

half the height of the Empire State Building, but that's pretty good height. finally  
 "Nothing breaks the view and the plain/melts into the horizon. At twenty miles away rises the high mound of . This city was sacred to , the god of pestilence in the underworld. The ruins of Babylon are near. All around the tower small heaps of dirt represent all that remains of Tish, one of the oldest cities of Mesopotamia. On all sides is desert, the yellowish soil is arid and thirsty and no plant can survive the parching heat of the summer. Sheep and camels must feed on whatever remains of the grass that has managed to sprout in the few weeks after the rain. A large network of canals which in ancient times distributed the waters of the Euphrates over all this land is now represented by a series of small mounds of dirt running in all directions. Even the Euphrates has abandoned this land by changing its course. In ancient times it came very near to the city giving water in abundance and afforded an easy way of communication, but man has not yet forsaken this place and still tries to something from the avaricious ground. A mile away an Arab peasant chanting a plaintive sound is urging on two skinny donkeys that pull a primitive plow. He is placing his trust in the coming rains hoping these may help multiply the few grains of barley that he will throw into the shallow furrow. If the rain should fail so will the bread in his house. He works without energy and the plow wriggles uncertainly over the plain. Immediately before me and all around the tower are the deep trenches made during last year's excavation. It is getting dark and they are not well defined, but at night in the full moon they appear pitch black and bottomless, a line of defense around the sacred mountain, ready to swallow whoever should attempt to worship. The sun has just now disappeared and a purple sky is smiling, unmindful of this scene of desolation. A cool evening breeze attempts to tear away from my hand the sheet of paper on which I write these notes. The dead city. I have Pompeii and and I have taken walks around the empty corridors of the palaces of the Caesars but those cities are not dead. They are only temporarily