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978-1-108-07745-3 - *Travels and Researches in Chaldaea and Susiana: With an Account of Excavations at Warka, the 'Erech' of Nimrod, and Shúsh, 'Shushan the Palace' of Esther, in 1849–52*

William Kennett Loftus

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Travels and Researches in Chaldaea and Susiana

This book contains two works by William Kennett Loftus (1821–58) in which he describes his archaeological surveying and excavations in Mesopotamia between 1849 and 1855. An enthusiastic antiquarian and geologist, Loftus was appointed to the staff of the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission. On his travels, he located many ruins later identified as biblical cities, including Warkah (Uruk) and Tell el-Muqayyar (Ur). In 1854 Loftus was enabled by the newly formed Assyrian Excavation Fund to return to Warkah, and he excavated over a three-month period, discovering artefacts and cuneiform tablets which he sent to the British Museum. His *Travels and Researches*, describing his work in Mesopotamia up to 1852, was published in 1857, and his short account of his later work at Warkah in 1859, after his early death. These texts remain a record of the first discoveries in a region significant for its biblical history, but previously hardly visited by Europeans.

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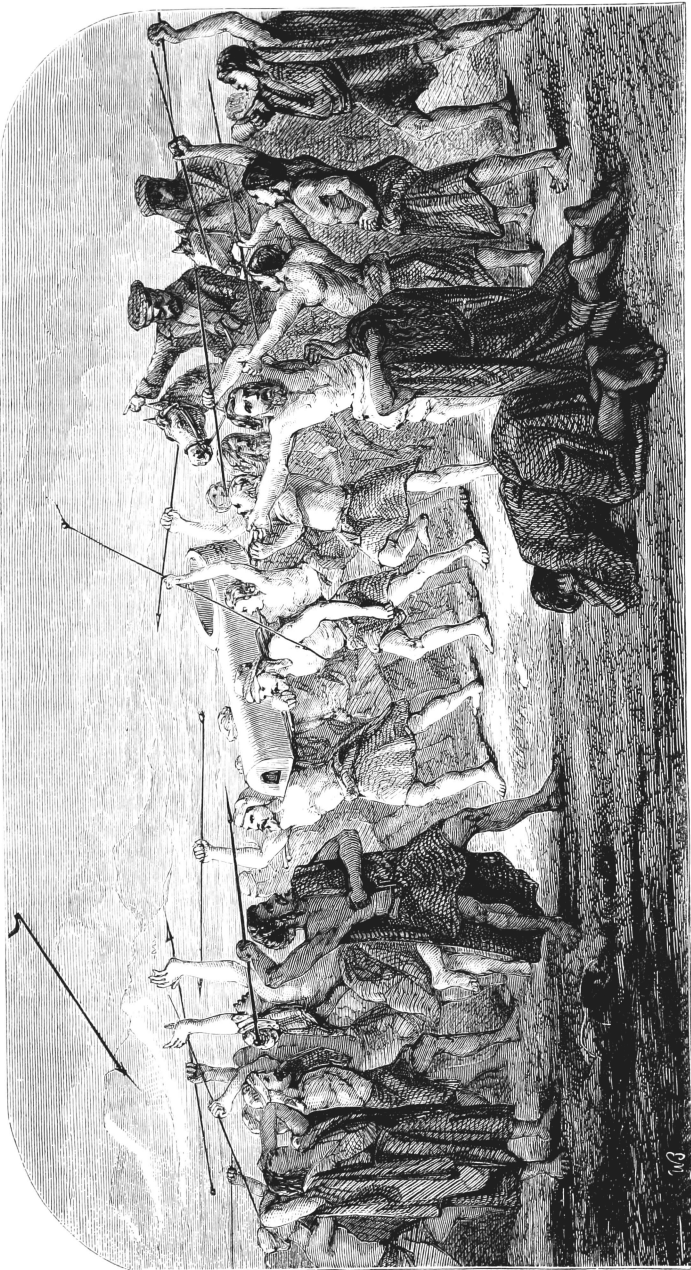
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Carrying the Coffin from the Ruins of Warka.

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TRAVELS AND RESEARCHES
IN
CHALDÆA AND SUSIANA;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF EXCAVATIONS AT
WARKA, THE “EREC” OF NIMROD,
AND
SHÚSH, “SHUSHAN THE PALACE” OF ESTHER,
IN 1849-52,

UNDER THE ORDERS OF
MAJOR-GENERAL SIR W. F. WILLIAMS OF KARS, BART., K.C.B., M.P.,
AND ALSO OF THE ASSYRIAN EXCAVATION FUND IN 1853-4.

BY
WILLIAM KENNETT LOFTUS, F.G.S.

“Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days?—Thou lookest from thy tower to-day :
yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes ; it howls in thy empty court.”—*Ossian*.

