

THE DESERT WEEKLY

PIONEER PUBLICATION ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION.

ESTABLISHED TRUTH AND LIBERTY. JUNE 1850.

NO. 21.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1891.

VOL. XLIII.

THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT.

There's no time like the present;
Tomorrow's far away.
And what our hands may find to do,
God bids us do today.

Be ready in the golden Now
To do a helpful deed;
And never let the chance go by
To meet a sister's need.

Don't wait until another time,
For she who waits may lose
The grandest chance of all her life;
It is not ours to choose.

The opportunities to do,
They come at God's behest,
And she who never squanders one
Is she who lives the best.

ELEN K. REXFORD.

WARS OF THE NEPHITES AND LAMANITES.

Frequent mention is made in the war annals of the Book of Mormon of watch-towers, and observation stations. And we select the subjoined from numerous notices of the remains of this class of works found upon the face of the country.

"The second class of military works, which are exceedingly numerous on all the watercourses—existing not only on the Ohio and Mississippi, but on all their tributaries, especially on the Muskingum, Soloto, Miami, Wabash, Illinois, Kentucky and minor streams -- are mounds which serve as out-looks. These were always placed in positions to command extended views, and from which signals could be given to still others of the same character, or probably to settlements remote from the watercourses.

"A system of these works no doubt extended north of Dayton, Ohio, on the great Malmi river to the Ohio southward, and connected with the great settlement on the site of Cincinnati, and with the high bluffs on the Kentucky shore. The great mound at Maimisburgh, ten miles south of Dayton, formed a part of this chain. There is little doubt that the mound-builders in the latter period of their occupancy of this region, when apprehensive of danger from their ene-

mies employed a system of signal telegraph by which communication was had through means of watch-fires or the torch, between localities as distant as those now occupied by Dayton and Cincinnati." (John T. Short, North Americans of Antiquity, p. 52.)

These signal stations, placed on lofty summits and, visible from these settlements and communicating with the great watercourses at immense distances, rival the signal systems in use at the beginning of the present century. And there are evidences that the watchers upon those lofty towers in all probability made use of instruments of a telescopic character to aid the power of the natural eye.

We have accounts of the discovery of tablets, notably the Davenport and Cincinnati Tablets, giving incontestable proofs that scientific astronomy was well understood by the mound builders. And if so, they must have pursued the study of that grand science by the aid of a powerful apparatus.

Mr. Short mentions "Antique Tubes, Telescopic Devices," being discovered in the valley of Ohio.

Mr. Schoolcraft says:

"Several tubes of stone were discovered; the longest measured twelve inches, the shortest, eight. Three of them were carved out of steatite, being skilfully cut and polished. The diameter of the tube externally was one inch and four-tenths, the bore eight-tenths of an inch.

"A silver figure found in Peru represents a man in the act of studying the heavens through one of these tubes, and Captain Duplax saw a stone in Mexico bearing the figure of a man sculptured on its side in the act of using one of these tubes." (Baldwin's Ancient America, p. 42, quoted on pp. 122-3.)

Col. Whittlesey in the report of the State Arch. Soc., ch. 4, has figured several symmetrical tubes of stone from Ohio mounds. The most perfect of these he says: "May have served as telescopic helps for distant views." The Huron states were most frequently employed in the manufacture of tubes,

as they were in the manufacture of the class of objects known as ceremonial relics.

In the preface to his book, Mr. Short takes occasion to say that the growing interest in the origin, migrations and life of the races of American antiquity led him to write and present his work to the world. He there gives a copious list of authors from whom he drew the materials for the body of his volume. Among other books he made free use of Bancroft's "Native Races," and on pp. 144-5 of his own book quotes Bancroft's account of the colonization of North America as given in the Book of Mormon. Short characterizes the Book of Mormon as "That pretentious fraud," and adds:

"The claim that the numerous tumuli scattered over the face of the country cover the remains of hundreds of thousands of warriors who fell in their deadly strife merits mention only on the ground of its romantic character, and not on the supposition for a moment that it contains a grain of truth."

And yet, he never read the book, but says, himself, that he drew his notice from Bancroft's book, and Bancroft probably never read the Book of Mormon, for he translated his account from Bertrand's Memoirs, pp. 32.

The account quoted by Short is the following:

"The Book of Mormon attributes the colonization of North America, soon after the confusion of tongues, to a people called Jaredites, who, by divine guidance reached our shores in eight vessels, and developed a high state of civilization on our soil. The first colonists, however, became extinct about six centuries B. C., because of their social sins. The Jaredites were followed by a second colony, this time of Israelites, who left Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, King of Juda. They reached the Indian ocean by following the shores of the Red Sea, where they built a vessel which bore them across the Pacific to the western coast of South America. Having arrived in the new land of