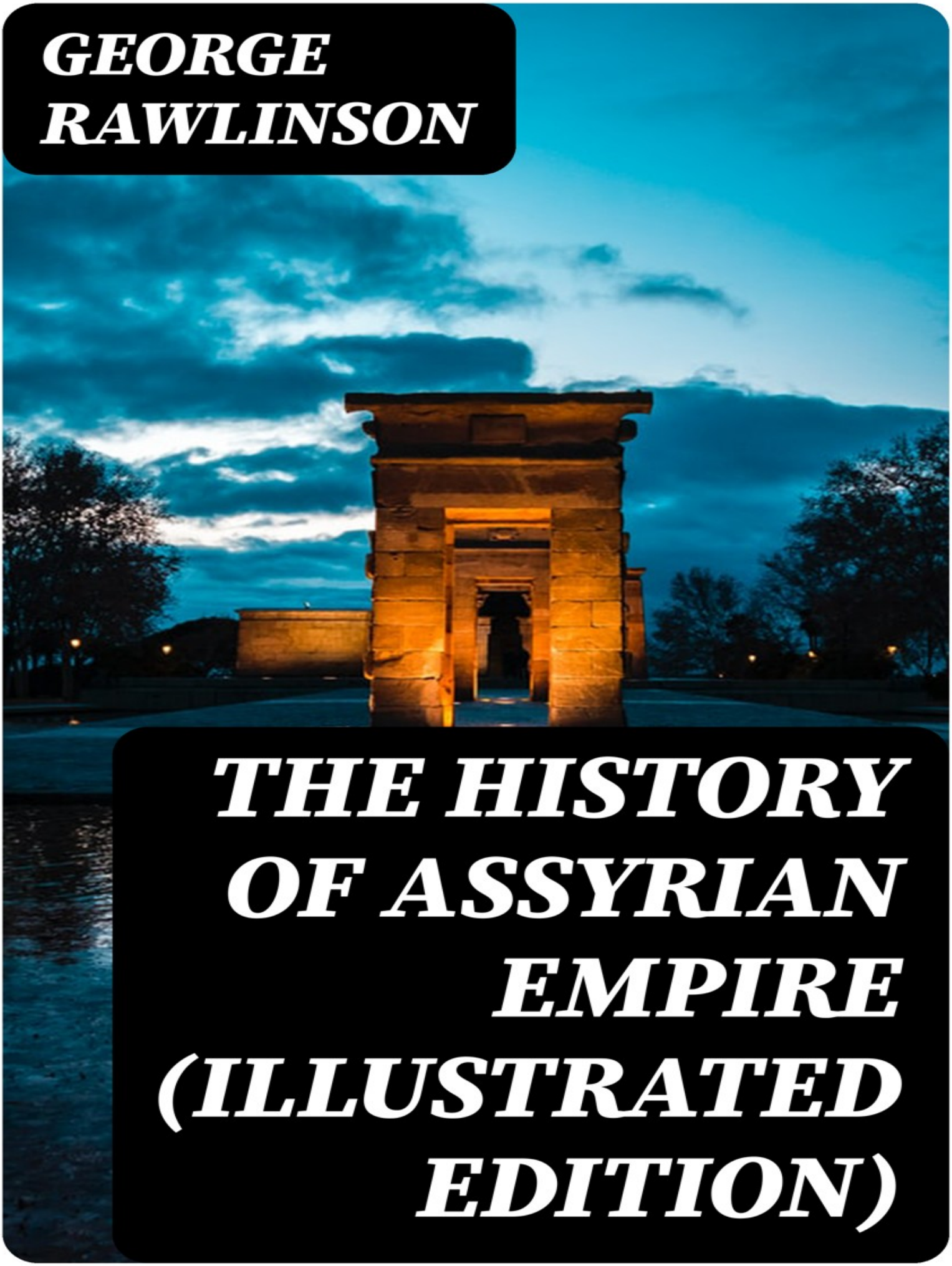
GEORGE RAWLINSON



THE HISTORY OF ASSYRIAN EMPIRE (ILLUSTRATED EDITION)

George Rawlinson

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and the adjacent Countries,
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“Τριτημοριη η ΄Ασσνριη χωρη τι δυνάμει της άλλης ΄Ασιης. ”—HEROD. i. 192.

The site of the second—or great Assyrian-monarchy was the upper portion of the Mesopotamian valley. The cities which successively formed its capitals lay, all of them, upon the middle Tigris; and the heart of the country was a district on either side that river, enclosed within the thirty-fifth and thirty-seventh parallels. By degrees these limits were enlarged; and the term Assyria came to be used, in a loose and vague way, of a vast and ill-defined tract extending on all sides from this central region. Herodotus considered the whole of Babylonia to be a mere district of Assyria. Pliny reckoned to it all Mesopotamia. Strabo gave it, besides these regions, a great portion of Mount Zagros (the modern Kurdistan), and all Syria as far as Cilicia, Judaea, and Phoenicia.

