

## RELICS OF BY-GONE DAYS.

The past few years have been rich in the discoveries of the remains of ancient grandeur. How sad the comment upon humble pride are the ruins fast coming to light, that tell us of mighty nations far surpassing us in the splendor of their monuments, and the magnitude of their works, that have flourished, disappeared and left not a record of their existence, save these dumb witnesses of their greatness!

The learned have for years been exploring the seats of ancient empires in the East, and wonderful have been the revelations that have rewarded their search. America is as rich, and as yet an almost untried field for the researches of the antiquarian. Monuments everywhere exist, which show that this continent was once peopled by a race of rare attainments—far advanced in the arts, and numerous as the sands of the ocean. Who were they? what has become of them?—are questions that none can answer.—[San Francisco Weekly Herald.]

[What nonsense, since the Book of Mormon, as translated by Joseph Smith the Prophet, fully and truthfully unfolds the answers to those questions, and many others. But this generation are too wise in their own conceit to accept of the truths of heaven because, forsooth, they have not come forth through some society or individual full of the vain philosophy of this world; hence, in their fancied wisdom, they are constantly exposing their gross ignorance, by making such comments as, 'none can answer,' upon questions concerning which every Latter Day Saint is well informed, and all who will read the Book of Mormon may be.—[Ed. 'News.']

## ANTIQUITIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

The antiquities of America extend from the eastern shores of Maine and Massachusetts, to the Pacific, and from the great lakes and British dominions, to Peru and La Plata, in South America; in fact, throughout the extent of both continents.

Immense forests grow over the ruins of large cities, and the gigantic size of the trees, with indications that other generations of trees sprung up and grew before them, prove that the ruins were in existence before the Christian era.

In every portion of the United States, interesting ruins have been discovered. In the State of New York have been found sculptured figures of one hundred animals of different species, executed in a style far superior to anything exhibited by any of the existing tribes of Indians.

The State of Ohio abounds in ruins of towers and fortifications, with extensive mounds and pyramids. At Marietta, in this State, beautiful pottery, silver and copper ornaments, and pearls of great beauty and lustre have been dug up from the earth. In the caves of Tennessee and Kentucky mummies have been found in a high state of preservation, clothed with clothes and skins of various texture, inlaid with feathers; like discoveries have been made at Carrolton, near Milwaukee, in the State of Wisconsin—ruins of huge fortifications appear. Similar ruins appear in the State of Missouri. On the south side of the Missouri river, in the western portion of this State, is an inclosure of some five hundred acres, which includes the ruin of a building (no doubt ancient tower) with walls one hundred and fifty feet high, and eighty feet wide at the base, attached to which are a redoubt and a citadel, with work much resembling the structure of a tower in Europe.

But it is in the south of Mexico, that magnificent and beautiful ruins present themselves in great abundance.

## UXMAL AND PALENQUE.

The most extensive ruins are to be found at Uxmal and Palenque, in the southeast of Mexico. At Uxmal are immense pyramids, coated with stone, and quadrangular stone edifices and terraces. The highest of these pyramids is 130 feet, and on the summit it supports a temple; on one of the facades of the temple are four human figures, cut in stone with great exactness and elegance. The hands are crossed upon the breast, the head is covered in something like a helmet, about the neck is a garment of the skin of an alligator, and over each body is a figure of death's head and bones.

At Palenque are immense ruins, a city of great extent, with the remains of a royal palace. One temple, that of Copan, was 520 feet by 650, and supposed to have been as large as St. Peter's at Rome. Another temple of great dimensions is here, having an entrance by a portico, 100 feet long and 10 feet broad; it stands on an elevation of 60 feet. The pillars of the portico are adorned with hieroglyphics and other devices. Different objects of worship have been found—representations of the Gods who were worshipped in this country. These temples, with fourteen large buildings, and many other objects of curiosity, stand here as monuments of ancient greatness, to remind us of the remote origin of a mighty empire. This city has been described as the Thebes of America, and travelers have supposed that it must have been 60 miles in circumference, and contained a population of three million of souls.

Centuries must have elapsed, and dynasties succeeded each other, before such orders of architecture were introduced, and a length of time must have passed before an empire would become sufficiently powerful to erect such temples, and possess a city of such vast extent. In looking back to the past, we feel interested in the imagination that this people was once in

the noon-day of glory, enjoying all the fruits and luxuries of an advanced civilization.

