bagdad it can only be said that it is fair without and adorned with minarets and mosques, that its bazars abound with all the wares of the East and the West, and that cleanliness and decency avoid its narrow and crowded streets. But the hand of modern improvement must at last sweep away its untidy conservatism. A fleet of steamers already visit its harbor. In the age of Haroun, Bagdad taught Europe and Charlemagne

the wonders of mechanics, but the Western world has long outstripped its early leader, and the intelligent and cruel caliph would have studied with rare interest the curious productions of the modern engineer. The steam-engine and the steamer are already arousing the venerable capital from its Oriental slumbers.

We next reach Babylon, and amidst a network of canals and traces of ancient agricultural skill find on the banks of the Euphrates a huge heap of earth-covered ruins. The Temple of Belus, the Hanging Gardens, the Tower of Babel, the palaces and the tombs, are hidden in monstrous mounds that cast their shadows over the solitary plain. No one would suppose that here Cyrus reigned and Alexander feasted, that the most populous of earthly cities once occupied the desolate scene before him. Cities have been built from the ruins of Babylon, and generations have pilfered its remains, yet modern discoverers still find it full of objects of interest and value. Even the Babylonian brick is a work of art, and the Babylonian lion, discovered in one of the mounds, standing over a man, is by some supposed to be commemorative of Daniel's deliverance. It is impossible to fix with certainty the site of the various buildings. They were all



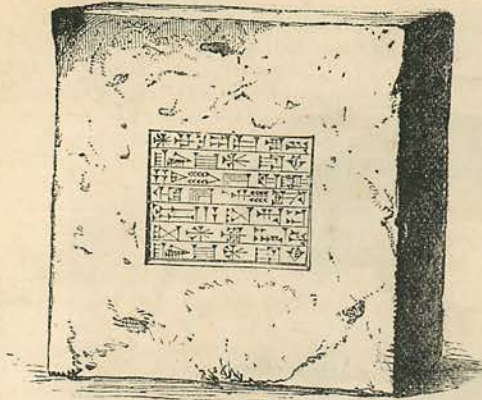
RUNAWAY RAFT ON THE TIGRIS.



BRIDGE OF BOATS, BAGDAD.

marked by immense height and a succession of terraces. One lofty red-tinted mound is thought to be the site of the Hanging Gardens. In the mound of Mujelibee, "the overturned," some see the remains of the Tower of Babel; the Birs Nimroud, ten miles south of Mujelibee, is also endowed with various fanciful names and uses. But the immense size and singular prosperity of the parent of cities are attested by the unparalleled grandeur of its ruins. Mountains have sprung up from its ashes, and

the Temple of Belus has been transformed into an everlasting hill. From the vitrified top of Birs Nimroud, blasted and melted by fire, opens a dreary view over the wild and solemn plain. Yet the marshes are covered with the reed huts of the Arabs who have fled hither from the terrors of the Turkish rule, and the Birs is no longer solitary. Our travelers vainly sought for some trace of the enormous walls of Babylon. The Euphrates has already awakened a new verdure on its banks as it glides

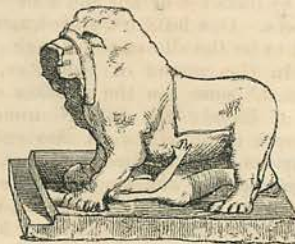


BABYLONIAN BRICK.

