

THE DESERT WEEKLY

PIONEER PUBLICATION

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.

ESTABLISHED

TRUTH AND LIBERTY

JUNE, 1850.

NO. 3.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1889.

VOL. XXXIX.

UNDER THE ICE AND SNOW.

In the old Norse regions they tell
How in winter, long ago,
A glacier swept a parish away
And buried it under the snow.
Only the night saw the horror,
And when the morning was come,
A ghastly pile—a wild bird's cry;
All else was dead and dumb.

Year after year the frozen grave
Heaps higher and higher still;
Deeper and deeper on the weak
Rest the lifeless, wintry chill.
In vain the sun of summer would melt
The glacier's crust with his gleam;
Yet the sweet warmth touches its heart
And starts the silent stream;
And lo! the traveler list'ning hears
The secret the spring brook tells,
Answering the sunshine under the ice
With music of convent bells.

O friend beloved, the dreams so bright
I thought they could not die,
Are whelmed and buried in my breast—
How cold the dead things lie!
Yet at the old love's glance will youth
Thrill in my warm heart's glow,
As music throbs in hidden bells
Tou'ed by the spring brook's flow,
To sweetest answering murmurs
Under the ice and snow.

GREAT MEN OF ANCIENT AMERICA.

NEPHI.

Nephi was the fourth son of Lehi; his birthplace was Jerusalem, and he was the last son born to that patriarch previous to the family leaving their native city. He is one of the most illustrious characters of the Book of Mormon and of ancient America, and to his skill in the art of picture writing, and his faithful and zealous labors as an inspired historian, we are indebted for an account of Lehi's exodus, and annals of the colony for fifty-five years, from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem. Jacob 1: 1-12.

Nephi was the choicest flower of his family. In reading his simple biography and observing the remarkable incidents and thrilling experiences of his eventful career,

the mind almost spontaneously reverts to the beautiful and touching story of his illustrious progenitor Joseph, the first-born of Rachael. Both were remarkable for their piety and exemplary virtues; both were victims of the cruel jealousy and unjust persecutions of their nearest relations—being hated and worshiped by turns. Both devoted their lives and sacrificed their self-interest for the temporal salvation of their father's house; and both became rulers over their brethren, and even their parents did them reverence.

Although Lehi was the nominal head and leader of the Jerusalem pilgrims, the sturdy young chieftain, through his humility and zeal in the work required of his family, rose rapidly in favor with the Lord, and became the guiding spirit and indefatigable leader of the company.

From very early life Nephi was moved by powerful religious feelings, a yearning after righteousness, and a desire "to know the mysteries of God." He humbled himself and prayed earnestly for personal communication with the Lord, and he had the privilege of beholding many great and marvelous visions, and receiving many tokens of favor and approbation. From the first he entered into the spirit of his father's mission, and with enthusiastic effort devoted to it his whole life.

The greater part of the company did not favor the breaking up of their homes, and moving out into the desert; and like the Israelites they murmured and complained, and oftentimes used active opposition against taking the journey. They could not be expected to labor with any degree of zeal for its success. Nephi, therefore, was hunter and general provider for the camp. While hunting Nephi accidentally

broke his bow, and it would seem that this was the only, or principal means they had of supplying themselves with game.

Shortly after leaving Jerusalem Lehi said unto his son Nephi:

"The Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem. For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews, and also a genealogy of thy forefathers; and they are engraven upon plates of brass. Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brothers should go unto the house of Laban and seek the records, and bring them down hither into the wilderness." 1 Nephi iii, 2-4.

The importance of this divine command will be apparent when it is understood that these brass plates contained:

"The five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; and also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; and also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah." 1 Nephi v: 11-13.

The only records of a sacred or inspired character then known to exist upon the continent of America were the twenty-four plates of gold, found by the people of Lemhi among the Jaredite ruins at Zarahemla. See Mosiah, chapter viii. These records contained the Book of Ether, and an account of the creation of the world, and other sacred history similar to that contained in the old Testament down to the time of the building of the Tower of Babel. Ether i: 1-4. But no further knowledge of God, or His dealings with the children of men existed upon the American continent.