

Travels and researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldea and Armenia Volume 2

TRAVELS AND RESEARCHES IN ASIA MINOR, MESOPOTAMIA, CHALDEA AND ARMENIA VOLUME 2

WILLIAM FRANCIS AINSWORTH



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1842 edition. Excerpt: ...of the city, to the early monarchs of the Sassanian dynasty, would indicate that one of the sacred fires or pyrea of the Magians existed at this place; and this, combined with the strong position of the fort, favours the supposition of its being the Assyrian Ecbatana of Ammianus. Whatever may have been the original meaning of Akbatana, or Ecbatana, which, according to Major Rawlinson, signifies a treasure-city, it is certain that that name was very generally applied; hence the great number of the Ecbatanas of antiquity. The city of this name noticed by Plutarch in his Life of Alexander, was in Babylonia, and not in Assyria, and may be easily recognised, as the Macedonian hero went there next after the battle of Arbela. He was there particularly struck with a gulf of fire, which streamed forth continually as from an inexhaustible source. He also admired a flood of naphtha not far from the gulf. This description applies solely to the Abu Jeghar, near Kerkuk, at which latter place is a AMADIYEH THE ASSYRIAN ECBATANA. 201 castle-bearing mound of great antiquity, resembling that of Arbela, a city of the same date. It is not surprising that the Magians should have made these natural fountains of fire the object of a peculiar worship. Major Rawlinson quotes the Asiatic Researches, to show that so great was the veneration in which these fountains were held, that they were visited by devotees from India. But save the fires, there are no remains of antiquity at the place nearer than Kerkuk, for I have carefully examined the site and circumstances connected with these natural fires. The site of the great Median Ecbatana has been satisfactorily determined by Major Rawlinson. But Stephanus of

Byzantium mentions a Syrian Ecbatana;
and we have the authority of...

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