If, leaving the conventional, which is thus vague and unsatisfactory, we seek to find certain natural limits which we may regard as the proper boundaries of the country, in two directions we seem to perceive an almost unmistakable line of demarcation. On the east the high mountain-chain of Zagros. penetrable only in one or two places, forms a barrier of the most marked character, and is beyond a doubt the natural limit for which we are looking. On the south a less

striking, but not less clearly defined, line—formed by the abutment of the upper and slightly elevated plain on the alluvium of the lower valley—separates Assyria from Babylonia, which is best regarded as a distinct country. In the two remaining directions, there is more doubt as to the most proper limit. Northwards,we may either view Mount Masius as the natural boundary, or the course of the Tigris from Diarbekr to Til, or even perhaps the Armenian mountain-chain north of this portion of the Tigris, from whence that river receives its early tributaries. Westward, we might confine Assyria to the country watered by the affluents of the Tigris, or extend it so as to in elude the Khabour and its tributaries, or finally venture to carry it across the whole of Mesopotamia, and make it be bounded by the Euphrates. On the whole it is thought that in both the doubted cases the wider limits are historically the truer ones. Assyrian remains cover the entire country between the Tigris and the Khabour, and are frequent on both banks of the latter stream, giving unmistakable indications of a long occupation of that region by the great Mesopotamian people. The inscriptions show that even a wider tract was in process of time absorbed by the conquerors; and if we are to draw a line between the country actually taken into Assyria, and that which was merely conquered and held in subjection, we can select no better boundary than the Euphrates westward, and northward the snowy mountain-chain known to the ancients as Mons Niphates.

If Assyria be allowed the extent which is here assigned to her, she will be a country, not only very much larger than Chaldaea or Babylonia, but positively of considerable

dimensions. Reaching on the north to the thirty-eighth and on the south to the thirty-fourth parallel, she had a length diagonally from Diarbekr to the alluvium of 350 miles, and a breadth between the Euphrates and Mount Zagros varying from about 300 to 170 miles. Her area was probably not less than 75,000 square miles, which is more than double that of Portugal, and not much below that of Great Britain. She would thus from her mere size be calculated to play an important (part) in history; and the more so, as during the period of her greatness scarcely any nation with which she came in contact possessed nearly so extensive a territory.

Within the limits here assigned to Assyria, the face of the country is tolerably varied. Possessing, on the whole, perhaps, a predominant character of flatness, the territory still includes some important ranges of hills, while on the two sides it abuts upon lofty mountain-chains. Towards the north and east it is provided by nature with an ample supply of water, rills everywhere flowing from the Armenian and Kurdish ranges, which soon collect into rapid and abundant rivers. The central, southern, and western regions are, however, less bountifully supplied; for though the Euphrates washes the whole western and south-western frontier, it spreads fertility only along its banks; and though Mount Masius sends down upon the Mesopotamian plain a considerable number of streams, they form in the space of 200 miles between Balls and Mosul but two rivers, leaving thus large tracts to languish for want of the precious fluid. The vicinity of the Arabian and Syrian deserts is likewise felt in these regions, which, left to themselves, tend to acquire

the desert character, and have occasionally been regarded as actual parts of Arabia.

The chief natural division of the country is that made by the Tigris, which, having a course nearly from north to south, between Til and Samarah, separates Assyria into a western and an eastern district. Of these two, the eastern or that upon the left bank of the Tigris, although considerably the smaller, has always been the more important region. Comparatively narrow at first, it broadens as the course of the river is descended, till it attains about the thirty-fifth parallel a width of 130 or 140 miles. It consists chiefly of a series of rich and productive plains, lying along the courses of the various tributaries which flow from Mount Zagros into the Tigris, and often of a semi-alluvial character. These plains are not, however, continuous. Detached ranges of hills, with a general direction parallel to the Zagros chain, intersect the flat rich country, separating the plains from one another, and supplying small streams and brooks in addition to the various rivers, which, rising within or beyond the great mountain barriers, traverse the plains on their way to the Tigris. The hills themselves—known now as the Jebel Maklub, the Ain-es-sufra, the Karachok, etc.—are for the most part bare and sterile. In form they are hogbacked, and viewed from a distance have a smooth and even outline but on a nearer approach they are found to be rocky and rugged. Their limestone sides are furrowed by innumerable ravines, and have a dry and parched appearance, being even in spring generally naked and without vegetation. The sterility is most marked on the western flank, which faces the hot rays of the afternoon sun; the eastern slope is

occasionally robed with a scanty covering of dwarf oak or stunted brushwood. In the fat soil of the plains the rivers commonly run deep and concealed from view, unless in the spring and the early summer, when through the rains and the melting of the snows in the mountains they are greatly swollen, and run bank full, or even overflow the level country.