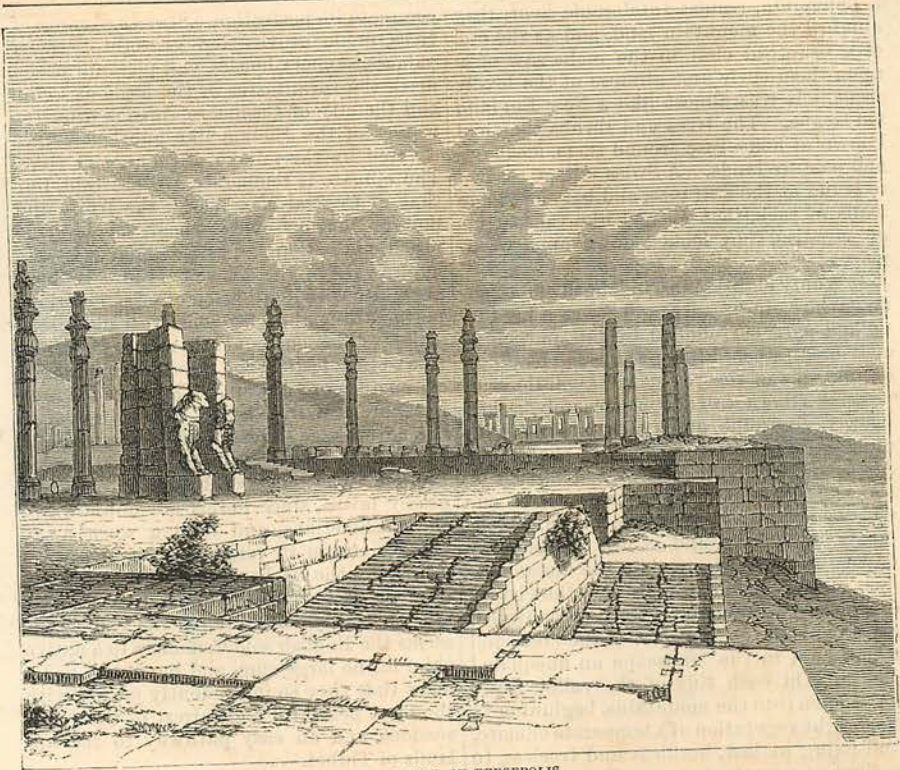
through the city. Date groves fringe the famous river. The foliage recalls the gardens and the parks of the ancient capital, and Arab tents and villages hide beneath the trees. Yet when a storm broke by night over the Mujelibee, and the lightning flashed over the waste of Babel, and the jackal howled on the troubled air, the travelers discovered the depth of the desolation foretold in the age of prophecy.

A steamer carried them down from Bagdad to Bushire. Still on every side rose heaps of ruins. The White Palace of Khosrau, the Persian capitals Seleucia, Ctesiphon, and Maydayn, lay desolate and fallen, the haunts of the wild beasts of the desert. Once here had been the richest and fairest provinces of the Persian realm. Parks, pleasure-grounds, and palaces had filled the neighborhood of the Tigris with the fairest of human labors. Every where the hand of art had adorned the banks of the ample stream. It was now a desert. All trace of cultivation was lost. Their little steamer dashed its waves over the brimming banks. They saw a telegraph line running through what was once thought the Garden of Eden, and came to the point of union where the Tigris mingles with the Euphrates, and the abode of our first parents is usually located. They ventured into one of the narrow canals at the side of the river, and found themselves covered in a thick screen of willows, palms, peach, and pomegranate, a boundless richness of vegetation that recalled the animated landscapes of the South American rivers. Canoes were seen paddling down the stream, birds of rich plumage glittered overhead, and the vast and swelling waters of the Euphrates seemed not unfit to be compared with the Amazon or the Orinoco. At Bushire they landed in the poetic realm of Persia, but saw only ruinous, uncleanly, and narrow streets, and a throng of indolent Orientals. The Persians have forgotten, it seems, one of their ancient lessons, and no

longer tell the truth. "Yes," said one of them to the Rev. Mr. Southgate, "we lie every time we can;" and the clergyman, for the first time almost, believed a Persian. There was famine over the country when our travelers came there. Death hovered over millions. Hundreds of the dead had lain unburied in the streets of Bushire. And when they penetrated into the interior they came to lands wholly depopulated and rural districts covered with the stillness of death. Kauzerun, which before the famine had a population of eighteen thousand, was now occupied by two thousand miserable paupers. Its streets were empty, its bazars abandoned, the mosques without worshipers, and fine houses, hidden amidst flowers and foliage, had not a tenant. It resembled one of those deserted cities described in the Arabian tales. At Shiraz, the seat of Persian romance and song, seated on a plain four thousand feet above the sea, they saw the famous gardens, now fallen into decay, where the orange-tree, the cypress, and the rose still lend a soft enchantment to the scene. The roses, pink and white, the nightingale, and the memories of the poets are still there. They visited the tomb of Hafiz, and saw the copy of his poems preserved at its side. It is used by the Persians as a *sortes Virgilianae*, and even Nadir Shah, in the midst of his triumphs, consulted the national oracle. A mile or more from the tomb of Hafiz, in a beautiful garden shaded with pines, cypress, and mulberry-trees, is that of Saadi, the author of *Gulistan*. Its grounds are neglected and fallen to decay, but the rich fancy of the "Garden of Roses" still delights the West and the East. Shiraz, the land of flowers, was unhappily filled with five thousand famishing beggars. Famine in all its horrors had swept over the home of poets, nightingales, and roses, and the lonely and isolated situation of Persia, shut out by its own folly from a close union with other nations, left it no means of drawing upon that common stock of food which provident nature offers in more fortunate regions to all who need.



