

THE TAJ MAHAL.

An English architect, Mr. W. Emerson, lately read, at a meeting of the British Institute of Architects, a paper describing the famous Taj-Mahal at Agra, in India, the tomb of Nour-Mahal, "the Light of the Harem," the heroine of Moore's popular poem. He says that of all the places he has ever seen, either in the East or the West, "it unobscurely affirms that Agra and the Taj-Mahal stand pre-eminent in the impression made on my mind."

roof, which is flat, and has four smaller domes, supported on piers and arches, one over each corner circular apartment. The centre chamber is surmounted by a double dome; the one forming the ceiling being about eight feet from the ground, and the upper one being about two hundred and sixty feet high, and is the principal feature in a distant view of the Taj group. The external elevation of the four principal sides is the same; also the four angles are the same design.

One striking peculiarity of the interior is the echoing of even the slightest sound. A musical note echoes and re-echoes through the dome, gradually and softly dying away. The natives believe these voices to belong to the unseen heavenly bodies who watch over Nour Jehan and her husband. "The most delicious harmony I ever heard," says Mr. Emerson, "was some singing by ladies in this tomb. The interior has the most solemn effect on one's mind; there is an amount of pathos in it that causes feelings in a sensitive person much the same as reading an affecting, melancholy love story, so much so that it almost forces tears to one's eyes."

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