The most important of these rivers are the following:—the Kurnib or Eastern Khabour, which joins the Tigris in lat. 37° 12’; the Greater Zab (Zab Ala), which washes the ruins of Nimrud, and enters the main stream almost exactly in lat. 30°; the Lesser Zab (Zab Asfal), which effects its junction about lat. 35° 15’; the Adhem, which is received a little below Samarah, about lat. 34°; and the Diyaleh, which now joins below Baghdad, but from which branches have sometimes entered the Tigris a very little below the mouth of the Adhem. Of these streams the most northern, the Khabour, runs chiefly in an untraversed country—the district between Julamerik and the Tigris. It rises a little west of Julamerik in one of the highest mountain districts of Kurdistan, and runs with a general south-westerly course to its junction with another large branch, which reaches it from the district immediately west of Amadiyeh; it then flows due west, or a little north of west, to Zakko, and, bending to the north after passing that place, flows once more in a south-westerly direction until it reaches the Tigris. The direct distance from its source to its embouchure is about 80 miles; but that distance is more than doubled by its windings. It is a stream of considerable size, broad and

rapid; at many seasons not fordable at all, and always forded with difficulty.

The Greater Zab is the most important of all the tributaries of the Tigris. It rises near Konia, in the district of Karasu, about lat. 32° 20’, long. 44° 30’, a little west of the watershed which divides the basins of Lakes Van and Urymiyeh. Its general course for the first 150 miles is S.S.W., after which for 25 or 30 miles it runs almost due south through the country of the Tiyari. Near Amadiyeh it makes a sudden turn, and flows S.E. or S.S.E. to its junction with the Rowandiz branch whence, finally, it resumes its old direction, and runs south-west past the Nimrud ruins into the Tigris. Its entire course, exclusive of small windings, is above 350 miles, and of these nearly 100 are across the plain country, which it enters soon after receiving the Rowandiz stream. Like the Khabour, it is fordable at certain places and during the summer season; but even then the water reaches above the bellies of horses. It is 20 yards wide a little above its junction with the main steam. On account of its strength and rapidity the Arabs sometimes call it the “Mad River.”

The Lesser Zab has its principal source near Legwin, about twenty miles south of Lake Urumiyeh, in lat. 36° 40’, long. 46° 25’. The source is to the east of the great Zagros chain; and it might have been supposed that the waters would necessarily flow northward or eastward, towards Lake Urumiyeh, or towards the Caspian. But the Legwin river, called even at its source the Zei or Zab, flows from the first westward, as if determined to pierce the mountain barrier. Failing, however, to find an opening where it meets the

range, the Little Zab turns south and even south-east along its base, till about 25 or 30 miles from its source it suddenly resumes its original direction, enters the mountains in lat. 36° 20’, and forces its way through the numerous parallel ranges, flowing generally to the S.S.W., till it debouches upon the plain near Arbela, after which it runs S.W. and S.W. by S. to the Tigris. Its course among the mountains is from 80 to 90 miles, exclusive of small windings; and it runs more than 100 miles through the plain. Its ordinary width, just above its confluence with the Tigris, is 25 feet.

The Diyaleh, which lies mostly within the limits that have been here assigned to Assyria, is formed by the confluence of two principal streams, known respectively as the Holwan, and the Shirwan, river. Of these, the Shirwan seems to be the main branch. This stream rises from the most eastern and highest of the Zagros ranges, in lat. 34° 45’, long. 47° 40’ nearly. It flows at first west, and then north-west, parallel to the chain, but on entering the plain of Shahrizur, where tributaries join it from the north-east and the north-west, the Shirwan changes its course and begins to run south of west, a direction, which, it pursues till it enters the low country, about lat. 35° 5’, near Semiram. Thence to the Tigris it has a course which in direct distance is 150 miles, and 200 if we include only main windings. The whole course cannot be less than 380 miles, which is about the length of the Great Zab river. The width attained before the confluence with the Tigris is 60 yards, or three times the width of the Greater, and seven times that of the Lesser Zab.

On the opposite side of the Tigris, the traveller comes upon a region far less favored by nature than that of which we have been lately speaking. Western Assyria has but a scanty supply of water; and unless the labor of man is skilfully applied to compensate this natural deficiency, the greater part of the region tends to be, for ten months out of the twelve, a desert. The general character of the country is level, but not alluvial. A line of mountains, rocky and precipitous, but of no great elevation, stretches across the northern part of the region, running nearly due east and west, and extending from the Euphrates at Rum-kaleh to Til and Chelek upon the Tigris. Below this, a vast slightly undulating plain extends from the northern mountains to the Babylonian alluvium, only interrupted about midway by a range of low limestone hills called the Sinjar, which leaving the Tigris near Mosul runs nearly from east to west across central Mesopotamia, and strikes the Euphrates half-way between Rakkeh and Kerkesiyeh, nearly in long. 40°.

