HISTORIC HOMES.

GLIMPSES OF ANCIENT MANSIONS IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY.

Glances at the Natural and Artificial Attractions and Antiquities of the Nomini River.

[Written for the Dispatch.]

Among the salt-water estuaries of the Potomac there is none of more varied or attractive natural features than Nomini river, which for a distance of eight or ten miles intersects the lower half of Westmoreland county. At the mouth of it and dividing it into two narrow, rapid currents lies a low, sandy island, called from its scattered, and stunted trees Cedar Island, while in close proximity are numerous reefs and oyster-bars which long rendered the channel peculiarly tortuous, swift, and intricate. Until an appropriation by Congress some twenty years ago led to the opening up of a deep, straight channel no steamboat could enter the stream. Even a school of porpoises that came in once on a very high tide became imprisoned, and much to the entertainment of the dwellers on the shore, sported up and down the narrow stream for several months before finding their way back to deep water. Now the Baltimore and Washington steamers make regular trips to four or five lucrative landing places on the stream, and the noise of the paddles and note of the steam whistle are daily heard along the shores.

Near the mouth of Nomini and the beautiful bay into which it empties broad, open fields recede from its low banks on either side, bounded in the distance by woodlands or ranges of high hills; but farther up the stream the hills rise abruptly from the water, and with thick and varied growths of timber, interspersed with clusters of ivy or holly and indented here and there by coves and inlets, and cleft ever and anon by deep valleys with steep, precipitous sides, they present a highly picturesque and pleasing view.

WILD DUCKS.

Within the memory of many denizens of this region yet living, the comparatively shallow and calm waters of this stream were frequented by immense numbers and numerous varieties of wild ducks, and I can myself recall many a still winter morning when the startled flocks, beating the frosty air with their wings, sounded like the roar of distant thunder. Now, it is said, in the best seasons the commonest varieties of ducks here may be counted by tens where formerly they were seen by thousands, and of the canvas-back and other better sorts only a stray visitor or two may sometimes be descried during a whole winter. The experience of fishermen on this creek, as it is locally called, would through many years have well justified the name of "Fishing" or "Herring creek," which I find in certain early legal documents applied to one of its principal head branches. There is many a cove, eddy, and shore on the stream that have become famous in the region adjacent as excellent fishing-grounds. It is now common to meet some luckless seine-hauler or angler who declares that the steamboats are driving the fish all away; but it is assuring, on the contrary, to note that in shallow waters here the wading crane still plies her wonted art, and the fish-hawk in summer, above her nest in some lonely, leafless tree, here and there maintains "her ancient, solitary reign."

ONOMANIENTE.

As noted on early maps of the colony, the savage tribe originally inhabiting these shores was called Onomanients, of which Nomini may be a contracted form, as Cone in Northumberland seems to be of Chickacone. According to the narrative of Captain John Smith's captivity among the Indians in the winter of 1607-'8, he was escorted to the campon this stream from the Tobagoes, on the Rappahannock (in Essex or Lower Caroline), and here he reached the northern limit of his enforced journeyings among the savages. He became thus, in all probability, the first white man who trod these shores and looked down from the wooded banks on the beautiful stream below.

In the summer following Captain Smith in his memorable voyage of discovery in an open boat, manned by twelve or thirteen bold companions and impelled with oars and a patched sail, having entered the Potomac, was conducted hither by two Indian guides or pilots and viewed the stream from the side of the water, as he had before done from the side of the land. One of this adventurous party thus describes their experience at the time: "We could see no inhabitants for thirty miles' sail. Then we were conducted by two savages up a little bayed creek towards Onomanient, where all the woods were laid with ambuscadoes to the number of 300 or 400 savages, but so strangely painted, grimed, and disguised, shouting, yelling, and crying, as we rather supposed them so many devils."

IN QUEST OF CORN.

It was hither also that Captain Samuel Argal came in the good ship Discovery, in the spring of 1613, in quest of corn for the almost famishing settlement at Jamestown, and while negotiating with Japazaws, king of the Powtowmacks, for the lading of his vessel, he learned of the presence in the Indian village near by of Pocahontas, King Powhatan's daughter, "employed thither," according to an early account, "as shopkeeper to a fair, to exchange some of her father's commodities for theirs." The English captain at once conceived the idea of making her a prisoner and taking her to Jamestown to be held as a hostage. Ralph Hamor's treatise, said to be "the most reliable and authentic work on the early history of Virginia," and Captain Argal's official report furnish detailed accounts of the low artifice by which the young princess was decoyed into the vessel and made a prisoner. As consequent upon this treacherous affair, her removal to Jamestown, subsequent baptism, and marriage to John Rolfe, and final death in England became interesting and romantic incidents in our early colonial history.

