

puctus Le Plongeon, to Mr. D. M. McAllister of this city, will be of special interest to the readers of the NEWS:

18 SIDNEY PLACE, Brooklyn,
May 25, 1897.

My dear Mr McAllister—The DESERET EVENING NEWS has reached me. The so-called Aztec MS. is a hoax. Several months ago a young lady from Fairfield, Iowa, wrote to Mrs. Le Plongeon with regard to this important Aztec MS that had just been found; she was very enthusiastic about it. Had sent the original to Prof. Morehead of the university of Ohio for identification and decipherment. On seeing the drawing of the document (?) and answering to her inquiry if the characters written on the bark were Maya, we answered her decidedly, no; that the only signs resembling Maya were four (see Fig. 1), which is the Maya

Fig. 1.

numerical 13. We did not wish to tell her abruptly that we regarded the whole thing as a hoax, she seemed so happy that so great a discovery had been made in her neighborhood.

He—whoever he is—who has pronounced the signs Aztec hieroglyphs, knows not what he says. The Aztecs did not make use of hieroglyphs, properly speaking. To convey their thoughts they employed pictures, not alphabetic signs. For instance, if they wished to indicate walking, travels, etc., they drew the figure of tracks made by feet (see Fig. 2), water (Fig. 3), speech



Fig. 2.

(Fig. 4), and so on. Their numerals were dots . . . , each representing a unit; (Fig. 5) would be 13, (Fig. 6) would be a



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

house; the numerical and the sign house would be the 13th house—the name of one of their years.

The find is not worth a moment's serious consideration.

I am hard at work on a new work on the emigrations that have come to America since 500 years before the Christian era to the time of the coming of Columbus. I hope to turn out an interesting volume, in which I expect to show who brought on this continent the story of a universal deluge and the saving of one man in a boat; the Christian doctrines of the trinity; the birth of a God from a virgin; His being put to death on a cross; the sacraments of the Christian Church that existed among the natives when the Spanish monks came, and many other ideas and facts regarded by many as coincidences, and are not coincidences at all.

My friends who have read part of the manuscript predict that it will bring an avalanche of abuses on my head, but I will give proofs, as many as possible, of every fact; so the prophecy does not deter me.

With kindest regards I remain as ever,
AUGUSTUS LE PLONGEON, M. D.
Please present my regards to Elders Richards and Roberts if they are in Salt Lake City.

From the forecast of his new book by Dr. Le Plongeon, it should prove one of the most important of that character given to the world. The subject with which he is dealing is

of more than ordinary interest—it is a deeply absorbing topic, involving not only historical information regarding ancient America, but the matter of communication from God to man in modern times. Mr. Le Plongeon will discuss the immigration to America and the Christian religion thereon. Those same subjects have received marked attention in modern revelation; for the Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith a sacred history which conveyed information on those topics. This record is known as the Book of Mormon; and it has been made the object of much ridicule and misrepresentation. But it has been impregnable to all assaults upon its accuracy, either in chronology, doctrine, prophecy or history; there has been no discovery in the archeology of this country that has tended to throw a solitary shadow upon the Book of Mormon record—every one has been in direct corroboration of that book.

Dr. Le Plongeon says he is warned that his book will bring an avalanche of abuses on his head. That is an intimation of the nature of the conclusions he has come to, in some degree at least; and these cannot be said to be adverse to the Book of Mormon record, or there would be an "avalanche" of another character than abuse from the great body of professing Christians, who are looking for something to be used to controvert the Book of Mormon, but never will find it. As we understand Dr. Le Plongeon, he is not inclined to any particular religious creed, but is nevertheless a religious man in the high moral principles he endeavors to follow, one of which is to declare the truth as he comprehends it. He has made a life study of archeology, and having acquired a prominent station in that field, his conclusions upon evidence in his possession deserve serious consideration; and there is no question that he has the courage of his convictions and will not be deterred from expressing his views by fear of ridicule.

Whatever the conclusions of Mr. Le Plongeon may be on the subject of which he treats, the coming forth of his book will be looked for with as much interest by the Latter-day Saints as by any other class of people, not with any trepidation, but rather with confidence, as to its bearing upon the Book of Mormon; for they know well that if it brings out new facts on this subject they will not fail to be corroborative of the statements in that record of ancient America, preserved and revealed by the Lord for the enlightenment and blessing of people in this age of the world.

THE KING BILL AGAIN.

This week we published in full Hon. W. H. King's bill providing for the transfer to this State of public lands within the territorial boundaries of Utah. By a private letter written by Congressman King to a friend in this city we learn that as originally drawn his bill provided only for the cession of agricultural and grazing lands to the State. During the discussion of the Uncompahgre amendment, however, many

of those who supported the Utah delegation in that contest took the ground that the mineral lands within the limits of Utah should be conveyed to the State, and offered to support the King bill if it contained that clause. Others stated that if the mineral lands were not granted to the State they would insist upon royalties being demanded for the federal government from all persons who were working mining claims. Some members of the House stated they intended introducing measures looking to the withdrawal of all mineral lands from location, and to the repeal of the present mineral land system of the government. In this state of affairs it was evident that with mineral lands included in the bill the latter would have a strong support from those who are not satisfied with the present mineral land system, and this, with the aid from others who might not go to the full extent, would insure the passage of an act ceding the agricultural and grazing lands at least, to the State. Hence the bill was made as broad as it now is.

Remembering the point that for years the western people have been insisting that the only solution of the arid land question and the conflicts between the sheep and cattlemen is for the general government to cede to the states all of the lands within their borders, it will be seen that Judge King's proposition is in the van of western sentiment on this matter. It has been demonstrated in the history of Texas that the state can handle the public lands with advantage and profit to the people. As to the minerals as well as agricultural and grazing lands, the dealings of the federal government therewith do not present a page of history free from blemishes—in fact it is notorious that the management of such lands has been attended by some very unpleasant features. And the fact remains, that in regard to the minerals as well as the other lands, to say that people at a distance, and clerks and subalterns who have no knowledge of or interest in the people whose homes are in the vicinity of the lands referred to, can more intelligently and wisely handle, control and dispose of such lands than the better informed officers selected directly by the people in the various states, is to deny the efficiency of local self-government and the honesty and integrity of the people in control of their own immediate concerns.

To say that agricultural and grazing lands should not be ceded to the State because the latter would not handle them properly would be to cast a grave reflection upon the honor and ability of the people; and the same can be said with regard to mineral lands. Carrying the matter further, it is evident that the sentiment concerning the mineral land system, as set forth in Judge King's letter, is of a character to suggest to those specially interested in mineral lands that the quicker they have these ceded to the State the better it will be for the mining industry. The agitation to withdraw from purchase all mineral lands, and insist upon royalties therefor to the general government, already having borne fruit in the Uncompahgre incident, certainly is one to cause alarm