The northern mountain region, called by Strabo “Mons Masius,” and by the Arabs the Karajah Dagh towards the west, and towards the east the Jebel Tur, is on the whole a tolerably fertile country. It contains a good deal of rocky land; but has abundant springs, and in many parts is well wooded. Towards the west it is rather hilly than mountainous; but towards the east it rises considerably, and the cone above Mardin is both lofty and striking. The waters flowing from the range consist, on the north, of a small number of brooks, which after a short course fall into the Tigris; on the south, of more numerous and more copious streams, which gradually unite, and eventually form two

rather important rivers. These rivers are the Belik, known anciently as the Bileeha, and the Western Khabour, called Habor in Scripture, and by the classical writers Aborrhas or Chaboras.

The Belik rises among the hills east of Orfa, about long. 39°, lat. 37° 10’. Its course is at first somewhat east of south; but it soon sweeps round, and, passing by the city of Harran—the Haran of Scripture and the classical Carrh—proceeds nearly due south to its junction, a few miles below Rakkah, with the Euphrates. It is a small stream throughout its whole course, which may be reckoned at 100 or 120 miles.

The Khabour is a much more considerable river. It collects the waters which flow southward from at least two-thirds of the Mons Masius, and has, besides, an important source, which the Arabs regard as the true “head of the spring,” derived apparently from a spur of the Sinjar range. This stream, which rises about lat. 36° 40’, long. 40°, flows a little south of east to its junction near Koukab with the Jerujer or river Nisi-his, which comes down from Mons Masius with a course not much west of south. Both of these branches are formed by the union of a number of streams. Neither of them is fordable for some distance above their junction; and below it, they constitute a river of such magnitude as to be navigable for a considerable distance by steamers. The course of the Khabour below Koukab is tortuous; but its general direction is S.S.W. The entire length of the stream is certainly not less than 200 miles.

The Khabour, from near Arban, looking north.

The country between the “Mons Masius” and the Sinjar range is an undulating plain, from 60 to 70 miles in width, almost as devoid of geographical features as the alluvium of Babylonia. From a height the whole appears to be a dead level: but the traveller finds, on descending, that the surface, like that of the American prairies and the Roman Campagna, really rises and falls in a manner which offers a decided contrast to the alluvial flats nearer the sea. Great portions of the tract are very deficient in water. Only small streams descend from the Sinjar range, and these are soon absorbed by the thirsty soil; so that except in the immediate vicinity of the hills north and south, and along the courses of the Khabour, the Belik, and their affluents, there is little natural fertility, and cultivation is difficult. The soil too is often gypsiferous, and its salt and nitrous exudations destroy vegetation; while at the same time the streams and springs are from the same cause for the most part brackish and unpalatable. Volcanic action probably did not cease in

the region very much, if at all, before the historical period. Fragments of basalt in many places strew the plain; and near the confluence of the two chief branches of the Khabour, not only are old craters of volcanoes distinctly visible, but a cone still rises from the centre of one, precisely like the cones in the craters of Etna and Vesuvius, composed entirely of loose lava, scorim, and ashes, and rising to the height of 300 feet. The name of this remarkable hill, which is Koukab, is even thought to imply that the volcano may have been active within the time to which the traditions of the country extend.

Koukab.

Sheets of water are so rare in this region that the small lake of Khatouniyeh seems to deserve especial description. This lake is situated near the point where the Sinjar changes its character, and from a high rocky range subsides into low

broken hills. It is of oblong shape, with its greater axis pointing nearly due east and west, in length about four miles, and in its greatest breadth somewhat less than three. The banks are low and parts marshy, more especially on the side towards the Khabour, which is not more than ten miles distant. In the middle of the lake is a hilly peninsula, joined to the mainland by a narrow causeway, and beyond it a small island covered with trees. The lake abounds with fish and waterfowl; and its water, though brackish, is regarded as remarkably wholesome both for man and beast.