The tide of English immigration on the Potomac, after receiving a temporary check from Indian ravages and massacres, began about 1650 to occupy the lands in this part of Westmoreland, and among the earliest settlements made on the Nomini, beginning at the mouth and extending up both sides of the stream, were those of William Hardridge, Richard Bushrod, William Boothe, Henry Ashton, William Pearce, John Vaughan, John Kozier, Lewis Burwell, Thomas Yeowell, George Reade, Francis Clay, and Thomas Hawkins, memorials of nearly all of whom remain in some bay bend, arm, point or plantation which bear their names, or in the moss-covered inscriptions of some time-worn and neglected tomb still to be found.

LOCK HARBOR.

The sailor in entering the Nomini through its present straight artificial channel, which runs between the fine old estates of Federal Farm and Bushfield, once the property of the Lees and Washingtons, sees ahead of him a mile or so distant, near the first steamboat landing, the old dwelling called Lock Harbor, standing now bare and bleak amidst the decay and ruin of much that once made it attractive and pleasing to the eye. I am ignorant of the early history of this old seat, but here lived during the early part of the century in opulent ease James Jett, Esq., an old-time representative of Westmoreland in the Legislature, and from this home went his sons, Dr. William N. Jett, long a prominent physician in King George, and the Hon. J. Bailey, Jett, late County Judge of Stafford, and at present a resident of the far West. Hence went also one of their sisters, as the wife of Dr. Ferdinand Fairfax, to find a home and a grave in Tennessee, and her daughters—one at Corsicana, Tex., and the other in Westmoreland—serve yet further to illustrate a tendency so common in Virginia families to become remotely separated and to shed their individual influences along widely divergent lines.

From this retired home, where he lived at the time, the Rev. George F. Bagby, D. D., (now of Farmville) was called at the beginning of the war to a chaplaincy in the army, and among the memories of the place that come to him through the lapse of the years since then is doubtless that of a successful shot made by him from the cover of the bushes in the early twilight of a winter morning at a flock of unsuspecting swans resting on the sandy edge of the point of land opposite the house.

NOMINI.

Two miles farther up the stream, where it makes a sharp curve around Church Point, we see on the high ground above the junction of Pearce's creek with the Nomini the site of an old colonial residence that was called Nomini. The situation here is a commanding one, and the view which it affords of the surrounding country, dotted over with farms, houses, orchards, woodlands, and hedges, and intersected in various directions by meandering creeks, with the blue Potomac beyond, extending as far as the eye can reach, is exceedingly diversified and pleasing. This place was long the abode of Dr. Thompson, a popular physician and the hospitable head of a prominent and patriotic family at the period of the Revolution and long subsequently. The old mansion was destroyed by British troops in 1813 at the command of Captain Baker, of the Fairy, one of Admiral Cockburn's flotilla, operating at the time on the Potomac. Close beside the road here near where it begins to descend the hill, beneath an ivy-covered sod, are the graves of members of the above-named family and of others also of the name of Griffith. Across the stream at the foot of the hill a ferry was in operation for nearly or quite 200 years and was only supplanted a few summers since by the draw-bridge now in use.

COLONIAL CHURCH.

On a grassy plat where grow a few cedars, on the lower side of the stream and close beside the bank, is the site of the old Nomini Episcopal church of colonial days, which also fell a prey to British vandalism in the war of 1812. The stuccoed building which has long occupied the former site has had among the clergymen who have statedly ministered within its walls Washington Nelson, W. N. Ward, and Edward McGuire previous to 1850, and since then William McGuire, T. G. Dashiell (late of St. Mark's church, Richmond), and the Revs. Rodifer, Wharton, Lloyd, Brooke, and Castleman.

