CHALDEA

Lesson	Chapters
CHAL001	**Chapter 1**
CHAL002	Chapters 2 and 3
CHAL003	Chapters 4 and 5
CHAL004	Chapters 6 and 7
CHAL005	Chapter 8

Author [1]

Canon George Rawlinson (23 November 1812 – 7 October 1902) was a 19th-century English scholar, historian, and Christian theologian. He was born at Chadlington, Oxfordshire, and was the younger brother of Sir Henry Rawlinson.

Having taken his degree at the University of Oxford (from Trinity College) in 1838, he was elected to a fellowship at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1840, of which from 1842 to 1846 he was fellow and tutor. He was ordained in 1841, was Bampton lecturer in 1859, and was Camden Professor of Ancient History from 1861 to 1889.

In his early days at Oxford, he played cricket for the University, appearing in five matches between 1836 and 1839 which have since been considered to have been first-class.

In 1872 he was appointed canon of Canterbury, and after 1888 he was rector of All Hallows, Lombard Street. In 1873, he was appointed proctor in Convocation for the Chapter of Canterbury. He married Louisa, daughter of Sir RA Chermside, in 1846.

His chief publications are his translation of the History of Herodotus (in collaboration with Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir John Gardiner Wilkinson), 1858–60; The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World, 1862–67; The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy (Parthian), 1873; The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy (Sassanian), 1875; Manual of Ancient History, 1869; Historical Illustrations of the Old Testament, 1871; The Origin of Nations, 1877; History of Ancient Egypt, 1881; Egypt and Babylon, 1885; History of Phoenicia, 1889; Parthia, 1893; Memoir of Major-General Sir HC Rawlinson, 1898. His lectures to an audience at Oxford University on the topic of the accuracy of the Bible in 1859 were published as the apologetic work The Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scripture Records Stated Anew in later years. He was also contributor to the Speaker's Commentary, the Pulpit Commentary, Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, and various similar publications. He was the author of the article "Herodotus" in the 9th edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica.

[1] Wikipedia, *George Rawlinson*

CHAPTER I. GENERAL VIEW OF THE COUNTRY.

"Behold the land of the Chaldaeans."--ISAIAH xxiii. 13.

The broad belt of desert which traverses the eastern hemisphere, in a general direction from west to east (or, speaking more exactly, of WSW. to ENE.), reaching from the Atlantic on the one hand nearly to the Yellow Sea on the other, is interrupted about its centre by a strip of rich vegetation, which at once breaks the continuity of the arid region, and serves also to mark the point where the desert changes its character from that of a plain at a low level to that of an elevated plateau or table-land. West of the favored district, the Arabian and African wastes are seas of sand, seldom raised much above, often sinking below, the level of the ocean; while east of the same, in Persia, Kerman, Seistan, Chinese Tartary, and Mongolia, the desert consists of a series of plateaus, having from 3000 to nearly 10,000 feet of elevation. The green and fertile region, which is thus interposed between the "highland" and the "lowland" deserts, participates, curiously enough, in both characters. Where the belt of sand is intersected by the valley of the Nile, no marked change of elevation occurs; and the continuous low desert is merely interrupted by a few miles of green and cultivable surface, the whole of which is just as smooth and as flat as the waste on either side of it. But it is otherwise at the more eastern interruption. There the verdant and productive country divides itself into two tracts, running parallel to each other, of which the western presents features not unlike those that characterize the Nile valley, but on a far larger scale; while the eastern is a lofty mountain region, consisting for the most part of five or six parallel ranges, and mounting in many places far above the level of perpetual snow.

It is with the western or plain tract that we are here concerned. Between the outer limits of the Syro-Arabian desert and the foot of the great mountain range of Kurdistan and Luristan intervenes a territory long famous in the world's history, and the chief site of three out of the five empires of whose history, geography, and antiquities it is proposed to treat in the present volumes. Known to the Jews as Aram-Naharaim, or "Syria of the two rivers;" to the Greeks and Romans as Mesopotamia, or "the between-river country;" to the Arabs as Al-Jezireh, or "the island," this district has always taken its name from the streams, which constitute its most striking feature, and to which, in fact, it owes its existence. If it were not for the two great rivers--the Tigris and Euphrates--with their tributaries, the more northern part of the Mesopotamian lowland would in no respect differ from the Syro-Arabian desert on which it adjoins, and which in latitude, elevation, and general geological character it exactly resembles. Towards the south, the importance of the rivers is still greater; for of Lower Mesopotamia it may be said, with more truth than of Egypt, that it is "an acquired land," the actual "gift" of the two streams which wash it on either side; being, as it is, entirely a recent formation--a deposit which the streams have made in the shallow waters of a gulf into which they have flowed for many ages.