The Sinjar range, which divides Western Assyria into two plains, a northern and a southern, is a solitary limestone ridge, rising up abruptly from the flat country, which it commands to a vast distance on both sides. The limestone of which it is composed is white, soft, and fossiliferous; it detaches itself in enormous flakes from the mountain-sides, which are sometimes broken into a succession of gigantic steps, while occasionally they present the columnar appearance of basalt. The flanks of the Sinjar are seamed with innumerable ravines, and from these small brooks issue, which are soon dispersed by irrigation, or absorbed in the thirsty plains. The sides of the mountain are capable of being cultivated by means of terraces, and produce fair crops of corn and excellent fruit; the top is often wooded with fruit trees or forest-trees. Geographically, the Sinjar may be regarded as the continuation of that range of hills which shuts in the Tigris on the west, from Tekrit nearly to Mosul, and then leaving the river strikes across the plain in a direction almost from east to west as far as the town of Sinjar. Here the mountains change their course and bend to

the south-west, till having passed the little lake described above, they somewhat suddenly subside, sinking from a high ridge into low undulating hills, which pass to the south of the lake, and then disappear in the plain altogether. According to some, the Sinjar here terminates; but perhaps it is best to regard it as rising again in the Abd-el-aziz hills, which, intervening between the Khabour and the Euphrates, run in the same south-west direction from Arban to Zelabi. If this be accepted as the true course of the Sinjar, we must view it as throwing out two important spurs. One of these is near its eastern extremity, and runs to the south-east, dividing the plain of Zerga from the great central level. Like the main chain, it is of limestone; and, though low, has several remarkable peaks which serve as landmarks from a vast distance. The Arabs call it Kebritiyeh, or “the Sulphur range,” from a sulphurous spring which rises at its foot. The other spur is thrown out near the western extremity, and runs towards the north-west, parallel to the course of the upper Khabour, which rises from its flank at Ras-el-Ain. The name of Abd-el-aziz is applied to this spur, as well as to the continuation of the Sinjar between Arban and Halebi. It is broken into innumerable valleys and ravines, abounding with wild animals, and is scantily wooded with dwarf oak. Streams of water abound in it.

Lake of Khatounyeh.

South of the Sinjar range, the country resumes the same level appearance which characterizes it between the Sinjar and the Mons Masius. A low limestone ridge skirts the Tigris valley from Mosul to Tekrit, and near the Euphrates the country is sometimes slightly hilly; but generally the eye travels over a vast slightly undulating level, unbroken by eminences, and supporting but a scanty vegetation. The description of Xenophon a little exaggerates the flatness, but is otherwise faithful enough:—“In these parts the country was a plain throughout, as smooth as the sea, and full of wormwood; if any other shrub or reed grew there, it had a sweet aromatic smell; but there was not a tree in the whole region.” Water is still more scarce than in the plains north of the Sinjar. The brooks descending from that range are so weak that they generally lose themselves in the plain before they have run many miles. In one case only do they seem sufficiently strong to form a river. The Tharthar, which flows by the ruins of El Hadhr, is at that place a considerable stream, not indeed very wide but so deep that horses have

to swim across it. Its course above El Hadhr has not been traced; but the most probable conjecture seems to be that it is a continuation of the Sinjar river, which rises about the middle of the range, in long. 41° 50’, and flows south-east through the desert. The Tharthar appears at one time to have reached the Tigris near Tekrit, but it now ends in a marsh or lake to the south-west of that city.

The political geography of Assyria need not occupy much of our attention. There is no native evidence that in the time of the great monarchy the country was formally divided into districts, to which any particular names were attached, or which were regarded as politically separate from one another; nor do such divisions appear in the classical writers until the time of the later geographers, Strabo, Dionysius, and Ptolemy. If it were not that mention is made in the Old Testament of certain districts within the region which has been here termed Assyria, we should have no proof that in the early times any divisions at all had been recognized. The names, however, of Padan-Aram, Aram-Naharaim, Gozan, Halah, and (perhaps) Huzzab, designate in Scripture particular portions of the Assyrian territory; and as these portions appear to correspond in some degree with the divisions of the classical geographers, we are led to suspect that these writers may in many, if not in most cases, have followed ancient and native traditions or authorities. The principal divisions of the classical geographers will therefore be noticed briefly, so far at least as they are intelligible.

According to Strabo, the district within which Nineveh stood was called Aturia, which seems to be the word Assyria slightly corrupted, as we know that it habitually was by the