Among the unmarked and neglected graves near this edifice I mention but one, and that not because of any social, ancestral, or historic dignity that belonged in life to its humble tenant. It is only the grave of the wife of the dusky ferryman, whose cot stood beside the church-yard and who long, by day and by night, answered the call of the public as they came wishing to be boated across the stream. She died after a brief illness of small-pox, and in the popular dread of the disease there was none to minister to her in her last hours but her husband, and there were no hands but his to arrange her form and compose her limbs in death. He alone was the sexton to dig her grave and the pall-bearer to convey her body to its burial, and alone in the night and in his grief he laid her away in the earth and reared the mound above her.

LIBERTY HALL.

On the side of the road opposite the church, and extending for some distance up the shore, is the plantation called Liberty Hall, owned at present by Mr. Bruce Massey, under whose energetic and progressive management, with its diversified crops of grain, larger fruits, berries, &c., it is becoming one of the most attractive and remunerative farms in the county. The building here, if it be not the same, marks the site of the one that became the home of Colonel John A. Washington during the Revolution, when, as the brother of the commander-in-chief of the American armies, his residence near the Potomac was made a target for the guns of the British vessels, and its name witnesses to the liberty-loving spirit of this patriotic citizen. In a letter dated here April 15, 1776, Colonel Washington wrote:

"My house, standing in point-blank cannon-shot of the shipping, I thought it advisable to move my family and most valuable effects. We are now living in the house where Mr. Ballendine formerly kept store, just below Nomini Ferry—baptized Liberty Hall."

GREEN HILL.

Two miles higher up the creek, beyond the homes of Messrs. Thomas N. and John Murphy (both of recent origin), is Green Hill, situated on a commanding and airy eminence, from which the ground falls for several hundred yards in a partly-wooded slope to the water in the rear. With this place are associated the early family names of Christopher and Glasscock, both of which have figured in the local military annals of Westmoreland. No descendants of these names survive, and a few graves in the garden here, and some shrubs and trees planted by their hands, remain as the last memorials of their occupancy of the place.

During most of the present half century Mr. Samuel R. Jackson has made this his home and has here reared a large family, more than one son of whom has gone to assume business relations in other States, while he, cheered with the presence of other children, lingers near the graves of loved ones whom he has lost, and often reverts to the good old times when he did business in the store at the corner and the intelligent leisure-loving yeomanry of the community came thither on the semi-weekly mail-days to discuss the political situation, the crops, the blooded colts, along with the incidents of the latest fish-fry or fox-chase.

HICKORY HILL.

Higher up the creek, near where the salt tide mingles with its fresh-water sources, and separated from Green Hill by rugged, wooded hills and a deep intervening valley, is the old seat widely known as Hickory Hill, which was occupied about the year 1700 by John Turberville, Esq. The old site is near the brow of the hill overlooking an extended undulating area of tree tops and open, bare hills beyond, with the marshy-fringed stream winding its way at the foot of them. The mansion here, described by a late chronicler as "a low brick building, more inviting for its internal comfort and conveniences than any imposing aspect it presented to the eye," was consumed by fire long years ago, and I can but imperfectly recall the pile of ruins and the flagstones from an English quarry that covered the walks near where it stood. To this home during its occupancy by Captain George Turberville, Sheriff of Westmoreland in 1720, were led as his successive wives Frances, Letice, and Martha, the daughters respectively of Henry Ashton, of "Boothes"; William Fitzhugh, of "Bedford," and Richard Lee, of London, Eng. The tombs that perpetuate their names and give the brief record of their lives may yet be seen not far from the stream on which they lived. The proprietor of this place in the succeeding generation was John Turberville, son to the above-named Captain George and of his children reared here, were George Lee Turberville, who, at the opening of hostilities in 1775, left Winchester College, England, to become a major in the Continental line in the Revolution. His sister Letitia married Catesby Jones, and was mother to Commodore T. ap Catesby Jones, United States navy, and Roger Jones, major-general, United States army. Through her only daughter—Mrs. Gordon—she was grandmother to Mrs. Julianna Hayes, the widely-known and venerable president of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Through his father, General Roger Jones, she sustained a like relationship to Lieutenant Catesby ap Roger Jones, who commanded the Merrimac on the second day of the memorable naval battle of March 8 and 9, 1862, in Hampton Roads.

About the year 1800 Major Robert Beale, a Revolutionary soldier, became proprietor here and so continued until his death forty-four years later, and there were born and reared to him during this occupancy a numerous family, the only survivor of which at present is General R. L. T. Beale.

