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Layard. The nineveh court in the
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* * *Some of the Illustrations in this volume have been kindly lent by*
MR. JOHN MURRAY and MR. HERBERT INGRAM.

NOTICE.

THE Nineveh, or Assyrian Court in the Crystal Palace has been erected from the designs and under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Fergusson—a gentleman who has especially devoted himself to the study of Assyrian architecture, and has spared no pains to examine and compare every fragment of architectural ornament and detail, as well as every monument which might throw light upon the subject, discovered during the researches of M. Botta and the Author in Assyria, and to consult all the authorities on the question in this country and France. He has been ably seconded by Mr. Collman, of Curzon Street, who has applied himself most diligently and successfully to the investigation of the peculiar mode of colouring and ornamentation used by the ancient Assyrians, and has, to a remarkable degree, entered into the spirit of their style of artistic treatment. The colossal Bulls, at some of the entrances, and the Bull-capitals and columns from Persepolis, have been modelled by Mr. Harper from the originals and from careful drawings.

The thanks of the Crystal Palace Company are especially due to the French government, for its liberality in granting full permission to their agents to take casts from the Assyrian

sculptures preserved in the Louvre, and to examine the drawings and plans of discoveries recently made at Khorsabâd, sent to France by M. Place, French consul at Mósul.

The Company are equally indebted to the Trustees of the British Museum for the casts of numerous Assyrian bas-reliefs in the national collection.

Before describing the Nineveh Court, it has been thought advisable to give a slight sketch of the recent researches and discoveries among the ruins of Nineveh, to serve as an introduction to the examination of the various sculptures and monuments which it contains.

THE NINEVEH COURT.

INTRODUCTION.

Six hundred years before Christ Nineveh ceased to be a city, and Assyria an empire. Cyaxares, at the head of a vast army of Babylonians and Persians captured Nineveh after a short siege, destroyed its walls and palaces, and left it what it has remained to this day, a heap of ruins. The Assyrians, after the destruction of their capital, became subjects of the King of Babylon, and appear no more in history as an independent people.

As the great historians of Greece had not been born before the Assyrian empire had perished, no trustworthy account of it is to be found in profane history ; but the Greeks preserved many traditions concerning its power and extent, and traced to it much of their civilisation and religion, as well as many of their arts. It is, however, in the Bible that we have the most distinct and authentic notices of the state of Assyria. The Jews and the Assyrians were kindred people. They spoke nearly the same language, they claimed the same descent, and, as recent discoveries have shown, there was a considerable resemblance in their political condition. The dominions, too, of the Kings of Assyria bordered on those of the Jewish monarchs, and there was constantly war between them. Indeed, there is good reason for believing that for several hundred years the Jews were actually tributaries to the Assyrians. It was, no doubt, chiefly on account of this intimate connection, that the Jews were so frequently in danger of being corrupted by the superstitions and idolatrous worship of their neighbours, a tendency which drew forth the most emphatic warnings and denunciations of the prophets. The Kings of Nineveh, and their successors in the Empire of the East—the Kings of Babylon—were also repeatedly declared to be the instruments

by which the Almighty would punish the transgressions of the Jews, who were ultimately to be led away captive by those monarchs, and to expiate their sins in miserable bondage. It was soon after the division of the twelve tribes into the two distinct monarchies of Judah and Israel, under Rehoboam and Jeroboam, nearly 1000 years B.C., that the wars between the Assyrians and Jews appear to have commenced, or, at least, it is then that those wars are first mentioned in the Bible ; for the Jews, now weakened by their internal dissensions, offered an easy conquest to their ambitious and powerful neighbours.

The first Assyrian king, whose name is mentioned in Scripture, was Pul. He came against Samaria when Menahem reigned over Israel, and Azariah over Judah (about 770 B.C.), and having exacted a heavy tribute of 1000 talents of silver from the Israelites, returned to Assyria (2 Kings, xv. 19). Tiglath-Pileser, who appears to have been his successor, after having carried away captive the tribe of Naphthali in the reign of Pekah, became the ally of Ahaz against the Syrians, and received in return from the King of Samaria, "the silver and gold that were found in the House of the Lord and in the treasury in the King's House." (2 Kings, xvi. 8.) The next Assyrian royal names which occur in the Bible are Sargon and Shalmaneser (Isaiah xx. and 2 Kings, xviii.), believed by some to belong to the same king. Shalmaneser destroyed Samaria, and leading away captive the remainder of the ten tribes, placed them "in Halah and Habor, by the rivers of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." Thus ended the kingdom of Israel. Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon, made war upon Hezekiah, King of Judah, took Lachish and many of his principal cities, and exacted so large a tribute, that the Jewish monarch was compelled to cut off the gold from the doors and pillars of the temple. (2 Kings, xviii. 16.) At a subsequent period, however, the Assyrian army was destroyed by a pestilence, sent by God to punish the pride and arrogance of Sennacherib, who, on his return to Nineveh, was murdered by his two sons as he was worshipping in the House of Nisroch, his god. Esarhaddon, his son, who succeeded him, is the last Assyrian king mentioned in the Bible. Under one of his immediate successors Nineveh must have perished. Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, after the Assyrian Empire had been absorbed into that of Babylon.

It is this close intercourse, during several centuries, between the Jews and the Assyrians, the signal part which the kings of Nineveh

were destined to perform in the fulfilment of prophecy, and the ultimate destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser or Sargon, which render the recent discoveries among the ruins on the banks of the Tigris of such vast interest and importance, especially when those discoveries, as we shall shortly show, most completely corroborate the events recorded in the Bible, and illustrate to a remarkable extent the connexion between those two nations both in manners and language.

The Bible describes what recent discoveries fully confirm, the extent and power of the Assyrian empire, the pride and magnificence of its kings, its vast armies, composed of footmen, horsemen, and chariots, and the skill, enterprise, and wealth of its inhabitants. Nineveh, we are told in the book of Jonah, was a great city of no less than three days' journey in extent—meaning probably in circuit—containing more than six-score thousand persons who could not discern their right hand from their left hand, a description which has been variously applied to young children and to ignorant persons, but which, however applicable, conveys a striking illustration of the vast population of this mighty capital. The traditions preserved by the Greeks are no less full and precise as to its riches and splendour; and the dimensions they assign to it, correspond with the three days' journey of the Bible, and with the space actually occupied by its ruins.

These dimensions, far exceeding those of any modern capital, would seem to be too vast for a city, were it not remembered that it included gardens and fields, and was made up of several distinct walled quarters, distant from one another and divided by cultivated lands. The peculiar customs which have at all times prevailed in the East, especially with regard to polygamy and the seclusion of women, render a much larger space necessary for a dwelling than in the West, and more than one family rarely inhabit the same house. Such is the case in the modern capitals of Isfahan and Damascus; although they occupy as much ground as London or Paris, they do not contain a tithe of the population. Ancient writers tell us that in the event of a siege, Nineveh and Babylon could supply from the arable land within their walls abundant supplies for their inhabitants. It is, however, doubtful whether the whole of this vast area was enclosed by one great wall; it would appear from existing remains that each quarter only was so fortified and protected.

So completely had this great city disappeared, that Xenophon, who marched over its site with the ten thousand Greeks, about 250

years after its destruction, does not even record its name, and merely alludes to a few isolated ruins. The very position of Nineveh had, in subsequent ages, become a matter of doubt, and might have remained so but for those discoveries which have recently brought to light some of its ruins.

This entire disappearance of Nineveh, whilst the other great capitals of the ancient world had left some visible traces of their principal monuments, by which their site could be determined, is chiefly to be attributed to the materials of which it was constructed. The Assyrians did not, like the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, build their palaces and temples either of granite, precious marbles, or durable stone, but even their public edifices, as well as their humblest habitations, were of bricks made of clay mixed with chopped straw, and merely dried in the sun. Without the chopped straw the clay would not have been bound together, or have had sufficient consistency for use; hence the meaning of the passage in the book of Exodus (chap. v. 7.) which describes the hardships of the Jews when the Egyptians refused to supply them with straw to make their bricks. Other materials, such as marble, alabaster, stone, and kiln-burnt bricks, generally painted or glazed, were used by the Assyrians in their principal edifices, but to a comparatively limited extent, and only by way of ornament. Hence, when the buildings were once deserted, the upper walls and stories soon fell in and buried the lower. The bricks of clay became earth again, and the ruins would assume the appearance of mere natural heaps and mounds rising in the plain, upon which the grass grew and corn might be sown. And such have been the ruins of Nineveh for more than two thousand years.

On the left, or eastern bank, of the river Tigris, about 250 miles to the north of Baghdad and opposite to the modern town of Mosul, rise a number of these mounds. Some are of great size, and upon them the Arabs have built villages and have cultivated the soil. Others stretch out in long parallel lines, marking the site of walls and fortifications. The present inhabitants of the country, although not the descendants of the ancient, still preserve a few traditions which point to these remains as the ruins of Nineveh. Upon one of the most considerable stands a building, which is supposed to cover the tomb of the Prophet Jonah, who is believed by orientals to have died where he prophesied. Another is called Nimroud, or Nimrod, and an adjoining elevation Asshur, or Ashur. The late Mr. Rich, the British resident or political agent at Baghdad, a gentleman distinguished for his acquirements and his acquaintance

with the languages and antiquities of the East, was the first to call attention to these very remarkable remains. During a visit to Mósul, in the year 1820, he had an opportunity of carefully examining the mounds opposite that town. He found among the rubbish scattered around them, fragments of marble and bricks bearing traces of inscriptions in the peculiar character called the arrow-headed, or cuneiform. He learnt, too, from the Arabs, that large slabs of marble covered with sculptured figures of men and animals had occasionally been dug out of the ruins. Mr. Rich consequently inferred that these heaps of earth must cover the remains of vast edifices. Many years, however, elapsed before they were more completely examined, and the nature of their contents ascertained.

M. Botta, French Consul at Mósul, first undertook, in 1842, regular excavations in the ruins, commencing with a great mound called Kouyunjik, rising on the banks of the Tigris, opposite to the town. He worked for some time without success, until he was guided by a peasant to the village of Khorsabad, built upon one of these artificial elevations about fourteen miles from the river. Sculptured stones were said to have been found there by the Arabs when digging the foundations of their houses. M. Botta immediately sunk wells into the mound and soon discovered several slabs, seven or eight feet high, of a kind of gray alabaster, or gypsum, carved with human figures in relief. They proved to be part of the panelling or casing of a wall built of sun-dried bricks. Others succeeded, and M. Botta ere long found that he was in a chamber forming part of an edifice which had been buried at some remote period. Carefully removing the earth, he at length came to a doorway leading into a second apartment; similar discoveries followed, and, in the space of a few months, a large number of halls and chambers were completely explored, belonging to a magnificent edifice whose walls were all panelled with sculptured slabs, and whose entrances and *façades* were ornamented with monstrous forms carved partly in full, and partly in high relief. These extraordinary figures, which appeared to guard the inner recesses of the palace, were of colossal size, and united the head of a man with the body of a bull and the wings of a bird. Similar monsters had been discovered among the ruins of the celebrated city of Persepolis, the ancient capital of Persia. They were singularly grand and imposing in form, and thus dug as it were out of the bowels of the earth, had a very striking and solemn appearance. The sculptures on the walls, cut in low relief,

represented various scenes from the public and private life of the Assyrians—battles, sieges, banquets, processions, &c., and here and there colossal figures of priests and deities. There were no traces of the upper part and roof of the edifice ; as they had been principally constructed of wood and other perishable materials, they had entirely disappeared. Only the lower part or basement, consisting of thick walls of sun-dried bricks, panelled with the slabs of alabaster, had resisted the ravages of time.

The art displayed in the sculptures, although rude and primitive, was distinguished by considerable truth of outline and elegance of detail. It has now taken its place amongst other styles of ancient art, and is easily recognised by its peculiar characteristics, especially in the treatment of the human form, marked by the strong development of the limbs and muscles, in the nature of its ornamentation frequently marked by considerable grace and beauty, and in the conventional mode of portraying natural objects, such as mountains, trees, rivers, &c. Traces of colour were found upon nearly all the bas-reliefs, thus showing that the Assyrians, like other ancient nations, painted their sculptures and the architectural ornaments of their buildings.

During his researches at Khorsabad, M. Botta was in constant communication with the Author, who, as far back as the spring of 1840, had visited the ruins of Nineveh, and had formed the plan of opening the principal mounds. It was not, however, until 1845, that he was able to carry out, by the assistance of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then Sir Stratford Canning, his long-cherished design. In the autumn of that year he returned to Mósul. The jealousy which the Turkish authorities and the inhabitants of the country had shown of M. Botta's excavations,—carried on, as they believed, for the purpose of discovering buried treasures, or for some mysterious object connected with designs upon the territories of the Sultan, attributed to Europeans,—rendered it necessary to commence operations with great caution. The mound of Nimroud was consequently selected for examination as being the farthest removed from Mósul, as well as being the most important and interesting in this part of Assyria. At that time the country around the ruins had been left a desert, and was only occasionally visited by bands of Arab horsemen in search of plunder.

It was on the 8th of November that the Author left Mósul for Nimroud, floating down the river Tigris on a raft formed of inflated skins. He was accompanied by an English gentleman, Mr. Ross. In a few hours he reached the ruins. The

periodical rains not having yet commenced, the vast mound was still an arid, yellow heap, rising in the midst of a great plain equally devoid of verdure ; no remains of building, not even a trace of masonry, were visible. The enormous platform, or terrace, seemed a natural elevation ; and, had it not been for the fragments of brick and pottery, some inscribed with arrow-headed characters, scattered on its surface, there would have been no signs to lead to the conjecture that edifices had once stood on its summit. The mound was nearly a parallelogram, in length about 1800 feet, in breadth 900, and at the north-west angle rose a high cone, which has been called the "pyramid." The river Tigris once watered its western base, but had long deserted its ancient bed, now flowing at the distance of nearly a mile and a half from the ruins.



The great Mound of Nimroud.