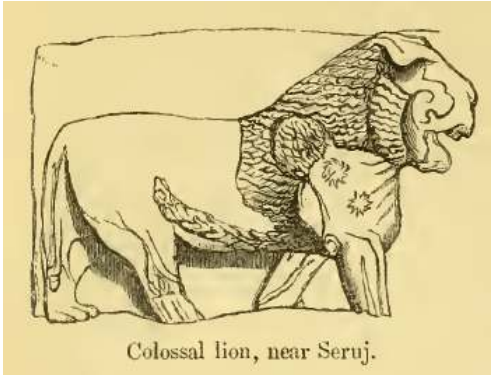
Persians. The neighboring plain country he divides into four regions—Dolomene, Calachene, Chazene, and Adiabene. Of Dolomene, which Strabo mentions but in one place, and which is wholly omitted by other authors, no account can be given. Calachene, which is perhaps the Calacine of Ptolemy, must be the tract about Calah (Nimrud), or the country immediately north of the Upper Zab river. Chazene, like Dolomene, is a term which cannot be explained. Adiabene, on the contrary, is a well-known geographical expression. It is the country of the Zab or Diab rivers, and either includes the whole of Eastern Assyria between the mountains and the Tigris, or more strictly is applied to the region between the Upper and Lower Zab, which consists of two large plains separated from each other by the Karachok hills. In this way Arbelitis, the plain between the Karachok and Zagros, would fall within Adiabene, but it is sometimes made a distinct region, in which case Adiabene must be restricted to the flat between the two Zabs, the Tigris, and the harachok. Chalonitis and Apolloniatis, which Strabo seems to place between these northern plains and Susiana, must be regarded as dividing between them the country south of the Lesser Zab, Apolloniatis (so called from its Greek capital, Apollonia) lying along the Tigris, and Chalonitis along the mountains from the pass of Derbend to Gilan. Chalonitis seems to have taken its name from a capital city called Chala, which lay on the great route connecting Babylon with the southern Ecbatana, and in later times was known as Holwan. Below Apolloniatis, and (like that district) skirting the Tigris, was Sittacene, (so named from its capital, Sittace which is commonly reckoned to Assyria, but seems more

properly regarded as Susianian territory.) Such are the chief divisions of Assyria east of the Tigris.

West of the Tigris, the name Mesopotamia is commonly used, like the Aram-Naharaim of the Hebrews, for the whole country between the two great rivers. Here are again several districts, of which little is known, as Acabene, Tigene, and Ancobaritis. Towards the north, along the flanks of Mons Masius from Nisibis to the Euphrates, Strabo seems to place the Mygdonians, and to regard the country as Mygdonia. Below Mygdonia, towards the west, he puts Anthemusia, which he extends as far as the Khabour river. The region south of the Khabour and the Sinjar he seems to regard as inhabited entirely by Arabs. Ptolemy has, in lieu of the Mygdonia of Strabo, a district which he calls Gauzanitis; and this name is on good grounds identified with the Gozan of Scripture, the true original probably of the “Mygdonia” of the Greeks. Gozan appears to represent the whole of the upper country from which the longer affluents of the Khabour spring; while Halah, which is coupled with it in Scripture, and which Ptolemy calls Chalcitis, and makes border on Gauzanitis, may designate the tract upon the main stream, as it comes down from Ras-el-Ain. The region about the upper sources of the Belik has no special designation in Strabo, but in Scripture it seems to be called Padan-Aram, a name which has been explained as “the flat Syria,” or “the country stretching out from the foot of the hills.” In the later Roman times it was known as Osrhoene; but this name was scarcely in use before the time of the Antonines.

The true heart of Assyria was the country close along the Tigris, from lat. 35° to 36° 30’. Within these limits were the four great cities, marked by the mounds at Khorsabad, Mosul, Nimrud, and Kileh-Sherghat, besides a multitude of places of inferior consequence. It has been generally supposed that the left bank of the river was more properly Assyria than the right; and the idea is so far correct, as that the left bank was in truth of primary value and importance, whence it naturally happened that three out of the four capitals were built on that side of the stream. Still the very fact that one early capital was on the right bank is enough to show that both shores of the stream were alike occupied by the race from the first; and this conclusion is abundantly confirmed by other indications throughout the region. Assyrian ruins, the remains of considerable towns, strew the whole country between the Tigris and Khabour, both north and south of the Sin jar range. On the banks of the Lower Khabour are the remains of a royal palace, besides many other traces of the tract through which it runs having been permanently occupied by the Assyrian people. Mounds, probably Assyrian, are known to exist along the course of the Khabour’s great western affluent; and even near Seruj, in the country between Harlan and the Euphrates some evidence has been found not only of conquest but of occupation. Remains are perhaps more frequent on the opposite side of the Tigris; at any rate they are more striking and more important. Bavian, Khorsabad, Shereef-Khan, Neb-bi-Yunus, Koyunjik, and Nimrud, which have furnished by far the most valuable and interesting of the Assyrian monuments, all lie east of the Tigris; while on the west two

places only have yielded relics worthy to be compared with these, Arban and Kileh-Sherghat.



Colossal lion, near Seruj.