In a modest cottage built in the vicinity of the old site by the Rev. Joseph H. Davis, late a veteran member of the Virginia Conference, he found a home during the last years of his life and now rests here beside his wife in the grave-yard of her ancestors. Professor J. W. C. Davis, a descendant of the early proprietor of the place, now owns and occupies it.

NOMINY HALL.

On the farther side of the stream opposite this place, in an elevated plateau between the head-waters of the Nomini, is Nominy Hall, long the seat of a branch of the Carter family in colonial and later years. A patent covering this large property appears to have been granted to Thomas Hawkins February 26, 1653, for "2,500 acres, side of a southeast branch of Nomini, formerly known by the name of Herring Creek." It passed early into the possession of Robert Carter, of Corrotoman, Lancaster, who, as a resident of Virginia, owned more land within its borders than any other of her citizens, and who on this and other grounds was popularly styled "King Carter." The estate passed to the one of his numerous sons called by his own name, Robert, and for him a palatial mansion was built here in 1732—an immense square edifice of brick, with roof sloping from the centre to the four sides, and having within high-pitched rooms with wainscoted walls and a great hall after the custom of the better class of old colonial homes, and beneath all subterranean chambers, passages, wine-cellars, and vaults, after the fashion of an ancient feudal castle. From the yard of the mansion to the outer gate was a broad avenue set for a full quarter of a mile with two rows of poplars (P. Monilifera), which still stand as veritable giants of their race, with their towering forms and wide-spreading arms overshadowing the grassy sod and roadway beneath. He for whom the house was built having died early, his son, of the same name, who, from his long connection as a member of the Council of State and residence in Williamsburg, was commonly called "Councillor Carter," inherited it.

A FRIEND OF LIBERTY.

Councillor Carter was, despite certain marked eccentricities of character, a kind-hearted, cultured, and hospitable man, a supporter of Christianity, patron of learning, and ardent friend of human liberty. His humane and generous care of Selim, the Algerine convert, has been touchingly told by the late Rev. Benjamin H. Rice in his narrative of that strangely interesting and unfortunate character. One of the most useful preachers of the Gospel who ever labored in the Northern Neck was educated by Mr. Carter's liberal assistance; and his slaves, who might have been counted by the hundred, were set at liberty by a stroke of his pen. The spacious hall of his residence was for years opened to itinerant ministers of different denominations as a place for preaching, and John Wesley, having once preached there and enjoyed the hospitalities of the house, wrote in his journal his impressions of Mr. Carter as "a Christian, a scholar, and a gentleman."

There were born here to Councillor Carter (who married Miss Tasker, of Maryland,) a large family of children, most of whom died unmarried. His only son who left descendants settled in Prince William, in the vicinity of the Manassas battlefield, and six of his daughters, who were respectively married to gentlemen of the names of Jones, Maund, Mitchell, Ball, Berkeley, and Chinn, bore into various scattered communities of Virginia, as their children have yet more widely extended, the traditional accounts and memoirs of "Old Nominy." Late in life Mr. Carter removed to Baltimore, where he died, March 4, 1804.

BURNED TO THE GROUND.

The subsequent occupants of this seat, except for a brief interval, have been the Maunds and Arnests, of whom numerous representatives have become widely scattered. Like most of the early seats on the Potomac, the house here was burned to the ground long ago, and the present frame dwelling stands within a few feet of the foundation stones that supported the former structure. Mr. Thomas M. Arnest is the present owner of the place, and his children are the fourth generation of the name to tread the sod and play beneath the shade of their forefathers. He, a lineal descendant of King Carter, of the seventh generation, sees his plantation, under energetic and intelligent management, showing no signs of wornout and unproductive land, but with crops as fruitful and horses and cattle as fine, probably, as ever sprang from its furrows or graced its turf in all its history of nearly two and a half centuries.

G. W. B.

HOLLINS INSTITUTE, VIRGINIA.

P. S.—A few hours after the sentence above with reference to General R. L. T. Beale was written a message was received announcing his sudden death on the evening of April 18, 1893. G. W. B.

THE WILLIAMS-ASHWORTH CASE.

A Statement of the Shooting and Stabbing Affray Near Wattsboro'.