The division, which has here forced itself upon our notice, between the Upper and the Lower Mesopotamian country, is one very necessary to engage our attention in connection with the ancient Chaldaea. There is no reason to think that the terns Chaldaea had at anytime the extensive signification of Mesopotamia, much less that it applied to the entire flat country between the desert and the mountains. Chaldaea was not the whole, but a part of, the great Mesopotamian plain; which was ample enough to contain within it three or four considerable monarchies. According to the combined testimony of geographers and historians, Chaldaea lay towards the south, for it bordered upon the Persian Gulf; and towards the west, for it adjoined Arabia. If we are called upon to fix more accurately its boundaries, which, like

those of most countries without strong natural frontiers, suffered many fluctuations, we are perhaps entitled to say that the Persian Gulf on the south, the Tigris on the east, the Arabian desert on the west, and the limit between Upper and Lower Mesopotamia on the north, formed the natural bounds, which were never greatly exceeded and never much infringed upon. These boundaries are for the most part tolerably clear, though the northern only is invariable. Natural causes, hereafter to be mentioned more particularly, are perpetually varying the course of the Tigris, the shore of the Persian Gulf, and the line of demarcation between the sands of Arabia and the verdure of the Euphrates valley. But nature has set a permanent mark, half way down the Mesopotamian lowland, by a difference of geological structure, which is very conspicuous. Near Hit on the Euphrates, and a little below Samarah on the Tigris, the traveller who descends the streams, bids adieu to a somewhat waving and slightly elevated plain of secondary formation, and enters on the dead flat and low level of the mere alluvium. The line thus formed is marked and invariable; it constitutes the only natural division between the upper and lower portions of the valley; and both probability and history point to it as the actual boundary between Chaldaea and her northern neighbor.

The extent of ancient Chaldaea is, even after we have fixed its boundaries, a question of some difficulty. From the edge of the alluvium a little below Hit, to the present coast of the Persian Gulf at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab, is a distance of above 430 miles; while from the western shore of the Bahr-i-Nedjif to the Tigris at Serut is a direct distance of 185 miles. The present area of the alluvium west of the Tigris and the Shat-el-Arab maybe estimated at about 30,000 square miles. But the extent of ancient Chaldaea can scarcely have been so great. It is certain that the alluvium at the head of the Persian Gulf now grows with extraordinary rapidity, and not improbable that the growth may in ancient times have been even more rapid than it is at present. Accurate observations have shown that the present rate of increase amounts to as much as a mile each seventy years, while it is the opinion of those best qualified to judge that the average progress during the historic period has been as much as a mile in every thirty years! Traces of post-tertiary deposits have been found as far up the country as Tel Ede and Hammam, 10 or more than 200 miles from the embouchure of the Shat-el-Arab; and there is ample reason for believing that at the time when the first Chaldaean monarchy was established, the Persian Gulf reached inland, 120 or 130 miles further than at present. We must deduct therefore from the estimate of extent grounded upon the existing state of things, a tract of land 130 miles long and some 60 or 70 broad, which has been gained from the sea in the course of about forty centuries. This deduction will reduce Chaldaea to a kingdom of somewhat narrow limits; for it will contain no more than about 23,000 square miles. This, it is true, exceeds the area of all ancient Greece, including Thessaly, Acarnania, and the islands; it nearly equals that of the Low Countries, to which Chaldaea presents some analogy; it is almost exactly that of the modern kingdom of Denmark; but it is less than Scotland, or Ireland, or Portugal, or Bavaria; it is more than doubled by England, more than quadrupled by Prussia, and more than octupled by Spain, France, and European Turkey. Certainly, therefore, it was not in consequence of its size that Chaldaea became so important a country in the early ages, but rather in consequence of certain advantages of the soil, climate, and position, which will be considered in the next chapter.

It has been already noticed that in the ancient Chaldaea, the chief--almost the sole-geographical features, were the rivers. Nothing is more remarkable even now than the featureless character of the region, although in the course of ages it has received from man some interruptions of the original

uniformity. On all sides a dead level extends itself, broken only by single solitary mounds, the remains of ancient temples or cities, by long lines of slightly elevated embankment marking the course of canals, ancient or recent, and towards the south--by a few sand-hills. The only further variety is that of color; for while the banks of the streams, the marsh-grounds, and the country for a short distance on each side of the canals in actual operation, present to the eye a pleasing, and in some cases a luxuriant verdure; the rest, except in early spring, is parched and arid, having little to distinguish it from the most desolate districts of Arabia. Anciently, except for this difference, the tract must have possessed all the wearisome uniformity of the steppe region; the level horizon must have shown itself on all sides unbroken by a single irregularity; all places must have appeared alike, and the traveller can scarcely have perceived his progress, or have known whither or how to direct his steps. The rivers alone, with their broad sweeps and bold reaches, their periodical changes of swell and fall, their strength, motion, and life-giving power, can have been objects of thought and interest to the first inhabitants; and it is still to these that the modern must turn who wishes to represent, to himself or others, the general aspect and chief geographical divisions of the country.