BABYLONIAN LION.



THE RUINS OF PERSEPOLIS.

The ruins of Persepolis, most magnificent of all the Persian remains, next won their admiration, and they mused amidst the fallen palaces of Cyrus, Xerxes, and Alexander. It is said that the latter set fire to the city in a bacchanalian frolic. A gigantic platform of stone, the largest in the world, drew their attention. A magnificent stairway leads to the top, so gentle of access that they rode on horseback to its summit. Several colossal bulls remain of the ancient palace, a magnificent hall of fluted columns, a propylæum of rare beauty, and volumes of sculptured history on the falling walls. The Hall of Xerxes is covered with sculptures representing processions of priests, warriors, kings, and captives. Black marble is used profusely in decorating the doorways. The "hall of audience," we are told, surpasses all that human architects have devised, and in the ruins of four grand palaces we are pointed to the homes of Cyrus or Cambyses, Darins, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes Ochus. The Persian palace seems to have been the grandest and the most comfortless of its kind, and these gigantic doorways and endless lines of sculptured columns surpass the costliness and the useless splendors of Versailles. Yet our travelers, in the month of roses—for it was May—felt that they must hasten away from the land of Hafiz and the gardens of Shiraz to reach the object of their summer

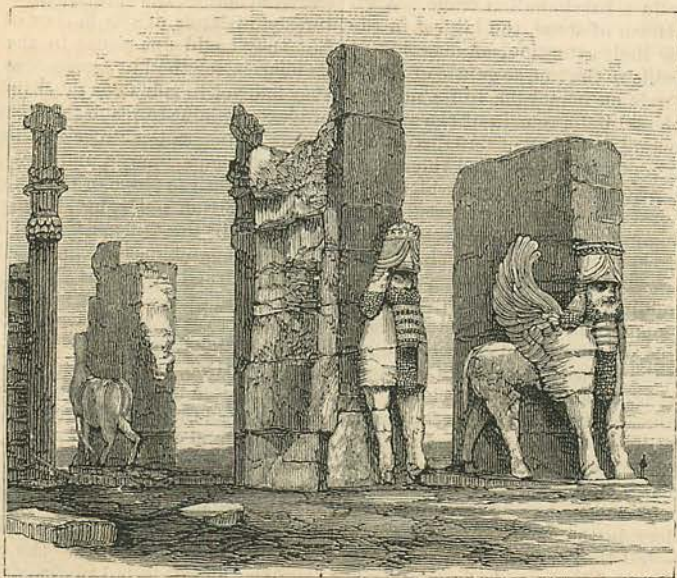
tour, the valley of Cashmere. They took the steamer from Bushire, coasted along the burning sands of Beloochistan, where Alexander's soldiers had made their terrible march, and in twelve days found themselves embayed amidst the verdant shores and picturesque islands of the harbor of Bombay. But they could not pause in the midst of its charms, for the hot season was near, and they had yet to ride over thousands of miles of blazing plains to reach the frozen mountains. A fine rail-car received them in its pleasant compartments, and they rose slowly up the western slope of the Ghauts, winding in a tortuous way, hot, thirsty, and disconsolate, in the famous land of the Bram, until a triumphant scream of the steam-whistle warned them that they had reached the summit of the Indian plain. Here for two days, over a perfect level, they swept by beautiful Allahabad, up the crowded valley of the Ganges, whose immense population exhibited itself in a throng of powerful cities, passed Cawnpore and Agra, Delhi and Lucknow, and paused at last at Lahore, in the hot, parched district of the Punjab. The heat was fierce and constant, but far above they could discern the dim peaks of the Himalayas, and knew that the fair vale of Cashmere would welcome the wanderers from the fiery, blasted plains with perpetual freshness. In a *dak* or a wagon, or in

a palanquin, amidst intolerable heat, they climbed the mountain land, and at the end of a beautiful cleft in the rocks saw open upon them their first glimpse of the lovely scene. It was almost like a New England landscape. The trees and shrubs they had known at home rose around them, meadows and pasture lands. A Swiss village seemed to stand at the entrance, and between huge walls of rock, that opened like the portals of paradise, they looked down upon Cashmere.