The mode of carrying on the excavations at Nimroud, and their results having been fully described in a work published by the Author on his return to this country after his first expedition to Assyria,* it will be sufficient to give a very slight sketch of the nature of the discoveries made by him in the ruins. The first successful researches were undertaken in the south-west corner of the mound, where a wall, panelled as at Khorsabad with inscribed alaba, was almost immediately uncovered. The edifice to which it belonged had evidently been destroyed by fire, its ruins were buried in charred wood, and the alabaster was almost reduced to lime. Some days elapsed before more perfect remains were discovered. At length an entire slab, sculptured with a winged figure in low relief, was dug out of the north-west corner of the mound, and a few days after the colossal human head, which formed the

* See "Nineveh and its Remains," and the Abridgment by the Author.

first great discovery at Nimroud, was uncovered. The sudden appearance of this strange object caused great excitement amongst the Arabs and the inhabitants of Mósul, who believed it to be the head of one of their prophets, or of some evil spirit, and led to the temporary suspension of the excavations. Not long after, however,



Discovery of the Colossal Head.

they were renewed under the authority of an imperial firman, and have since been carried on without any other interruption; the Sultan having generously permitted the Author to explore all the ruins in this part of his dominions, and to remove any monuments that might be discovered to this country.

The human head proved to be part of one of those emblematic figures already described as having been found in the ruins of Khorsabád, except that the body was that of a lion instead of a bull. There were some differences too in the details. The

cap, that peculiar head-dress always given to sacred figures of Assyrian monuments, was round instead of square, and this distinction is now used to mark the difference between the Nineveh remains. In the Nineveh Court in the Crystal Palace this lion-like head-dress is observed in the figures forming the doorway on the west side of the central hall (the head of one to the right is cast from that first discovered at Nimroud), and differs in this respect from the winged bulls of the palace and principal entrance.



Human-headed Lion.

The second human-headed lion was soon after discovered, the two opening a portal into a grand hall, 154 feet in length, and 33 in breadth, in which were three other entrances similarly ornamented. The walls of this magnificent apartment had been entirely covered with alabaster slabs, which, with one or two exceptions, were carved with elaborate bas-reliefs, representing battles, and hunting scenes, divided into two compartments, an upper and a lower, by a band of inscriptions. Unfortunately, one of this hall had been almost entirely destroyed, and it was from the fragments scattered amongst the rubbish that the names of the sculptures, which once adorned it, could be ascertained. The opposite wall was still preserved almost entire, although many of the slabs had fallen from their places upon the pavement. The whole series of these sculptures has been placed in the British Museum, and casts from them surround the inner chamber of the Nineveh Court.

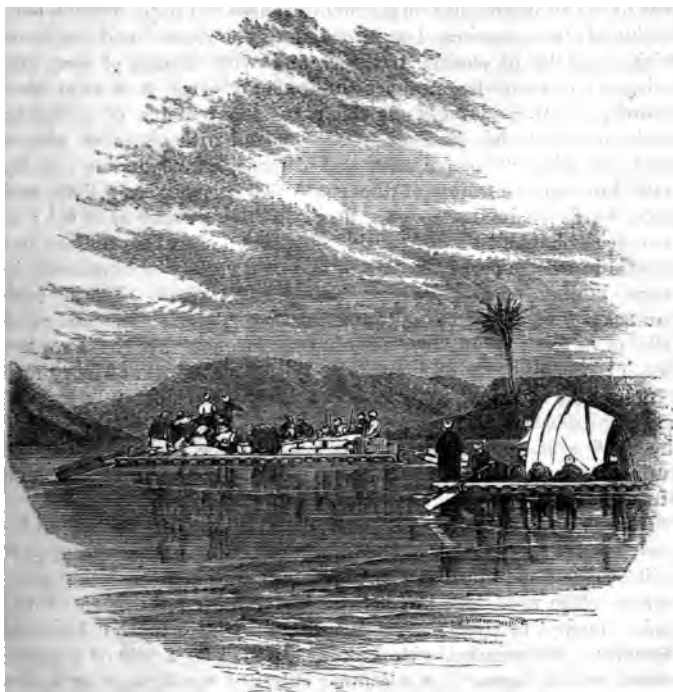
The entrances formed by the winged bulls and lions led into further chambers, from which doorways opened into other parts of the temple; one apartment having been discovered, the excavators were only to follow the walls to penetrate into others. After some months' labour five and twenty halls and chambers were explored, all covered with slabs of alabaster—some sculptured with figures, and merely inscribed with a short record in the arrow-headed cuneiform character, containing the name, titles, and principal events of the

reign of the royal founder, repeated on almost every stone used in the edifice, and now known as "the standard inscription of Nimroud."

The workmen employed by the Author were chiefly Arabs, and Nestorian Chaldeans. Soon after the excavations had been commenced, the tribes which usually inhabit the plain around the ruins returned to their pastures. By entering into friendly relations with the chiefs, and humouring the peculiar prejudices and customs of their followers, an effective body of Arabs was soon collected together. They usually brought their black tents, with their wives and children to the mound itself, and there encamped whilst the excavations were in progress. They were chiefly employed in removing the earth from the ruins in baskets, no other mode of proceeding being known in the country. The more arduous labour of digging away the rubbish, which on account of its hardness and consistency, could only be effected with iron picks, was assigned to the Nestorian Chaldeans of the mountains, a hardy and industrious race of Christians, with whom the Author had opened communications, and who came down from their villages to earn a scanty subsistence after they had been plundered of all their property by the Kurds.

The sculptured and inscribed walls, forming the lower part of the ancient edifices, were buried beneath a vast heap of rubbish, the remains of the upper stories and roofs, and of fine soil which, had been for ages accumulating above the ruins. In some places this mass of earth rose fifteen or twenty feet above the slabs. The surface of the platform or mound was nearly flat. Upon it the Arabs, and probably those who inhabited the country before them, had sown corn for centuries, little thinking that their rude ploughs were passing over the sculptured halls of palaces, once the marvel of the Eastern world. Even tombs which must have held their dead before the birth of Christ, and some which contained vases and ornaments of Greek and Roman origin, were found above the Assyrian edifices. Had the ruins been completely explored, an immense quantity of earth must have been removed. In order, therefore, to save labour and much needless expense, the sides only of the chambers, ornamented with the panelling of sculptured or inscribed slabs, were uncovered, the centre being left unexamined and filled with rubbish. Thus the excavations had the appearance of a number of narrow galleries, open to the sky above, formed on one side by bas-reliefs and inscribed slabs, and on the other by a wall of earth mingled with bricks, decayed wood, and pottery. When the palace had been thus partially explored, a selection

was made of the most interesting and best preserved sculptures to be sent to England for the British Museum, and the smaller lion and bull now in the national collection, with the slabs of which casts have been placed in the Nineveh Court, were taken from the ruins. From the size and weight of these objects, and the entire absence of any mechanical contrivances in the country, considerable difficulty was experienced in moving them. A rude cart was at length constructed, and, with the assistance of a large number of Arabs, the two principal sculptures, the bull and lion, were lowered from their erect position at the entrances which they



Rafts upon the Tigris.

guarded, and were dragged to the water's edge. They were then placed upon rafts made of inflated skins bound together, and

floored with beams and planks of wood. Upon these primitive vessels they floated down the river Tigris to Busrah (Balsora), where they were shipped for England.*

On the Author's return to Assyria in 1849, further excavations were undertaken in the north-west corner of the Nimroud mound. Many new chambers were discovered belonging to the palace already partly explored, but their walls were not panelled with sculptured slabs, being simply plastered and painted with various ornamental designs and groups of figures. In one of these apartments, which appears to have been the royal treasury or store-house, was found an interesting collection of bronzes and other objects, consisting of plates, bowls and cups, elaborately embossed and engraved with a variety of elegant patterns, and with figures of men and animals; of many large copper cauldrons; of arms, such as arrows, swords, spear-heads and shields; of the remains of a throne made of ivory and precious wood, encased with plates of copper embossed with various figures and designs, corresponding exactly with the representation of the royal seat in the bas-reliefs, and upon which Shalmaneser or Sennacherib himself may have sat; of several elephant's tusks of considerable size; of parts of altars and tripods in bronze; of glass bowls, and of a variety of ornaments in ivory, mother of pearl, glass, enamel and copper. These, with one beautiful glass vase, and two of alabaster, bearing the name and title of Sargon, the Assyrian king mentioned by the Prophet Isaiah; the remains of helmets and armour; tablets of ivory and figures in the same material, most delicately and elaborately carved, and enamelled bricks of many colours and designs, were amongst the most remarkable objects discovered in the north-west palace during the excavations. They are now mostly in the British Museum.

In addition to this palace it was found that two small temples occupied the northern extremity of the platform of Nimroud, built by the same king, and forming, as it were, part of the same edifice. The most remarkable was one adjoining the base of the conical mound or pyramid—apparently dedicated to the Assyrian Hercules. Its principal gateway was guarded by a pair of gigantic human-headed Lions. An adjoining entrance was formed by sculptured slabs, some of which are now in the British Museum, representing the Deity—to whom probably the temple was dedicated

* The process of lowering and raising these colossal figures has been fully described in the work published by the Author.



—driving out with a thunderbolt the Evil Spirit, portrayed with monstrous head and extended jaws, the body of a lion, the tail an eagle, and the wings and tail of a bird. Adjoining



Dagon, or the Fish God.

sculptures was the figure of a man, with the head and shoulders of a fish forming a kind of head-dress and upper garment. This singular image is believed to represent the god Dagon, the Philistines, frequently mentioned in the Bible, and whose altar the people of Ashdod were "gathered together to offer a great sacrifice and rejoice," when Samson "brought down upon himself with all his might against the pillars and the lords and the people before the ruins of the temple (Judges xvi. 23). It was this idol which fell upon its face on the ground before the ark of the Lord at Ashdod, when the Philistines cut off both palms of the statue, and only the lower part (according to the relief in the margin) was left (1 Samuel v. 4). At this same excavation was also discovered a fine figure of the royal foundry, the north-west palace in the relief, and inscribed on the

sides with arrow-headed writing; before it stood a tripod or showing that the king had been deified. Both are now in the British Museum.

In this temple were found several enormous slabs of alabaster covered on both sides with cuneiform writing, each forming an entire pavement of one room. The largest was no less than 11 feet by 16½ feet, and upon it were inscribed in 325 lines the annals of a king who lived nearly a thousand years before Christ. These records, which contain the most curious historical

geographical details, and throw a new light upon the political condition and manners of the ancient Assyrians, have been translated by Dr. Hincks, and will, it is hoped, be shortly published.*

The second temple, opposite to that just described, and standing on the northern edge of the mound, was chiefly remarkable for an entrance formed by a pair of colossal lions, sculptured with singular spirit and boldness. One of them is now in the British Museum.

Excavations in the high conical mound led to the discovery that it was the remains of an enormous square tower, which must



Pyramidal Mound, Nimroud.

have been at least 200 feet high, and probably much more. It was **built** of sun-dried bricks, faced to the height of twenty feet with

* For a notice of the contents of these inscriptions see "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 352.

solid masonry of stone, and above with burnt bricks. In interior was found a narrow vaulted gallery, 100 feet long, high, and 6 broad. It was empty, having probably been broken into and plundered at some remote period. It appears to have been a place of royal sepulture, and there are grounds for believing that the building covered by this mound is the tomb of Sardanapalus, so frequently alluded to by ancient writers, as existing in the ruins at Nineveh.

Whilst these discoveries were being made in the north-west palace, excavations were at the same time carried on in other parts of the great mound of Nimroud. In its centre were the remains of a second edifice, which has been called the "second palace," and which appears to have been founded by one king, completed or added to by a second. It had suffered far more than the north-west palace; few of the walls were still standing.



The Obelisk in Black Marble.

and the greater part of the bas-reliefs were heaped together as if ready to be moved to some other building. Remains of human-headed bulls and lions still stood at the entrances,

1. them were inscriptions of the highest interest ; but the most remarkable discovery in these ruins was that of the black obelisk in the British Museum. This very important monument is studded with twenty bas-reliefs representing the king of Assyria receiving the tribute of several conquered nations, consisting of various wild animals, vases of precious metal, rare woods, and other costly objects, and is inscribed with 210 lines of arrow-headed writing, being the royal annals for thirty-one years. Amongst the names of the monarchs who acknowledged the supremacy of the king of Assyria, are those of Jehu, king of Samaria, and Ahaz, whom Elijah anointed king of Syria, which gives to this monument the utmost value, and enables us to fix its date at about 885 B.C. The whole inscription was first translated and published by Col. Rawlinson—the name of Jehu was discovered by Hincks. This king is called “the son of Omri,” of whom, however, the Bible tells us he was only the successor—“son of” being frequently used in this sense in eastern phraseology.* Samaria is, therefore, called “the house of Omri,” by whom we know the city to have been founded ; another common mode of eastern designation. The next important discovery at Nimroud was that of the south-east palace, which had been ornamented with sculptures evidently taken from several other buildings ; some from the north-west palace, and others from the centre. The human-headed bulls and lions, however, which stood at the entrances, bore the name of Esaraddon, the son of Sennacherib, who appears to have founded the palace. Several inscriptions of great interest and value have been found amongst these ruins, but unfortunately few of them are complete ; the inscribed and sculptured slabs having been sawn or cut to fit them into the walls. They contain the records of Ashurnasirpal and Tiglath-Pileser, the Assyrian kings mentioned in the Bible, in one of them Dr. Hincks first detected, amongst the names of other tributary monarchs, that of Menahem, king of Israel. The fourth palace was discovered in the south-east corner of the mound, but no sculptured or inscribed slabs appear to have adorned its walls, which were simply panelled to the height of about four feet in common stone, and plastered and painted above. The king who founded this building, and whose name is inscribed upon the slabs from its ruins, was the grandson of Esarhaddon, and appears to have been nearly the last, or perhaps the last king of Assyria. But an obelisk or detached monument, with a bas-relief of

Thus in the Bible Jehu is called both “the son of Nimshi,” and “the son of Shaphat the son of Nimshi.”

an earlier Assyrian king, and a very long inscription containing his annals, has recently been found by Mr. Rassam in this edifice.

During the latter part of the Author's first residence at Nineveh, the remains of a palace had been discovered in the great mound of Kouyunjik, opposite Mósul. The ruins were buried beneath an immense accumulation of earth and rubbish, and were only reached by trenches, in some instances, more than thirty feet deep. Whilst the principal edifices at Nimroud, except the south-west palace, were uninjured by fire; that at Kouyunjik had been evidently exposed, like Khorsabád, to a terrible conflagration. The alabaster slabs were reduced to lime, and in many places had entirely disappeared. The chambers were filled with charcoal, and other undoubted evidence of the great fire which must have destroyed the building. It was not, however, until the Author's return to Assyria in 1849, that these ruins were fully explored. They were found to be those of a magnificent palace built by Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, the king who made war against Hezekiah. Each apartment was panelled with sculptured slabs, representing a distinct subject, so that each chamber was a separate historical record. In one were portrayed the wars of the king in a mountainous region, in another a campaign in a plain wooded with palm trees, in a third an expedition against a people inhabiting vast marshes, and in a fourth the siege of cities standing on a great river.

