

**EAST BY WEST,  
ESSAYS IN  
TRANSPORTATION**

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East by West, Essays in Transportation by A. J. Morrison

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**A. J. MORRISON**

**EAST BY WEST,  
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# EAST BY WEST

## ESSAYS IN TRANSPORTATION

A COMMENTARY ON THE POLITICAL  
FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE EAST  
INDIA TRADE HAS BEEN CARRIED ON FROM  
EARLY TIMES, STARTING WITH BABYLON  
AND ENDING VERY NEAR BABYLON

BY

A. J. MORRISON



BOSTON  
THE FOUR SEAS COMPANY  
1920

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Encyclopædia's a weighty book;  
Smith's row of dictionaries took  
Me long to read at and digest  
(If so) from East back East by West:  
These, with a history or two,—  
Say, Finlay, Grote,— commend to you  
I of my stays most warmly do.

*Nota:* Should mention Robertson,  
His India, for 'twas Robertson  
Set me about the task here done:  
And Bancroft of the Western Coast,  
And others pointed as they almost:  
Starting with Babylon, long time ago,  
And ending where — none seems to know.

*Quo dura vocat fortuna.*

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**EAST BY WEST**  
**PART I**



## EAST BY WEST

### THE OLD EAST OF BABYLONIA

Sir Walter Raleigh said, "We must go a long way back to find the Romans giving laws to nations, and their Consuls bringing kings and princes bound in chains to Rome; to see men go to Greece for wisdom, or Ophir for gold, when now nothing remains but a poor paper remembrance of their former condition." We must go even farther back to the time when the Mediterranean was becoming the nursery of our modern western civilization; when the Etruscans were active in Italy, the Turduli and Turdetani in Spain, whose books two thousand years ago were allowed an antiquity of six thousand years. Egypt had seen greater centuries before Psammetichus, and Psammetichus ruled a century before the Tarquins were expelled. The planting of Tartessus, of Gades, where a temple was dedicated to the wandering divinity Melkarth, son of Baal; the establishment of the colonial city Utica, older than Carthage, remind us that the Phœnicians had already marked the limits of the Mediter-

Before the Persians had interrupted the navigation up the rivers from the Persian Gulf, there were two main channels of the import trade to Babylon, one by water and the other by caravan. In the old flourishing days of the river trade to Babylon, the inhabitants of Gerra in East Arabia were one of the richest peoples of the world, and for this they were indebted to their traffic in Arabian and Indian commodities, which they transported into the West by caravan and to Babylon by their ships. For although the Gerra men dwelt in a barren district, (but a salt country, and thence a part of their fortunes, as with the Venetians), yet they were near to Arabia Felix, the native region of frankincense and other perfumes, which the Babylonians consumed in quantity: Herodotus mentioning that annually the Chaldeans put to use a thousand talents of frankincense in the temple of Bel. All this valued freight was conveyed to Babylon in such abundance that a great overplus, after the capital was supplied, was carried up the Euphrates to Thapsacus, close in to the Mediterranean, and from Thapsacus over much of far western Asia. The merchants of Gerra also sent their ships above Babylon to Opis on the Tigris, and from Opis caravans went out to the interior of Asia. The Gerra men, with little to start upon, became handlers in the

large — products of Arabia and East Africa, cinnamon of Ceylon, Persian and Indian pearls. Babylon was their chief market, Babylon the magnificent. Herodotus saw the place in his mind's eye at least.

"Assyria," he wrote, "possesses a vast number of great cities, whereof the most renowned and powerful, Babylon, whither after the fall of Nineveh the seat of government had been removed. The city stands on a broad plain, and is in form an exact square. In magnificence there is no other city that approaches it. The city is surrounded by a broad and deep moat, full of water, behind which rises a wall fifty royal cubits in width and two hundred in height. On the top, along the edges of the wall, the makers constructed buildings of a single chamber, facing one another, leaving between them room for a four-horse chariot to turn. In the circuit of the wall are a hundred gates, all of brass, with brazen lintels and side posts.—The city is divided into two portions by the Euphrates, which runs through the midst of it, a broad, deep, swift stream. The city wall is brought down on both sides to the edge of the stream; thence, from the corners of the wall, there is carried along each bank of the river a fence of burnt bricks. The houses are mostly three and four stories high: the streets all run in straight lines, not only