## THE PYRAMIDS OF AMERICA.

In this country is exhibited the largest pyramid in the world, that of Cholula, near Puebla. It covers 40 acres, and is about 200 feet high; on its summit was a temple, and in the interior has been discovered a vault, roofed with beams of wood, containing skeletons and idols. Several smaller pyramids surround this large one.

It appears to have been formed by cutting a hill into an artificial shape. Its dimensions are immense, being nearly three miles in circumference, and about 400 feet high. It is divided into terraces and slopes, covered with platforms, stages and bastions, elevated one above the other, and all formed with large stones skilfully cut and joined without any cement.

In some respects the style of architecture resembles the Gothic, being massive and durable; in other respects it resembles the Egyptian, yet the general construction, manner, and style of architecture is different from anything hitherto described in the world.

As in Egypt, hieroglyphics on stone denote remarkable events, which no man has yet been able to decipher.

Architecture, sculpture, painting, and all the arts that adorn civilized life have flourished in this country at a period far remote. There is evidence sufficient to prove that those cities were in ruins at least 16 or 1800 years ago.

In Palenque is the remains of an altar, over which grows an immense cedar, whose powerful roots enshrine it. The whole city is overgrown with mahogany and cedar trees of enormous size. The concentric circles of some of these trees—the well known cycles for a year—have been counted, which showed that they were more than 1800 years old, and there were indications of another generation of trees having sprung up before them.

How few reflect on the fact that America is an old dominion, the seat of an ancient, mighty empire!

## THE WONDERS OF MEMPHIS UNCOVERED.

The Paris correspondent of the Journal of Commerce, under date of the 27th of November, writes as follows:

'You have read of Memphis, the vast city of Egypt, second in importance only to Thebes, after the fall of which it became the capital. It was of unknown antiquity. Among its most splendid edifices, the temple of Serapis, with its avenue of sphinxes, had the brightest renown. Now covered by the sand of the desert, it is the common record of travelers. But this covering has been removed, and an inestimable booty for archaeologists happily discovered.'

Mr. Auguste Mariette, whom the French government sent to Egypt on a scientific mission, has just returned, after an absence of four years. He devoted them exclusively to excavation of the Serapeum, or Temple of Serapis, and succeeded beyond all hope. The administration of the Louvre are preparing new galleries for an early display of the treasures of antiquity and art which he has brought with him. He completely cleared the Serapeum of the sands under which it lay buried for so many centuries.

The fusion of Greek and Egyptian art at various periods is established by a number of statues which were amid the images of Serapis. Sculptured representations of Apis were found near the statues of Pindar, Homer, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Plato and Euripides.

An alley or avenue of six hundred sphinxes is terminated by a series of figures representing the principal Hellenic divinities—genii placed, in the Egyptian manner, on animals that symbolize those divinities.

The most important of Mariette's discoveries was the tomb of Apis—a monument excavated entirely in live rock.

There are a hundred vast chambers, and a considerable number of galleries and streets—the ensemble of a real subterranean city. They supplied the discoverer with a multitude of steles (monoliths, shafts, statuettes, images of all dimensions and every age) deposited by the ancient Egyptians in the chambers and compartments of the funeral structure, as tokens of their pious devotions to the mummy of the god worshipped at Memphis.

There are epitaphs forming a chronological record of each of the Apis buried in the common tomb. The sculpture is of the date of the Pyramids; and the statues are in the best preservation; the colors are perfectly bright; altogether the execution is admirable, and they convey an exact idea of the physical character of the primitive population.

## THE PALACES OF THE ASSYRIANS.

Mr. Layard, who has for years been exploring the ruins of ancient Nineveh, thus graphically describes the spectacle which, in days of old, met the eye of those who entered the abode of the Assyrian kings:

He was ushered in through the portal guarded by the colossal lions or bulls of white alabaster. In the first hall he found himself surrounded by the sculptured records of the empire. Battles, sieges, triumphs, the exploits of the chase, the ceremonies of religion, were portrayed on the walls—sculptured in alabaster, and painted in gorgeous colors.

Under each picture were engraved, in characters filled up with bright copper, inscriptions describing the scenes represented. Above the sculptures were painted other events—the king, attended by his eunuchs and warriors, receiving his prisoners, entering into alliances with other monarchs, or performing some sacred duty.