But amongst the most remarkable of the bas-reliefs were two series representing the various processes employed by the Assyrians in moving the colossal figures forming the entrances to their palaces, and in raising the great mounds upon which the royal edifices were built. We have first the stone in the rough brought down the river Tigris on a boat towed by several hundred men—next, the slab having been landed and carved into a human-headed bull, is moved on a kind of sledge to the foot of the mound; and lastly, the colossus is dragged by gangs of workmen to the summit of the platform prepared to receive it. We shall again allude to these series of sculptures when we describe the architecture of the Assyrian palaces. The entrances at Kouyunjik, as in the edifices previously described, were formed by human-headed bulls and lions, and by colossal winged figures of Assyrian gods. Amongst the latter the eagle-headed deity, Dagon or the fish god, a lion-headed man, and various other monstrous forms continually occurred.

The bas-reliefs in Sennacherib's palace differed somewhat from

hitherto discovered. They were from eight to nine feet high, were mostly covered from top to bottom with very small figures, minute, though rude, representations of the natural features of country in which the events recorded took place. No descriptive inscriptions, except occasionally a few words with the name of the city or king portrayed, accompanied these sculptures. The slabs of the royal founder were, however, engraved at great length with the numerous colossal man-bulls which formed the entrances and façades of the building. Several chambers appear to have contained the public archives or records, and amongst the earth and rubbish with which they were filled was discovered an immense number of tablets of baked clay of various sizes, covered with inscriptions in the most minute arrow-headed characters. With this was also found a large collection of pieces of clay impressed with seals once appended to documents—probably rolls of leather or papyrus—the marks of the string being still visible. Amongst these lumps of clay were two of great importance. Upon one was the impression of two seals; one that of a king of Assyria, the other that of a king of Egypt. The name of the Egyptian monarch in hieroglyphics is recognised by Egyptian scholars as that of Sesostris III., the Æthiopian, of the twenty-fifth dynasty, believed to be identical with So, who received ambassadors from Hoshea, king of Israel (2 Kings xvii. 4), and was the immediate predecessor of Tirhakah, who came against Sennacherib. These seals were probably appended to a treaty between the kings of Assyria and Egypt, and the fact of the Egyptian seal being of a monarch who reigned at the very time at which the palace of Kouyunjik, long before this discovery, was conjectured to have been built, is a most remarkable corroborative proof of the correctness of the interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions.

The palace of Sennacherib at Kouyunjik is the most vast and magnificent building hitherto discovered on the site of Nineveh. Although partly explored during the Author's residence in Assyria, some idea may be formed of its great extent and of the richness and variety of its decorations, when it is mentioned, that "no less than seventy-one halls, chambers, and passages were explored, whose walls, almost without an exception, were panelled with slabs of figured alabaster, recording the wars, the triumphs, and other deeds of the Assyrian king; that by a rough calculation it measured 9880 feet, or nearly two miles of bas-reliefs, with twenty-four portals formed by colossal winged bulls and lion-sphinxes, all uncovered," and that the area of the ruins excavated was 720

and numerous inscriptions, have been found among the ruins of the centre palace ; at Kouyunjik two or three obelisks, an entire statue, and a large number of inscribed tablets have been added to the collection of detached objects. But the most important discovery in that great mound consists of many new halls and chambers panelled with bas-reliefs, in far better preservation than anything yet found. Whether these apartments belong to a second palace, or whether they form part of that founded by Sennacherib, does not yet appear to be determined. They were built during the reign of the grandson of that monarch, who, we know, added to the great edifice raised by his grandfather ; six slabs, now in the British Museum, of the same period having been brought from that building.

The newly discovered bas-reliefs are described as remarkable for the spirit of the design, and the exceeding minuteness of the details. They probably resemble, in this respect, the bas-reliefs above alluded to of the same king now in the national collection, and are of the same style of art. Although at this period the Assyrian sculptor sought to portray with greater exactness and in fuller detail than had before been attempted, the scenes which he endeavoured to represent, yet in a true feeling for art the monuments of this epoch undoubtedly show a very marked decline. The bas-reliefs from Khorsabad and Kouyunjik bear the same relation to the sculptures of the north-west palace of Nimroud, as the later monuments of Egypt do to the earlier. It is at Nimroud alone we find that grandeur and severity of style displayed in the colossal lion now in the British Museum, and that variety and elegance in the details so remarkable in the sculptures of which casts are placed in the central hall of the Nineveh Court, which were evidently the origin of some of the ornaments of classic Greece. Any one acquainted with the various characteristics of Assyrian art will, at once, detect the period of a bas-relief by its style, and although the artists employed by Sennacherib and his successors aimed at greater effect and exactness they never reached the simple grandeur of the earlier monuments.

Amongst the most interesting bas-reliefs discovered by Mr. Bussam in the new chambers at Kouyunjik is one series representing the king hunting lions in a royal park, or paradise ; another a campaign against the Arabs, who are mounted on dromedaries ; and a third, a palace with all its architectural details, and a bridge with pointed arches. The most important of these sculptures have been secured for the British Museum, and will, it is hoped, be shortly placed in the national collection.

Careful transcripts and casts in paper of the inscriptions discovered at Nimroud and Kouyunjik, with a large collection of inscribed terra-cotta cylinders and tablets were brought to this country. The examination to which they have been subjected has produced results which could have been scarcely expected, and the importance and interest of which it would be impossible to exaggerate. As far back as 1849, Dr. Hincks had read the name of Sennacherib as that of the king who founded the great palace at Kouyunjik, and had consequently identified the names of his father and his son with Sargon and Esarhaddon. Col. Rawlinson, in August, 1851, announced that he had further discovered in an inscription from those ruins, the name of Hezekiah, King of Judah, and a distinct record of the expedition of Sennacherib against Jerusalem, mentioned in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. Through the assistance of Dr. Hincks and of Col. Rawlinson's translations, the Author was shortly after able to publish the substance of this most important inscription, part of which we will here transcribe. These royal records or chronicles, like most of those hitherto discovered in Assyria, are divided into annals, the events of each year being classed together. In the first year of his reign, the inscription declares, Sennacherib turned his arms against the nations who inhabited the country to the south of Assyria, and whose king was Merodach Baladan, a name familiar to us as that of the Babylonish monarch to whose ambassadors Hezekiah in his pride showed "the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold, and the spices and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures" (Isaiah xxxix.). Having subdued this king, Sennacherib made war upon several tribes who appear to have dwelt in the mountains to the north of Nineveh, the modern Armenia and Kurdistan. It was not until the third year of his reign that he crossed the Euphrates, and entered Syria, whose inhabitants are called by their well-known Biblical name of Hittites. And now comes the really important portion of his annals. He soon discomfited the King of Tyre and Sidon, who is called Luliya, and who is mentioned by Josephus as *Elulus*, undoubtedly a Greek form of the same name. Other kings of the sea-coast, except the King of Ascalon submitted at once to the Assyrians. This king was, however, at length defeated, and was taken prisoner to Nineveh. A passage of great importance which now occurs is unfortunately so much injured that it has not yet been satisfactorily restored. It appears to state that the chief prince and people of Ekron had dethroned their king Padiya, who was

dependent upon Assyria, and had delivered him up to Hezekiah, King of Judah. The king of Egypt sent an army, the main part of which is said to have belonged to the king of Æthiopia (as stated in the Bible), to Judaea, probably to help his Jewish allies. Sennacherib joined battle with the Egyptians, and totally defeated them near a city the name of which has not yet been decyphered, capturing the charioteers of the king of Æthiopia, and placing them in confinement. This battle between the armies of the Assyrians and Egyptians appears to be hinted at in Isaiah (xxxvii.) and 2 Kings (xix. 9). Padiya having been brought back from Jerusalem, was replaced by Sennacherib on his throne. "Hezekiah, King of Judah," says the Assyrian king, the very words of whose record we now quote, "who had not submitted to my authority, forty-six of his principal cities and fortresses, and villages depending upon them of which I took no account, I captured and carried away their spoil. I shut up himself within Jerusalem, his capital city. The fortified towns and the rest of his towns which I spoiled, I severed from his country, and gave to the kings of Ascalon, Ekron, and Gaza, so as to make his country weak. In addition to the former tribute imposed upon these countries, I added a tribute, the nature of which I fixed." The next passage is somewhat defaced, but the substance of it appears to be, that Sennacherib took from Hezekiah the treasure he had collected in Jerusalem, 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, the treasures of his palace, besides his sons and his daughters and his male and female servants, or slaves, and brought them all to Nineveh. The city itself, however, he does not pretend to have taken.*

In the eighteenth chapter of the Second Book of Kings we have an account of this campaign of Sennacherib, agreeing with singular precision with the Assyrian records—"Now, in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, did Sennacherib, King of Assyria, come up against all the fenced cities of Judah and *took them*. And Hezekiah, King of Judah, sent to the King of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest upon me will I bear. And the King of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah, King of Judah, three hundred talents of silver, and *thirty talents of gold*, and Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord and in the treasures of the King's house."

* See "Nineveh and Babylon," p 143.

It will be perceived that the amount of tribute in gold paid by Hezekiah, thirty talents, agrees in both records. It is possible that the difference in the silver may be accounted for by supposing that Hezekiah added the silver ornaments of the temple and royal treasury to the number of talents assigned to him, and that in the Assyrian records we have a statement of the gross amount.

It would appear from the Biblical account of the wars between Sennacherib and Hezekiah, that the Assyrian king undertook two distinct expeditions against the Jews; in the first he was successful, in the second his army was destroyed by the plague. Sennacherib



Sennacherib on his Throne before Lachish.

reigned, according to his annals, many years after these events, and we are not told by the Bible that he was slain *immediately*.

fter his return to Nineveh. The expression is general, and merely firms that he was afterwards murdered by his sons. It cannot be expected that Sennacherib should have related his own defeat in his public records.

Each warlike expedition undertaken by Sennacherib was probably commemorated by bas-reliefs on the walls of his palace, each chamber, as we have already observed, being devoted to one event. We have little difficulty in recognising the representations of his campaigns against the people of Chaldæa and Babylonia, inhabiting a country watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, abounding in vast marshes formed by the overflowing of those great rivers, and wooded with palm trees. The mountainous regions, with their castles and hill forts, and their forests, are no less distinctly portrayed. In some instances, a few lines of cuneiform inscription accompany these representations, and contain the names of the captured cities and of their chiefs. It might be expected, therefore, that a sculptured record should be found of the war with the Jews; and in a bas-relief representing the siege of a great city, built amongst wooded hills and surrounded by fig-trees, pomegranates, and vines, we find the king himself seated upon his throne, receiving the captives and spoil taken in battle: above his head is an inscription in four lines, which reads, "Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment, before the city of Lachish. I give permission for its slaughter."

Here, then, we have an actual representation of an event recorded in the Bible, for it was during the siege of Lachish, which afterwards surrendered, that Sennacherib "sent Tartan, and Rabсарis, and Rab-shakeh with a great host against Jerusalem," (2 Kings xviii. 17). The captives brought before the king, and the warriors defending the walls of the besieged city, as portrayed in the sculptures, are consequently the Jews themselves. The wooded hills, vineyards, and orchards represent the hilly country of Judah, in one of the vallies of which Lachish appears to have been situated. This most interesting series of bas-reliefs, although much injured by fire, will shortly arrive in this country and will be placed among the other Assyrian remains in the British Museum.

It has frequently been remarked, that there is a complete absence of either cotemporary evidence or of subsequent records to corroborate the historical parts of the Bible, and that it is scarcely possible that such great wars and campaigns, as are

described in the Books of Kings and Chronicles could have occurred without some notice having been taken of them by ancient writers. Such an objection, of whatever value it might have been, is now completely removed by the discoveries we have described ; the testimony of those who actually took a part in the events described in Holy Writ, who had no interest whatever in distorting them, and who recorded them almost within a few days of the time when they occurred, can now be produced to confirm the truth and accuracy of the Biblical relation. The simple and unexaggerated tone in which the Assyrian records are written, so different from that generally adopted by Eastern nations, and the great minuteness of the details, to the very number of the captives, cattle, and various objects of spoil taken during the several campaigns, give a singular truthfulness to the narrative.

But these are not the only discoveries illustrative of sacred and profane history, and of the manners and condition of the ancient Assyrians which have been made since the inscriptions have been examined in England. The names of more than thirty Assyrian and Babylonian kings have been recovered ; the earliest probably reigned nearly 2200 years before Christ, and the last at the time of the fall of Nineveh. Of some of these kings we have the fullest annals. Amongst the earliest and most complete hitherto discovered are those of Tiglath-Pileser I., who must have lived between eleven and twelve hundred years before Christ. Cylinders of terra-cotta, one inscribed with no less than eight hundred lines of cuneiform writing containing the records of this monarch, have been dug up at Kalah Sherghat, a great Assyrian ruin on the Tigris, some miles to the south of Nimroud. Amongst other events which occurred during his reign, they commemorate the restoration of a temple which had been pulled down some sixty years before, and six hundred and forty-one years after its original foundation, thus carrying back the Assyrian monarchy to nearly 1850 years before Christ, and proving that, even at that remote date, the Assyrians possessed an accurate system of chronology. The records of the founder of the north-west palace, perhaps the most powerful and warlike of the Assyrian monarchs, have been recently translated by Dr. Hincks, and are next in importance for their antiquity as well as the most remarkable for their completeness. They contain very curious geographical details of the countries conquered by this monarch, including the names of tribes, cities, mountains and rivers, with the amount of captives and plunder carried away from each people ; giving us an accurate

re of the political condition, and of the mode of warfare of Assyrians a thousand years before Christ, and affording a series of highly interesting illustrations of the customs of the Jews. The records of his son are scarcely less full and interesting. They contain, as has been already observed, the names of Shalmaneser, King of Israel, and Hazael, King of Syria. The annals of the king who was second or third in succession to the builder of the great palace at Nimroud have been recently discovered, and a translation of a portion of them has been sent to this country by Col. Rawlinson. The next monarch of whom we have any detailed records is one whose name according to Col. Rawlinson

is Phal-lukha, supposed to be the Pul of Scripture and Belochus of profane history. Col. Rawlinson has recently found that on a statue of the god Nebo, discovered in the ruins of a south-east palace at Nimroud, he has found an inscription containing the name of the wife and queen of this monarch, who was no other than the celebrated Semiramis of the Greeks, the famed conqueror of Asia, and the greatest heroine of ancient Assyria. Of Tiglath-Pileser II., his successor, the Assyrian king mentioned in the Bible, and who, Col. Rawlinson conjectures, was the founder of a new dynasty, we have also important records; in them we find mention of Menahem, King of Israel. The ruins of Khorsabad furnish us with the most complete annals of this king, the inscriptions having been published by the French government. We have already fully noticed the annals of Sennacherib from Kouyunjik. In addition to inscriptions on the walls of the palace, we have several historical cylinders and terra-cotta tablets of the time of this king. Dr. Hincks has prepared a translation of all the important records, which will, it is hoped, be soon published. The same learned scholar has recently announced that on the fragment of a cylinder containing the annals of Esarhaddon, he has detected the names of Manasseh, King of Judah, and of the king of Edom, Gaza, Ascalon, Ekron, Gubal, and Ashdod.

