

NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

NOVEMBER, 1871.

THREE CONQUERORS IN THE TROAD.

BY JOHN READE.

The land of the Sultan is a land of ruins—where mighty empires were “founded, flourished, and decayed,” and have left only their names and their graves. There is not a spot throughout its whole extent that is not full of the interest that belongs to what has lived and is dead. There humanity had its earliest ineffable joys, its first awful sorrows. There rose the mother of all cities whose walls were destined to watery overthrow. There Jubal drew from winds and woods the secret of music. There flourished primeval art. There, though “Enoch walked with God,” not many walked with Enoch. There came to sinful men the dread message, to which they would not harken, of approaching destruction. There rose the Ark above a drowning world. There, on a peak of Ararat, Noah rested after his pathless, but not unguided wanderings. There the fathers of all the families of the earth tended their countless flocks. There did Abraham hear the voice divine which commissioned him to be the founder of the chosen people. There grew Damascus, and Babylon, and Nineveh, and Jerusalem. Thence migrated to their appointed places the patriarchs of the Gentiles. There were enacted the great scenes, pregnant with human destinies, recorded in the Bible. There Assyrian and Macedonian, and Roman and Saracen tyrannized in turn; and in turn were swept away. There was the birth-place of Judaism, of Christianity, of Islamism. There the Redeemer of mankind went

about doing good, and suffered, and died and rose again. There fought the champions of the Cross with the fierce followers of the Arabian Enthusiast. There reigned for a brief time in the Holy City a few Christian kings. There now, alas! unseemly broils take place for the right to worship on the spot where the great sacrifice was offered. It is, indeed, a wonderful, romantic, venerable land, in spite of all its degradation, this “land of the East,” this “clime of the sun.”

If we had the opportunity of visiting one and one only of its shrines of the past, we would, without hesitation, choose to take our seat on the Mount of Olives—where David wept as he went up, where Christ looked with compassion on the cruel, infatuated, fated city. But next to Jerusalem, we would choose for the goal of our pilgrimage the scene of the grand old poem which is very dear to our heart, where Ida looks upon Tenedos and Scamander flows into the Ægean.

The region of Troas, situated on the Asiatic side of the entrance to the Propontis, or Sea of Marmora, however insignificant it may be now, is strangely associated with the progress of civilization. It was pressed by the footsteps of three of the greatest conquerors that the world has known, though their modes of conquest were widely different. They lived in ages far apart and amidst circumstances utterly diverse. Their names were Homer, Alexander, and Paul. We do not know that