

LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR. 183

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"NO WEAPON THAT IS FORMED AGAINST THEE SHALL PROSPER; AND EVERY TONGUE THAT SHALL RISE AGAINST THEE IN JUDGMENT THOU SHALT CONDEMN. THIS IS THE HERITAGE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE LORD, AND THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS OF ME SAITH THE LORD."—*Isaiah liv, 17.*

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THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.

BY ELDER GEORGE REYNOLDS.

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In the year 1833, or thereabout, some laborers engaged in removing a mound at Fall River, Mass., unearthed a skeleton clad in armor. The discovery was an unexpected and remarkable one, and gave rise to many speculations in the scientific world. Two theories were especially favored by antiquarians. The first, that the skeleton was that of some adventurous Phœnician seaman, whom adverse winds had carried to the American coast, and wrecked his barque on the bleak New England shore. The second theory has a somewhat greater show of probability; its advocates contend that in the tenth and immediately succeeding centuries the hardy Norsemen planted colonies along the coast of Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which they maintained for three or four hundred years, giving to the country the name of Vinland, and that this skeleton is that of one of their chiefs, whom it is known was killed by the natives and buried in

the neighborhood where the skeleton was found.

The *American Magazine*, a periodical published in Boston in 1837, gives the following description of the finding of the body, and of the covering in which it was enshrouded:

"The surrounding earth was carefully removed, and the body found to be enveloped in a covering of coarse bark of a dark color. Within this envelope were found the remains of another of coarse cloth, made of fine bark, and about the texture of a Manilla coffee-bag. On the breast was a plate of brass, thirteen inches long, six broad at the upper end, and five at the lower. This plate appears to have been cast, and is from one-eighth to three thirty-seconds of an inch in thickness. It is so much corroded that whether or not anything was engraved upon it has not yet been ascertained. It is oval in form, the edges being irregular, apparently made so by corrosion. Below the breast-

plate, and entirely encircling the body, was a belt composed of brass tubes, each four and a half inches in length, and three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, arranged longitudinally and close together, the length of a tube being the width of the belt. The tubes are of thin brass, cast upon hollow reeds, and were fastened together by pieces of sinew. Near the right knee was a quiver of arrows. The arrows are of brass, thin, flat, and triangular in shape, with a round hole cut through near the base. The shaft was fastened to the head by inserting the latter in an opening at the end of the wood, and then tying with a sinew through the round hole—a mode of constructing the weapon never practiced by the Indians, not even with their arrows of thin shell. Parts of the shaft still remain on some of them. When first discovered the arrows were in a sort of quiver of bark, which fell to pieces when exposed to the air."

Latterly this subject has again come to the surface, through republication of this article in several American newspapers.

To the mind of the believer in the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, the Phœnician and Scandinavian theories appear, to say the least, very far fetched. But even with such there exists a difficulty to decide to which of the two mighty races which have filled this continent since the flood, this unknown warrior belonged. The great number of years that have elapsed since the first race, the Jaredites, were, by internicine war, swept from the face of the earth, has been urged as an argument against the skeleton having belonged to a chieftain of that race, but the argument would be equally fatal to the Phœnician theory, as the Jaredites and Phœnicians were co-existent powers. The strongest argument in favor of the idea that the skeleton belonged to a Jaredite, is found in the fact that the region of country in which it was unearthed, was for fourteen hundred years (as near as we can calculate from the data afforded in the Book of Ether) one of the principal centres of Jaredite population. Omer, the fourth king of this people, whom

we judge to have lived cotemporary with Abraham, was driven by a revolution to this locality, where he afterwards dwelt, and we find no reason, from the record of Ether, for believing that this portion of the continent was ever afterwards deserted during this people's national existence, except perhaps for short periods—once when an overwhelming pestilence destroyed the greater portion of the people, and again when a sanguinary war made much of the land desolate. With regard to king Omer's flight to those parts, the sacred historian relates, that being warned of the Lord in a dream of the intention of the conspirators to assassinate him, he fled from his kingdom, and after a journey of many days he "came over by the place where the Nephites were destroyed and from thence eastward, and came to a place which was called Ablom, by the sea shore." The place where this skeleton was discovered was *eastward* of the hill Cumorah, and was by the sea shore. True, Fall River lies somewhat south of the hill Cumorah, but in as scanty a history as that given of the Jaredites we do not find, nor can we expect, minute details, as to the exact location of places; but, supposing that the ancient Ablom was some few miles north of the modern Fall River, the people doubtless in a generation or two extended along the coast, and its occupancy would be but the matter of a few years at the utmost. As an evidence that this region continued to be inhabited by the descendants of Jared, we note that many of the wars between the rival factions which divided this people appear to have been conducted in this region. This is particularly noticeable in the description given of the last war which ended in the utter destruction of the nation. Ether states (Book of Mormon, page 546) that the last King Coriantumr was pursued by the rebel Shiz "eastward, even to the borders of the sea shore," and in a later campaign he "fled to the waters of Ripliancum, which, by interpretation, is large, or to exceed all," where a battle was fought in which Coriantumr was victorious. Shiz, his foe, fled *southward*, and pitched his tents in a place which was called Ogath, whilst the victo-

rious army pitched its tents "by the hill Ramah," the Jaredite name for Cumorah. Here were fought the last series of battles which left Coriantumr alone of all his people, a denizen of this earth. From the above statements we must necessarily come to the conclusion that the waters called Ripliancum were either the Atlantic Ocean or Lake Ontario, with the probabilities in favor of the latter conclusion, as when the coasts of the ocean are intended, they are generally spoken of as the sea shore.