Amongst the inscriptions belonging to the son of Esarhaddon, we find amongst other important events of his reign, an account of a campaign against the people of Susiana, or Elam, and a representation of the celebrated capital of that country, the Shushan of the prophet Daniel, is supposed to exist in one of the bas-reliefs in the British Museum.

It would exceed our limits to describe the many other important varieties in chronology, philology, and ancient geography which the inscriptions hitherto brought from Nineveh have furnished,

or to point out the various ways in which the Assyrian monuments illustrate and corroborate the Biblical records. The Author has already published a list of fifty-six names of kings, countries, and cities, mentioned in the Old Testament, which occur in the Assyrian inscriptions,* and, since the publication of his work, many others have been added. The greater part of the enormous mass of materials deposited in the British Museum yet remains to be examined. It is impossible to foretell what these inscriptions may yield to the patient investigation of scholars, but it may confidently be predicted that, should the present researches amongst the ruins of Nineveh be continued on the scale that their importance demands, in a very few years a complete history of Assyria, of which hitherto only a few isolated facts have been known from scattered notices in the Bible, or from vague and uncertain tradition, will be added to that of the ancient world.† That which has hitherto been discovered is sufficient to excite the deepest interest in every reflecting mind, and to render the attempt to restore an Assyrian building, in which monuments and records of such vast importance were contained, one of not the least attractive undertakings of the enlightened projectors of the series of architectural illustrations of ancient history and art in the Crystal Palace.

We will now, for the sake of easy reference, recapitulate the palaces hitherto discovered, in the order of their respective dates, and, as far as we are able, with the names of their founders.

The *North-west Palace, Nimroud*, built by a king who is supposed to have reigned about 900 years B.C. His name may read Asshur-akh-pal, which is believed to be identical with the Sardapalus of the Greeks, several Assyrian monarchs having borne this name. In the inscriptions found in this edifice and in the adjoining temples of the same period are mentioned several kings of Assyria, one of whom appears to have lived about 1200 B.C.

The *Centre Palace, Nimroud*, founded by the son of Asshur-

* See "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 626.

† A society has recently been formed under the name of "The Assyrian Excavation Fund," supported by subscriptions and donations, for the prosecution of the researches and excavations in Assyria and Babylonia, with a view to the ultimate presentation of any monuments discovered to the nation. Mr. Loftus, already known for his discoveries at Susa, is now engaged for the Society in examining various ruins in the south of Mesopotamia and on the site of Nineveh, and it is hoped that the Society will not be prevented by the want of adequate pecuniary means from carrying on researches which promise to be of such vast importance in the elucidation of both sacred and profane history, and in the illustration of prophecy.

kh-pal, whose name has been read Shalmanu-bar or Divanubar. He was cotemporary with Jehu, King of Israel, who, according to the inscriptions on his monuments, was his tributary. He must therefore have reigned about 885 years B.C. This palace appears to have been rebuilt or repaired by Pul or by Tiglath-Pileser, two Assyrian kings mentioned in the Bible, as the name of Menahem, King of Israel, occurs in an inscription brought from the ruins.

Kalah-Sherghat, the remains of an edifice built by the founder of the Centre Palace at Nimroud. No sculptured walls have yet been discovered in these ruins; but the bricks and a sitting statue (now in the British Museum) brought from them, bear the name of this king. Kalah-Sherghat, however, appears to have been a very ancient Assyrian site, and terra-cotta cylinders have been found there belonging to Tiglath-Pileser I., who reigned 1200 B.C.

The Upper Chambers, Nimroud. A small edifice added on to the North-west Palace by a successor of the founder of the Centre Palace, whose name, according to Col. Rawlinson, reads Shamas-pal, and who reigned about 800 years B.C. In these ruins were discovered two inscribed slabs with an important list of royal names.

Khorsabdd, a palace at the north-east corner of Nineveh, founded by Shalmaneser or Sargon, and probably built chiefly by the latter, about 720 B.C. Inscriptions have been found in this edifice which appear to describe the wars against Samaria and the captivity of the ten tribes.

Kouyunjik, a vast and magnificent palace, built by Sennacherib, the son of Sargon, on the banks of the Tigris, at the north-west corner of Nineveh, about 700 years B.C.

The South-west Palace, Nimroud, built by Esarhaddon, who was the son of Sennacherib, as we know from the Bible. Few of the sculptures in this edifice were actually executed under the direction of this king, who appears to have despoiled the palaces built by his predecessors on the same platform, to decorate his own.

A Palace in the mound of the Tomb of Jonah, supposed to have been built by the same king; inscribed slabs and bricks with his name having been discovered in the ruins.

Kouyunjik, a second palace, or an addition to that of Sennacherib, built by the son of Esarhaddon, whose name may perhaps be read Ashur-bani-pal, about 650 B.C.

South-east Palace, Nimroud, an edifice unadorned by sculpture and of little extent or splendour, erected by the grandson of Esarhaddon. This is the most recent building hitherto discovered in Assyria, and its founder was perhaps the last of the royal dynasty:

THE

ASSYRIAN OR ARROW-HEADED WRITING.

As we have thus described the results of the discoveries at Nineveh, a few words are necessary to explain the process which has led to the deciphering of the letters or characters used by the ancient Assyrians, and called from their peculiar shape the arrow-headed or cuneiform (wedge-shaped). It must be premised that a similar mode of writing, differing only in the combination of the arrow-heads or wedges, which form the letters, prevailed at one period in Persia, as well as in Assyria and Babylonia. It is mainly to this fact that we owe the successful solution of this very difficult problem. The Kings of Persia, like those who preceded them in the dominion of the east, were accustomed to engrave the records of their reign on stone, and they frequently chose for that purpose the face of some great rock or lofty precipice by the side of a much frequented road. As their subjects consisted of three great nations, the Persians, the Scythians, and the Assyrians or Babylonians, who may be compared with the modern Persians, Turks, and Arabs, it was necessary that, to be generally understood, these records should be written in the three different languages spoken by those races, and they were accordingly divided into three parallel columns, each containing the same inscription, but in a different tongue. Fortunately, the Persian column furnished the means of comparatively easy decipherment; the number of letters was limited to about forty, whilst the Assyrians had above three hundred distinct characters; each word was separated by a peculiar sign, and the language nearly resembled the Sanscrit and other languages with which scholars are acquainted. A learned German, Professor Grotefend, was the first to obtain a clue to the value of the letters. By an ingenious train of reasoning, he discovered the names of Darius and Xerxes. Since this first step, immense progress has been made in deciphering, and now nearly every word in this branch of cuneiform writing can be read with tolerable certainty. The contents of one column having been thus ascertained, it was, of

course, less difficult to decipher the other two. By carefully comparing proper names, and by other means familiar to scholars, the value of a number of letters was soon ascertained. Although owing to the great variety of signs used by the Assyrians, (many being rather syllables than letters, and others representing whole words,) and to the language being far removed from any known dialect, the progress hitherto made in deciphering has not been such as to enable us to read inscriptions with anything like fluency and certainty; yet they have furnished, as we have shown, discoveries of the utmost importance in the history, geography, and religion of the ancient Assyrians.*

The public records of the Assyrians were engraved on stone, for which the arrow-headed character, from its simplicity, was peculiarly well adapted, and were usually, as we have seen, placed on the walls of temples, or palaces, and on rocks. For private, as well as in some cases, for public purposes, two other materials appear to have been used, baked clay or terra-cotta, and rolls of leather or papyrus as in Egypt. In the first case, the letters were stamped or incised with a sharp instrument upon the moist clay, moulded into the shape of an octagonal or hexagonal cylinder, or into square or oblong tablets, and then baked in the furnace. An immense number of such documents have been discovered in Assyrian and Babylonian ruins and a large collection is now in the British Museum. The cylinders are historical, and are inscribed with the records, in the shape of annals, of various kings of Assyria, by whose orders they appear to have been distributed amongst the different cities of the empire, to be deposited, it may be conjectured, in the public archives. The smaller tablets are mostly of a more private nature—some are evidently contracts for the sale of land or other property, and have upon them impressions of seals and the names of witnesses; others appear to commemorate dedicatory offerings to the gods; others again have chronological tables and astronomical calculations, which will probably prove of great value, and upon some have been detected alphabets and apparently lessons in grammar or spelling. In fact, there is reason to hope that they form almost a complete Assyrian library, furnishing us with a vast amount of information regarding the history, sciences, and customs of the Ninevites. No remains of

* The principal authorities on the deciphering of the cuneiform inscriptions to which we would refer our readers, are papers of Col. Rawlinson and Dr. Hincks in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, and in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*.

the scrolls of parchment or papyrus have been as yet discovered they have probably all been destroyed by time, but seals appended to such documents have been found in considerable numbers, and in the bas-reliefs officers are continually represented as registering on such scrolls with a pen or stylus, the amount of the slain and of the spoil after a battle.

The Assyrians had also a more cursive mode of writing than the cuneiform. It resembled that in use throughout Syria, and to which is the Phœnician and ancient Hebrew. Very few specimens of this writing have as yet been discovered.

The Assyrian inscriptions are in a branch of that family of languages usually called the Shemitic, that is to say, by which there is a close analogy to the ancient Hebrew, Chaldean and Arabic. It is by the help of these three languages that they have been successfully deciphered. In the time of Daniel, the Chaldean was spoken in Babylon, and was used by the Jews in their books. It appears to bear the nearest resemblance to the language of the Assyrian monuments. A corrupted dialect of the tongue is still spoken by the Nestorian Chaldean tribes, who inhabit the mountains of Kurdistan and the neighbourhood of the ruins of ancient Nineveh.

The cuneiform writing appears to have been used as late as the Greek supremacy in the East, and Colonel Rawlinson has recently announced the highly interesting discovery of the names of Sardanapalus and Antiochus the Great on some tablets found by Mr. Loftus, Agent of the Assyrian Excavation Fund, during his excavations for the Society in the ruins of Warka to the South of Babylon. The discovery of these names is a further proof of the accuracy of the interpretation of the arrow-headed character.



Entrance to Nineveh Court.

ASSYRIAN ARCHITECTURE.

BEFORE describing the Nineveh Court in the Crystal Palace, it will be necessary to explain the nature of Assyrian architecture, and the grounds upon which we can venture to restore any portion of an Assyrian palace. All the edifices hitherto explored in Assyria were built upon platforms or artificial mounds raised to the height of thirty or forty feet above the level of the surrounding country. These terraces were partly constructed of earth and rubbish heaped together, and partly of regular layers of sun-dried bricks. That part of the great mound at Nimroud on which the more ancient palaces stand, appears to be entirely formed of such bricks carefully laid and united by tenacious clay. At Babylon, as the Greeks have informed us, and as existing remains still show, reeds were placed at certain intervals between the layers of bricks and the whole was cemented with bitumen; but this mode of construction has only been found in one instance in Assyria—in the high conical mound at Nimroud. The platforms appear in most cases to have been faced,

and to have been supported by solid masonry of limestone. At certain intervals were flights of steps and inclined ways leading up to the buildings, which were generally constructed on the very edge of the artificial terrace, and thus commanded a view over the surrounding country.

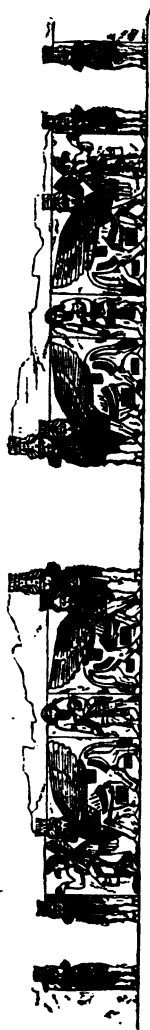
The object of raising these great platforms, which must have demanded scarcely less labour and expense than the superstructures they were destined to sustain, was twofold—to give the royal or sacred edifices additional dignity and grandeur, and to secure in a climate remarkable for its intense heat during the summer months, as much coolness as possible. In some cases, too, especially in the lowlands of Babylonia, they may have served both as a means of defence, and to protect the buildings against the effects of inundations, to which that country is subject. The earliest settlements in Mesopotamia and Shinar were on a perfectly level plain, with scarcely a natural elevation to break the horizon around. In order, therefore, to raise the principal public edifices, such as the royal palace or the temple, above the surrounding habitations, the people were compelled to make an artificial hill, and hence the origin of these vast platforms. This mode of construction having become an essential feature of the architecture of this part of the East, and hence probably, as was usual in ancient times, invested with a religious character, was adopted by the descendants of the earliest settlers, even when they had extended their dominions to the northwards, and had founded their capital, Nineveh, in the midst of a land where natural hills were not wanting, upon which public buildings could be erected.

In the series of bas-reliefs discovered at Kouyunjik already mentioned, and part of which is now in the British Museum, the process of building these platforms or terraces, and of raising the great bulls and other large masses to the top of them, was minutely represented. Long lines of workmen, some to be recognised by their peculiar costumes as captives from foreign lands, others bound together in chains, and probably public malefactors, are seen with stones or with baskets filled with earth or bricks on their backs, hastening to add their burdens to the accumulating mound. Groups of men are portrayed crouching on the ground and kneading the clay to make the bricks. Overseers urge on the workmen with blows. To transport the winged bulls and the great stones used in the building, sledges are employed, with rollers, levers, and ropes. Immense bodies of men drag them by main force up the inclined plane. The king in person, surrounded by his principal officers and by his

armed guards, presides over the proceedings. Officers specially appointed direct the workmen, and some give with trumpets the necessary signals. Considering the enormous size of these sculptures, some of them being nearly twenty feet square, it is astonishing that the Assyrians should have been able not only to move them, but to raise them in their palaces. It is evident from the discoveries which have been made in the ruins, that although the colossi were roughly sculptured before being transported to the buildings intended to receive them, they were not finished until after they had been placed against the walls.

