

## BIG VESSELS OF THE ANCIENTS.

We moderns are justly proud of the wonderful and magnificent specimens of naval architecture that crowd the great ports of the world. If there is anything new under the sun, a first-class ocean steamer, it is believed, is that rarity. In our conceit we recall only the galleys and triremes of the ancients, that scarce ever ventured beyond the coast line, and the small barks in which Columbus and those that followed him conquered the new world, and gave commerce its greatest field. But the ancients built many goodly sized crafts, and made luxury a study on some of them.

That much controverted craft, the ark, is an example of bigness. Her tonnage is estimated at about 15,000 tons, smaller, it is true, than that of the *Great Eastern*. No less an authority than Lindsay thinks that she was simply a raft of stupendous size, having upon it a structure resembling a huge warehouse. As no means of propulsion were necessary, this description may be correct. The cargo, however, was unique, and probably the largest and most valuable ever carried.

The description of the ark, as given in the Scriptures, makes the vessel about 450 feet in length, 75 feet in breadth, and 45 feet in depth—proportions similar to those now in use today for great vessels. But as the agnostic is not sure that this lifeboat of the human race ever existed, and as the materialist is sure she never was built, let us take for example of big ancient vessels some other craft vouched for upon the authority of profane and not sacred writers. The Egyptians, fond of large things and big dimensions, made the big tonnage vessels of ancient times.

Ptolemy (Philopater) would have appreciated the *Great Eastern*. He was fond of building big boats. One of these is said to have been 420 feet long, 57 feet broad, and 72 feet deep from the highest point of the stern. This vessel had four rudders, or what some would call steering oars, as they were not fastened, each 45 feet long. She carried 4000 rowers, besides 3000 mariners, a large body of servants under her decks, and stores and provisions. Her oars were 57 feet long, and the handles were weighted with lead. There were 2000 rowers on a side, and it is supposed that these were divided into five banks. That this extraordinary vessel ever put to sea is doubted, but that she was launched and used at times, if only for display, several historians are agreed.

Another ship, the *Thalamegus*, built for one of the Ptolemies, is said to have been 300 feet long, 40 feet broad, and 40 feet deep. This was a far more magnificent vessel than any previous one. An Alexandrian historian, Catlixenus, in describing her, speaks of her having colonnades, marble stairs and gardens. Another great vessel, historical by reason of its size, is one built by Hiero, King of Syracuse. Her dimensions are estimated to be large

from the description of her cargo, and the number of her decks and houses. She is supposed to have been sheathed with lead, and accomplished at least one successful trip.

A full description of her would read somewhat like that of one of our Long Island Sound or Hudson River steamboats. She had three entrances, the lowest leading to the hold, the second to the eating rooms, and the third was appropriated to the soldiers. There were thirty rooms, each having four couches, for the soldiers; there were fifteen couches in the sailors' upper room, and there were three more cabins, each having three couches. The floors of all these rooms were laid in stone mosaic work. There was also a temple of cypress, inlaid with ivory and dedicated to Venus. The mainmast was composed of a single tree, and the vessel carried four wooden and eight iron anchors.

As a freight carrier she would rival the largest of our ocean tramps. It is recorded that one or two of the launches belonging to her would carry about eighty tons. This vessel is said to have carried "60,000 measures of corn, 10,000 jars of Sicilian salt fish, 20,000 talents' weight of wool, and of other cargo 20,000 talents, all of which was in addition to the provision required for the crew." These are the notably big vessels of ancient times, but the supposition is that, as rulers, whether king or people, were as emulous in those days as these, other big craft were also built. From the foregoing description the thought is suggested that the first designers of our own river steamboats may have heard of the Egyptian and Syrausan vessels and taken a hint from them in building floating palaces.—*Maritime Register*.

## ST. JOHNS QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

The quarterly conference of the St. Johns Stake of Zion convened at St. Johns at 10 a.m. December 7. Present on the stand: President David K. Udall, Counselors Elijah N. Freeman and William H. Gibbons; members of the High Council, Bishops from most of the wards, and Elders from various parts of the Stake. The President's report showed the Stake to be generally in a healthy and prosperous condition. Spiritually the Saints are feeling well.

The Bishops, with two exceptions, reported fairly good crops and the Saints are feeling and doing well. In the Alpine and Heber wards there has been such a heavy rainfall that a great deal of the grain sprouted in the shock, thereby rendering it almost worthless, and hay that was cut lay upon the ground and rotted.

The principal subjects dwelt upon by the speakers were prayer, the proper care and training of children, the necessity of seeking to understand the power and authority of the Priesthood, the proper training and education of our children, and the necessity of so living that we may

enjoy the Holy Spirit at all times. Although the weather was quite stormy, there were crowded meetings.

On Sunday afternoon the general and Stake authorities were presented and unanimously sustained. The quarterly statistical report was also read, which showed increasing numbers.

We think the tide is turning in our favor, and by means of reservoirs now in progress we expect to have plenty of water.

SAMUEL D. MOORE,  
Stake Clerk,

## IN THE SHADOWS.

We find in the sprightly little organ of the Canoeists, *Sail and Paddle* this gem, which is credited by the *London Academy* to *Songs of the Great Dominion*. The author is said to be the cultivated daughter of an Indian chief, which lends an added interest to the charming song.

I am sailing to the leeward,  
Where the current runs to seaward  
Soft and slow;  
Where the sleeping river-grasses  
Brush my paddle as it passes  
Too and fro.

On the shore the heat is shaking  
All the golden sands awaking  
In the cove;  
And the quaint sand-piper winging  
O'er the shallows, ceases singing  
When I move.

On the water's idle pillow  
Sleeps the overhanging willow,  
Green and cool;  
Where the rushes lift their burnished  
Oval heads from out the tarnished  
Emerald pool.

Where the very water slumbers  
Water-lilies grow in numbers,  
Puro and pale;  
All the morning they have rested,  
Amber-crowned and pearly crested—  
Fair and frail.

Here impossible romances,  
Indefinable sweet fancies,  
Cluster round;  
But they do not mar the sweetness  
Of this still September fleetness  
With a sound.

I can scarce discern the meeting  
Of the shore and stream retreating  
So remote;  
For the laggard river, dozing,  
Only wakes from its reposing  
Where I float.

Where the river pilots are rising,  
All the foliage baptizing  
With their spray;  
There the sun gleams far and faintly  
With a shadow soft and saintly  
In its ray.

And the perfume of some burning  
Far-off brushwood, ever turning  
To exhale;  
All its smoky fragrance dying  
In the arms of evening lylox  
Where I sail.

My canoe is growing lazy  
In the atmosphere so hazy,  
While I dream;  
Half in slumber I am gliding  
Eastward, indistinctly gliding  
Down the stream.