

AMERICA'S ANCIENT INHABITANTS.

MR. JOEL RICKS who gave an account of the antiquities and remnants of an extinct people, discovered in Southern Utah, and which account appeared in a recent number of the MILLENNIAL STAR, has continued his researches into Arizona, and writes from there to the *Deseret News* of his explorations, as follows:

"When the Jesuit priests entered the Salt River Valley, Arizona, upwards of three hundred years ago, they were surprised to find everywhere vast evidences of an old civilization, the remains of a people who, through long periods, had grown and developed, flourished, and passed away. On every hand were the ruins of their houses, temples and forts, reduced, by the action of the elements during the long ages that had passed since their abandonment, to mere heaps of earth, on which were growing the mesquit brush and around which stood the great cactus trees like solemn sentinels, as if keeping guard over the graves of the ancient people. In every direction ran the ancient canals which in former times had enlivened the desert and given life to the fields of green that spread like a mantle over the plain. When asked regarding the ancient people, the wild Indians shook their heads. Their traditions had become silent concerning them. Since that time there has been little change in the condition of the ruins. The tops of the mounds are crusted and baked until now the rainfall has little effect upon them; indeed we believe that they are still capable of enduring for many hundreds of years to come without material change, that is, so far as the elements are concerned; but modern civilization is making inroads upon them and fast obliterating them from the face of the earth.

"The first canal was taken out of Salt River a few miles above the mouth of the Verde, and skirting the base of Superstition Mountain it ran off southwards towards the Gila, a distance of thirty-five miles or more. From that point, at intervals of a few miles all the way down the valley to the mouth of the Hassayampa Creek, a distance of nearly eighty miles, are traces of the ancient canals. Then, too, the waters of the Agua Fria and Verde rivers were utilized for irrigating purposes, as is attested by the old canals found along their banks. The waters of the Gila were diverted at convenient points, and canals carried far out into the desert south of the river, where Casa Grande now stands.

"I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that there was more land irrigated by the ancient people in this part of Arizona than is to-day cultivated in all Utah. And when I consider the productiveness of the soil here and the advantages of the climate, I believe the country could sustain, and did sustain, more than twice the present population of our fair territory.

"The combined length of these old canals would be more than 1,000 miles, to say nothing of the thousands of small canals and ditches radiating in every direction, distributing the waters to every part of the plain.

"The ruins of the villages and cities are found almost everywhere, and in that olden time when the buildings were intact and inhabited, the people must have been in easy call of each other from one end of this

great valley to the other. The ruins of large buildings, which are usually believed to have been temples, or places of worship, are found distributed among the other ruins at distances of from three to five miles apart, all over the valley.

"One of these buildings I visited is just north of Mesa City. It stands on a level plain, and is surrounded on all sides by hundreds of smaller mounds. It is rectangular, being four hundred feet long and about sixty feet wide, and about twenty feet high. On the eastern side was an apron, or open court, the same size as the building, and which was enclosed by a wall ten or twelve feet high. The entrance to the enclosure was in the centre of the east wall of the court. The building corresponded as nearly to the cardinal points as it would be possible for our best engineers to make it to-day. Judging from the vast amount of rubbish that occupies the site of the building and which at one time formed a part of its walls, I incline to the opinion that it was from three to four stories high, and must have been a conspicuous object on the plain. There are a great many of these temples in the valley, and while they differ some little in plan of building they all were constructed of the same material, and have the same air of antiquity about them.

"The dwellings of the people are everywhere. You find them thickest on the edge of the mesa along the river, and away out on the plain they are grouped around the temples. But it seems that there was nothing to prevent the inhabitant from building where he chose, as you will find ruins of houses along the canals and scattered about over what must have been the cultivated lands. I have no doubt but that men built their houses where they would be convenient to their work. The man whose duty it was to watch and keep the canal in repair lived there; the farmer lived convenient to his lands; but the ruins testify that the most favored place to dwell was in the vicinity of the temple.

"There seems to have been as wide a difference between the dwellings of this strange people as there is with us at the present time. Men built houses according to their requirements and their wealth. You will find small mounds, mere heaps of earth, that indicate that there once stood the one-room abode of some poor mortal. In another place, not far away, are larger remains, a house of many rooms, where, no doubt, lived a man of wealth, rolling in all the luxury of those primeval times. It would be difficult to say definitely just what was the design of these ancient abodes, but after making a careful study of them I believe they were not very unlike the box-shaped, mud-roofed Mexican house of the present time. That style of a building is very popular in this country; indeed, from the earliest times it has been very popular among the inhabitants of the warm countries of the East. It was the prevailing style at Jerusalem, in Egypt, and was even used by the Mexicans at the time of the conquest, three hundred and fifty years ago. The Zuni Indians still build their houses much after the same principle. It is particularly adapted to the requirements of a country like this, where the climate is warm and where wood, because of its scarcity, becomes a consideration.