It is curious that in Assyria, as in early Chaldaea, there is a special pre-eminence of four cities. An indication of this might seem to be contained in Genesis, where Asshur is said to have “builded Nineveh,” and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen; but on the whole it is more probable that we have here a mistranslation (which is corrected for us in the margin), and that three cities only are ascribed by Moses to the great patriarch. In the flourishing period of the empire, however, we actually find four capitals, of which the native names seem to have been Ninua, Calah, Asshur, and Bit-Sargina, or Dur-Sargina (the city of Sargon)—all places of first-rate consequence. Besides these principal cities, which were the sole seats of government, Assyria contained a vast number of large towns, few of which it is possible to name, but so numerous that they cover the whole face of the country with their ruins. Amomig; them were Tarbisa, Arbil, Arapkha, and Khazeh, in the tract between the Tigris and Mount Zagros; Haran, Tel-Apni, Razappa (Rezeph), and Amida, towards the north-west frontier; Nazibina (Nisibis), on the eastern branch of the Khabour; Sirki (Circesium), at the confluence of the Khabour with the Euphrates; Anat, on

the Euphrates, some way below this junction; Tabiti, Magarisi, Sidikan, Katni, Beth-Khalupi,etc., in the district south of the Sinjar, between the lower course of the Khabour and the Tigris. Here, again, as in the case of Chaldaea, it is impossible at present to locate with accuracy all the cities. We must once more confine ourselves to the most important, mind seek to determine, either absolutely or with a certain vagueness, their several positions.

It admits of no reasonable doubt that the ruins opposite Mosul are those of Nineveh. The name of Nineveh is read on the bricks; and a uniform tradition, reaching from the Arab conquest to comparatively recent times, attaches to the mounds themselves the same title. They are the most extensive ruins in Assyria; and their geographical position suits perfectly all the notices of the geographers and historians with respect to the great Assyrian capital. As a subsequent chapter will be devoted to a description of this famous city, it is enough in this place to observe that it was situated on the left or east bank of the Tigris, in lat. 36° 21’, at the point where a considerable brook, the Khosr-su, falls into the main stream. On its west flank flowed the broad and rapid Tigris, the “arrow-stream,” as we may translate the word; while north, east, and south, expanded the vast undulating plain which intervenes between the river and the Zagros mountain-range. Mid-way in this plain, at the distance of from 15 to 18 miles from the city, stood boldly up the Jabel Maklub and Ain Sufra hills, calcareous ridges rising nearly 2000 feet above the level of the Tigris, and forming by far the most prominent objects in the natural landscape. Inside the Ain Sufra, and parallel to it, ran the

small stream of the Gomel, or Ghazir, like a ditch skirting a wall, an additional defence in that quarter. On the south-east and south, distant about fifteen miles, was the strong and impetuous current of the Upper Zab, completing the natural defences of the position which was excellently chosen to be the site of a great capital.

Plan of the Ruins at Nimrud (Calah).

South of Nineveh, at the distance of about twenty miles by the direct route and thirty by the course of the Tigris, stood the second city of the empire, Calah, the site of which is marked by the extensive ruins at Nimrud. Broadly, this place may be said to have been built at the confluence of the Tigris with the Upper Zab; but in strictness it was on the Tigris only, the Zab flowing five or six miles further to the south, and entering the Tigris at least nine miles below the

Nimrud ruins. These ruins at present occupy an area somewhat short of a thousand English acres, which is little more than one-half of the area of the ruins of Nineveh; but it is thought that the place was in ancient times considerably larger, and that the united action of the Tigris and some winter streams has swept away no small portion of the ruins. They form at present an irregular quadrangle, the sides of which face the four cardinal points. On the north and east the rampart may still be distinctly traced. It was flanked with towers along its whole course, and pierced at uncertain intervals by gates, but was nowhere of very great strength or dimensions. On the south side it must have been especially weak, for there it has disappeared altogether. Here, however, it seems probable that the Tigris and the Shor Derreh stream, to which the present obliteration of the wall may be ascribed, formed in ancient times a sufficient protection. Towards the west, it seems to be certain that the Tigris (which is now a mile off) anciently flowed close to the city. On this side, directly facing the river, and extending along it a distance of 600 yards, or more than a third of a mile, was the royal quarter, or portion of the city occupied by the palaces of the kings. It consisted of a raised platform, forty feet above the level of the plain, composed in some parts of rubbish, in others of regular layers of sun-dried bricks, and cased on every side with solid stone masonry, containing an area of sixty English acres, and in shape almost a regular rectangle, 560 yards long, and from 350 to 450 broad. The platform was protected at its edges by a parapet, and is thought to have been ascended in various places by wide staircases, or inclined ways, leading up from

to Heb. רֹאשׁ, "head," and *elim*, the plural of *il* or *el*, "god;" or perhaps it may mean "Asshur (is) high-headed," from *Asshur*, *ris*, and *elam*, "high," *ris-elim* being equivalent to the *sir-buland* of the modern Persians. Asshur-danin-il is thought to mean "Asshur' (is) a strengthening god," *danin*, which has no Hebrew equivalent, having that force in Assyrian. Asshur-bel-kala means probably " Asshur (is) lord altogether," from *Asshur*, *bel* or *bil*, "a lord" (Heb. בַּעַל), and *kala*, "wholly;" a form connected with the Hebrew כֹּל or כָּל, "all." Nin-pala-zira is of course "Nin (Hercules) is the son of Zira," as already explained under Tiglath-pileser. Bel-sumili-kapi is conjectured to be "Bel of the left hand," or "Bel (is) left-handed," from Bel, *sumilu*, an equivalent of שְׂמֹאל, "the left," and kapu, (=כַּף), "a hand." Of Asshur-dah-il—if that be the right reading of the name—no satisfactory explanation has been as yet given.