Now, it must be remembered that whilst the Jaredites inhabited this region for some fourteen hundred years, it was not occupied by the Nephites for four hundred. The great migration of that people northward took place in the last half century before the Christian era. It is recorded that at that time (the 46th year of the Judges over the Nephites) an exceeding great many "left the land of Zarahemla, and went forth into the land northward to inherit the land." After traveling to an "exceeding great distance they came to large bodies of water and many rivers," and from thence they spread forth into all parts of the land. A little further on, in the record, it is stated that they multiplied and spread so greatly that they began to cover the whole land "from the sea south to the sea north" and "from the sea west to the sea east." From that time it appears that the country bordering on the great lakes and the Atlantic Ocean became one of their permanent abiding places, though after the destructions attending the convulsions that occurred at the death of the Redeemer, we judge that the northern portions of the land were for a considerable time but very thinly inhabited; but, as Mormon relates, as with the Jaredites so with the Nephites this portion of the land ultimately became the scene of the death struggles of the nation.

In the chronicles of the wars between the Nephites and Lamanites, handed down to us in the Book of Mormon, frequent mention is made of the Nephite warriors wearing breastplates and other defensive armor. The soldiers of the armies of Moroni, in the days that the Judges, ruled over

the people of Nephi (say 70 to 80 years B. C.) were protected by "breastplates, and with arm shields" and "also shields to defend their heads" and were dressed in very thick clothing," whilst the Lamanites at that period fought almost entirely naked, their weapons being swords, simetars, arrows and slings. Yet we are told that in one battle, fought near the river Sidon (the Magdalena of to-day) so desperate were the efforts of the Lamanites, that they cut through and pierced the defensive armor of the Nephites, inflicting upon them terrible wounds notwithstanding the protection offered by their shields and breastplates. Some few years later, however, the Lamanites copied the example of their enemies and came up to battle as the historian records "with shields and with breastplates; and they had also prepared themselves with garments of skins; yea, very thick garments to cover their nakedness."

The material of which the armor and arrow heads were composed afford us no clue to the deceased's nationality, as both Jaredites and Nephites worked in brass. With regard to the first named people it is recorded (page 537) "and they did work all manner of ore, and they did make gold, and silver, and iron and brass and all manner of metals. \* \* And they did make all manner of weapons of war; and they did work all manner of work of exceeding curious workmanship. Of the Nephites it is said in the book of Jarom (p. 137) "And we multiplied exceedingly and spread upon the face of the land, and became exceeding rich in gold and silver, and in precious things, \* \* and also in iron and copper, and brass and steel, making all manner of tools of every kind to till the ground and weapons of war; yea, the sharp pointed arrow and the quiver, and the dart and the javelin."

There is a striking similarity in the description given by Jarom of the Nephite arrow heads, and those found with the armored skeleton. Jarom states that his people made arrows of brass and particularly refers to the fact that they were "sharp pointed." In the account of those found at Fall River it is said "the arrows were of

brass, thin, flat and triangular in shape," a most admirable mode of obtaining sharp pointed missiles.

There is one statement made regarding the burial of this warrior that militates somewhat against his Nephite nationality, it is that he was interred in a sitting posture. We think this is exceedingly un-Israelitish, and without the Nephites, had departed far from the traditions of their progenitors, they were not likely to bury in this manner. There is a pos-

sibility that he was a Lamanite, for that people appear to have departed from the ways of their fathers in almost every particular. There is also a chance that he was a Lamanite of an era later than the Book of Mormon carries us, but of this we have very grave doubts.

Considering how much more lengthily the Jaredites occupied this region, than any other civilized people, we incline to the opinion that the armored warrior belonged to that people.

## COMPETITION.

BY ELDER CHARLES W. NIBLEY.

"The race of life," says an eminent writer, "has become so intense, that mankind tread on each others heels, and woe be unto him, who stops to lace his shoe."

There is probably nothing that gives so much excitement to the affairs of society, as the spirit of competition, which enters into every part of our institutions, and permeates the whole of the social and political structure.

All competition is, sooner or later, productive of division, and in so far as it takes us from a unity of action and purpose, tends to destruction, for the truth is, that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," and what is true, in this sense, as regards a family, will apply with equal force to a community of any size.

It is easy to establish the fact that in religion, mankind has departed from, and perverted, the truth; because the essential element of the Gospel is unity. There is a great depth of meaning that is seldom comprehended, in the words of our Savior, when he prayed, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their words; that they all may be one." (John xvii, 20-21.)

In a business sense also the world has departed from the truth, and no agent has been more powerful in bringing about a business apostacy than this spirit of competition, for division and death have ever followed in its train.

Examine for a momentsome of the results it produces. There are engaged in the same business, say two men. They mark their wares and offer them to the public. Soon one becomes jealous of the other and determines he will undersell his competitor. So he marks his goods at a lower figure. This kind of thing is carried on until there remains scarcely any profit in the business whatever. What next? The wages of their workmen must be reduced; and so from time to time is this continued, until it brings ruin alike to master and men. From the lowest to the highest grades of society, this fierce, antagonistic competition is painfully manifest; even the boot-blacks, news boys and apple venders on the streets are filled with it and every business is to-day, more or less, seriously affected by it. Why this state of affairs? Because of apostacy from the truth—business truth it may be called, but nevertheless the truth.

If we look at political parties we see such a refuge of lies, such knavery, such a seething, moral-polluted mass that our senses sicken at the sight. This arch-enemy to the welfare of society—competition—has here been most actively, desperately and cunningly at work.

Pass now to nations and the same spirit in its aggravated forms, is everywhere apparent. England buys a Cyprus; assumes the protectorate over Asia Minor; institutes railroad schemes in India, Canada and Austra-