The Tigris and Euphrates rise from opposite sides of the same mountain-chain. This is the ancient range of Niphates (a prolongation of Taurus), the loftiest of the many parallel ridges which intervene between the Euxine and the Mesopotamian plain, and the only one which transcends in many places the limits of perpetual snow. Hence its ancient appellation, and hence its power to sustain unfailingly the two magnificent streams which flow from it. The line of the Niphates is from east to west, with a very slight deflection to the south of west; and the streams thrown off from its opposite flanks, run at first in valleys parallel to the chain itself, but in opposite directions, the Euphrates flowing westward from its source near Ararat to Malatiyeh, while the Tigris from Diarbekr "goes eastward to Assyria." The rivers thus appear as if never about to meet; but at Malatiyeh, the course of the Euphrates is changed. Sweeping suddenly to the south-east, this stream passes within a few miles of the source of the Tigris below Lake Goljik, and forces a way through the mountains towards the south, pursuing a tortuous course, but still seeming as if it intended ultimately to mingle its waters with those of the Mediterranean. It is not till about Balis, in lat. 36 deg., that this intention appears to be finally relinquished, and the convergence of the two streams begins. The Euphrates at first flows nearly due east, but soon takes a course which is, with few and unimportant deflections, about south-east, as far as Suk-es-Sheioukh, after which it runs a little north of east to Kurnah. The Tigris from Til to Mosul pursues also a south-easterly course, and draws but a very little nearer to the Euphrates. From Mosul, however, to Samarah, its course is only a point east of south; and though, after that, for some miles it flows off to the east, yet resuming, a little below the thirty-fourth parallel, its southerly direction, it is brought about Baghdad within twenty miles of the sister stream. From this point there is again a divergence. The course of the Euphrates, which from Hit to the mounds of Mohammed (long. 44 deg.) had been E.S.E., becomes much more southerly, while that of the Tigris--which, as we have seen, was for awhile due south--becomes once more only slightly south of east, till near Serut, where the distance between the rivers has increased from twenty to a hundred miles. After passing respectively Serut and El Khitr, the two streams converge rapidly. The flow of the Euphrates is at first E. S. E., and then a little north of east to Kurnah, while that of the Tigris is S.S.E. to the same point. The lines of the streams in this last portion of their course, together with that which may be drawn across from stream to stream, form nearly an equilateral triangle, the distance

being respectively 104, 110, and 115 miles. So rapid is the final convergence of the two great rivers.

The Tigris and Euphrates are both streams of the first order. The estimated length of the former, including main windings, is 1146 miles; that of the latter is 1780 miles. Like most rivers that have their sources in high mountain regions, they are strong from the first, and, receiving in their early course a vast number of important tributaries, become broad and deep streams before they issue upon the plains. The Euphrates is navigable from Sumeisat (the ancient Samosata), 1200 miles above its embouchure; and even 180 miles higher up, is a river "of imposing appearance," 120 yards wide and very deep. The Tigris is often 250 yards wide at Diarbekr, which is not a hundred miles from its source, and is navigable in the flood time from the bridge of Diarbekr to Mosul, from which place it is descended at all seasons to Baghdad, and thence to the sea. Its average width below Mosul is 200 yards, with a depth which allows the ascent of light steamers, unless when there is an artificial obstruction. Above Mosul the width rarely exceeds 150 yards, and the depth is not more in places than three or four feet. The Euphrates is 250 yards wide at Balbi, and averages 350 yards from its junction with the Khabour to Hit: its depth is commonly from fifteen to twenty feet. Small steamers have descended its entire course from Bir to the sea. The volume of the Euphrates in places is, however, somewhat less than that of the Tigris, which is a swifter and in its latter course a deeper stream. It has been calculated that the quantity of water discharged every second by the Tigris at Baghdad is 164,103 cubic feet, while that discharged by the Euphrates at Hit is 72,804 feet.