Having thus raised an artificial platform, and conveyed the principal building materials to its summit, the Assyrians commenced their palaces. One general plan suited to the habits of the people, and most probably consecrated either by long custom or by certain religious prejudices, both considerations as is well known exercising an extraordinary influence in the East over the arts as well as the manners of a nation, was adopted in these edifices. It consisted almost in every instance of oblong chambers placed side by side, either leading to the terrace or grouped round large halls, or rather court-yards open to the sky, generally square and situated within the building itself. Some of the chambers were nearly two hundred feet long, and from twenty-five to forty feet broad; but they were usually somewhat less than half this length, and about twenty feet in width. Many rooms of much smaller dimensions were scattered through the building, and at Kouyunjik long galleries led from one part of the palace to the other. Mr. Fergusson, in his ingenious and learned Essay on the Architecture of the Palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis, has shown the probability that these great edifices were divided according to oriental custom, into two distinct parts, that containing the apartments inhabited by the men and reserved for public ceremonies, and that appropriated to the women, the harem of the modern eastern house. There are many circumstances, into which it is scarcely necessary here to enter, to confirm the views of this gentleman upon this subject.

The exterior of the buildings, which were nearly square, all the walls being invariably at right angles, had generally two façades or principal faces. One opened upon the terrace or platform, and the other, on the opposite side, rose on the edge of the mound, and usually overlooked the river, when the palace, as in the case of Nimroud and Kouyunjik, was built upon the very banks of the Tigris. These façades consisted almost always of three entrances,



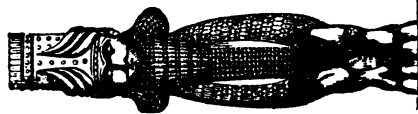
REMAINS OF FAÇADE DISCOVERED AT KOUTUNJIK, WITH GROUND-PLAN.

principal being in the centre, and ornamented with two sal human-headed bulls or lions, forming the sides or jambs of the portal. The two side gateways in the more splendid edifices were flanked by similar figures, and between them and the centre were pairs, of the same winged monsters, of somewhat smaller size, placed back to back, and separated by a colossal human figure, usually represented as strangling a lion. These winged bulls had the human head turned sideways, so as to look outwards from the front of the building. Each bull was, moreover, flanked by a colossal figure of a deity or priest, presenting a pine-cone. Thus the south-eastern front of Sennacherib's palace at Kouyunjik consisted of ten human-headed bulls, the tallest being about nineteen feet high, and of six gigantic human figures, occupying altogether a space of no less than 180 feet. It was flanked on either side by sculptured walls, which completed the entire façade. The wood-cut on the opposite page will best illustrate the details of the building, remains of the whole of which, although considerably damaged by fire, having been found in the ruins.

Each bull, as in the restored Nineveh Court, was, however, a usual arrangement, the side entrances being simply adorned with colossal winged figures, representing divinities or priests. In the interior the doorways leading from the chambers into the courtyards, and in some instances those opening into the principal hall, were likewise formed by human-headed bulls or lions. The side entrances were flanked by winged figures.

The walls, which were of extraordinary thickness, were solidly constructed of sun-dried bricks; but they were usually panelled with slabs of alabaster, or some other stone elaborately carved with single figures, as in the principal hall of the Nineveh Court, or with entire scenes, occupying the whole slab, as at Kouyunjik, or divided into two compartments by a band of friezes, and representing battles, sieges, and domestic events, in the inner chamber of the restored building.

We have already observed, that the whole of the upper part of the building, with the exception of a few feet of sun-dried brick above the line of sculptured panels, had fallen in and perished. What remains, therefore, of the Assyrian edifices is that part which being faced with stone has been able to resist the ravages of time. Consequently the general plan of the buildings, together with the substructure, has been preserved to us. The upper part being entirely disappeared, must be restored by comparison with monuments of the same, or of nearly the same period, by analogy.



PART OF FAÇADE DISCOVERED AT KHORSABAD.

with the modern architecture of the same country, and by such representations of buildings as may be found in the sculptures on the walls. By such means, Mr. Fergusson has been enabled to find materials for the restoration of the Assyrian building which now occupies so conspicuous a place in the Crystal Palace.

We will proceed to point out the sources which have furnished the different parts and details of this restoration. Existing remains show that above the line of marble slabs the wall was continued in sun-dried bricks covered with plaster or stucco, and painted with human figures, usually the king and his attendants, representations of animals, mythological subjects, and various ornaments, generally of a sacred character. As the bulls forming the portals were about seventeen or eighteen feet high, it is most probable that the painted wall was carried to the same height, or was about equal to the height of the sculptures. The whole appears to have been crowned by a cornice of some sort, supported by dentels, representing a closed fist, numbers of which have been found in the Assyrian ruins.* They have been consequently adopted in the restoration.

When sculptured slabs were not employed as panelling, the walls were either entirely stuccoed and painted, or a curious system of "reeding" was introduced, consisting of half-columns placed side by side, and separated into groups by square box-like pilasters. This peculiar ornament, which appears to have prevailed in Babylonia as well as in Assyria, has been used in the southern entrance to the central hall of the Nineveh Court.

Numerous representations in the bas-reliefs, as well as recent discoveries, prove that many of the Assyrian gateways were arched, but it is by no means certain to what extent these vaulted entrances were used in the interior of the buildings. Two great portals leading into the city have been excavated at Khorsabâd, one of which is flanked by human-headed bulls, from whose backs springs an arch nearly fifteen feet in span, decorated with an ornamental border of painted bricks. This entrance has been faithfully copied in the centre hall of the Nineveh Court. By its side was a gateway of smaller dimensions, without any sculptures, and simply arched. It appears by the marks of wheels on the pavement, to have been used by chariots, whilst the more highly ornamented portal was reserved for foot passengers.

* These dentels are frequently covered with blue enamel, the colour used in the restoration.

The pavement of the halls and chambers was formed either by slabs of alabaster, similar to those employed for the decoration of the walls, or by large square bricks. In the first case the slab were generally inscribed on both sides, as in the north-west palace



Human-headed bull at Khorsabad.

at Nimroud, with cuneiform inscriptions containing the titles of the king, the names of the great gods of Assyria, and a list of the countries conquered by, or tributary to Nineveh, or were elaborately carved with graceful ornaments and scroll-work, as in the palace at Kouyunjik. As a general rule, inscribed or ornamented slabs were found between the human-headed bulls, and at the various entrances. When bricks were employed for the pavement they were usually placed in two layers, between which was a bed of fine sand to exclude moisture. The bricks were generally inscribed on the under side with the name of the king who founded the edifice, and were sometimes cemented with bitumen. They varied in dimensions from one foot to sixteen inches square. Drains were carried beneath the principal parts of the Assyrian palaces, and appear to have communicated with one main sewer. They were frequently arched, and many thus constructed have been discovered both at Nimroud and Khorsabad. Beneath the foundations and under the pavement, it appears to have been the custom of the Assyrians to place small images of their gods and tablets inscribed with dedicatory inscriptions, intended for the protection of the building. Many such objects were found during the excavations, especially beneath the winged bulls and lions. It has not been considered

necessary to introduce an Assyrian pavement in the restored Nineveh Court.

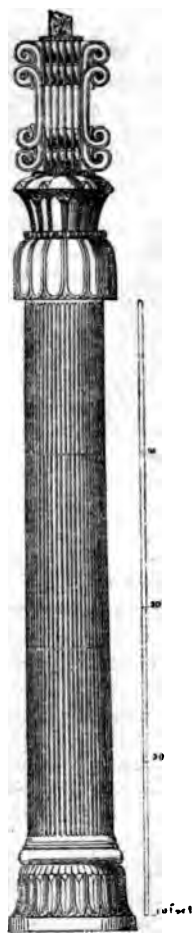
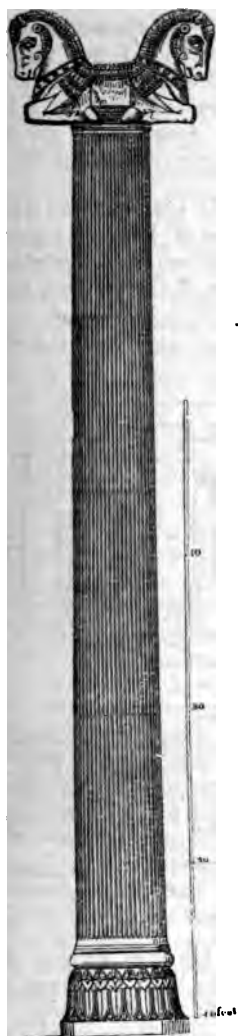
It will be seen, from the foregoing remarks, that the lower part of the Nineveh Court, to the height of seventeen feet from the ground, has been entirely copied, with the exception of the pavement, from existing remains, and that there are sufficient grounds for the various ornaments and details which have been introduced on its walls.

The superstructure above this level, as well as the roofs of the Assyrian palaces, was almost entirely built of wood and other perishable materials. The buried chambers were partly filled with charcoal and charred wood, the effects of the great fire which destroyed the building. At Nimroud many entire beams of cedar and other wood were found in the ruins, some still entire, others falling to an almost impalpable powder as soon as exposed to the air. With the exception of some imperfect representations in the bas-reliefs, we could have had no materials for the restoration of the upper part of the building, had it not happened that at Susa and Persepolis the architects, in erecting the palaces of the Persian kings, had employed stone to replace those parts which in Assyria were of wood. The remains still existing among the ruins of those celebrated cities prove beyond a doubt that the Persians, who, after the fall of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires, succeeded to the dominion of the East, received from the Assyrians their religion, their arts, and their civilisation, closely copying them in all particulars. The human-headed bull of the Nineveh palaces is found faithfully reproduced at Persepolis. Slabs sculptured with bas-reliefs of processions, and with single winged figures, line the chambers and the façades; myths and religious symbols, similar to those found on the monuments of Nimroud, are portrayed upon the walls; and the cuneiform character was used to record the glory and the titles of the king. Besides, many details of architectural moulding almost identical have been found in the Assyrian and Persian ruins. Such being the case, we can have little hesitation in supplying from the one edifice what is wanting in the other. It seems to have been only from the accident of Persepolis and Susa having been built in a country where stone, peculiarly fitted for building purposes, was abundant, that any change took place in the materials used, and in the form of construction.

Following the lights thus afforded us, the four great columns in the central hall of the Nineveh Court, are carefully modelled

from those still standing at Persepolis, similar columns have been lately dug up at Susa—a mode of reproduction which has been preferred to attempting to compose a column from fragments of Assyrian architecture as have been found at Nineveh; for although bases, and perhaps capitals, have been discovered among the Assyrian ruins, and columns are represented in the sculptures, they are neither so complete or so distinct as to enable us to reconstruct the whole with any degree of certainty. The same remarks apply to the smaller pillars rising above sculptured walls, which are also borrowed from Persepolis. Bull capitals are peculiarly appropriate in an Assyrian building where this animal, apparently looked upon as sacred, continually occurs in the painted and sculptured decorations. It is absolutely necessary that columns should have been employed in support of the roof, especially in a country which does not afford beams of wood of sufficient size and strength to span chambers of the dimensions of those in the Assyrian palaces. The open substructure was equally necessary for the admission of the requisite quantity of light and air, and, at the same time, for the exclusion of the perpendicular rays of the sun in summer, and the heat in winter; considerations which it is indispensable to bear in mind in attempting any restoration of an Assyrian building. The form of construction could be devised more fit to obtain these ends than that used in the Nineveh Court; and as in several representations of buildings in the bas-reliefs short columns are introduced into the façade, and as a similar mode of admitting light and air is still found in parts of the East, Mr. Fergusson has not hesitated to adopt it in the restoration.

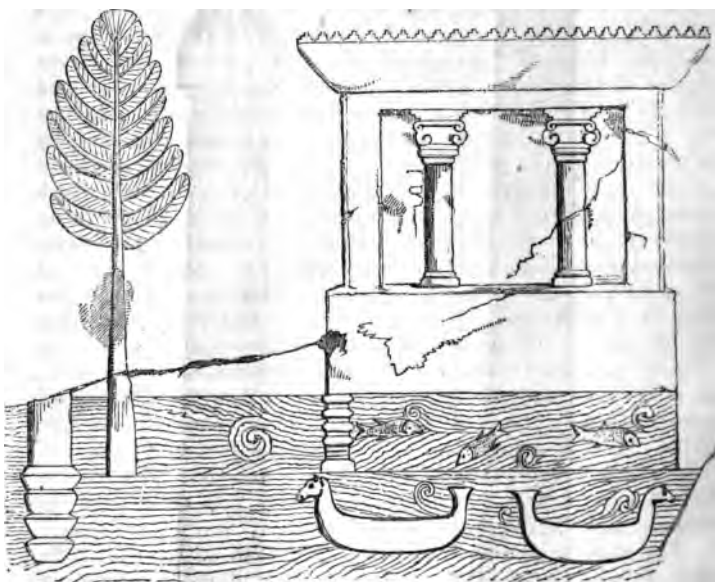
It is quite certain that the tops of the columns were connected by massive beams of wood, forming the framework upon which the roof rested. The ceiling has been subdivided in a mode very prevalent not only in Mesopotamia, but also in India and other eastern countries. Though this part of the restoration cannot pretend to very minute accuracy, it serves as a vehicle for the display of the peculiar forms of decorative painting of the Assyrians, all the patterns and ornaments being reproduced from those discovered in the excavations. The Assyrian ceilings were probably adorned with precious woods, ivory, and gilding. In the Bible we find mention of a “roof of cedar wood” (Zephaniah ii. 1) and of chambers “ceiled with cedar and painted with vermilion” (Jeremiah xxii. 14). The greater house of the temple of Solomon was ceiled with fir-tree which “was overlaid with fine gold”



COLUMN FROM PERSEPOLIS.

thereon were set palm-trees and chains" (2 Chronicles iii. 5), a mode of decoration which may have resembled that introduced in the ceiling of the restored Nineveh Court, the palm-trees being the sacred tree and the chains the *guilloche* border. In the inscriptions from Nineveh the king is described as going, like Solomon, to Mount Lebanon to cut down cedars for the beautifying of his palace.

The external cornice, resting upon the pillars of the façade, is modelled from a bas-relief discovered by M. Botta at Khorsabâd, representing a fishing kiosk or temple, with two circular columns and two square piers arranged precisely as in the restoration, and sur-



Fishing Kiosk, or Temple at Khorsabâd.

mounted by a similar cornice. Of this bas-relief we have given a sketch. The curved cornice above the bulls has been copied from an architectural moulding found in the same ruins. By a letter recently received from Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who is now superintending the excavations at Nineveh, it appears that a sculpture has been discovered at Kouyunjik, in which a palace is

y minutely portrayed, and that in this representation the per part of the edifice is formed by columns resting upon aged bulls and lions ; thus confirming, as it would seem, the toration we are describing.

