

their houses, and to call upon God in mighty prayer to keep the destroyer from them. I feel as though the Saints will escape, if they will obey counsel. My prayer to God is that he will bless and preserve his honest-hearted Saints. I hope, dear brother, you will be so kind as to keep us posted with the news by the mail as heretofore.

The Priesthood are united in the Cape Conference, and the Saints all doing pretty well.

The mail has just arrived. I have had a glance at the *Stars* and also the letter you sent me. My soul feels to rejoice and to be full of gratitude to our God that he has blessed his Saints upon the land of Zion and again restored unto them peace for awhile. I anticipate that the way for emigration will soon be opened up again. We shall hold ourselves in readiness as much as we can until we get counsel from you by letter or in the *Star* when and which way we are to steer for the mountain home of the faithful. I believe there are a few families in this Conference who will be able to avail themselves of the opportunity when the way shall be again opened.

I will conclude by praying that the Lord will bless you and the brethren in the Office, and make you a blessing to the Saints throughout your Presidency. I remain your brother in the Gospel of Christ,

RICHARD PROVIS.

ENGLAND.—MANCHESTER PASTORATE.

Chorlton-upon-Medlock, Manchester,  
November 26, 1858.

President Asa Calkin.

Dear Brother,—In compliance with your

request, I present you with a report of the state and condition of my Pastorate.

As regards the Priesthood, we are feeling well. I myself feel well in the work of the Lord. If I have one desire stronger than another, it is that I may be useful in the Church to bring many to a knowledge of the truth and help to establish righteousness on the earth. Brothers Croft (of Manchester Conference), James McGhie (of Liverpool Conference), and Mark H. Forscutt (of Preston Conference,) are all one with me to do good according to the best of their abilities; but brother Mark H. Forscutt, of the Preston Conference, is now unfit for his duty through sickness.

There are many strangers in some of the Branches of both the Manchester and Liverpool Conferences coming to hear the word preached, and some few are being baptised, and there seem to be quite a number enquiring after the truth.

The Saints in general throughout the Pastorate feel well and are willing to do their duty in all respects. There are a few exceptions, however, in Preston Conference. A few there have got a murmuring spirit among them. There are some in that Conference, who have been in the Church many years, who think they know a good deal, and that there is no one in this land able to teach them anything; and I think it would be well to find them a good straightforward man of experience to preside over them.

I believe this to be a faithful report of the present condition of the Pastorate.

Yours in the Gospel,

EDWARD OLIVER.

AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES,

CORROBORATIVE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

According to intimations given in the *Star* a short time back, we now commence a compilation of facts, derived from various sources, relative to the antiquities of America, which supply a mass of strong confirmatory evidence in favour of the Book of Mormon. Some of the extracts have already appeared in different periodicals of the Church. We have availed ourselves of every reliable source of information within our reach that would enable us to carry out the objects intended.

The Book of Mormon is a professed history of ancient America, containing an

account of the migrations, settlement, modes of life, prosperities, adversities, joys, sorrows, wars, and various doings of the aboriginal inhabitants of that vast country, of whom the Indians are direct descendants. It is professedly "An account written by the hand of Mormon upon plates taken from the plates of Nephi.

. . . . An abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel, and also to Jew and Gentile. . . .

An abridgement taken from the Book of

Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower," &c. (See title-page of Book of Mormon.)

It is not our intention here to enter upon a dissertation on the Book of Mormon. Our object is simply to bring together and place before our readers, in a connected and compact form, what *others* (not "Mormons") have said, from time to time, since its publication, that (unwittingly) tends to substantiate its claims and illustrate its truths.

Much has been said and written at different times in support of that "good old book," the Bible. The declarations of impartial historians, the mythologies and traditions of heathen nations, the facts of geology, the evidence of existing monuments, the habits and customs of eastern people, and the testimony of modern travellers in relation to their researches in Palestine and neighbouring countries, are all assiduously collected and with praiseworthy zeal pressed into the service of Biblical expositors and defenders.

A similar course may with considerable advantage and benefit be pursued in behalf of the Book of Mormon. Much has been and much more has yet to be done in this way; and if our present labours in that direction shall tend in the least to strengthen the faith of the Saints in that sacred volume, and at the same time stimulate others to gather up and preserve all such similar evidences as may come under their notice or within their reach, we shall feel abundantly satisfied that our labours have not been in vain.

We will here quote the testimony of that celebrated geologist, the late Hugh Miller, in support of the fact that the so-called "New World" of America has far greater claims than the Eastern continent to be designated the OLD World. In his geological work entitled "The Testimony of the Rocks," published in 1857, he says—

"Not only are we accustomed to speak of the Eastern continents as the Old World, in contradistinction to the great continent of the West, but to speak also of the world before the flood as the Old World, in contradistinction to the postdiluvian world which

succeeded it. And yet equally, if we receive the term in either of its acceptations, is America an older world still,—an older world than that of the Eastern continents—an older world, in the fashion and type of its productions, than the world before the flood. And when the immigrant settler takes an axe amid the deep backwoods to lay open for the first time what he deems a new country, the great trees that fall before him, the brushwood which he lops away with a sweep of his tool, the unfamiliar herbs which he tramples under foot, the lazy fish-like reptile that scarce stirs out of his path as he descends to the neighbouring creek to drink, the fierce alligator-like tortoise with the large limbs and small carapace that he sees watching among the reeds for fish and frogs just as he reaches the water, and the little hare-like rodent without a tail that he startles by the way,—all attest, by the antiqueness of the mould in which they are cast, how old a country the seemingly new one really is—a country vastly older, in type at least, than that of the antediluvians and the patriarchs, and only to be compared with that which flourished on the eastern side of the Atlantic long ere the appearance of man, and the remains of whose perished productions we find locked up in the loess of the Rhine or the lignites of Nassau. America is emphatically the *Old World*."