The Tigris and Euphrates are very differently circumstanced with respect to tributaries. So long as it runs among the Armenian mountains, the Euphrates has indeed no lack of affluents; but these, except the Kara Su, or northern Euphrates, are streams of no great volume, being chiefly mountain-torrents which collect the drainage of very limited basins. After it leaves the mountains and enters upon a low country at Sumefsat, the affluents almost entirely cease; one, the river of Sajur, is received from the right, in about lat. 36 deg. 40'; and two of more importance flow in from the left-the Belik (ancient Bilichus), which joins it in long. 39 deg. 9'; and the Khabour (ancient Habor or Chaboras), which effects a junction in long. 40 deg. 30', lat. 35 deg. 7'. The Belik and Khabour collect the waters which flow from the southern flank of the mountain range above Orfa, Mardin, and Nisibin, best known as the "Mons Masius" of Strabo. They are not, however, streams of equal importance. The Belik has a course which is nearly straight, and does not much exceed 120 miles. The Khabour, on the contrary, is sufficiently sinuous, and its course may be reckoned at fully 200 miles. It is navigable by rafts from the junction of its two main branches near the volcanic cone of Koukab, and adds a considerable body of water to the Euphrates. Below its confluence with this stream, or during the last 800 miles of its course, the Euphrates does not receive a single tributary. On the contrary, it soon begins to give off its waters right and left, throwing out branches, which either terminate in marshes, or else empty themselves into the Tigris. After awhile, indeed, it receives compensation, by means of the Shat-el-Hie and other branch streams, which bring back to it from the Tigris, between Mugheir and Kurnah, the greater portion of the borrowed fluid. The Tigris, on the contrary, is largely enriched throughout the whole of its course by the waters of tributary streams. It is formed originally of three main branches: the Diarbekr stream, or true Tigris, the Myafarekin River, and the Bitlis Chai, or Centrites of Xenophon, which carries a greater body than either of the other two. From its entry on the low country near Jezireh to the termination of its course at

Kurnah, it is continually receiving from the left a series of most important additions. The chain of Zagros, which, running parallel to the two main springs, shuts in the Mesopotamian plain upon the east, abounds with springs, which are well supplied during the whole summer from its snows, and these when collected form rivers of large size and most refreshing coolness. The principal are, the eastern Khabour, which joins the Tigris in lat. 37 deg. 12': the Upper Zabo which falls in by the ruins of Nimrud: the Lower Zab, which joins some way below Kileh Sherghat: the Adhem, which unites its waters half way between Samarah and Baghdad: and the Diyaleh (ancient Gyndes), which is received between Baghdad and the ruins of Ctesiphon.

By the influx of these streams the Tigris continues to grow in depth and strength as it nears the sea, and becomes at last (as we have seen) a greater river than the Euphrates, which shrinks during the latter part of its course, and is reduced to a volume very inferior to that which it once boasted. The Euphrates at its junction with the Khabour, 700 miles above Kurnah, is 400 yards wide and 18 feet deep; at Irzah or Verdi, 75 miles lower down, it is 350 yards wide and of the same depth; at Hadiseh, 140 miles below Werdi, it is 300 yards wide, and still of the same depth; at Hit, 50 miles below Hadiseh, its width has increased to 350 yards, but its depth has diminished to 16 feet; at Felujiah, 75 miles from Hit, the depth is 20 feet, but the width has diminished to 250 yards. From this point the contraction is very rapid and striking. The Saklawiyeh canal is given out upon the left, and some way further down the Hindiyeh branches off upon the right, each carrying, when the Euphrates is full, a large body of water. The consequence is that at Hillah, 90 miles-below Felujiah, the stream is no more than 200 yards wide and 15 feet deep; at Diwaniyeh, 65 miles further down, it is only 160 yards wide; and at Lamlun, 20 miles below Diwaniyeh, it is reduced to 120 yards wide, with a depth of no more than 12 feet! Soon after, however, it begins to recover itself. The water, which left it by the Hindiyeh, returns to it upon the one side, while the Shat-el-Hie and numerous other branch streams from the Tigris flow in upon the other; but still the Euphrates never recovers itself entirely, nor even approaches in its later course to the standard of its earlier greatness. The channel from Kurnah to El Khitr was found by Colonel Chesney to have an average width of only 200 yards, and a depth of about 18 or 19 feet, which implies a body of water far inferior to that carried between the junction with the Khabour and Hit. More recently, the decline of the stream in its latter course has been found to be even greater. Neglect of the banks has allowed the river to spread itself more and more widely over the land: and it is said that, except in the flood time, very little of the Euphrates water reaches the sea. Nor is this an unprecedented or very unusual state of things. From the circumstance (probably) that it has been formed by the deposits of streams flowing from the east as well as from the north, the lower Mesopotamian plain slopes not only to the south, but to the west. The Euphrates, which has low banks, is hence at all times inclined to leave its bed, and to flow off to the right, where large tracts are below its ordinary level. Over these it spreads itself, forming the well-known "Chaldaean marshes," which absorb the chief proportion of the water that flows into them, and in which the "great river" seems at various times to have wholly, or almost wholly, lost itself. No such misfortune can befall the Tigris, which runs in a deep bed, and seldom varies its channel, offering a strong contrast to the sister stream.

