

confusion of the tongues, a party left Asia and after an eventful voyage landed in North America, where their descendants flourished for centuries, until they were weakened by wars, and the country became desolate.

Before the dispersion of the Jewish nation, about the time the Prophet Jeremiah departed from Jerusalem (600 years B. C.) another prominent party left that city. They wandered for years in Arabia and finally, crossing the ocean, landed on the shore of South America. A third party left Asia Minor a few years later for this continent.

This is the solution of the origin of the inhabitants of America, offered by the Book of Mormon; in this way Mormonism accounts for the civilizations of this world. It is the only plausible theory so far offered—one which is supported by all the facts known and against which no valid objection has yet been raised. It is safe to conclude that when science shall have proceeded far enough to speak with authority on this matter, it will corroborate the Book of Mormon, just as it has long ago vindicated the historical books of the Bible. The subject is important, since Mormonism claims a hearing solely because it is incontrovertible truth.

SHIPS FIRST, DOCKS AFTERWARDS.

That a United States battleship should be compelled because of her size to go to a foreign port to be docked, has stirred up the self-elected proprietors of the American eagle in furious fashion, and the national bird has been compelled to ruffle his feathers very indignantly over the seeming short-sightedness of the administration and especially its navy department. But there has been a great deal more fuss than consistency throughout the whole affair, and now that cooler weather has come it may properly be expected to sink into the insignificance to which it belongs.

Firstly, the incident is of no particular consequence, for it is not at all an unusual thing for our ships to go into foreign docks for repairs; foreign ships are not above availing themselves at times of the same privilege in our docks. Secondly, the battleship *Adolphus*, the vessel under discussion, has not been received into Uncle Sam's navy as yet, and cannot be until she has been formally accepted by the government from the builders. Thirdly, being still in possession of the Cramps, her builders, they have the right to take her into dock as their own property wherever they choose, and they elected Halifax instead of Port Royal because they had some doubt as to the strength of the dock at the latter place. Fourthly, the new dock at Brooklyn is as yet in an unfinished condition, but when it is completed, as it soon will be, it will be in all respects adequate for every legitimate purpose desired.

It will accordingly be seen that there is very little in the whole circumstance worthy of exciting patriotic anger or unreasonable criticism. Of course a great big dock is a desirable piece of property for those who can afford the luxury; but the United States of America have had greater need of many other things—one of these being

ships. Having now got a good start as to the latter article, there is no need to fear that the other will be long delayed. A bird, even of the eagle species, does not usually build a nest until it has a mate, the prospect of eggs, and the hope of a brood to occupy the eyrie.

THE POPE INVITED TO AVIGNON.

A dispatch stating that the city council of Avignon has offered to restore the ancient papal palace in that city with a view of inviting the pope to take up his residence there, recalls the fact that Avignon for a long period was the refuge of the head of the Roman church during the so-called "Babylonian captivity." Clement V, during the stormy conflicts between French and Italian prelates, took a decided stand for France and finally had to leave Rome. He established himself in Avignon in 1309 and the papal court remained there until 1376 when Gregory XI returned to Rome, but until 1413 it remained the seat of Anti-Italian popes, and the world witnessed the curious spectacle of two visible heads of one church, each vehemently condemning the other. The retirement of the pope to Avignon in the fourteenth century was one of those events which acted on the Catholic world like an earthquake. It rent the superstructure and prepared in some measure the way for the Reformation. It is not probable that the present pope nor any of his successors, will voluntarily retire from the alleged see of St. Peter and repeat the experiment of a "captivity."

Avignon is the chief town of the department of Vaucluse in France. It is situated on a beautiful plain on the Rhone. Its climate, however, is a contradiction of its beautiful surroundings, as may be judged from its reputation for disastrous winds and sickness. To Avignon the proverb refers: "Liable to the plague when it has not the wind, and plagued with the wind when it has it." The ancient papal palace is a complex of buildings covering more than an acre. It has been allowed to decay, but lately a restoration has been in progress with a view of appropriating the building for civic and ecclesiastical purposes.

DIAZ' PRACTICAL STATESMANSHIP

One of the most interesting features of the recent irrigation congress at Albuquerque, N. M., was the presence and participation of delegates from old Mexico. That the occurrence was unusual gratifying on this than on the other side of the border, is shown by the prominence given it in the message of President Diaz to the congress of our sister republic when it opened a few days ago. He alluded to the pleasure afforded Mexico by the invitation to attend the convention, and then dwelt at length upon the interest in irrigation lately developed in his country, as witnessed by the great number of applications for the right to utilize the waters of streams under Mexican jurisdiction—this interest being alike directed to waters for power in developing electricity, and to waters for reclaiming the arid lands. As to

the latter proposition, the president's message pointed out that the agricultural development of the country on both sides of the frontier demanded that a common interest in irrigation be created and kept up.

Mr. Diaz has many times in the past shown his talents for government and his capacity for statesmanship. He has never shown these abilities in a higher degree than in the prominence he is now attaching to irrigation. Near to the border on this side of the line between the two countries there are abundant evidences of a superior acquaintance with the science of earlier inhabitants, including remains of irrigation systems that cannot be improved upon by engineers of the present day. No doubt exploration will show that similar evidences of ancient skill are to be found on the Mexican side of the frontier. What has been done by modern settlers in these regions proves to be but an example of the old axiom that history repeats itself; and there is no reason why the past greatness of the country now called Mexico may not be in large measure restored by a more attentive observance of the customs and knowledge of the ancients, and a closer following of the lessons and examples of the practical benefits of which they have left us so many monuments.

BACK FROM GREENLAND.

Lieutenant Peary has returned from his Arctic expedition after a little more than a year's absence. He has encountered many hardships and unpleasant experiences.

The explorer and party started late in March and made their way to Independence bay, the most northern point of Greenland reached during previous expeditions. This point was reached in June. The plan was to continue northward, but it seems that lack of food prevented the explorers from pushing onward. There were only three men in the party, and their journey came near being fatal to them, owing to the fact that the stores laid up last year had disappeared.

Although the daring expeditions of Lieutenant Peary practically have resulted in failure as far as reaching the North Pole is concerned, they are considered of value for the addition to the geographical knowledge they have brought the world. Concerning the northern part of Greenland, an impression has prevailed that it extended northward, perhaps to the Pole. Peary has found the northern coast line and mapped it out for a considerable distance. It would therefore be incorrect to say that his efforts have been entirely fruitless. From that remote time when northern Europe was to the rest of the world an Ultima Thule, or the whole of this continent a Vinland, shrouded in a hazy mist, geographical knowledge has proceeded with slow steps. Still it has advanced, and it is only a question of time when the now unknown regions of the north and south will be unknown no longer. Every inch of progress is that much gained to science, and Lieutenant Peary has certainly contributed his share to the general store of knowledge, even if the results are not in every respect equal to the anticipations.