WATTSBORO', VA., April 25, 1893.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Having seen your communication from Green Bay of April 18th, giving an account of the Ashworth-Williams altercation of Sunday last, I propose to give it as heard from an eye-witness of the affair to me. The question of small-pox in our county has been a mooted one for some weeks—some contending it was, others that it was not. Mr. Thomas F. Williams, who had been appointed a quarantine officer to prevent the spread of the disease, went early on last Sunday morning to Chase City to invoke a visit from Dr. Clarence Saunders, to see the cases and decide as to the genuineness of the disease. In the evening of the same day Dr. Saunders came down and visited the cases and pronounced it veritable small-pox. Mr. Embra E. Williams, father of Mr. T. F. Williams, and who is a one-armed man, together with several others, met at Wattsboro' to hear the doctors' report and take such steps as might be thought necessary or ordered by two justices of the peace, who were also present. Mr. Ashworth commenced abusing Mr. T. F. Williams, and said that had it not been for him and his d—d one-arm daddy all this fuss would not have been stirred up about small-pox; that they were just trying to run up a big account against the county. Mr. T. F. Williams of course resented the abuse and insult offered his one-armed father, who lost his arm at Gettysburg. The justices intertered and disarmed the parties for the time, Mr. Williams giving up his very small pocket-knife, which he had not drawn, his father taking it in his possession, which was the only weapon he (Mr. T. F. Williams) had. Dr. Saunders left in his buggy for home. Then Mr. E. E. Williams, Mr. T. F. Williams, Justice Smithson, and a negro left for their homes. At the time they left the Messrs. Ashworth rode around in rear of the store-house in another direction. When Williams, his son, Smithson, and the negro had gone about a quarter of a mile, one of the Messrs. Ashworth came up, overtaking them, and said to young Mr. Williams to hold back a little—that he wanted to talk with him—and asked for a chew of tobacco. Williams paid no attention to him whatever. Smithson said: "I can give you a chew of tobacco, and gave him one. About that time the other Mr. Ashworth came up in a gallop. They both crowded up to young Williams, saying, "D—n you, we intend to kill you right here," and both drew pistols.

THE SHOOTING.

Williams dismounted and stooped to get a rock. While in a stooping posture he was shot in the back, the ball striking just to the right of the spine, ranging upward towards the right shoulder-blade, making its exit about eight inches from where it entered. While in that stooping position the other Mr. Ashworth stabbed Williams in close proximity to the pistol-shot, inflicting a knife-wound about one and a half inches deep and about two or three inches long. The two shot at Williams about seven times and snapped once, only one ball taking effect in the flesh. There were several holes in his clothing. After the parties were separated Williams, Sr., rode as fast as he could to overtake Dr. Saunders to come back to his son, leaving Williams, Jr., with Justice Smithson in the road. Williams, Sr., had to ride some two miles to overtake the Doctor, and while he was gone young Williams felt able to ride, and so rode on, meeting the Doctor about half way. The Ashworths were riding on behind, and came up while Dr. Saunders was examining the wounds and staunching them. Dr. Burwell, from Chase City, reached the young man about midnight and did all that was necessary. Williams is in no danger, as it was only flesh-wounds unless blood-poison or erysipelas sets in. The Ashworths are in jail.

The above is a true statement as given to me by an eye-witness of the affair.

WHITE M. COLEMAN.

FINE OLD CULPEPER COUNTY.

Names of Distinguished Men in Its Honorable Roll.

[Written for the Dispatch.]

Attention having been called to an article which appeared in THE RICHMOND DISPATCH of April 9th, speaking of the men of Culpeper who had left an honorable record, some of the most distinguished were not included in the honorable roll.

The name of Lightfoot is one of the most respected. Colonel Charles Lightfoot, the latest representative of this distinguished family (Confederate colonel), subsequently became an educator of the sons of that county, paid and free. Governor Stone, of Missouri, who was in attendance at the Convention of Southern Governors, is a son of Culpeper, descended from ancestry upon whom there is no discount. Senator John W. Palmer, of Illinois, is a descendant of the old families of Tutts and Yancys, of Culpeper. Newspaper articles often furnish facts for historians, and when they are published in part they are apt to mislead. Among names most conspicuous for absence from this roll is that of Green. First in the county, of the year 1600, came Robert Green, of Liberty Hall, whose *seven sons* (some of them) emigrated to South and West. Norvin Green, of Western Union, of direct descent from Kentucky Greens; General Duff Green, General Jackson's close friend and coworker, whose descendants, Patrick and John C. Calhoun, lineal descendants of John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, are also from this stalwart stock of Culpeper. Dr. Lewis Green, father of Mrs. Adlai Stevenson, wife of our Vice-President, is a descendant of Robert Green.