The representations were enclosed in color-

ed borders of elaborate and elegant design. The emblematic tree, winged bulls and monstrous animals were conspicuous amongst the ornaments. At the upper end of the hall was the colossal figure of the king in adoration before the Supreme Deity, or receiving from his eunuch the holy cup. He was attended by warriors bearing his arms, and by his priests or presiding divinities. His robes and those of his followers were adorned, by a group of figures, animals and flowers, all painted in brilliant colors.

The stranger trod upon alabaster slabs, each bearing an inscription, recording the titles, genealogy, and achievements of the great kings. Several doorways, formed by gigantic winged lions or bulls, or by the figures of guardian deities, led into other apartments which again opened into more distant halls.

In each were new sculptures. On the walls of some were processions of colossal figures—armed men and eunuchs following the king, warriors laden with spoil leading prisoners or bearing presents and offerings to the gods. On the walls of others were portrayed winged priests, or presiding divinities, standing before the sacred trees.

## REMAINS OF THE DREADED VEHMIC TRIBUNAL.

A very interesting historical discovery has just been made in the museum of arms, in the palace of Hohenzollern, the property of the Prince Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. The marshal of the court, M. de Mayenfisch, remarked in the museum what appeared to be a door covered with plaster. He had the plaster removed, and found a wooden door, and behind that door was one of iron, fastened with four enormous locks.

M. de Mayenfisch had the locks opened, an operation of great difficulty. The door being then flung open, a subterranean passage was discovered. This passage, between three and four hundred yards in length, was blocked up at the end with rubbish. The rubbish was removed, and a large chamber was exposed. On the walls, at certain intervals, were crucifixes and figures of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist, all in wood, clumsily executed; also, iron caps with spikes in the interior, heavy chains, pincers, and other instruments of torture. In the centre of the room was a huge stone table, with ten seats surrounding it.

There was on the table a hammer, a plate with figures of the Virgin and of St. John the Baptist in bas relief at the bottom, five wooden balls quite black with age, and an iron seal of the famous Vehmic tribunals. This seal, with the other articles, makes it clear that the cavern was employed for the sittings of one of those secret courts of justice whose mysterious and terrible proceedings created such profound terror in the middle ages, but served to keep in check the brutality of the people. Singular to relate, no other actual remains of any Vehmic tribunal have yet been discovered in Germany, though savans have spent many weary years in making all manner of researches respecting them.

## THE RUINS OF ABO AND GRAN QUIVERA.

There has been much speculation as to the origin of the huge remains of ancient cities, temples, &c., which are scattered over many portions of Mexico. By the acquisition of a portion of its territory, we have placed within our reach the means of investigation.

Major Carlton, an energetic officer in the United States army, having resolved to explore some of these famous relics of the past, started with an expedition from Albuquerque on the 14th December for the ruins of Gran Quivera in New Mexico. After three days journeying in a south-west direction, they arrived at Abo. The following is the sketch of the ruins at that place:

'The ruins of Abo consist of a large church and the vestiges of many other buildings which are now but little else than long heaps of stones, with here and there portions of walls projecting above the surrounding rubbish. There is yet standing enough of the church to give one a knowledge of the form and magnitude of the building when in its prime.

The ground plan of this structure is in the form of a cross, its longitudinal direction being within ten degrees of the magnetic meridian. It was, perhaps, situated exactly on that meridian when the building was erected, the variation of the compass accounting for its present difference. The great entrance was in the southern end. From thence to the head of the cross, where the altar was doubtless situated, it is one hundred and thirty-two feet inside. This, the nave of the church, is thirty-two feet in width.

The short arm of the cross, or what in cathedrals is called the transept, is forty-one feet in length and twenty-three in breadth. The transept is sixty-six feet from the doorway. These measurements were made with a tape line in a very high wind. The round numbers in feet are therefore only given, without noticing the fractional part of a foot.

The walls are of great thickness, and their height is at this day, in over half the structure, all of fifty feet. The upper edge of these walls is cut into battlements.

The church, as well as the neighboring buildings now in ruins about it, was built of a stratified, dark-red sandstone, such as crops out along the creek and makes its appearance around the sides of the surrounding hills. The pieces of stone do not average over two and a half inches in thickness, and are not generally over one foot in length. Each piece is of the form it had when broken from its native bed. We saw not a single dressed stone about the ruins. These stones are laid in mortar made of the ordinary soil, from the ground immediately at hand.

The roof of the church was evidently supported by beams and covered with earth, as in the churches still occupied as places of worship throughout New Mexico.