It is only eighty miles in length and twenty or thirty in breadth, and forms a kind of upland park surrounded by tall and snow-clad mountains. Fifteen thousand feet high on one side of the valley the gigantic rampart rises like a wall of stone, scarcely broken by a ravine; the other side is lined with clusters of peaks billowy like the snowy Alps. Through the copses and forests of the valley the river Jhelum enters at one end, passes through its whole length, widens into a lovely lake, and at last bursts away down the declivities to join the distant Indus. On its banks are situated the city of Cashmere and several others less renowned, and the bright clear waters of the lakes and rivers lend to the landscape an unequalled charm. On each side of the valley lesser vales open into the mountains, beginning in the bright vegetation of a temperate climate, and rising at last, herbless and treeless, to regions of perpetual snow. But to the rare natural beauties of the happy vale art has added its most graceful decorations. The Great Moguls from age to age have made it their favorite summer retreat. Shah Jehan and Aurungzebe lavished their treasures to

complete its perfection. Stately avenues of trees, noble groves and graceful gardens, palaces, summer-houses, and pleasant paths, mark the rural tastes of the lords of Delhi, and the city of Cashmere springs from the waters of the Jhelum like another Venice covered by the foliage of its ancient trees. The climate is temperate, we are told, like that of Central New York; the fruits and flowers like our own; wheat, tobacco, the peach, apricot, apple, grape, flourish in the happy valley; the sides of its hills in June are white with a profusion of roses, and their perfume fills the air; some rise like great pillars of blossoms, and others, creeping from tree to tree, festoon the woods with garlands of the queen of flowers. The roses of Cashmere are usually white. The valley forms the natural *sanitarium* of Hindostan, and in the summer months is filled with throngs of English, who encamp in tents upon its grassy lawns, since hotels are unknown to the Cashmerians, and having worn away the hot season in various pastimes, are required by the Maharajah to leave his dominions at its close. No foreigner is permitted to stay all winter in the valley. It seems the English sold Cashmere to a native chief for no large sum, and have now to lament that they so imprudently parted with the most healthful and fairest of their possessions, and an easy pathway to the uplands of Thibet.

The people of Cashmere are not altogether unworthy of the bright scene around them. Children of the mountains and of a temperate climate, they have preserved an energy unknown to the people of the hot plains below. Ages of tyranny, exactions,



PROPYLEUM OF XERXES.



AVENUE OF POPLARS, CASHMERE.

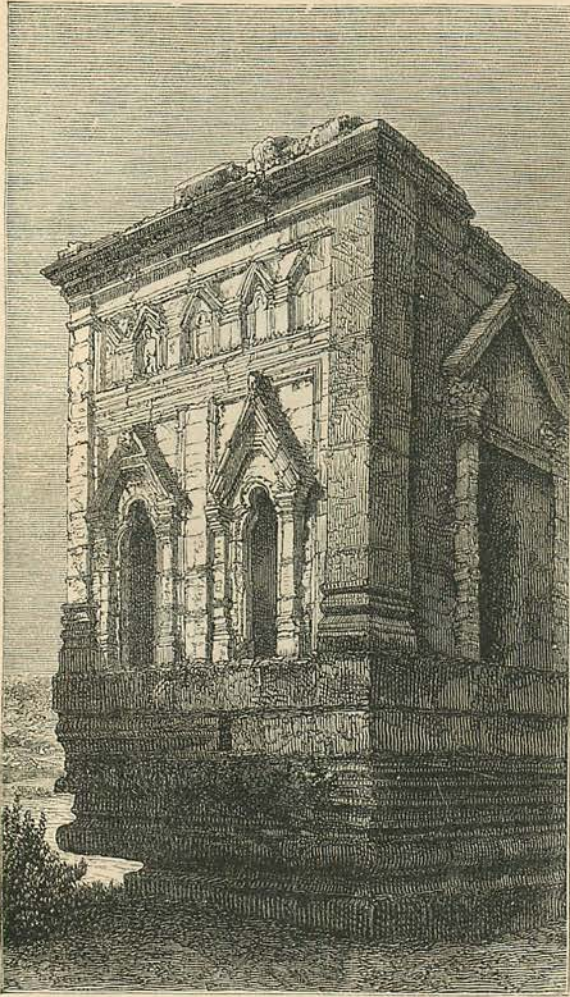
and plunder have not destroyed their industry or their intelligence, and various ruins of ancient temples scattered through the vale recall the labors of a happier age. One of them, the Martund, grand, massive, magnificent, rises on a rock, like the Parthenon, in the midst of one of the fairest of earthly scenes, and looks down upon the whole length and breadth of the valley. The city of Cashmere is pierced, like Venice, with numerous canals; its buildings overhang the water; the fronts of the best houses line the Jhelum on both sides; and one floats in a Cashmerian gondola down the Grand Canal, beneath its seven bridges, amidst a spectacle of singular beauty. At night the lights flash along the river, and its surface gleams with varied illuminations. The boats used on it are fifty or more feet long, and many of the people live altogether on the water. In one part of the river all fishing is forbidden, because the people believe that Gholab Singh, one of their former kings, has been changed into a fish, and haunts the place forever. Floating in their boats along the Grand Canal, a throng of strangers and natives meet one another, greetings are exchanged, friendly words spoken, the gay