Frequent allusion has been made, in the course of this description of the Tigris and Euphrates, to the fact of their having each a flood season. Herodotus is scarcely correct when he says that in Babylonia "the river does not, as in Egypt, overflow the corn-lands of its own accord, but is spread over them by the help of engines." Both the Tigris and Euphrates rise many feet each spring, and

overflow their banks in various places. The rise is caused by the melting of the snows in the mountain regions from which the two rivers and their affluents spring. As the Tigris drains the southern, and the Euphrates the northern side of the same mountain range, the flood of the former stream is earlier and briefer than that of the latter. The Tigris commonly begins to rise early in March, and reaches its greatest height in the first or second week of May, after which it rapidly declines, and returns to its natural level by the middle of June. The Euphrates first swells about the middle of March, and is not in full flood till quite the end of May or the beginning of June; it then continues high for above a month, and does not sink much till the middle of July, after which it gradually falls till September. The country inundated by the Tigris is chiefly that on its lower course, between the 32d and 31st parallels, the territory of the Beni Lam Arabs. The territory which the Euphrates floods is far more extensive. As high up as its junction with the Khabour, that stream is described as, in the month of April, "spreading over the surrounding country like a sea." From Hit downwards, it inundates both its banks, more especially the country above Baghdad (to which it is carried by the Saklawiyeh canal), the tract west of the Birs Nimrud and extending thence by way of Nedjif to Samava and the territory of the Affej Arabs, between the rivers above and below the 32d parallel. Its flood is, however, very irregular, owing to the nature of its banks, and the general inclination of the plain, whereof mention was made above. If care is taken, the inundation may be pretty equally distrib uted on either side of the stream; but if the river banks are neglected, it is sure to flow mainly to the west, rendering the whole country on that side the river a swamp, and leaving the territory on the left bank almost without water. This state of things may be traced historically from the age of Alexander to the present day, and has probably prevailed more or less since the time when Chaldaea received its first inhabitants.

The floods of the Tigris and Euphrates combine with the ordinary action of their streams upon their banks to produce a constant variation in their courses, which in a long period of time might amount to something very considerable. It is impossible to say, with respect to any portion of the alluvial plain, that it may not at some former period have been the bed of one or the other river. Still it would seem that, on the whole, a law of compensation prevails, with the result that the general position of the streams in the valley is not very different now from what it was 4000 years ago. Certainly between the present condition of things and that in the time of Alexander, or even of Herodotus, no great difference can be pointed out, except in the region immediately adjoining on the gulf, where the alluvium has grown, and the streams, which were formerly separate, have united their waters. The Euphrates still flows by Hit and through Babylon; the Tigris passes near Opis, and at Baghdad runs at the foot of an embankment made to confine it by Nebuchadnezzar. The changes traceable are less in the main courses than in the branch streams, which perpetually vary, being sometimes left dry within a few years of the time that they have been navigable channels.

The most important variations of this kind are on the side of Arabia. Here the desert is always ready to encroach; and the limits of Chaldaea itself depend upon the distance from the main river, to which some branch stream conveys the Euphrates water. In the most flourishing times of the country, a wide and deep channel, branching off near Hit, at the very commencement of the alluvium, has skirted the Arabian rock and gravel for a distance of several hundred miles, and has entered the Persian Gulf by a mouth of its own. In this way the extent of Chaldaea has been at times largely increased, a vast tract being rendered cultivable, which is otherwise either swamp or desert.

Such are the chief points of interest connected with the two great Mesopotamian rivers. These form, as has been already observed, the only marked and striking characteristics of the country, which, except for them, and for one further feature, which now requires notice, would be absolutely unvaried and uniform. On the Arabian side of the Euphrates, 50 miles south of the ruins of Babylon, and 25 or 30 miles from the river, is a fresh-water lake of very considerable dimensions--the Bahr-i-Nedjif, the "Assyrium stagnum" of Justin. This is a natural basin, 40 miles long, and from 10 to 20 miles broad, enclosed on three sides by sandstone cliffs, varying from 20 to 200 feet in height, and shut in on the fourth side--the north-east--by a rocky ridge, which intervenes between the valley of the Euphrates and this inland sea. The cliffs are water-worn, presenting distinct indications of more than one level at which the water has rested in former times. At the season of the inundation this lake is liable to be confounded with the extensive floods and marshes which extend continuously from the country west of the Birs Nimrud to Samava. But at other tines the distinction between the Bahr and the marshes is very evident, the former remaining when the latter disappear altogether, and not diminishing very greatly in size even in the driest season. The water of the lake is fresh and sweet, so long as it communicates with the Euphrates; when the communication is cut off it becomes very unpalatable, and those who dwell in the vicinity are no longer able to drink it. This result is attributed to the connection of the lake with rocks of the gypsiferous series.

It is obvious that the only natural divisions of Chaldaea a proper are those made by the river-courses. The principal tract must always have been that which intervenes between the two streams. This was anciently a district some 300 miles in length, varying from 20 to 100 miles in breadth, and perhaps averaging 50 miles, which must thus have contained an area of about 15,000 square miles. The tract between the Euphrates and Arabia was at all times smaller than this, and in the most flourishing period of Chaldaea must have fallen short of 10,000 square miles.