We saw no signs of an arch, nor any indication that those who planned and built the church at Abo were at all acquainted with architecture as a science. The walls over the doors and windows, so far as we could observe, had been supported by beams of wood. When these had become destroyed, the stones which were liberated above had dropped down; so that now, over each window, there is a rude description of the gothic arch, owing its form not to design, but to accident. The wood work of the church was evidently destroyed by being burnt. Wherever in the walls portions of the beams still remain, they are found charred and blackened by fire.

The form of the church alone proves it to have been designed by Christians. Perhaps the workmen employed in its construction were Indians. We saw distinct marks of an axe in one of the pieces of timber which is embedded in the east wall of the church some six feet from the ground. Saws also were doubtless used, but we discovered no marks of them. The stick of timber marked with the axe and some beams that supported a landing at the head of a stairway which is made in the west wall were the only pieces of wood about the ruins which were not burnt so much over their surface, as to obliterate all marks of tools.

The extent of an exterior wall, which, from the appearance of the present heaps of stones, once surrounded the church and the town, was about nine hundred and forty-two feet north and south, with an average width east and west of say four hundred and fifty feet. A large population must have occupied this town and its neighborhood, if one were to judge the number of the people by the size of the church built to accommodate them while at their devotions.

We saw few, if any, unmistakable signs that the ground had been cultivated in the vicinity of these ruins. Nor is there any good arable land, so far as we could observe, at any point nearer than the Rio Grande; for uplands, to be arable in the climate of New Mexico, must be so situated as to be capable of irrigation. The stream of water at Abo is in a deep ravine. It is very inconsiderable in point of size, and loses itself in the very sand in less than five hundred yards below the springs which feed it. The adjacent country is rolling and broken and covered with pinon and cedar. The underlying rocks are secondary red sand stone. The summits of the mesas and neighboring eminences are composed of grey limestone, filled with marine fossils.

It was nearly night when we reached Abo. There was a keen freezing gale from the northwest, and the whole appearance of the country was cheerless, wintry and desolate. The tall ruins standing there in solitude had an aspect of sadness and gloom. They did not seem to be the remains of an edifice dedicated to peaceful religious purposes, a place of prayer; but rather as a monument of crime, and ruthlessness and violence. The cold wind, when at its height, appeared to roar and howl through the roofless pile like an angry demon; but when at times it died away a low sigh seemed to breathe along the crumbling battlements; and then it was that the noise of the distant brook arose upon the ear like a wail.

## Comical Report of a Fish Convention.

It is to be understood that all the marine monsters, big fish, and 'small fry' of the great deep are assembled in conclave—the Whale 'in the chair.'

'He opened the Convention by stating that he did not wish to make a speech; he would take up as little room, and be no longer than possible.'

'(Here the Shark whispered to the Sword-Fish that it was not possible for the Whale to be much longer as he was over eighty feet now. In his opinion, he only wanted a chance to spout; in fact, he considered him a regular old blower.)

'The Whale continued, and contended that he had been grossly insulted by man—he might say, lampooned; not that he would pun upon the use made of his fat, as he did not wish to make light of such a matter. He had been harpooned, at least. Men were sarcastic toward him, and their shafts were sharp and pointed. Some of his fellow-whales had been very much cut up, and exceedingly tried. He had lately learned that a substitute for oil had been invented, which might lessen the persecution of whales—but he feared it was all gas. The Whale alluded to a harpoon which had lately hit him; it had made a great impression on him, and, he feared, had affected him deeply.

'Here his feelings overpowered him, and he sat down (on the Shark) amidst a general blubber.'

'The Shark rose with some difficulty, and remarked that the tale of the Whale had moved him; in fact, it was very striking. His own situation was far from pleasant. He was by profession a lawyer, and, he flattered himself, one of the deep kind. But business was bad, and he had been obliged to take in a few pupils. He had lately presented a fine opening for a young man who fell overboard, but was soon afterward obliged to reject his suit as indigestible. Unless he had more cases, he should leave the law and open as a dentist.'

'The Sea-Serpent did not wish to intrude upon the Convention; he did not know whether he properly belonged to the fish-tribe or not. All he asked was, not to be classed with the Eel, whom he considered to be a very slippery character.—(Here the Eel was observed to wriggle violently.) Lately, he was passing a certain species of the Eel, when, just happening to touch him, he had been so shocked that he hardly recovered.'

'The Eel hastily arose, and said that he was