scene is a summer carnival, and the vale of Cashmere rings with the echoes of mirthful voices. Yet the gardens planted by its early rulers are among its chief attractions; they line the fair Wulmar Lake, and glow with fruit and flowers; cascades break out on every side; terraces and kiosks fill the view; and in Shalimar Bagh, one of these later Edens, Moore's Georgian maid exclaims,

"If there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this."

On another fair lake, the Dul, floating gardens cover the surface, and produce abundant crops of cucumbers and melons. The men of Cashmere are tall, fair, and well-proportioned, but the ladies are profanely described as exceedingly ugly; its Nourmahals and Lalla Rookhs live only in the poet's fancy.

The fame of the happy vale might possibly have faded with the flight of years had not the productions of its looms given it a renown in every Western land. Its shawls are dear to the gentler sex in every clime. They are made from the softer wool of the wild goats of Lassa and Ladakh, which is chiefly spun by the women of the vale. The



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF MARTAND.

skins are dyed of the richest tints. The weavers, who are usually men and boys, work crowded together in small rooms. Their skill is unsurpassed. Many of the shawls are woven in separate pieces, yet so carefully joined together that the seams are scarcely seen, and from three months to two years is required to finish one of the finest patterns, and sometimes even longer. The price of the plainer shawls varies from \$200 to \$800, but the trade of Cashmere is no longer active, since European factories have so successfully imitated its finest products.

When the heavy rains had lowered the temperature of the Indian plains to 80° or 90°, our travelers in July left the happy valley and descended boldly into the hot lands below. They found a wonderful transformation. The copious showers had awakened the scorched and blighted plains into that abundance of vegetation that has made