STILL OTHERS.

Then, of the decendants left in Culpeper come Judge John W. Green, first chancellor, then Judge of Court of Appeals. His eldest son, William Greer Green, first of Culpeper, then of Richmond, a man of vast legal repute and practice. Then, Dr. Daniel Green, of United States navy, then Confederate, having charge of the first hospital at Culpeper after the battle of Manassas. Then, John C. Green, whose immense fiduciary trusts evidenced the high regard in which he was held by his people. Judge Thomas Green, President of Court of Appeals of West Virginia, whose concentrative power and rapid conception of legal faculties enabled them to give more opinions—and correct ones—in his judicial work than any judge of his day. Then came the last and youngest of these lawyer sons of Judge John W. Green, of Culpeper, James W. Green, a lawyer in full practice at the beginning of the war, who raised a company out of his own private means, in which he enlisted as a private, being afterwards appointed as commissary of Kemper's Brigade, of whom Colonel Northrop said, had the Confederate army commissaries all been like him the supplies of the army would not have been so soon exhausted. After the war was over he returned and took up his large practice and fiduciary trust, which were most difficult, peculiar, and arduous, all of which duties he discharged most nobly, falling in the prime of his manhood a sacrifice, leaving a noble example to his county people and State. Thus it is seen that the Greens of Culpeper have contributed as much, if not more, than any other names to make Culpeper a fine old county, and should be among the first on the roll of honor.

ADDENDA.

A Natural Occurrence.

[Judge.]

"What is the matter, Ray? Have you found something in the horse radish?"

"No'm, not much; only a little hair from the horse."

Very True.

[Life.]

Hoster: The man in the moon is crazy.
Willard: Why so?
Hoster: He's away off.

BABYLON'S MOUNDS.

THE INTERESTING THINGS THAT THEY HAVE TO TELL.

A New Witness to the Biblical Story of the Tower of Babel—Prophecies Fulfilled, &c.

[Written for the Dispatch.]

Let us return to the land of Babylonia, for its mounds have yet many interesting things to tell. The country of Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, was in ancient times the seat of two empires—the Babylonian in the north and the Assyrian in the south. That which invests these countries with such interest and importance is the fact that they were the captive homes of the chosen people of God. Into Assyria was carried Israel and into Babylon was carried Judah. From these exile prisons of the Hebrews are now breaking forth rays of light which wonderfully illumine and confirm many statements and narratives of the Old-Testament.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

Almost every child is familiar with the Bible story about the building of the Tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues, and the sudden stoppage by God of the work. That such an event never occurred has been asserted by many a sneering critic. The record, like the account of Jonah and the whale, Daniel and the lions' den, has been ridiculed as one of the absurdities of the Old Testament. Friends of the Bible have always believed the narrative, but they had despaired of ever finding any direct proof of the occurrence outside of the Scriptures. Such proof, however, has at last been discovered. It was found at the very place where the tower was built—viz., at the city of Babylon. Babel and Babylon are names for the same place. In fact, both names are found upon the ruins of Babylon. While the Hebrew writers of the Old Testament lived far away in the west, the recent witnesses concerning the rearing and destruction of the tower have been resurrected in the very home of the builders. In a mound of Babylon several tablets have been brought to light upon which is engraved some interesting testimony about the famous tower. The tablets are badly mutilated and the inscriptions (originally very lengthy) have been deciphered only in fragments. These fragments read as follows:

"Babylon corruptly to sin went, and
Small and great were mingled on the mound."

* * * * *

"Their work all day they builded,
But to their stronghold in the night
Entirely an end God made.
In His anger also His secret counsel
He poured forth;
He set His face to scatter.
He gave command to make strange their speech;
Their progress he impeded."

* * * * *

"In that day He blew and for (all) future time,
The mountain (was demolished?)."

* * * * *

"Greatly they wept for Babylon;
Greatly they wept."

