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HALF-HOLIDAY TALKS ON ANCIENT HISTORY.

PAPER II.

BY JOSEPHINE H. GRAHAM, B. A., WHITBY.

ON the following Wednesday afternoon Ted brought his chum Tom upstairs into Anna's pretty little sitting room.

The truth was both boys were somewhat diffident, Ted as to the success of this plan of historical study, in which he was the prime mover, and Tom well, Tom would have found his reasons difficult to define.

For one thing he didn't know much about girls, especially the "grown up kind," but he had a feeling that they were all more or less given to "frills." Frills, as Tom used the word, was a phrase descriptive of manner rather than of costume.

But from the moment he heard the pleasant voice say,—

"I am glad to see you Master Tom. Teddie has told me so much about his friend that I feel as if I had known you for a long while."

Tom made up his mind that he liked Ted's big sister.

In a few minutes the three were cosily seated around a small table on which lay a portfolio of sketches and photographs, several books of travel, and a small atlas.

"You have chosen a good position boys," said Anna, "from which to take your first look backward into the mists of antiquity. On the eastern bank of the river Euphrates, a few miles from the modern Hilleh, is a vast ruin called by the natives El Mujelibah, the overturned.

"That ruin most archaeologists are agreed in believing to be the Tower of Babel, built soon after the Deluge, about the twenty third or twenty fourth century before Christ. While I look for Doctor Mignan's picture of Babel restored, will you turn to the map of Asia and trace the windings of the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, until you come to the point of their junction a little above the Persian Gulf

"Now it is in that fertile valley that tradition says the garden of Eden was situated. North of that towers Arrarat, and again tradition says here rested the ark. Be that as it may, here is our Tower of Babel, and from this valley of the Euphrates went forth those whose feet turned eastward, and who gave the world the great empires of China and Japan, those whose motto was 'Westward Ho!' and whose leader MEXUS laid in the Nile Valley the foundations of the venerable Egyptian civilization, those who braved the winds that swept down upon them from the north, and pitched their tents beyond the Hindu Koush Mountains. There they lived, that hardy race whose history is the history of the world.

"From the great Aryan hive swarmed the nations that have attained the highest intellectual development, have made the greatest progress in science, art, literature and political freedom. At the time when we look at them they are just beginning their conquering march across the continent.

"But now let us look once more at the cradle of the race, this fertile strip that lies between the Tigris and the Euphrates. The Greeks called it Mesopotamia, the Hebrews Shinar. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there, this the story of Genesis tells us.

"Now in this broad basin were three great monarchies, each having its own territorial and political division. These three kingdoms, the Chaldean, the Babylonian, and the Assyrian were all absorbed in Persia in the 6th century B.C.

"Who were the Chaldeans Anna?" said Ted, "and why do you put them first? I thought you said that the Babylonian fellows were the oldest."

"Babylonian was a political division Ted, and embraced