There is one point connected with the remains discovered at neveh, which adds additional interest to them ; the similarity ich appears to have existed between the architecture of the Jews d the Assyrians. This is especially exemplified in the descrip- ms given in the Bible of the temple and royal house of Solomon, d even still more by the accounts preserved to us by Josephus of ose celebrated buildings. The same style seems to have pre- siled in both countries, and we are now, for the first time, able d understand the accounts of the Bible from the discoveries in yria. Solomon "carved all the house around with carved gures of cherubim and palm trees, and open flowers within and ithout." The cherubim have been described by commentators on e Bible as mystic figures uniting the human head with the body an ox or a lion, and the wings of an eagle ; in fact, composed e same elements as the colossal sphinxes at Nineveh, which re perhaps but a corrupted and traditional version of that reve- tion which taught the image of the cherubim to the Jews. he house of the forest of Lebanon appears to have been almost ntial with one of the great halls of Nineveh. The roof was med of cedar wood supported by rows of cedar columns standing e floor. The walls, according to Josephus (b. viii., c. 2), ere wainscoted with stones that were sawed," i. e. into slabs, in the Assyrian palaces ; and appear to have been sculptured ith ornaments, principally representations of trees and plants, in lief. And Josephus adds, "the rest of the wall, up to the roof, as plastered over, and, as it were, wrought over with various ous and pictures," thus, agreeing exactly with the sides of the mbers as restored in the Nineveh Court.

The edifices hitherto explored at Nineveh appear to have en palace-temples—that is to say, they served both for the idence of the king who was the high-priest as well as the itical ruler of the nation, and for the celebration of great igious ceremonies in which he was the principal officiator. Such s also the case in Egypt, where the palace also comprised the mple.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NINEVEH COURT

THE Nineveh Court is situated in the north-western angle of the Crystal Palace. It occupies five bays in frontage and in width; the extreme length being 126 feet, and the depth 32 feet. Its exterior height, exclusive of the battlements, is 32 feet 2 inches. The halls are 32 ft. 7 in. high to the under part of the great beams, and this, consequently, is the height of the columns which support the roof. The walls beneath the columns, forming the division between the halls and the exterior, are 17 ft. 7 in. high.

The court is not a complete restoration of any particular Assyrian building. It has been the endeavour to convey to the spectator as exact an idea as possible of Assyrian architecture, for this purpose a façade has been restored, as it has been derived from existing remains, and two halls or chambers have been selected. The internal arrangement is, of course, arbitrary. The court consists of two distinct apartments. The principal hall, 70 feet by 31 feet, is ornamented with casts from sculptures now in the British Museum, taken from several chambers in the north-western palace at Nimroud. The inner chamber 33 feet by 22 feet is surrounded by bas-reliefs from one great hall discovered at the same ruins, placed as nearly as the dimensions of the room permit in the order in which they were originally found. The principal hall gives a very accurate idea of the nature of the larger chambers of an Assyrian palace, which probably were used for great public ceremonies, celebrating national triumphs and connected with religious worship. Although the space at command would not permit the re-production of the vast dimensions of many of those chambers—some, as we have already observed, being nearly 200 feet in length—yet the proportions have been maintained as nearly as possible. The inner chamber, in its proportions and details, resembles some of the smaller rooms in the edifices discovered at Nineveh, and may be accepted, supposing the superstructure and ceiling to be correctly restored, as a very good representation of a royal apartment in an Assyrian palace.

two smaller chambers, opening into the central hall, will be l up with original sculptures, obtained by the Company from the rations and shortly expected in this country, and with casts from new and interesting bas-reliefs which may be hereafter placed e British Museum. These chambers, it must be observed, no part of an Assyrian building, and have been merely taken the thickness of the wall, in order that no space might unnecessarily lost. In the original edifices, the dimensions he wall correspond with the depth of the entrances, and whole of this great mass consists of masonry of sun-dried a.

restoring the various details and painted ornaments of the ivateh Court, care has been taken to select those of most ment occurrence in the Assyrian palaces which have hitherto explored. They have been combined with as much regard as ble, to the peculiar characteristics of Assyrian architecture, as far as we can judge from existing remains, of Assyrian . The arrangement and contrasts of the colours have been ully studied, and when there has been no authority for their use y particular instance, a comparison with other monuments and ially with Egyptian remains have, in some instances, furnished means of deciding which to adopt. It may appear strange and tural to us that colour should be employed in all parts of an edifice, and that even sculptures and bas-reliefs in various rials should be painted. But that such was the case in ria, as indeed in Egypt and in ancient Greece, can now no r admit of a doubt, and in restoring an Assyrian palace, it id have been absurd to omit so essential a feature of Assyrian itecture. The same rule has consequently been adopted with Nineveh Court, as with all the other restorations in the tal Palace, to render it as nearly as possible in every respect the original buildings. Care, at the same time, has been taken nsult every authority upon the subject. The traces of colour existing on the monuments discovered at Nineveh, especially those at Khorsabad, have been minutely examined, and have ished sufficient data for the painting of most of the bas-reliefs architectural details. In describing the different parts of the ling, we shall point out the authority for each particular ment, and for its employment in the place where introduced. a the remains of gold-leaf continually found amongst tho , it would appear that gilding was profusely employed in Assyrian palaces. It is even probable that many parts

were overlaid with thin plates of gold or other precious metals. In this mode of decoration we have another analogy with the great edifices raised by Solomon, in which the beams, the posts, the winged Cherubim, and even the walls of the upper, as well as of the principal chambers, were overlaid with gold (2 Chronicles iii). In the restoration it would have been impossible to have attempted the introduction of gilding without carrying it out to its fullest extent. A yellow colour has consequently been substituted for it. The colours employed in the Assyrian buildings, as far as they have yet been analysed, were mineral pigments. There are, however, grounds for believing that vegetable colours were not unknown to the Assyrians, but were extensively used in decorating the walls of their palaces. Being subject, however, to more rapid decay than the mineral pigments, they have disappeared. The colours discovered in the ruins were a blue of great brilliancy derived from copper, red, yellow, white, black, and green. These colours, with several shades and tints, may be seen on bricks brought from the ruins and preserved in the British Museum. The dark black outline is a distinguishing feature of Assyrian art. As on Egyptian monuments, colours were probably used conventionally—that is to say, the same colours were always employed for a certain class of objects. From the drawings made from painted walls at Khorsabâd, recently sent to Paris, it would appear, however, that the human flesh was closely imitated in colour. The Assyrians appear also to have been fond of using only two colours, such, for instance, as blue and yellow, in very elaborate decorations, combining them so as to skilfully produce a very pleasing effect.

THE EXTERIOR OR FAÇADE.

The lower part of the façade is almost entirely copied from the remains at Khorsabâd and Kouyunjik, and is formed by the human-headed bulls and gigantic human figures—casts, with the exception of the two bulls flanking the centre entrance), sculptures discovered among the former ruins, and now in the collection of the Louvre, at Paris. The inscriptions on the bulls are in the name of Sargon, the Assyrian King, mentioned in the Bible, by some supposed to be the same as Shalmaneser, who conquered Samaria and carried away the ten tribes. The winged human-headed bulls were, probably, emblematical figures connected with the religion of the Assyrians, representing the union of wisdom, power, and ubiquity—the three great attributes of the deity—wisdom typified by the head of a man; power by the body of a bull; and ubiquity by the wings of a bird.

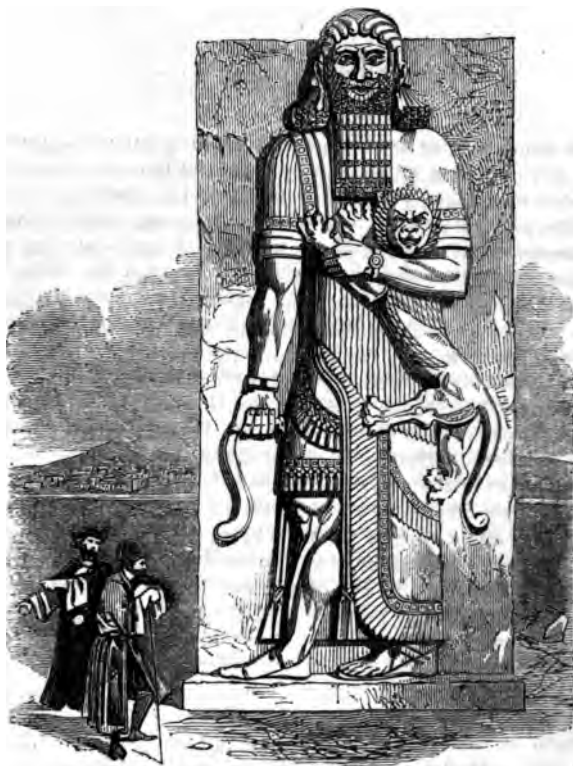
The prophet Ezekiel saw in his vision four living creatures with faces and four wings; the faces being those of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle—the four sacred types of the Assyrian sculptures. Ezekiel was amongst the Samaritan captives carried away by Sennacherib, and as he prophesied on the banks of the Chebar, one of the rivers of Assyria, he had probably seen the palace of that king at Khorsabâd, and it has been conjectured that he employed the well-known type to his fellow-captives in order to convey and state his meaning.

It will be observed that all these figures have five legs, the extra leg being desirous of giving the spectator a complete front, as well as a side view of the animal.

The colossal figure strangling a lion is supposed to represent the Assyrian Hercules—one of the great deities of the nation.

Above the basement rise columns whose capitals are in the form of kneeling bulls, back to back; they have been accurately modelled after those found at Persepolis. We have described in our preliminary remarks the reasons which authorise their introduction into the Assyrian building. The battlements, in the form of steps or terraces, are a peculiar feature in Assyrian architecture and are

continually represented in the sculptures. The painted orname on the cornice are the honeysuckle, alternating with a tulip



Colossal figure from Khorsabad.

some such flower and the guilloche, both of pure Assyrian orig and the source of two of the most elegant architectural orname of the Greeks.

CENTRAL HALL.



The principal entrance to this hall, opening upon the nave and the fountain, is formed by a pair of human-headed bulls, seven feet high, modelled from those discovered in the ruins of Nimroud. The narrowness of the entrances, notwithstanding colossal forms which adorn them, is a peculiar feature in Assyrian architecture. On the ceiling are painted the sacred tree, the winged emblem of the great Assyrian God, and the winged figure which, as in Egypt, appears to have been emblematical of the Supreme Deity.

The columns which support the roof are, as we have stated, different from those still existing amongst the ruins of Persepolis and Susa.

We have already explained the reasons which appear to justify their introduction into an Assyrian building, and we need repeat in this place, that although no columns of stone were found at Nineveh, yet that columns of some kind, probably of brick, must have been used to support the ceiling and roof in buildings of such vast size as those contained in the Assyrian palaces. The capitals, with a kind of rude Ionic capital are in several instances in buildings represented in the bas-reliefs.

The ceiling has been restored by Mr. Fergusson, who has carefully selected from the various ornaments found in the ruins of Nineveh, those which appear most appropriate for the decoration of the building; every pattern and design thus introduced, occurring either in the sculptures, on painted walls, or on the red bricks discovered in the excavations. The arrangement of the ceiling is, of course, arbitrary, as no ancient ceiling has been preserved. We have already described in our introductory notes on the architecture of the Assyrians, the grounds for the restoration of the hall and other parts of the Nineveh Court.

The casts which surround this hall have all been taken from the sculptures discovered in the north-west palace at Nimroud, and are now in the British Museum. Behind the great bulls are three winged figures of priests or deities, one above the other, a group of arrangement very common in Assyrian interior architecture.



THE ASSYRIAN KING.

to the left on entering, is a group (No. 1, on the plan) representing the king resting his right hand on a long wand or staff, standing between two winged figures. The Assyrian king may be known by his head-dress, which consisted of a peculiar conical cap or turban, apparently made up of bands of some coloured material, surmounted by a small cone. This tiara was reserved for the monarch alone, and he is never seen without it in Assyrian monuments. The ancient Persian kings appear to have worn a somewhat similar head-dress. The royal robes are remarkable for the richness and variety of the designs probably ordered upon them, mostly of a sacred character, and the arms and the elegance of their ornaments. The king, as well as his principal nobles and attendants, wore ear-rings, bracelets, armlets, necklaces, and the splendour of his attire, as represented in the sculptures—the long embroidered robes, the ornaments of gold and precious stones, the elaborately curled hair, and the tassels and ornaments attached to various parts of his dress, more befitting a god than a man, are completely in accordance with the description preserved to us by the Greek historians of the luxury and magnificence of the Assyrian monarchs. It is doubtful whether the king and beard so artistically dressed and curled were false. Wigs have been worn by the ancient Assyrians, as they appear to have been by the Egyptians. The Chaldeans, however, who inhabited the north of Assyria, and are believed to be the descendants of the people of Nineveh, are still remarkable for the luxuriance and length of their hair and beards, which would almost rival those portrayed in the sculptures.

On either side of the king is a winged figure—whether of a god or of some inferior deity is still undecided. Such figures are represented continually on the walls of the Assyrian palaces, and there are many grounds for conjecturing that they are of a sacred character. They have wings and wear the rounded cap with horns, similar to that of the human-headed bulls. They carry in their hands two objects, a pine cone and a square vessel, which are supposed to be emblematic of the sacred elements—fire and water. Similar figures are usually seen at the entrances, and appear to represent guardians and protectors of the building, and are therefore probably minor divinities of the Assyrian hierarchy. In the present place they are ministering to the king, who alone is seen thus attended by these winged figures. It must be observed that they are not priests who disguised themselves as deities, an ancient custom during the celebration of certain religious ceremonies.



WINGED DEITY OR PRIEST.

Beyond this group an entrance leads into a small chamber, which will eventually be appropriated to the exhibition of original sculptures, now on their way from Nineveh.

The group beyond this entrance (No. 2) represents two men bringing tribute to the King of Assyria. They formed part of a long line of similar figures, bearing vessels and ornaments, probably of gold and silver, which ornamented the exterior wall of the north-west palace at Nimroud. From their peculiar dress they appear to have been natives of a foreign country subject to Nineveh. In some of the bas-reliefs from the same palace, the Assyrians are represented in battle with an enemy similarly attired. The first figure of the group before us raises his hands, perhaps in token of submission; the next brings two apes or monkeys, one of which is seated on his shoulder.