Thus the Old-Testament story is confirmed by a newly-resurrected witness from the very spot where the tower was built.

HEZEKIAH AND THE KING OF BABYLON.

II Kings xx., 12 and 13, read: "At that time (the time of Hezekiah's illness) Berodach Baladan, the son of Baladan King of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah was sick, and Hezekiah harkened unto him and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold and the spices," etc. An important event for the little kingdon of Judah must have been this visit of an embassy from the great king of Babylon. The Old Testament describes it in some detail. Do the resurrected ruins of Babylon bring any information concerning it? It may be answered that up to the present time no direct declaration of such an event has been found, but several interesting facts have been brought to light. Inscriptions have been unearthed which state that when Hezekiah was King of Judah Babylon was ruled by Merodach Baladan. They also state that this king was fearing an invasion from his enemy, the Assyrians, and as a consequence was eagerly casting his eyes around for some friendly neighbor and ally. That he would turn to Hezekiah is rendered almost certain by the fact that Hezekiah also was at this time on bad terms with Assyria. (This is seen from the statement in II. Kings that Hezekiah "rebelled against the King of Assyria and served him not.") Thus, while we find no direct statement in the inscription of an embassy from Baladan, King of Babylon, to Hezekiah (as mentioned in the Bible), yet we have already found writings which declare that contemporary with Hezekiah was a Babylonian king by the name of Baladan and that Baladan was on the hunt for some friendly ally against Assyria; and we know from Scripture that Hezekiah, being himself unfriendly toward Assyria, was the one most likely at this time to offer valuable aid.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, KING OF BABYLON.

Prominent among the figures of ancient history stands Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. His name is found upon many pages of the Old Testament and his career is closely linked with the history of the chosen people. It was he who invaded the ranks of Judah, dragged them captive into his land, and did much to change and mould their destiny. It was in his palace that the youthful Daniel was reared and trained; it was his dream that Daniel was called upon to interpret, and it was his decree that sent the three Hebrew heroes into the fiery furnace. It is interesting to know that in addition to the Bible account of this King the monuments of Babylon also have much to tell, and the testimony of these monuments strictly accords with the statements of Holy Writ. To some people the perfect accuracy of the Bible may be so unassailable that such confirmation may be considered entirely unnecessary and not worth the trouble of mentioning, and yet surely it is a fact of interest that at this day when the Scriptures are attacked so defiantly (in many cases by those who claim to be friends) there should be rising from the mounds of the East such wonderful testimony to confront and confute this new opposition.

Let the reader turn to Daniel i., 1 and 2, and he will find the following: "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, into Jerusalem and besieged it." A reference to this campaign has been found in Babylonia. In one of the curious-looking mounds of that country was discovered an inscription telling of an expedition which Nebuchadnezzar conducted against Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.

Daniel i., 2, in describing this attack, states that Nebuchadnezzar carried off certain holy vessels and "brought them into the treasury-house of his God." The expression "his God" occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament in referring to the deity of Nebuchadnezzar. Some people have branded this monotheistic expression "his God" as a palpable error, inasmuch as the Babylonian kings did not worship only one God, but were famed for the multitude of their divinities. Skeptics have said, "Here is a mistake. The Hebrew writer, worshipping only one God, could very naturally and properly speak of 'his God,' but he made a big blunder in representing a Babylonian king as doing a service for 'his God.'" A recent discovery, however, lets in a ray of light and completely vindicates the Old-Testament statement. It is very true that Babylonian kings were generally worshippers of many deities, but the inscriptions show that *Nebuchadnezzar was an exception.* He was a devotee of one special divinity, Merodach; and in his writings Nebuchadnezzar speaks of Merodach as "his Lord," "the God who created him," &c. His chief title is "Worshipper of Merodach." He speaks of Merodach as "the chief of the Gods," "the God of Gods," &c. On one of the monuments of Nebuchadnezzar he says: "Merodach, the great Lord, has appointed me to the empire of the world and has confided to my care the far-spreading people of the earth." All of the inscriptions of the King end with a prayer to Merodach, his great Lord. Thus we see that while the expression, "his God," would have been incorrect in connection with any other Babylonian king, yet in the case of Nebuchadnezzar it was entirely accurate and appropriate.