We have no evidence that the natural division of Chaldaea here indicated was ever employed in ancient times for political purposes. The division which appears to have been so employed was one into northern and southern Chaldaea, the first extending from Hit to a little below Babylon, the second from Niffer to the shores of the Persian Gulf. In each of these districts we have a sort of tetrarchy, or special pre-eminence of four cities, such as appears to be indicated by the words--"The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar." The southern tetrarchy is composed of the four cities, Ur or Hur, Huruk, Nipur, and Larsa or Larancha, which are probably identified with the Scriptural "Ur of the Chaldees," Erech, Calneh, and Ellasar. The northern consists of Babel or Babylon, Borsippa, Cutha, and Sippara, of which all except Borsippa are mentioned in Scripture. Besides these cities the country contained many others,--as Chilmad, Dur-Kurri-galzu, Ihi or Ahava, Rubesi, Duran, Tel-Humba, etc. It is not possible at present to locate with accuracy all these places. We may, however, in the more important instances, fix either certainly, or with a very high degree of probability, their position.

Hur or Ur, the most important of the early capitals, was situated on the Euphrates, probably at no great distance from its mouth. It was probably the chief commercial emporium in the early times; as in the bilingual vocabularies its ships are mentioned in connection with those of Ethiopia. The name is found to have attached to the extensive ruins (now about six miles from the river, on its right bank, and nearly opposite its junction with the Shat-el-Hie) which are known by the name of Mugheir, or "the bitumened." Hereon a dead flat, broken only by a few sand-hills, are traces of a

considerable town, consisting chiefly of a series of low mounds, disposed in an oval shape, the largest diameter of which runs from north to south, and measures somewhat more than half a mile. The chief building is a temple, hereafter to be more particularly described, which is a very conspicuous object even at a considerable distance, its greatest height above the plain being about seventy feet. It is built in a very rude fashion, of large bricks, cemented with bitumen, whence the name by which the Arabs designate the ruins.

About thirty miles from Hur, in a north-westerly direction, and on the other side of the Euphrates, from which it is distant eight or nine miles, are the ruins of a town, called in the inscriptions Larrak, or Larsa, in which some of the best Orientalists have recognized at once the Biblical Ellasar, the Laranchue of Berosus, and the Larissa of Apollodorus, where the king held his court who sent Memnon to the siege of Troy. The identification is perhaps doubtful; but, at any rate, we have here the remains of a second Chaldaean capital, dating from the very earliest times. The ruins, which bear now the name of Senkereh or Sinkara, consist of a low circular platform, about four and a half miles in circumference, rising gradually from the level of the plain to a central mound, the highest point of which attains an elevation of seventy feet above the plain itself, and is distinctly visible from a distance of fifteen miles. The material used consists of the ordinary sun-dried and baked bricks; and the basement platforms bear the inscriptions of the same king who appears to have been the original founder of the chief buildings at Ur or Mugheir.

Fifteen miles from Larsa, in a direction a little north of west, and on the same side of the river, are ruins considerably more extensive than those of either Ur or Larsa, to which the natives apply the name of Warka, which is no doubt a corruption of the original appellation. The Erech, or Orech, of the Hebrews, which appears as Huruk in the cuneiform geographical lists, became known to the Greeks as Orchoe; and this appellation, probably continuing in use to the time of the Arab conquest, was then corrupted into Urka or Warka, in which shape the name given by Nimrod still attaches to the second of his cities. The ruins stand in lat. 31 deg. 19', long. 45 deg. 40', about four miles from the nearest bend of the Euphrates, on its left or east bank. They form an irregular circle, nearly six miles in circumference, which is defined by the traces of an earthen rampart, in some places forty feet high. A vast mass of undulating mounds, intersected by innumerable channels and ravines, extends almost entirely across the circular space, in a direction, which is nearly north and south, abutting at either end upon the rampart. East and west of this mass is a comparatively open space, where the mounds are scattered and infrequent; while outside the rampart are not only a number of detached hillocks marking the site of ancient buildings, but in one direction--towards the east--the city may be traced continuously by means of ruined edifices, mounds, and pottery, fully three miles beyond the rampart into the desert. The greatest height of the ruins is about 100 feet; their construction is very rude and primitive, the date of some buildings being evidently as early as that of the most ancient structures of either Mugheir or Senkereh.

Sixty miles to the north-west of these ruins, still on the left or eastern bank of the Euphrates, but at the distance of thirty miles from its present course, are the remains of another city, the only Chaldaean ruins which can dispute, with those already described, the palm of antiquity. They consist of a number of separate and distinct heaps, which seem to be the remains of different buildings, and are divided into two nearly equal groups by a deep ravine or channel 120 feet wide, apparently the dry bed of a river which once ran through the town. Conspicuous among the other hillocks is a conical heap, occupying a central position on the eastern side of the river-bed, and rising to the height of about

seventy feet above the general level of the plain. Further on in this direction is a low continuous mound, which seems to be a portion of the outer wall of the city. The ruins are of considerable extent, but scarcely so large as those at either Senkereh or Warka. The name which now attaches to them is Niffer: and it appears, from the inscriptions at the place, that the ancient Semitic appellation was but slightly different. This name, as read on the bilingual tablets, was Nipur; and as there can be little doubt that it is this word which appears in the Talmud as Nopher, we are perhaps entitled, on the authority of that treasure-house of Hebrew traditions, to identify these ruins with the Calneh of Moses, and the Calno of Isaiah.