The same writer, in the same work, also says—

"In the human family there are races that have long since reached their culminating point, and are now either fast disappearing or have already disappeared. The Aztecs of Central America or the Copts of the valley of the Nile are but the inconsiderable fragments of once mighty nations, memorials of whose greatness live in the vast sepulchral mounds of the far West, or in the temples of Thebes or Luxor, or the pyramids of Gizah."

The following extracts from various American periodicals will be found to corroborate the fact of the Western continent having been formerly inhabited by a great civilized people:—

(From the *Trinity Times*.)

"The deep diggings in the mountains of California are daily bringing to light interesting and astonishing facts, which tend to shroud the early history of this portion of the continent in the deepest mystery, and tend to the conviction that it was once peopled by another race of men highly advanced in civilization."

(From the *San Francisco Herald*.)

"The great basin between the Colorado and the Rio Grande is an immense table-land, broken towards the Gila and the Rio Grande by detached sierras. Almost all the streams run through deep canons. The country is barren and desolate and entirely uninhabited. But though now so bleak and forbidding, strewn all around may be seen the evidence that it was once peopled by a civilized and thickly-settled population. They have long since disappeared, but their handiwork still remains to attest their former greatness. Captain Walker assures us that the country from the Colorado to the Rio Grande, between the Gila and San Juan, is full of ruined habitations and cities, most of which are on the table-land."

(From the *New Quarterly Review*.)

"Every fact recorded by the Spanish historians would go to show that there has existed in Central America a vast empire of great civilization and great antiquity. It must be so old as to have received the traditions of the creation as they were known to Moses, and so civilized as to have perpetuated them in writing. . . . Bernal Diez, and De Solis, Villa Gutierre, and Cogolludo may be dishonest in their descriptions or in their compilations; the books of bark, the writings upon cotton, and the hieroglyphic books seen at Zempoala may be fictions or modern forgeries; but the testimony that these are *not* so is at present very strong and not disproved. On the other hand, there is nothing impossible in the suggestion that the race which strewed monuments over lands that are now deserts and forests may have been, as their traditions assert, the grandchildren of Noah and the contemporaries of the patriarchs. The subject is at any rate worthy of research, and yet how little it has been investigated!"

(From an American paper.)

"A gentleman exhibited to us a piece of cedar, the history of which is as follows: In digging a well on the property of Smith, Brothers, and Co., at Bunker Hill, Illinois, at the distance of 53 feet beneath the surface, they came to a cedar log, embedded in the earth, and extending across the well. It was cut off, was found to be five or six inches through, and was in a state of perfect preservation. The town of Bunker Hill, as many persons know, is situated in the middle of a large and level prairie; and the gentleman who has it in his possession, who is a bit of a Yankee, wants to know how that log of cedar got there."

(From the *Fulton City [Ill.] Investigator*.)

"Not long since, as some workmen were engaged in excavating a well, about two miles north of Round Grove, in this county, they came on the remains of an old well, about 37 feet below the surface. The mouth of this ancient pit was covered over with earth; and, removing this, they found it walled around with a stone and lime wall about eight feet deep. There was about five feet of water in the bottom, which was found to be pure. What increases the mystery is the fact that the ground seemed perfectly solid from the mouth of the well to the surface of the ground. The material removed was stiff blue clay closely compacted."

(From the *St. Louis Republican*.)

"A day or two ago, an oak was cut down a short distance from Harrisburg, (and near an old revolutionary relic, known as Paxon's church,) which, upon counting the growth, proved to be near 400 years' old; and, perfectly embedded in it, at a height of near 30 feet from the ground, was found a well-shaped stone mortar and pestle, and an instrument very much resembling an axe, though much smaller in size. They had evidently been placed in the crotch of the tree, which had grown together over them; and, from an examination of the section, it is perfectly manifest that they must have been there at least 300 years. They are of very hard flinty stone, and in their finish exhibit much skill."

(From the *Hampshire Telegraph*.)

"Philadelphia, Feb. 18. — Antiquarians will feel deeply interested in the discovery of vast regions of ancient ruins near San Diego, and within a day's march of the Pacific Ocean, at the head of the Gulf of California. Portions of temples, dwellings, lofty stone pyramids (seven of them within a mile square), and massive granite rings and circular walls round venerable trees, columns, and blocks of hieroglyphics,—all speak of some ancient race of men now forever gone, their history actually unknown to any of the existing families of mankind. In some points these ruins resemble the recently-discovered cities of Palenque, &c., near the Atlantic or Mexican Gulf coast; in others again, the ruins of ancient Egypt; in others again, the monuments of Phœnecia; and yet in many features they differ from all referred to. The discoverers deem them to be antediluvian, while the present Indians have a tradition of a great civilized nation which their ferocious forefathers utterly destroyed."

(To be continued.)