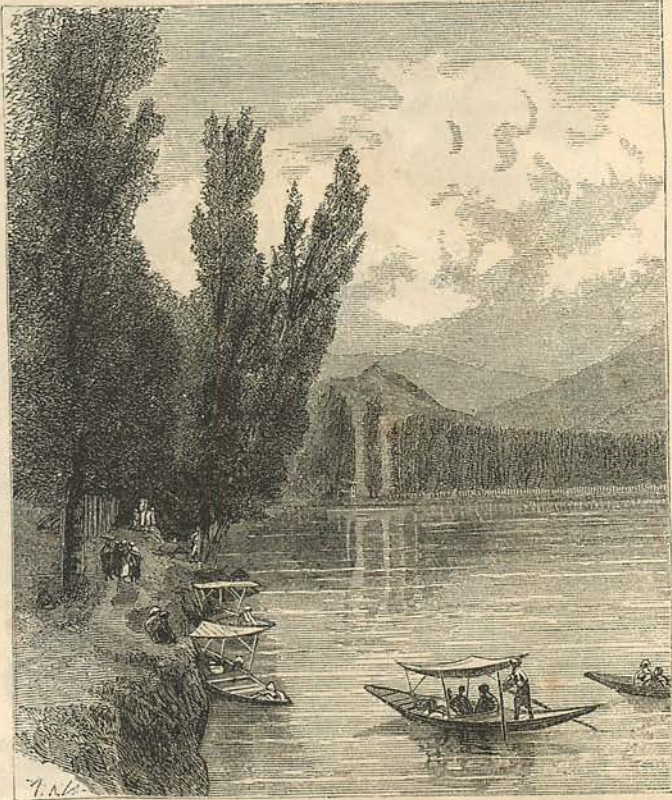
India the home of a teeming population. The parched desert was now covered with leaves and flowers, with the life and beauty of spring. They hastened to study the ruins and the architecture of Delhi. It bore traces of that stern retribution which the English had inflicted on its guilty princes. Its famous palace had been torn down, except the Audience Hall, the Dewani Khass, where Shah Jehan had kept his court, or Aurungzebe shone in the most beautiful of Oriental halls. A pillared, massive, arched pavilion, about one hundred and fifty feet long and fifty wide, it is constructed of pure white marble, lustrous as the blocks of the Parthenon. Such graceful shafts, such wonderful carving, so inimitable the ornaments of the columns and the arches, that the modern fancy is lost in wonder at the results and the waste of human toil. Flowers and fruits are inlaid in the stone with gold and precious jewels, and so perfectly imitated as to exceed the finest painting. Beneath the central arch of the pavilion once stood the Peacock Throne, gleaming with gems and gold, and valued at \$150,000,000, and among the regalia of the Mogul was the Koh-i-noor,

the most useless and the most costly of the spoils that England has found in the East. The mosques and palaces of Delhi point to an age of barbaric extravagance, and one of its marvels is a tall pillar, the Kutub Minar, the loftiest in the world, that overlooks a desolate plain, and surveys the long waste of ruins that line the banks of the Jumna for fifteen miles. For two thousand years the labors of man have been building and destroying city after city beside the placid river; the fair capital rises amidst a circle of crumbling mosques and palaces; the English soldiers bivouac in the audience chamber of Aurungzebe; yet it may be hoped that the cunning fingers of the Hindoo workmen will be employed in future to plant a higher civilization among the scenes of their ancient grandeur, and toil rather for themselves than others. Famine, disease, tyranny, despair, have too often

been the lot of the real builders of cities. The wealth that raised a succession of Delhis and purchased the Koh-i-noor was wrung from infinite cottages and the toil of suffering millions. And it was the chief aim of the founders of our republic, we remember with more than classic satisfaction, to found a state in which labor should be the source of honor, and barbaric castes no longer prey upon their fellows.

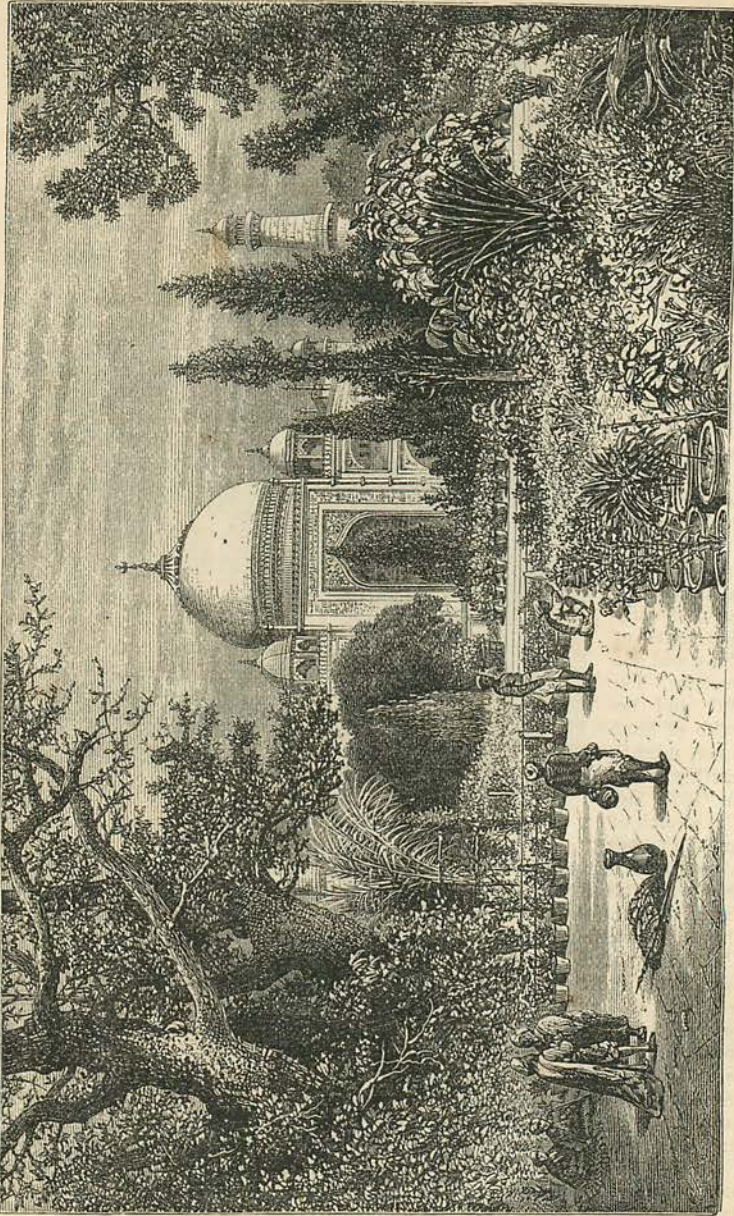
A hundred miles from Delhi, at Agra, rises one of the fairest monuments of selfish love and of a cruel promise. The beautiful and beloved wife of Shah Jehan, the mightiest of earthly kings, died in 1631, nor could the wealth of India or the power