About sixty-five miles from Niffer, on the opposite side of the Euphrates, and in a direction only slightly north of west, are the remains of the ancient Borsippa. These consist of little more than the ruins of a single building--the great temple of Merodach--which was entirely rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar. They have been sometimes regarded as really a portion of the ancient Babylon; but this view is wholly incompatible with the cuneiform records, which distinctly assign to the ruins in question the name of Borsip or Borsippa, a place known with certainty to have been distinct from, though in the neighborhood of, the capital. A remnant of the ancient name appears to be contained in the modern appellation, Birs-Nimrud or Birsi-Nimrud, which does not admit of any explanation from the existing language of the country.

Fifteen miles from thence, to the north-east, chiefly but not entirely on the left or east bank of the Euphrates, are the remains of "Babylon the Great," which have been so frequently described by travellers, that little need be said of them in this place. The chief ruins cover a space about three miles long, and from one to two broad, and consist mainly of three great masses: the first a square mound, called "Babil" by the Arabs, lying towards the north at some distance from the other remains; the second or central mound, a pile called the "Kasr" or Palace; and the third, a great irregular heap lying towards the south, known as the "mound of Amram," from a tomb which crowns its summit. The "Kasr" and "Amram" mounds are enclosed within two lines of rampart, lying at right angles to each other, and forming, with the river, a sort of triangle, within which all the principal ruins are comprised, except the mound called "Babil". Beyond the rampart, towards the north, south, and east, and also across the river to the west, are various smaller detached ruins, while the whole ground, in every direction, is covered with fragments of brick and with nitre, the sure marks of former habitations.

The other cities of ancient Chaldaea which may be located with an approach to certainty, are Cutha, now Ibrahim, fifteen miles north-east by north of Hymar; Sippara or Sepharvaim, which was at Sura, near Mosaib on the Euphrates, about twenty miles above Babylon by the direct route; and Dur-Kurri-galzu, now Akkerkuf, on the Saklawiyeh canal, six miles from Baghdad, and thirty from Mosaib, in a direction a little west of north. [PLATE III., Fig. 1.] Ihi, or Ahava, is probably Hit, ninety miles above Mosaib, on the right bank of the river; Chilmad may be Kalwadha, near Baghdad; and Rubesi is perhaps Zerghul, near the left bank of the Shat-el-Hie, a little above its confluence with the Euphrates. Chaldaean cities appear likewise to have existed at Hymar, ten miles from Babylon towards the east; at Sherifeh and Im Khithr, south and south-east of Hymar; at Zibbliyeh, on the line of the Nil canal, fifteen miles north-west of Niffer; at Delayhim and Bisrniya, in the Affej marshes, beyond Niffer, to the south-east; at Phara and Jidr, in the same region, to the south-west and south-east of Bismiya; at Hammam [PLATE III., Fig. 2], sixteen miles south-east of Phara, between the Affej and the Shatra marshes; at Tel-Ede, six miles from Hammam, to the south-south-west [PLATE IV., Fig. 2]; at Tel-Medineh and

Tel-Sifr, in the Shatra marshes, to the south-east of Tel-Ede and the north-east of Senkereh; at Yokha, east of Hammam, and Nuffdyji, north of Warka; at Lethami, near Niffer; at Iskhuriyeh, north of Zibbliyeh, near the Tigris; at Tel-Kheir and Tel-Dhalab, in the upper part of the alluvium, to the north of Akkerkuf; at Duair, on the right bank of the Euphrates, south of Hilleh and south-east of the Birs-Nimrud; at Jeb Mehari, south of the Bahr-i-Nedjif; at Mal Battush, near Swaje; at Tel-el-Lahm, nine or ten miles south of Suk-es-Sheioukh, and at Abu Shahrein, in the same neighborhood, on the very border of the Arabian Desert. Further investigation will probably add largely to this catalogue, for many parts of Babylonia are still to some extent unexplored. This is especially true of the tract between the Shat-el-Hie and the lower Tigris, a district which, according to the geographers, abounds with ruins. No doubt the most extensive and most striking of the old cities have been visited; for of these Europeans are sure to hear through the reports of natives. But it is more than probable that a number of the most interesting sites remain unexplored, and even unvisited; for these are not always either very extensive or very conspicuous. The process of gradual disintegration is continually lowering the height of the Chaldaean ruins; and depressed mounds are commonly the sign of an ancient and long-deserted city. Such remains give us an insight into the character of the early people, which it is impossible to obtain from ruins where various populations have raised their fabrics in succession upon the same spot.