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TO

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM FENWICK WILLIAMS,

OF KARS, BART., K.C.B., M.P., ETC.,

This Volume is Inscribed,

IN ADMIRATION OF HIS BRILLIANT ACHIEVEMENTS,

AND

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF FOUR HAPPY YEARS

PASSED UNDER HIS COMMAND

UPON THE TURCO-PERSIAN FRONTIER.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages are due to researches in that remote, and but partially explored region, which, from our childhood, we have been led to regard as the cradle of the human race.

The matter they contain is the result of two visits to the countries in question: first, in connexion with the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission in 1849–52, under the orders of Colonel, now Major-General Sir W. F. Williams, Bart., of Kars; and secondly, in conduct of the Expedition sent out by the Assyrian Excavation Fund, at the end of the year 1853.

On returning to England in the middle of last year, I hoped that the Committee of the above Society would have published *in extenso*, and in

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another form, the fruits of its investigations in Chaldæa and Assyria; but, this plan having been abandoned, I am induced to embody the records of some portion of my journeys and researches in the following pages.

Although this volume does not chronicle the discovery of sculptured palaces, such as the sister-land of Assyria has yielded, yet it comprises accounts of cities existing centuries before the greatness of Nineveh rose to astonish the Eastern world, and of sites containing the funereal remains and relics of primæval races. With the more important of those great necropolis-cities I hope to make the reader familiar.

In my account of Warka, I have, for the sake of brevity, combined the results of my three visits; and, since the modern Sheah custom of burial, to a certain extent, corresponds with that which prevailed at the great Chaldæan cemeteries, I have introduced, in the early part of the work, a description of the celebrated Persian shrines and cemeteries at Meshed 'Alí and Kerbella.

Although the ruins of Babylon have been repeatedly described, I have made a brief allusion to them, and mentioned the most recent discoveries made there, because a work on Chaldæa would be

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necessarily imperfect without some reference to, or description of, its great capital. In doing this, I have touched upon some points which have not hitherto been noticed.

The discoveries made at Shúsh, during the progress of the Frontier Commission, are equally interesting in a biblical, as in an historical sense, for they identify, beyond reach of cavil, the exact position of "Shushan the palace," where the events recorded in the book of Esther took place, and settle many difficult questions connected with the topography of Susa, and the geography of the Greek campaigns in Persia, under Alexander the Great and his successors.

In the course of the work, I have had repeated occasion to refer to the labours, and quote the opinions of others; in doing so, I trust that I have accorded to each his due share in Chaldæan research.

Since there appears to be no golden rule for the orthography of Oriental names—at any rate, as each writer on Eastern subjects adopts his own method of spelling, I have chosen one which, while it approximates as nearly as possible to the native pronunciation, agrees likewise with the written orthography. In carrying this out, I am

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deeply indebted to Mr Redhouse for his valuable corrections; and, although many well-known names appear here in somewhat different guise from that which they usually wear, I conceive that it is better to risk the charge of pedantry than to perpetuate errors. I am, nevertheless, fully aware that there are several inaccuracies in this respect, because the late severe illness of Mr Redhouse prevented my asking his aid until some of the early sheets had passed through the press. These it is proposed to amend, if another edition of the work be required. If, however, the accented vowels be attended to, the reader will approach very nearly to the native pronunciation. The *á* is equivalent to the French *a*; the *é* to the French *é*; *í* corresponds to the sound of *ee*; *ú* to that of *oo*; and the guttural aspirate is represented in such words as '*Alí* and *Músá'd*.

It gives me great pleasure here to record my sincere obligations to others of my friends who have aided me with their advice and corrections while the work was in the press; more especially to the Rev. Dr Hamilton, Mr J. F. Nicholson, Mr Radford, Mr Birch, Mr Vaux, and Mr Boutcher. To the last-named gentleman I am likewise indebted for the careful copies on wood of his own

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original drawings, made on the spot for the Assyrian Excavation Society, and also of those (now in the British Museum) made by the friend and companion of my first journey, Mr H. A. Churchill.

I here likewise take the opportunity of acknowledging the aid and encouragement afforded to me on the field of my researches. To General Williams I am in an especial manner indebted for the facilities which, as British Commissioner, he invariably granted to me in carrying out such plans as were advantageous to the success of my labours. During the more recent Expedition on behalf of the Assyrian Excavation Fund, my efforts were materially aided by the position assigned me by the Earl of Clarendon, as an Attaché of our Embassy at Constantinople during the continuance of the Expedition, for which I return my grateful acknowledgments. My thanks are also due to his Excellency Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the first patron of Assyrian research, who, amidst other and most onerous duties, applied to the Porte for, and obtained, new firmáns for excavation. And, lastly, to Sir Henry Rawlinson I desire to express my obligations for the assistance rendered me in his then official capacity, as

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Consul-General at Bághdád, by his influence with the Turkish authorities and native Arab chiefs.

In conclusion, I hope that the new facts and observations which I am enabled to lay before the reader will insure me some consideration for my literary inexperience.

W. K. L.

NORWOOD, *December* 1856.

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