of an absolute rule save the life of the being most dear to the Grand Mogul, the fair Moon-taj-i-Mahal. As she died she uttered the request that her husband would provide for her a suitable monument. Thoughtless and full of the common vanities of life, she scarcely reflected that the execution of her wish must be paid for from the poor earnings of the mothers and daughters of Hindostan, that tears would be shed in thousands of cottages, that children would be pinched and starved, and the aged harassed and disheartened, to provide for the cost of her marvelous tomb. Too seldom, indeed, do any of us look to the results of our actions, or are more careful than the dying queen to limit our wishes by a philanthropic rule. In his passionate grief Shah Jehan pressed on the building of a mausoleum to his consort with a barbaric indifference to the sufferings of his people. Twenty thousand laborers, it is said, were employed upon the work for twenty years. All India groaned with toil and taxation. The Taj Mahal, for so the tomb is called, rose at last to a wonderful perfection. It is the most beautiful and the richest of all the testimonials of a selfish affection to its lost object, the finest architectural device of sorrow, love, and death.



VIEW OF THE JHELUM ABOVE CASHMERE.

A garden, as is usual in most Oriental palaces and tombs, surrounds the spot where sleeps the Eastern queen; the cypress waves, the orange, the lemon, the banyan, and the palm spread their foliage around; fountains play along every avenue, and glitter in the air; and all the charms of Shiraz and Cashmere are said to be imitated if not surpassed in the gardens of Taj Mahal. In the midst of the solemn beauty of the natural decorations, in front of the great gate, and looking down upon the sacred Jumna, springs up the mausoleum itself. A platform of shining marble, one minaret at each corner of wonderful loveliness, and the central shrine crowned with its glittering crescent two hundred and sixty feet high, are wrought into that rare perfection of form and decoration to which only Hindoo craftsmen could attain. The marble, the gold, the precious stones, are melted into fruits and flowers, and woven into designs that surpass the labors of the pencil or the dreams of poetry. Yet it is within, beneath the central minaret, in a chamber richer and grander than royal palace ever knew, that the Oriental fancy finds its chief display. The marble-latticed windows lend a pensive light, the floors are sown with jewels, and



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the cenotaph of the fair and feeble mortal for whom all this wasteful toil was given rises like an apparition of beauty behind the lace-work of a marble screen. Yet in all this rich effect of Oriental fancy one misses perhaps the stronger traits of Western genius. A single figure on the mausoleum of Halicarnassus, cloven by the powerful chisel of Scopas, must surpass it all, and all the wealth and power of Shah Jehan could not awake the immortal fire that glows in the friezes of Phidias.

