

height, and in circumference sixty miles. The walls were made of large bricks cemented with bitumen, which, when dried, became harder than the bricks themselves. The gates, which were made of solid brass, are said to have been one hundred in all, each side having twenty-five gates. A branch of the Euphrates ran through the city from north to south, and on each side of the river was a quay, and a wall of the same thickness with those which encompassed the city. In these walls were brazen gates from the extremity of every street that opened into the river, and a flight of steps by way of descent. To facilitate communication between the two divisions of the city, for which boats had been hitherto employed, the building of a bridge across the Euphrates was undertaken. This bridge was in length two hundred and twenty yards, and in breadth thirty feet, and, as we are told, was of great strength, and built with uncommon art. Great banks made of brick and bitumen were at the same time raised for the river in its whole course through the city, as well as considerably above it, for the purpose of confining the waters at the flood seasons within their proper channel.

Another celebrated work near Babylon was an artificial lake, but of such dimensions as almost to surpass belief. It was a square, the sides of which were forty miles, its circumference one hundred and sixty, and its depth thirty-five feet. Into this great reservoir the Euphrates was turned, in order to enable the workmen to build the quay, bridge, and other works above referred to. After these works were all finished, and the Euphrates was turned back to its own channel, the lake was a reservoir to save the country from inundation, as that river, like the Nile, overflowed its banks at certain seasons of the year. In this great lake, sluices were made, that the water might be drawn off to fertilize the fields as occasion required.

This city was also remarkable for its palaces and hanging gardens. The palaces were two, and they stood at the ends of the bridge above referred to. They had communication with each other by a tunnel, which was built when the river was dry. These palaces are said to have been of great dimensions. The one on the east, called the new palace, being seven miles and a half in circumference; and the other, on the west, called the old, being three miles and three quarters. In the former of these were the hanging gardens; they were contained within a square, each side of which was four hundred feet; they stood on terraces raised one above another, until the height equalled the walls; the ascent was from terrace to terrace, by stairs ten feet wide. The fabric was founded on vast arches, on which others again were reared; and the whole was strength-

ened by a wall, surrounding it on all sides, of twenty-two feet in thickness. A floor, strong and compact, was laid upon the top of the arches, and a mould of earth, so deep that the largest trees as well as flowers and plants flourished in it. An engine or pump was placed on the upper terrace, whereby water was drawn from the river to water the garden. We know not to which of the kings we are to refer this last work; but it is said to have been raised to gratify the wish of one of the queens who came from Media, and who desired to have something on the plan of Babylon like the mountain scenery of her own land.

The last work which we shall notice was the temple of Belus. In the centre of this temple was the famous tower, supposed to be the same with that whose building was stopped by the confusion of tongues, as related in the Scriptures, but afterwards completed by Belus or Nimrod.— It stood on the west side of the river, not far from the old palace. This tower was a square, whose sides were two hundred and twenty yards, and its circumference half a mile. Its height was equal to one of the sides of the base, so that it was considerably higher than the pyramids of Egypt. It is said that one might have ascended the tower by a flight of steps turning round the outside of the building. On its top was an observatory, for marking the motions of the heavenly bodies.— But its chief use, as well as of the temple beside it, was to serve as a place for the worship of the god Belus. And it may be added, that the furniture, consisting of images, cups, and other utensils, are computed to have amounted to one hundred and twenty millions sterling.

These then were the works which rendered Babylon so celebrated, and in the building of them, as has been said, Semiramis had her share. After these were finished, she made a journey through several parts of her empire, and left many monuments of her power as well as good policy as a princess. She built aqueducts to supply with water places that were deficient. She made highways easy by cutting through mountains and filling up valleys, and by such means she came at length to possess great authority over her people. Her desires, however, were not satisfied with the dominions she possessed, she sought to enlarge them by an expedition against India: in the first engagement, at the crossing of the Indus, she gained a victory over the Indian king, but on advancing farther she was defeated, after having lost two-thirds of her army. Semiramis after this, abdicated the government, on the discovery that her son Ninyas, with one of her principal officers, was plotting against her. She reigned in all, forty years, and was succeeded by her son.

Ninyas, in his public conduct, was wholly un-