The cities here enumerated may not perhaps, in all cases, have existed in the Chaldaean period. The evidence hitherto obtained connects distinctly with that period only the following--Babylon, Ur or Hur, Larrak or Larsa, Erech or Huruk, Calneh or Nopher, Sippara, Dur-Kurri-galzu, Chilmad, and the places now called Abu Shahrein and Tel-Sifr. These sites, it will be observed, were scattered over the whole territory from the extreme south almost to the extreme north, and show the extent of the kingdom to have been that above assigned to it. They are connected together by a similarity in building arrangements and materials, in language, in form of type and writing, and sometimes in actual names of monarchs. The most ancient, apparently, are those towards the south, at Warka, Senkereh, Mugheir, and Niffer; and here, in the neighborhood of the sea, which then probably reached inland as far as Suk-es-Sheioukh, there is sufficient reason to place the primitive seat of Chaldaean power. The capital of the whole region was at first Ur or Hur, but afterwards became Nipur, and finally Babel or Babylon.

The geography of Chaldaea is scarcely complete without a glance at the countries which adjoin upon it. On the west, approaching generally within twenty or thirty miles of the present course of the Euphrates, is the Arabian Desert, consisting in this place of tertiary sand and gravels, having a general elevation of a few feet above the Mesopotamian plain, and occasionally rising into ridges of no great height, whose direction is parallel to the course of the great stream. Such are the Hazem and the Qassaim, in the country between the Bahr-i-Nedjif and the Persian Gulf, low pebbly ridges which skirt the valley from the Bahr to below Suk-es-Sheioukh. Further west the desert becomes more stony, its surface being strewn with numerous blocks of black granite, from which it derives its appellation of Hejerra. No permanent streams water this region; occasional "wadys" or torrent-courses, only full after heavy rains, are found; but the scattered inhabitants depend for water chiefly on their wells, which are deep and numerous, but yield only a scanty supply of a brackish and unpalatable fluid. No settled population can at any time have found subsistence in this region, which produces only a few dates, and in places a poor and unsucculent herbage. Sandstorms are frequent, and at times the baleful simoon sweeps across the entire tract, destroying

with its pestilential breath both men and animals.

Towards the north Chaldaea adjoined upon Assyria. From the foot of that moderately lofty range already described which the Greeks call Masius, and the modern Turks know as Jebel Tur and Karajah Dagh, extends, for above 300 miles, a plain of low elevation, slightly undulating in places, and crossed about its centre by an important limestone ridge, known as the Sinjar hills, which have a direction nearly east and west, beginning about Mosul, and terminating a little below Rakkah. This track differs from the Chaldaean lowland, by being at once less flat and more elevated. Geologically it is of secondary formation, while Chaldaea proper is tertiary or post-tertiary. It is fairly watered towards the north, but below the Sinjar is only very scantily supplied. In modern times it is for nine months in the year a desert, but anciently it was well inhabited, means having apparently been found to bring the whole into cultivation. As a complete account of this entire region must be given in another part of the present volume, this outline (it is thought) may suffice for our present purpose.

Eastward of Chaldaea, separated from it by the Tigris, which in its lower course is a stream of more body than the Euphrates, was the country known to the Jews as Elam, to the early Greeks as Cissia, and to the later Greeks as Susis or Susiana. This territory comprised a portion of the mountain country which separates Mesopotamia from Persia; but it was chiefly composed of the broad and rich flats intervening between the mountains and the Tigris, along the courses of the Kerkhah, Kuran, and Jerahi rivers. It was a rich and fertile tract, resembling Chaldaea in its general character, with the exception that the vicinity of the mountains lent it freshness, giving it cooler streams, more frequent rains, and pleasanter breezes.

Capable of maintaining with ease a dense population, it was likely, in the early times, to be a powerful rival to the Mesopotamian kingdom, over which we shall find that in fact it sometimes exercised supremacy.

On the south Chaldaea had no neighbor. Here a spacious sea, with few shoals, land-locked, and therefore protected from the violent storms of the Indian Ocean, invited to commerce, offering a ready communication with India and Ceylon, as well as with Arabia Felix, Ethiopia, and Egypt. It is perhaps to this circumstance of her geographical position, as much as to any other, that ancient Chaldaea owes her superiority over her neighbors, and her right to be regarded as one of the five great monarchies of the ancient world. Commanding at once the sea, which reaches here deep into the land, and the great rivers by means of which the commodities of the land were most conveniently brought down to the sea, she lay in the highway of trade, and could scarcely fail to profit by her position. There is sufficient reason to believe that Ur, the first capital, was a great maritime emporium; and if so, it can scarcely be doubted that to commerce and trade, at the least in part, the early development of Chaldaean greatness was owing.