

for some slavery or other? But on the other hand, there never was empire or state, which did not flourish more or less, so long as the people dutifully cultivated their language and upheld its character."

ART. V. — *Nineveh and its Remains ; with an Account of a Visit to the Chaldæan Christians of Kurdistan, and the Yezidis, or Devil-Worshippers ; and an Inquiry into the Manners and Arts of the Ancient Assyrians*. By AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD, Esq., D. C. L. New York : George P. Putnam. 1849. 2 vols. 8vo.

MORE than twenty-two centuries ago, when the Ten Thousand Greeks, after the unfortunate battle at Cunaxa, were beginning their memorable retreat along the east bank of the Tigris, they crossed the Zabatus a little above its confluence with the former river.

"There," as one of their number informs us, "was a great deserted city, the name of which was Larissa. In the olden time, the Medes inhabited it. The breadth of its wall was twenty-five feet, its height a hundred feet, and its circumference about seven miles. It was built of bricks, but the under part of it was of stone to the height of twenty feet. When the Persians subdued the kingdom of the Medes, the Persian king besieged this city, but was not able to take it. An eclipse of the sun took place,* however, which caused the besieged to abandon the city, and thus it was taken. Near this city was a pyramid of stone, the breadth of which was a hundred feet, and its height was two hundred. Upon it were many of the barbarians, who had fled thither from the neighboring villages." *Anabasis*, III. 4.

Xenophon evidently knew but little about the history of this uninhabited city, on the heights of which the frightened country people took refuge as the armed Greeks passed by. But it is probable that he described its appearance faithfully ;

* We adopt the conjectural reading, ἥλιον δὲ σελήνη προκαλύψασα ; for the common reading makes nonsense ; and if we preserve νεφέλη instead of σελήνη, the question arises, what was there in so common an occurrence as that of a cloud passing over the sun to terrify the inhabitants.

from the Acropolis, where they might have been visited without hazard.

Mr. Layard made the best possible use of the pittance that was doled out to him. A larger band of laborers was hired, and under the protection of the Sultan's firman, the excavations were continued on a larger scale. To save expense, only trenches could be dug to expose the face of the slabs, the earth in the interior of the chamber remaining unmoved. From this cause, no doubt, many smaller objects of curiosity and value remain undiscovered. In one apartment, which it was necessary to clear out in order to raise the slabs which had fallen on their faces, a quantity of iron rust was found, in which could be distinguished the scales of a suit of armor, like that represented in the bas-relief. A helmet remained perfect a little while; but the iron being almost wholly decomposed, it soon fell to pieces. A pair of gigantic winged bulls were dug out, and a few perfect vases of glass and alabaster. "A kind of exfoliation had taken place in the glass vase, and it was incrustated with thin semi-transparent laminæ, which glowed with all the brilliant colors of the opal. This beautiful appearance is a well known result of age, and is frequently found on glass in Egyptian, Greek, and other early tombs." But the most important discovery was of a black marble obelisk, about seven feet long, which is thus described:—

"Although its shape was that of an obelisk, yet it was flat at the top and cut into three gradines. It was sculptured on the four sides; there were in all twenty small bas-reliefs, and above, below, and between them was carved an inscription 210 lines in length. The whole was in the best preservation; scarcely a character of the inscription was wanting; and the figures were as sharp and well defined as if they had been carved but a few days before. The king is twice represented, followed by his attendants; a prisoner is at his feet, and his vizir and eunuchs are introducing men leading various animals, and carrying vases and other objects of tribute on their shoulders, or in their hands. The animals are the elephant, the rhinoceros, the Bactrian or two-humped camel, the wild bull, the lion, a stag, and various kinds of monkeys. Amongst the objects carried by the tribute-bearers, may perhaps be distinguished the tusks of the elephant, shawls, and some bundles of precious wood. From the nature, therefore, of the bas-reliefs, it is natural to conjecture that the