

abandoned. The hum of life is still heard and light gleams all around. *They* are but a step in the progress of that civiliaation to which they have contribut- ed their full share and which marches on under their very eyes. Here, only, is real death. Not a column or an arch still stands to demonstrate the permanency of human works. Everything has crumbled into dust. The very temple tower, the most imposing of all these ancient constructions, has entirely lost its original shape. Where are now its seven stages, where the large stairway that led to the top, where the shrine that crowned it? We see nothing but a mound of earth, all that remains of the millions of . On the very top some traces of walls, but these are shapeless. Time and neglect have completed their work. Under my feet are some holes that have been bored by some foxes and jackalls. At night they descend stealthily from their haunts in their difficult search for food and appear silhouetted against the sky. This evening they appear to sense my presence and stay in hiding, perhaps wondering at this stranger who has come to disturb their peace. The mound is covered with white bones which represent the accumulated evidence of their hunt. It reminds me of the pasage in Isaiah about the desolation predicted for the great city of Babylon. and the plaintiff song of the Arabs has ceased. Nothing breaks the deathly silence. and Babylon have been swallowed by the darkness. In the distance some lights are seen and I can distinguish those of a village of friendly Arabs who are employed in the excavation. Further away is an encampment of Bedouins, here considered as enemies. To us they represent an element of danger for they are born thieves, but I who have accepted their hospitality and drunk their coffee made with dirty water and served in cups that are never washed cannot call them enemies. They have been so trusting that they even let me take some photographs of them, a favor rarely attained from the Bedouins of the desert. Who knows what danger might threaten that these should/used in black magic? They are friends, so far as they can be, friends of the foreigner and an unbeliever. A jackall