

**LECTURE ON THE RELIGIOUS
EXCAVATIONS OF WESTERN INDIA,
BUDDHIST, BRAHMANICAL, AND JAINA,
INCLUDING THE DETAILS OF THOSE OF
ELEPHANTA AND KARLA; WITH
DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL REMARKS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649369409

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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Religious Excavations of Western India,

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INCLUDING THE DETAILS OF THOSE OF ELEPHANTA
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Descriptive and Historical Remarks.

BY

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ETC. ETC.

Bombay:

EDUCATION SOCIETY'S PRESS.

THACKER, VINING & Co.

TRACT AND BOOK DEPÔT.

1875.

PREFACE

During my professional journeyings throughout this great country, I have often been brought in contact with its more remarkable antiquarian wonders, which in a considerable number of instances I have been among the first to observe and describe, though sometimes with unsatisfied curiosity as well as with qualified admiration. For long they have met with much considerate treatment from our Asiatic Societies and from Government. It is confidently hoped that, in their general aspects at least, they will soon be patent to the public, from the able and long-continued research of our Orientalists, and especially, of late, General Cunningham, and from the intelligent delineation and description of Mr. James Burgess, prompted and urged on (as he is) by Mr. J. Ferguson, whose friendship he enjoys. In the meantime much has been definitely ascertained respecting our antiquities; and it is this which principally excites the attention of our tourists and visitors, who in position, influence, and numbers have been

certainly increasing from year to year. With them the climax may be supposed to be now reached by the auspicious advent to India of His ROYAL HIGHNESS the PRINCE OF WALES, the YUVARA'JA, or the Heir Apparent of the Throne of the British Empire in its totality. With the mild radiance of himself and his noble attendants, as it will appear to the natives of India, and the specimens of the worthies of the British army and navy gracing his movements and demonstrations, His Royal Highness will doubtless attract great and salutary attention. But he will find an Indian Progress from very early times, as well as from the commencement of our own day, which is well calculated to excite regard, sympathy and gratitude of no ordinary character. In the European atmosphere around him may be seen what must encourage us to believe that in the providence of God we have great blessings to give to India; while in the native princes, nobles, educated youth and multitudes near us, we may see a field of hopeful philanthropy of a most encouraging nature, if we will but humbly seek to discharge our respective duties with regard to it.

Most encouraging is it for us who have cleaved longest to India to see among our visitants and re-visitants on this occasion such a tried and compe-

tent friend as we know the Right Hon'ble Sir Bartle Frere to be. I introduce his name here at present mainly to add, that two of the greatest groups of Religious Excavations of Western India were of his discovery, as very precisely brought out by himself in our *Asiatic Journal*, and acknowledged by our Asiatic Society on his leaving India.

This Lecture was originally delivered in the Town Hall, Bombay, to the Mechanics' Institute, and afterwards published in the *Calcutta Review*, through the kindness of my friend Dr. George Smith. It now appears in a somewhat extended form, and will be found more or less applicable to the varied Excavations of Western India, which in reality have much in common, notwithstanding the differences which exist in the religious systems which they represent.

J. W.

Cliff, Malabar Hill, Bombay,
November 1875.

THE
RELIGIOUS EXCAVATIONS
OF
WESTERN INDIA.

The East distinguished for its Antiquarian Wonders.

EVERY country of the East has its own peculiar antiquarian wonders, illustrating its ancient history, and the powers, resources, and occupations of the early generations of its peoples. In Egypt, 'the land of ancient kings' and ancient things, we find temples, obelisks, sphinxes, and excavated and structural tombs (among the last of which are the mimic mountains, the pyramids), with their no longer mysterious hieroglyphics, and with their still enduring paintings and drawings (on walls, pillars, tablets, sarcophagi, papyri, rings, seals, and other moveable objects), still recording the names, genealogies, enterprises, and exploits of these kings, from Menes to Ptolemy; and unfolding the social and religious life, and manners and customs, of the people over whom they ruled, and

of the tribes and nations which were tributary to them or held in bondage by them, or with whom they maintained commercial intercourse. In the Mount Sinai peninsula we have the inscriptions on numerous rocks and stones (in the Written Valley and other localities), recording the names and simple prayers of Nabathæan and Arabian shepherds, wanderers, and pilgrims to that hallowed locality; and the monuments and excavations and cuttings of Megharah, Sarabut al-Khâdim, and the north of the Makattab, revealing to us the mining system of the Pharaohs from the eighteenth to the eighth century before the Christian era, when the man of cunning employed by them put forth his hand upon the rock, overturned the mountains by the roots, and by his eye searched every precious thing.* On the summit of Mount Hor we find the oft-constructed and renewed tomb of the venerable Aaron, the brother of Moses; and, embosomed in its neighbouring Seir, the pride and glory of Edom, what, so early as the times of the Israelitish David and Amaziah, was denominated Selah, the city of the rock (in Greek Petra), the name which it still bears, and whose excavated tombs, temples, cisterns, aqueducts, and private

* See *Lands of the Bible*, by the author, vol. i., pp. 183-199.

dwelling, with their beautiful façades and colonnades, in union with what a French traveller calls 'the most enchanting picture which nature has wrought in her grandest mood of creation,' form the most wonderful combination of art and nature to be found in the world. In the land of Israel, as at Hebron at the tomb of Abraham, still bearing alike with Jew and Arab the designation of the 'Friend of God,' and in the remains of the temple enclosure at Jerusalem, we have specimens of the Phœnician masonry, procured by Solomon, more than cyclopean in dimensions. At B'aalbek in Cœle-Syria, and at the neighbouring Palmyra in the wilderness, we have the remains of the boldest, noblest, grandest, and most magnificent architecture which, in the judgment of both science and taste, has yet been erected on the face of the globe. Mesopotamia, the seat of the most ancient empires in the world, has yielded, from its disentombed palaces, the records and illustrations,—graven with an iron pen on stone, or printed on clay, or painted on the facings of the walls,—of the earliest monarchs of the earth, extending to upwards of two thousand years before Christ, and of the Assyrian or Babylonian sovereigns from Tiglathpelezer I., B.C. 1150, down to Nabonidus, of the sixth century before our own era. At Behistun, in