Such are the sights and scenes that await the traveler who penetrates into the heart of the forgotten East, and surveys the wrecks of its fallen empires. From Damascus to Delhi one wanders amidst a ceaseless desolation and decay. Around him are the foot-prints of emperors and conquerors, and the storied ruins of three thousand years. He passes over the mounds of Babylon, through the palaces of Cyrus, Xerxes, and Alexander, amidst the gardens of Persia and the unrivaled landscapes of Cashmere.

When all Europe was a savage waste, and all America unknown, before Rome and Athens had sprung up in the Western wilderness, the human race began its career of progress in the hot plains of India and on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris. The builders of Babylon and Nineveh were almost alone upon the earth. They were laboring unconsciously to found the central source from which all Western civilization was to take its rise. It is this that must ever give a lasting interest to that land of ruin and decay. We can not sever ourselves from its silent influence, or forget that but for Babylon and Nineveh, Persia and Assyria, our European ancestors might never have left their caves, and been transformed from savages into men. Nor can San Francisco or New York fail to trace its origin to the shapeless mounds that sleep on the Mesopotamian plain. Already the stir of West-

ern invention is awakening the slumbers of the fallen cities. A railroad must soon penetrate the valley of the Euphrates; we may soon rush with furious speed along the track of Alexander's armies, or where Xenophon paints the slow march of the invincible ten thousand. The *kellie* will no longer float on the Tigris, as in the days of Herodotus. The mounds on its banks will be rifled by avaricious explorers; the rose-gardens of Persia and the vale of Cashmere will become familiar to tourists from Oregon and the farmers of New Zealand. Yet the free races of the West, as they survey the total decay of early despotism and meditate upon its doom, will read the moral of the story, and learn amidst the ruins of Babylon or Persepolis that liberty alone is immortal, and independence and self-control the source of the lasting prosperity of nations.

RAPE OF THE GAMP.

CHAPTER XIX.

CARE KILLS A CAT.

BEFORE the boys dispersed for their Christmas holidays the head-master of the school at Pedlington again talked with his colleague on the painful subject of the distance which had been allowed to separate them. Being thrown so much together, as they had been now every day during terms for two years and a half, and closely allied in the common interest which existed between them and their pupils, being also on terms of old intimacy and proved friendship, it seemed always increasingly strange to Dr. Phelps that Mr. Lane should show such a persistent resolution to live alone, and to retire to his solitude whenever acknowledged duty did not summon him from it. Phelps, although a childless widower bordering on middle age, who in more than one sense of the expression might seem "to have done with the world," and so much occupied with a literary undertaking, in addition to his scholastic cares, as to have little time for general society (though general society in Pedlington was willing enough to incorporate the Doctor into its community), was yet of that social and genial temperament that he would have liked to sit with his old friend over their private studies and pursuits, and to have shared the hours of recreation with Mr. Lane, instead of sitting and working alone, as he now too often for a widower did, in the long winter nights after the boys had gone to bed, and instead of depending for daily intercourse on his relations with the boys, and with his third master, who was only a gentlemanly Senior boy. Still these scholastic relations were

so pleasant and intimate, and especially in summer Mr. Phelps partook so frequently of the games and sports which rivaled intellectual attainments in the youthful aspirations, that he felt himself to be less lonely and less in danger of giving way to melancholy than he had reason to believe was the case with his friend.

Was religion, or were the differences arising out of religious convictions, the cause of the partial estrangement between them? Dr. Phelps feared that it was so. Each year, as he grew older and found himself less and less in accord with religious people of any school or sect, he took refuge in a callous indifference to any prevailing set of opinions; outwardly, and more than outwardly in some philosophical and subjective sense, conforming to the creed of the universal church, as a body of doctrine generally beneficial to society, if people would only observe the law of charity, and not attempt to enforce any limited interpretation of this code upon their neighbors.

With those who did so Phelps had little patience. And although moderate persons esteemed him a fit and proper guardian of youth in a school where all shades of religious opinion were represented, yet the more zealous pietists of Pedlington, whether High-Church, Low-Church, or of any non-conforming sect, considered him a dangerous guide to the young in a perverse and stiff-necked generation, and prayed over him (somewhat despondently, it must be owned) in their secret council-chambers. He was, they said, upright and highly intellectual. His character was truly amiable. But these qualities of Dr. Phelps only made *it* (probably meaning "his case") all