This group is followed by two winged figures (Nos. 3 and 4); the first wears a garland round his head and bears a fallow-deer in one hand, and a flower of peculiar shape in the other. It probably represents a deity presiding over a month or season of the year, or over some natural phenomenon. The second is a very peculiar figure, and is, perhaps, found more frequently than any other on Assyrian monuments. It unites with the body of a man the head of an eagle, and has, consequently, been conjectured to represent the god Nisroch, worshipped by the Assyrians, and before whose altar Sennacherib was slain by his sons. The word "Nisr" in certain Eastern languages closely allied to the Assyrian means an eagle, and long before the discovery of these ruins the ancient commentators on the Bible had asserted that the god Nisroch was worshipped under the form of an eagle, or of an eagle-headed figure.

An entrance here leads into the transept. It is formed by a pair of colossal human-headed bulls, similar to those at the principal entrance into the central hall, which have already been described. Behind them is a wall of peculiar shape, consisting of a reeding, or of a series of circular projections grouped together like the barrels of an organ. This singular construction has been closely copied from existing remains recently discovered at Khorsabad by M. Place, and appears to have been frequently adopted in Assyrian buildings, to adorn such walls as were not decorated with sculpture. It was also used by the Babylonians, and a similar wall has lately been found in the excavations carried on for the Assyrian Excavation Fund by Mr. Loftus among the ruins of Wurka, to the south of Babylon. It was built of terra-cotta cones, with bases of different colours, embedded in clay, the bases being left outwards

so as to form a kind of mosaic, the design of which is literally reproduced in the present instance. The panelled pilasters which terminate this decoration on both sides are also copied from those which invariably accompany this peculiar construction at Khorsabâd.

On the external wall facing the transept are two bas-reliefs, casts from sculptures in the British Museum. That to the right on issuing from the entrance, is the eagle-headed figure before described, and that to the left a group surrounded by a frame, copied from one in the Museum, and representing the king between two eagle-headed figures and two peculiar objects which have been called the sacred tree. This emblem occurs continually on Assyrian buildings and monuments. It has been supposed to have some

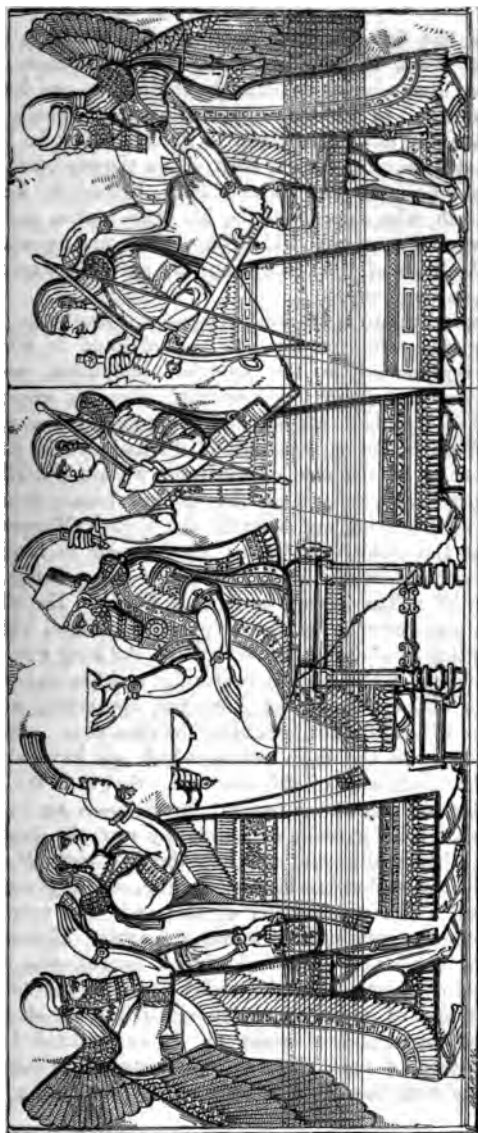


Eagle-headed figures before the Sacred Tree.

reference to the tree of life, so universally recognised as a sacred and mysterious symbol in the religious systems of the East; and Mr. Fergusson has conjectured that it may be identified with the "grove," or "groves" so frequently mentioned in the Bible as an object of idolatrous worship to the Jews.

Returning to the hall, and continuing to the left, we have a group (Nos. 5 and 6) representing an eagle-headed figure, similar to that on the opposite side of the entrance, and a priest or divinity, with four wings, holding in one hand a mace with a circular top and extending the other.

Two groups (Nos. 7 and 8) follow, one representing the king between his attendants, the other the same monarch between winged



THE ASSYRIAN KING ON HIS THRONE BETWEEN ATTENDANTS AND WINGED DEITIES.

figures. In the first the king is seen with a cup in his right hand, either about to pour out a libation, or to raise it to his lips. Before him stands an eunuch holding in one hand a flapper, or fan, and in the other apparently a towel, which is thrown over his shoulder, and is presented to the king after he has drunk—a custom still prevailing in the East, where the cup-bearer is one of the principal officers in great households. Behind the king stands another eunuch, who appears to be his arms-bearer, and carries a mace, a bow, and a quiver. This group, which was repeated several times on the walls of the same chamber, probably commemorates some religious ceremony.

In the second group is the king raising two arrows in one hand and resting the other on his bow, an attitude in which he is constantly represented in the Assyrian sculptures, and which apparently denotes victory and triumph over his enemies. On either side of him is a winged figure presenting the pine cone, similar to those on the opposite side of the hall already described.

In the centre of the side of the room we are describing is an entrance; formed by casts from the colossal human-headed lions discovered at Nimroud, and now in the British Museum. Like the bulls at the opposite entrance, they appear to have typified the great attributes of the deity, the idea of power being conveyed by the body of a lion instead of that of a bull. The whole arch except that part occupied by the sculpture, is covered with a very long inscription containing the records of the king who built the north-west palace at Nimroud, between nine and ten centuries before Christ. On either side of the lions, and apparently ministering to them, are winged figures presenting the pine cone. Beyond the winged figures are the deep panels which we have already described. The remainder of this entrance—that is to say, the arch and the band of coloured ornament round it—is an exact copy on a somewhat smaller scale, of a gateway recently discovered at Khorsabad, which will be sent entire by the discoverer, M. Place, France. The restoration has been made from drawings and sections now in Paris. The construction of this arch was very peculiar and of a character only hitherto found in Assyria. The ornamented portion, the band of patera and winged figures, was formed of highly glazed or enamelled bricks, whilst the inner part of the wall consisted of clay of great tenacity moulded into the shape of, and supporting the upper arch of brickwork. It is remarkable that such a mode of construction should have so long resisted the ravages of time.

The whole wall beyond this entrance is occupied by one group

(No. 9), representing the king seated on a throne, or royal and, as in a preceding bas-relief, raising a cup in his right hand. To him is an eunuch holding a fan in one hand and a stand to give the cup in the other. Behind the eunuch is a winged or priest. On the other side of the king are his two attendant arms-bearers, carrying his bow, arrows, and quiver, and behind them a second winged figure. The whole group appears to represent the celebration of some religious ceremony in commemoration of a victory. It occupied the end of a chamber in the west palace at Nimroud, whose walls were covered with other groups, in which, however, the king stood erect instead of seated on the throne.

These bas-reliefs, of which the two groups on the opposite side of the entrance form part, represent the triumph of the same king, whose name reads Assur-yuchura-bal or Asshur-akh-pal, and who perhaps, be identified with the Greek Sardanapalus. They are amongst the best preserved hitherto discovered at Nineveh, and are remarkable for the great minuteness and elegance of the work, many of which afford valuable additions to the religious and artistic remains of the Assyrians. These sculptures belong to the best school of Assyrian art, and however conventional may be the treatment of the human form, there is a simplicity and boldness of design in the general design, and a beauty in the ornaments, in as far as we can judge from the monuments hitherto discovered, were never after equalled by the Assyrian artists. The

figures of the monarch as well as those of his attendants and of the other figures, are covered with the most elaborate designs, representing various mythic symbols and groups connected with the religion of Assyria. The emblem of the supreme deity, winged genies, winged horses, gryphons, sphinxes, ostriches, men fighting with various animals, goats and bulls bending before a sacred flower, and a variety of other objects, are traced upon the robes of the king and on the skirts of his robes, as well as on the ornaments of the other figures. These ornaments were probably considered sacred. Ancient Assyria was celebrated for the beauty and richness of its dyed and figured stuffs, and its merchants traded to Tyre "in blue clothes and brodered work" (Ezekiel xxvii.

The forms of many of the ornaments in these bas-reliefs are specially deserving of attention on account of their close resemblance to those afterwards employed by the Greeks in architectural decoration, of which, there are good grounds for believing, the Assyrians furnished the original type. Greece derived much of

her art, as well as many of her religious myths, from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and the discoveries at Nineveh have furnished many analogies to prove this connection, which are of the highest interest to the critical historian and archæologist.

The ornaments of the arms and of the furniture are remarkable for their elegance. The handles of the swords and the ends of the scabbards are in the form of lions, and may have been of precious metal. The throne and footstool were probably made of cedar wood and ivory, or of wood cased with copper or gold plates embossed with figures, the extremities and some of the principal ornaments, such as the rams' heads and the lions' feet, being also in metal. A throne of this kind was discovered at Nimroud, but unfortunately too much injured by time to bear removal, as it fell to pieces almost as soon as exposed to the air. Fragments of the embossed copper-plates, and the heads of the animals also in copper have alone been preserved, and are now in the British Museum.

In looking upon these sculptures we cannot but be struck at the remarkable illustration they afford, of the description given by Ezekiel of the walls of an Assyrian palace. The prophet prophesying in Assyria and denouncing the idolatrous practices which, borrowed from strange nations, had crept into and corrupted the pure religion of the Jews, thus describes the influence of the Assyrians upon his perverse fellow-countrymen. "She saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldæans pourtrayed with vermillion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldæa, the land of their nativity." (Chap. xxiii. 14, 15.)

At the north end of the central hall, and on each side of an entrance leading into the inner chamber, are two groups (Nos. 10 and 11) one similar to that on the opposite side before described; the other consisting of an eagle-headed god, and a winged figure bearing in one hand an ibex, or wild goat, such as are still found in the mountains of Assyria, and an ear of corn in the other.

In the group, No. 12, the king and winged figure are similar to those in No. 8 on the opposite side of the hall. An entrance leading into a small chamber, at present unappropriated, separates this group from a second, No. 13, which is a repetition of No. 8.

The inscriptions along all the slabs in this hall are of the same import, and record the titles, genealogy, and principal events of the reign of the king who built the north-west palace at Nimroud. Nearly every stone and slab discovered in that edifice, whether

ured or not, bore on both sides this inscription, or an
ed version of it, and upon nearly every brick was stamped
ames of the king, his father, and grandfather.

3 bands of painted ornaments above the bas-reliefs, are
l both in design and colour from remains recently discovered
orsabâd. The wall was continued over the sculptures with
l or enamelled bricks, a mode of decoration which appears to
generally prevailed both at Nineveh and Babylon. An immense
er of these coloured bricks exist among the ruins of both
great cities, and numerous specimens are preserved in the
h Museum. The lion and the bull in the principal band of
ent, are the sacred animals continually represented on
ian monuments. The tree is the conventional Assyrian form
e vine, also, probably, a sacred emblem. The upper band
enting rosettes, or patera, between winged figures, is copied
the decoration round the archway recently found by M.
, at Khorsabâd.

INNER CHAMBER.

PASSING through the entrance at the north end of the just described, and between small winged figures placed above the other, we enter the Inner Chamber. Its walls ornamented with casts from bas-reliefs discovered in the princ hall of the North-west Palace of Nimroud, and now in the Bri Museum. They formed a consecutive series on one side of apartment, and they all celebrate the exploits of the same ki who is supposed to have reigned between nine hundred an thousand years before Christ. Between the sculptures, are inser repetitions of the same inscription to show the manner in wh they were originally divided. This inscription, however, altho found in the same building, is of a more recent date than bas-reliefs, and appears to have been carved at an entrance to palace by the order of Sargon, the builder of Khorsabâd, wh power and conquests it describes. We commence with the l reliefs to the left on entering.

No. 1 (in the plan). The upper bas-relief represents the king his chariot, hunting the wild bull ; he is striking one animal v a short sword in the back of the neck, precisely where a mod Spanish matador would deal the last and fatal blow. A sec bull, pierced by arrows, is lying beneath the horses' feet. royal chariot is driven by a charioteer, who holds in one har short whip, and in the other the reins, with which he urges the tl horses to the top of their speed. Behind the chariot, is a ho man with a spear and bow leading a second horse, probably, the use of the king, in case of need, and two armed attenda The bull represented in this sculpture, was probably, at one ti found wild in the great plains of Mesopotamia ; and the B seems to allude to it (Deut. xiv. 5 ; Isaiah li. 20), as an ani of great strength and fierceness. If we may judge from representation in the bas-relief, it had long, shaggy hair. must have become extinct even before the fall of the Assy empire, as Xenophon does not mention it amongst the ani inhabiting Assyria. An observation may be made here whic applicable to all the Assyrian bas-reliefs—that ignorance of laws of perspective has led the sculptor to give the horses

one fore and hind leg, and to place the bull, as it were, between the wheel and body of the chariot.

The lower bas-relief of No. 1 in this instance, bears relation to the upper, and represents the king after his victory over the wild bull, pouring a libation, or drinking wine over the body of the fallen animal. Whilst he raises the cup with his right hand



King standing over a conquered Bull.

he rests his left on his bow, an attitude denoting triumph and power in which we have seen the monarch portrayed in the centre hall. In front of him are his prime minister, or vizier, an attendant raising a fly-flapper, or fan, a second attendant standing with his hands crossed before him—an attitude of respect still assumed by inferiors and servants in the East—and musicians playing on a kind of stringed instrument. Behind the king are an attendant bearing the parasol—an emblem of royalty even to this day recognised by many Eastern nations, and reserved for the monarch alone—and his armed body guard.

No. 2. The king hunting the lion. He is bending his bow against an infuriated animal, which, already pierced by several arrows, is springing upon the chariot, whilst a second in the agonies of death is struggling beneath the feet of the horses. Two warriors on foot with drawn swords and raised shields appear to be hastening to the assistance of the king. This bas-relief is probably the finest specimen hitherto discovered of Assyrian art, and is especially remarkable for the spirited and effective delineation of the lions, which in their masterly, though somewhat conventional, treatment, bear a close resemblance to the lion of the early Greek sculptors.