Only two Assyrian royal names appear to be compounded of four elements. These are the first and the last of our list, Asshur-bel-nisis, or, more fully, Asshur-bilu-nisi-su, and the king commonly called Asshur-emid-ilin, whose complete name was (it is thought) Asshur-emid-ili-kin, or possibly Asshur-kinatili- kain. The last king's name is thought to mean " Asshur is the establisher of the power of the gods "—the second element, which is sometimes written as emid (comp. עמד), sometimes as nirih, being translated in a vocabulary by hinat, " power," while the last element (which is omitted on the monarch's bricks) is of course from hiii (the equivalent of בוֹן), which has been explained under Sargon, The name of the other monarch presents no difficulty. Asshur-bilu-nisi-su means " Asshm- (is) the lord of

liis people," from hil or hilu, " lord," 7iis, "a man" (comp. Heb. אֱנוֹשׁ), and *su*, "his" (=Heb. וֹ).

To these names of monarchs may be added one or two names of princes, which are mentioned in the records of the Assyrians, or elsewhere ; as Asshur-danin-pal, the eldest son of the great Shalmaneser, and Adrammelech and Sharezer, sons of Sennacherib. Asshur-danin-pal seems to be "Asshur strengthens a son," from roots mentioned above. Adrammelech has been explained as demis regis, "the king's glory;" but it would be more consonant: with the prepositional character of the names generally to translate it "the king (is) glorious," from *adir* (אדר or אדיר), " great, glorious," and melek (מֶלֶךְ), " a king." Or Adrammelech may be from ediru (comp. עדר), a common Assyrian word meaning "the arranger" and melek, and may signify "the king arranges," or "the king is the arranger." Sharezer, if that he the true reading, would seem to be "the king protects," from *sar* or *sarru*, "a king" (as in Sargon), and a form, *izzir*, from *nazar* or *natsar*, "to guard, protect." The Armenian equivalent, however, for this name, San-asar, may be the proper form ; and this would apparently be "The Moon (Sin) protects."

Nothing is more remarkable in this entire catalogue of names than their predominantly religious character. Of the thirty-nine kings and princes which the Assyrian lists furnish, the names of no fewer than thirty-one contain, as one element, either the name or the designation of a god. Of the remaining eight five have doubtful names, so that there remain three only whose names are known to be of a purely secular character. Fifteen names, one of which was borne by

two kings, contain the element Asshur; three, two of which occur twice, contain the element Nin; two, one of which was in such favour as to occur four times, contain the element Iva; two contain the element Bel; one the element Nebo ; and one the element Sin.^ The names occasionally express mere facts of the mythology, as Nin-pala-zira, "Nin (is) the son of Zira," Bel-sumih-kapi, "Bel (is) left-handed," and the like. More often the fact enunciated is one in which the glorification of the deity is involved; as, Asshur-bilu-nisi-su, "Asshur (is) the lord of his people;" Buzur-Asshur, "a stronghold (is) Asshur;" Asshur-bilu-kala, " Asshur (is) lord altogether." Frequently the name seems to imply some special thankfulness to a particular god for the particular child in question, who is viewed as having been his gift, in answer to a vow or to prayer. Of this kind are Asshur-akh-iddina (Esar-haddon), Sin-akhi-irib (Sennacherib), Asshur-bani-pal, &c. ; where the god named seems to be thanked for the child whom he has caused to be born. Such names as Tiglathi-Nin, Tiglath-Pileser, express this feeling even more strongly, being actual ascriptions of praise by the grateful parent to the deity whom he regards as his benefactor. In a few of the names, as Mutaggil-Nebo and Shamas- Iva, the religious sentiment takes a different turn. Instead of the parent merely expressing his own feelings of gratitude towards this or that god, he dedicates in a way his son to him, assigning to him an appellation which he is to verify in his after-life by a special devotion to the deity of whom in his very name he professes himself the " servant " or the " worshipper."

In the purely secular names the honour of the king would seem to have been considered. Sargon, Sharezer, and Adrammelech are all titles, of this kind—the first probably assumed together with the crown by a usurping monarch, the other two given perhaps by mothers to their sons in honour of the king their husband.