"It has been said many times that these old buildings were constructed

of adobe. This is a mistake. I have examined many of them and have yet to see one so constructed. They are built with cement, and after the manner that we erect our concrete houses. No one who has ever seen the ruins and noted the layers of cement as they have been placed on the walls, one after the other, will be willing to admit that adobes, in any form, entered into their construction. Another thing: all who have carefully examined the material used in these old buildings claim that lime was used largely in its preparation. The residents of to-day in the vicinity of the mounds, when they want material for plastering or for laying up adobe buildings, go to the mounds for it, claiming that it works up much better than the clay found elsewhere on the plain.

"In many of the ruins that have been disturbed, the old walls can be easily traced protruding through the mass of rubbish that has accumulated around them, being preserved by the hardness of the cement from the action of the elements. So hard are they that a blow with a pick makes little impression upon them.

"Who are they, and whence came they? These are questions asked by every visitor to the ruins regarding the people who built here. Up to the present no one has been able to answer the questions satisfactorily. A recent writer on the subject says: 'The selection of the location of their homes seems to indicate that they were originally a maritime people, from either Asia or Africa, more probably the former, who, landing on the coast of Lower California when that peninsula was more closely connected with the mainland than at present, drifted north and eastward along the Colorado and Gila, until they overran and settled the irrigable land contiguous to each of these streams. This seems the most probable theory, as the lines of their settlements apparently radiate from near the mouth of the Colorado.' Whether this is the correct theory or not I would not venture to say, but from the fact that the old civilization appears to have reached its highest development in this valley; that the ruins north and south indicate plainly that they were only offshoots from the center; that there are wide tracts of land in every direction surrounding them that seem to have been capable of redemption and settlement, and on which there are no traces of old cities, I incline to the opinion that this particular family came here by sea. They probably came up the Gulf of California and spread along the river courses. Everything indicates that their development was gradual, and their occupancy of the country extended over a long period of time.

"It seems to me that the Book of Mormon furnishes a parallel to what was apparently the history of this ancient people. It will be remembered that about fifty-five years before Christ a man named Hagoth built a large ship and launched it into the Pacific ocean somewhere near Panama bay. A large number of Nephites went on board of it and sailed to some point on the west coast of North America, where they made a home. We are not told where they landed, but the country was evidently a desert, so much so that it was necessary for a time to send the new colonists food by ships. There was no timber there and the settlers were obliged to build their houses with cement, in the working of which we are told they became

expert. What timber they used was also sent to them by means of shipping. Now, we will not say that those ships coasted along the shore of Mexico and landed at the head of the Gulf of California, for we do not know, but it is certain that there is a striking similarity between the old Nephite country and this one. Another thing about it is how Joseph Smith found out that there were remains of cement houses in Arizona, for without that knowledge it was rather presumptuous on his part to make his ancient people build their cities of that material. Yet we know that at the time he published the Book of Mormon it was impossible for him to have had any such knowledge from actual modern research.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FACTS AND EVENTS

At a fire in Whitechapel, London, five persons were burned to death.

The women of New Zealand have now secured the passage of the woman's suffrage bill, by a majority of two.

Statistics published at Bombay, with respect to the health of the army in India, show that 550 men per 1,000 were admitted to the hospitals last year, suffering from contagious diseases, and that thus 4,000 were constantly unfit for duty.

Elise Adamson, a woman employed as cook at a house in Ullet Road, Liverpool, has been sent to jail for a month for stealing food and fuel from her mistress's house. She had taken it home to her husband, who was in want, being out of work.

Workmen engaged in clearing the foundations of some old houses in Whitechapel, London, came upon an immense quantity of human bones, stated to weigh about a couple of tons. There is no explanation as to this mysterious and ghastly discovery.

A coroner's jury inquiring as to the death of a Liverpool carter named Pritchard, who, it appeared, had died from the effects of excessive drinking, were informed that the deceased had been in the habit of consuming from twenty to twenty-six pints of beer a day.

British warships appear to be most unusually unlucky, for within a few days three of them have had mishaps. First the *Camperdown* ran ashore, then a boiler burst on the cruiser *Leander*, and now comes the news from British Columbia of the cruiser *Hyacinth* being severely damaged in a storm in the Pacific.

It is stated that emigration on a large scale from Spain to the South American Republics is now going on, in spite of the distracted condition of those republics. This is regarded as evidence of the extreme industrial depression which has been reached in Spain. This year there are no Columbus funds to give to the unemployed.

A terrible tale of the sea comes from Penang, to the effect that the Dutch vessel *Rajah Kongsee Atjech* was pirated between Penang and Acheen, on July 20, by her Acheenese passengers, who murdered the captain, two English mates, and twenty-two members of the crew. The cargo was left intact by the pirates, whose leader was an Acheenese supercargo on board. Seven of his accomplices went aboard at one of the ports of call after the custom officers had examined and left the steamer. This irregularity probably led to the disaster, which resulted in the pirates securing five thousand guilders as booty. Obtaining this, however, they also killed twenty-four passengers and wounded twelve, while eighteen others who escaped in a boat were drowned, by the craft capsizing owing to overcrowding. Nineteen passengers and thirty-two of the crew were unharmed. The man at the wheel was first cut down with a sword, then Mr. Alexander, and next Captain Wood was slain in his cabin. These murders were followed by a general slaughter in the saloon. The pirates carried off four Acheenese and five other women.