As on the preceding slab, the lower bas-relief of No. 2, forms a part of the same subject as the upper, and represents the king in

an attitude of triumph or thanksgiving over the fallen lion. He is attended by his cup-bearer, guards, and musicians.

The lion represented in these bas-reliefs is still found on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris. It is smaller than the African lion, and the male is rarely provided with the long shaggy mane which distinguishes that species. But its chief peculiarity is the claw or hook at the extremity of the tail, which has been portrayed by the Assyrian artist, is described by ancient writers, and has been recently found in a specimen brought to England from countries adjoining Assyria.

The four bas-reliefs just described confirm the traditions which have been preserved to us by the Greeks of the skill in hunting of the ancient Assyrian kings. Nimrod, who is supposed to have been the founder of the Assyrian empire, was, the Bible tells us, "a mighty hunter before the Lord." It is probable that when from the increasing population of the plains watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, lions were no longer found in sufficient abundance to afford a ready supply for the chase, they were preserved in those vast paradises, as they were called, which were especially kept up by the Assyrian and Persian kings for hunting, and were plentifully stocked with all manner of wild beasts and rare birds. In the series of bas-reliefs lately discovered at Kouyunjik by Mr. Rassam, representing the son of Eсарhaddon hunting in one of those great enclosed parks, an attendant is seen letting a lion out of a cage, whilst the monarch, having already slain a number of animals, whose carcasses are scattered around him, is making ready for a fresh contest.

No. 3. The siege of a city or fort. This bas-relief is principally remarkable for the introduction of the battering-ram and artificial tower. These engines of war appear to have been constructed of wicker-work, and to have rested on wheels, by the aid of which they were pushed up to the walls of the besieged town. The ram is represented in the sculpture as having already dislodged several stones from the walls. In the tower are two warriors discharging their arrows against the enemy, one of whom is raising his hands as a sign of surrender, whilst the others are still defending their city. The king, with his shield-bearer protecting him from the arrows of the besieged, and followed by his attendants, is taking part in the siege.

The battering-ram, the "bulwarks," the "forts built against a city," by which are probably meant artificial towers, and other "engines of war," are frequently mentioned in the Bible, especially as used by the Assyrians and Babylonians, in their wars

the Jews (Ezekiel, iv. 2 ; Jeremiah, lii. 4 ; and 2 Chronicles, 15).

The towers and walls of the besieged castle or city are represented with angular battlements, and an arched entrance.

No. 4. A castle on an island or on the banks of a river. On the lower is an archer, on the other a woman, distinguished by long hair. Swimming to the castle and escaping from the Assyrian warriors who are discharging arrows at them from the shore, are three men, two of whom are supporting themselves on crocodilian skins, a mode of crossing rivers still practised by the natives inhabiting Mesopotamia, who generally carry the prepared skins of a sheep with them for this purpose. Rafts for transporting merchandise and travellers are constructed of similar skins, blown up with air and bound together with twigs and brushwood ; it was by these means that the sculptures discovered amongst the ruins of Nineveh were transported by the river Tigris to Busrah for embarkation. The conventional mode of treating the water and trees, worthy of observation.

The lower divisions of Nos. 3 and 4 form one subject—the king receiving prisoners of war, probably captured in the sieges represented in the upper bas-reliefs. He has dismounted from his chariot, the reins of which are now held by a groom, and is raising two captives in his hand, an attitude denoting victory. Before him stand his vizier, and attendants are bringing the captives, who are bound together and have their arms fastened behind their backs. Above them are represented various objects of spoil taken in the war, such as vessels (probably of precious metals) shawls, and elephant's tusks.

As no descriptive inscriptions accompany the bas-reliefs just described, the nation represented as conquered by the Assyrians has not been determined.

Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, These four bas-reliefs form a consecutive series, and represent a great battle, in which the Assyrians were, of course, victorious. The king is seen in his chariot, attended by a shield-bearer and charioteer. He is discharging his arrows against the enemy, who endeavour to oppose his progress, and a warrior already wounded has fallen beneath the feet of the king. Above his head is the emblem of the great protecting deity of the Assyrians, in the form of a man within a winged disk, who especially watches over the monarch. The god is also discharging an arrow, with a head shaped like a trident, against the enemies of the Assyrians. Near is an eagle, emblem of victory, feeding on the slain. In front of the king, also engaged



Bas-reliefs from Nimroud.

with the enemy, are Assyrian warriors in chariots and on horses. Some of the charioteers have standards bearing devices. The battle scene is concluded by Assyrian footmen slaying the defeated.

In these bas-reliefs the elaborate and minute ornaments on the robes of the figures, the furniture of the horses, and the chariots, are especially remarkable. The horses are delineated with considerable spirit, and show that the Assyrians possessed a pure breed of that noble animal—probably resembling the Arab horse



now found in the same country. The Assyrian horsemen appear to have been famous, and are frequently mentioned in the Bible as well as the Assyrian horses (Ezekiel xxiii. 6 ; 2 Kings xviii. 23 ; Habakkuk i. 8). When they fought with the bow, their horses appear to have been led by a second horseman, who is represented in the bas-reliefs as wearing a circular cap—probably of iron. The Assyrian warriors, it must be observed, are distinguished by the pointed helmet, several of which were discovered in the ruins. They were of iron inlaid with copper ornaments, as represented in the sculptures.

The lower compartments of Nos. 5, 6, 7, form a continuous subject, representing the passage of a river by the king and his army. In the first boat, towed by men, the king is standing in his chariot. He appears to be conversing with an attendant who is pointing out something on the opposite bank—perhaps the army or the castle of the enemy. Three men are seated at the oars, and the boat is further propelled and steered by a long oar fastened to the stern. The boats still used on the Euphrates and Tigris are constructed and managed in the same manner. A man standing

in the stern holds by their halters four horses, who are swim over the river. Behind the king's boat are two smaller ve one carrying his couch and a jar, and the other an empty cha in the water, in which are seen several fish, are men floati skins, some leading horses. The scene is closed by wa standing on the bank superintending the embarkation of chariots, whilst two others are preparing their skins for swim. The river represented in these bas-reliefs is probably the T and to this day, opposite the ruins of Nineveh, may be seen cially the same scene as that we have here described—so fev the changes which take place in the customs of the East.

Nos. 9, 10, 11. The king returning victorious from battle. procession is preceded by Assyrian warriors throwing the hea



the slain before the royal chariot. This barbarous mode of brating a victory is still practised by some Eastern nations. come the musicians playing on stringed instruments, and on a d They precede a group of Assyrian warriors in chariots, be standards, probably the same as those represented in the pre series of bas-reliefs, as combating with the enemy. Above hovers an eagle, carrying a human head in its talons. The in his chariot, followed by his led horse and guards, close procession. The monarch holds two arrows in one hand, an bow in the other—the usual attitude of triumph. His sl bearer is now changed for an attendant bearing the parasol, above him is his protecting deity, raising one hand, and hold bow in the other. Headless bodies are scattered in the ground.

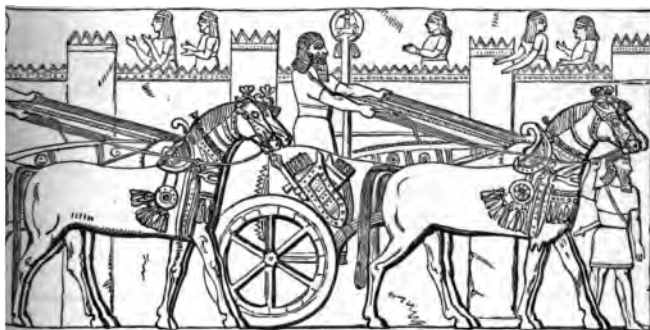
The lower compartments of Nos. 8, 9, 10. The king af victory receiving captives. He has left his chariot, the hors which are held by a groom. Before him is his vizier, follow

prisoners, with their arms bound. Above the captives are
 decorated vases to denote the spoil taken from the enemy.
 In the royal chariot are the two charioteers, the warriors
 are dismounted. They are passing under the walls of a city or
 a town, upon which stand women, apparently viewing the ceremony.



Fig. 11. Lower compartment. Assyrian warriors hunting the
 lion. The wounded animal struggling to free itself from the
 jaws with which it is pierced, is represented with great truth and
 detail. The details and finish of this bas-relief are worthy of
 the finest Assyrian art.

The archway modelled from that discovered at Khorsabâd,



flanked by eagle-headed figures and the sacred tree, similar to
 the one already described, opens to the eastward into the great nave.
 Figs. 12 to 15. These bas-reliefs form one subject, the siege of a
 city. The king is pursuing, and a battle beneath its walls.

about to discharge an arrow against a warrior who is already falling wounded from his chariot, the horses of which are rearing and plunging. The monarch is protected from the arrows of the besieged by his shield-bearer, and above him hovers the emblem of the great god of Assyria. Behind him are two Assyrian charioteers contending with the enemy, one of whom is flying his chariot before them, and looking back with his hands raised



asking for quarter. Assyrian warriors and the headless bodies of the slain are placed over the line of chariots, to represent, in a kind of conventional perspective, the field of battle; wavy lines at the bottom of the bas-reliefs denote water, probably a river, on the



banks of which the battle was fought. The walls of the castle are defended by archers. Beneath them are Assyrians slaying the conquered. On the opposite side of the castle is a warrior of great distinction, probably the general of the Assyrian army, clothed in a complete shirt of mail made of iron scales inlaid with copper, and falling from



WARRIORS HUNTING THE LION.

his neck to his ankles. He is discharging an arrow against the besieged, and is protected by his shield-bearer. Above him hovers an eagle. Behind him stands the chariot from which he has dismounted, and a guard of armed men closes the scene.

This series of bas-reliefs is also remarkable for the minutely detailed details, and for the illustrations it affords of many passages in the Bible. The ornaments of the various arms used by the Assyrians, of their armour, of the trappings of their horses and their chariots, consisting of the heads of animals, probably of precious metals, of dyed and figured cloths, of tassels of various colours, and of bells, profusely attached to the harness (many of which have been discovered in the ruins), are especially observed. The embroidered trappings are described by Ezekiel as "the precious cloths for chariots" brought from Dedan (xxv.



Both the Jewish and Assyrian armies contained a large number of chariots. Solomon had no less than 1400, for the maintenance of which certain cities were especially appointed (2 Chron. xxi. 10). Isaiah prophesying of the invasion of Judea by the Assyrians describes a scene very similar to that represented in the bas-relief: "The choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the hosts shall set themselves in array against the gate" (xxii. 7).

The lower division of No. 12.—A singular bas-relief, which appears to represent a walled inclosure or castle, and the pavilion of a victorious king. The first is indicated by a circle of battle walls with equidistant towers. It is divided into four compartments, each occupied by figures either preparing for a banquet or a sacrifice—one is slaying a sheep, another appears to be kneading bread in an oven, and others are before tables and stands laden with dishes and bowls. Beneath, or in front of the pavilion,

in cleaning a horse, whilst others are feeding at a manger, and like those still used in the East when horses are picketed at doors. An attendant stands at the entrance to the pavilion, behind him are four prisoners bound together and followed by a Syrian warrior. Above this group are two strange figures dressed in men's heads and skins, probably masquers or buffoons.



The lower division of No. 13.—Male and female prisoners and captives brought to Assyria after a campaign. The women are tearing their hair and throwing dust upon their heads, usual signs of grief in the East.

The lower divisions of Nos. 14 and 15.—Highly interesting bas-reliefs representing the siege of a city. The king, attended by a shield-bearer, and an eunuch raising the royal parasol, is attacking the city by firing his arrows against the enemy. On the opposite side is the battering-ram, the force of which the besieged are endeavouring to stop by catching it with chains lowered from the walls. The

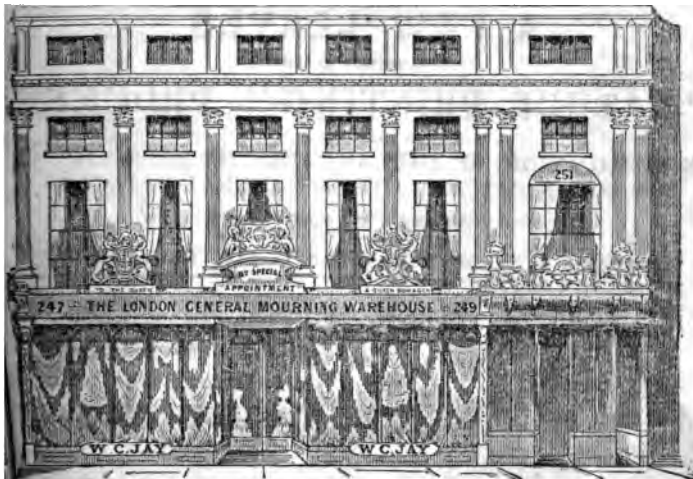
Assyrians are represented as struggling to keep it in its place by hooks. The besieged are also throwing lighted torches upon the artificial tower, from which a projecting spout discharges water to extinguish the fire. Assyrian warriors are mounting to the assault by ladders, whilst others are undermining the fortifications. Some of the besieged are falling wounded from the wall, others still defend their city. Women, tearing their hair, appear to be asking for quarter. An Assyrian warrior, standing behind the battering ram and discharging an arrow, is protected by a large shield of wickerwork, which probably covered the whole of his person. Such shields appear to have been especially used in sieges.



The paintings running round the chamber above the bas-relief represent the king, accompanied by his usual attendants and guards receiving his vizier—a subject continually portrayed on the walls of the Assyrian palaces, and found, in more than one instance, in the ruins of the North-west Palace at Nimroud. The drawings have been carefully made from bas-reliefs in the British Museum, by Mr Scharf, Sen., and the colours correspond as nearly as possible to the remains discovered. The ornamental borders are also copied from those found at Nimroud; and the alternate rosettes or patera with winged figures are taken, as in the adjoining hall, from Khorsabad.

The ceiling, like that of the central hall, of which it may be said to form a part, has been restored from various ornaments on the existing sculptures discovered in the ruins.

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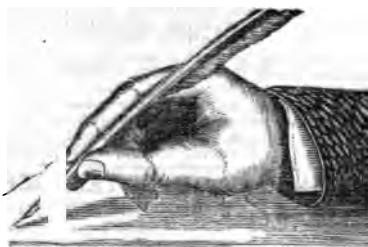
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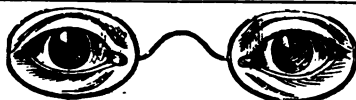
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