

terior of a great continent, through different routes opened to inland trade and river navigation. In the short period of twelve years are compressed the campaigns in Western Asia and Syria, with the battles of the Granicus, and the passes of Issus; the taking of Tyre, and the easy conquest of Egypt; the Persico-Babylonian campaign, when the dominion of the Achæmenidæ was annihilated at Arbela, in the plain of Gaugamela; the expedition to Bactria and Sogdiana, between the Hindoo-Coosh and the Jaxartes (Syr); and, lastly, the bold advance into the country of the five rivers, the Pentapotamia of Western India. Alexander founded Greek colonies almost every where, and diffused Greek manners and customs over the vast tracts of land that extend from the Temple of Ammon in the Libyan Oasis, and from Alexandria on the Western Delta of the Nile to Alexandria on the Jaxartes, the present Khodjend in Fergana.

The extension of the sphere of new ideas—and this is the point of view from which the Macedonian expeditions and the prolonged duration of the Bactrian empire must be considered—was owing to the magnitude of the space made known, and to the variety of climates manifested from Cyropolis on the Jaxartes (in the latitude of Tiflis and Rome) to the eastern delta of the Indus at Tira, under the tropic of Cancer. To these we may further add the wonderful diversity in the configuration of the country, which alternated in luxurious and fruitful districts, in arid plains and snow-crowned mountain ranges; the novelty and gigantic size of animal and vegetable forms; the aspect and geographical distribution of races of men of various color; the actual contact with Oriental nations in some respects so highly gifted and enjoying a civilization of almost primitive antiquity, and an acquaintance with their religious myths, systems of philosophy, astronomical knowledge, and astrological phantasies. In no age, excepting only the epoch of the discovery and opening of tropical America, eighteen centuries and a half later, has there been revealed, at one time and to one race, a richer field of new views of nature, or a greater mass of materials for laying the foundation of a physical knowledge of the earth, and of comparative ethnological science. The vividness of the impression thus produced is testified by the whole literature of the West, and is also manifested by the doubts—such as accompany, in all cases, an appeal to the imagination in the description of natural scenery—which were excited in Greek, and subsequently in Roman writers, by the narrations of Megas-