II. Chronicles, xxxvi., 7, says that Nebuchadnezzar brought the treasures into "*his temple at Babylon.*" Reference to this temple has been found in some of the recently resurrected inscriptions which were written by Nebuchadnezzar himself. The King declares that he built for his God, Merodach, a great temple at Babylon. He even describes the manner in which he did the work.

DREAMS.

The Book of Daniel represents the Babylonian and Assyrian kings as attaching much importance to dreams. The accuracy of the Old Testament on this point has recently been vindicated. The new inscriptions show that the Assyrians had a "dream deity to whom they prayed for favorable dreams or for confirmation of dreams already had." One of the successors of Nebuchadnezzar says, "Merodach, the great Lord showed me a dream," etc.

Daniel iv., 30, reads: "Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" Nebuchadnezzar is the speaker and he is represented here in Scripture as claiming the honor of building Babylon. Has anything been found in Babylon indicating that the monarch ever made such a boast? Strange to relate the claim is found recorded in the very writings of Nebuchadnezzar himself. On one of his tablets he writes that he built nine great Babylonian temples. His chief work seems to have been the building of walls. The inscription reads, "The great double walls of Babylon I built. Buttresses for the embankments of its ditch I completed. Two long embankments with cement and brick I made, and with the embankment which my father had made I joined them. I strengthened the city. Across the river—[i. e., the Euphrates, which ran through Babylon and along whose emptied banks Cyrus on the night of Belshazzar's feast was to hurry his conquering army] westward I built the wall of Babylon with brick."

Mr. Rawlinson says: "He was one of the most indefatigable of all the builders that have left their mark upon the world. He was the Augustus of Babylon. He found it a perishing city of unbaked clay, he left it one of durable burned brick."

In Ezekiel xxv., 1-4, is found a startling prophecy. It is the announcement that the great city of Tyre would be destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Even the manner of the invasion is described in detail. While no Babylonian inscription has been found which shows that this prediction was fulfilled, yet the records of Tyre mention this terrible invasion by Nebuchadnezzar.

The prophet Jeremiah also sounds a doleful note of warning concerning the great Nebuchadnezzer. In his Egyptian exile home he tells of coming disaster. Jeremiah xliii., 8-13, reads: "Then came the Word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying: 'Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, my servant. * * * He shall smite the land of Egypt, and shall deliver such as are for death to death." Ezekiel also foretells this invasion, and his prophecy is recorded in two places—Ezekiel xxix., 18, 19, and xxx., 10. But were these prophecies ever literally fulfilled? Did this invasion ever occur? The pages of history, let it be said, contain not a single reference to such a campaign. Even Herodotus, when writing 125 years later, seems ignorant of any such occurrence, and consequently these Scripture passages have been held up by skeptics as specimens of unfulfilled prophecies. But their sneering lips have at last been stopped by two witnesses who have the greatest right to speak. The first word of testimony comes from the land of Egypt. An inscription found on a statue and written by a high official of the King tells of an invasion from Asia, in which country the Babylonian empire held the chief position. The official record reads: "I have caused to be made ready my statue; my name will be made ready by means of it; it will not perish in this temple, inasmuch as I took care of the house when it was injured by the foreign hordes of * * * the *Asiatic* and the foreigners." From this inscription we learn that the invader came from Asia. A recent discovery in Babylon gives us the name of the invader. Upon a tablet is found an inscription written by King Nebuchadnezzar, in which he addresses his god, Merodach, as follows: "My enemies thou usedst to destroy * * * in those days thou madest my hands to capture, etc. In the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the country (of Babylon) Nebuchadnezza *to Egypt to make war went*, etc." Thus is confirmed the prophecy concerning the Egyptian campaign of Nebuchadnezzar.

Many have claimed that the narrative in Daniel about the fiery furnace and the three Hebrew children was a picture of cruel barbarism which was never really enacted. But once more the newly-resurrected testimony in Babylon is on the side of the Bible. The inscriptions tell us that in Babylonia this fiery form of punishment was often applied to criminals. On one of the monuments of Assyria King Asur-baripal writes of a punishment which had been visited upon his brother, whom he had made king of Babylon. He says: "Saul Mugina, my rebellious brother, who made war with me, in the fierce, burning furnace they threw him and destroyed his life." This same writer declares of another criminal that "over a furnace they placed him and consumed him entirely."

ELDRIDGE B. HATCHER.

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[Truth.]

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