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American Antiquities: Corroborative of the Book of Mormon

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Abstract: This 47-part series provides evidence to confirm the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. It describes the contents of the Book of Mormon and archaeological findings and discoveries, such as ancient cities, temples, altars, tools, and wells. Each part contains several excerpts from other publications that support the Book of Mormon.

ENGLAND.—SOUTHAMPTON PASTORATE.

St. Mary's Cottage, Southampton,
March 18, 1859.

President Calkin.

Dear Brother,—I am happy to be able to report favourably to you respecting the work of the Lord in this Pastorate.

Unity, faith, and good works among the Saints are on the increase. The Saints are getting a better understanding of the principle of gathering and of the way by which their deliverance is to be brought about, and they feel determined henceforth to do all they can to help themselves. Baptisms are not of very frequent occurrence, but our meetings are generally well attended by strangers; and it is to be presumed that some of the

seed which is now being sown will fall on good ground and bring forth fruit.

Presidents Hanham, Astle, and Reed, with the Travelling Elders, are one with me, and they are labouring diligently and successfully in their respective fields of labour.

As for myself, I feel desirous to honour my calling, and by the help of the Lord I am determined to do all I can to help to roll on the work of God.

Elder Keaton is still travelling in the Pastorate, and has always been ready render me any assistance that I have required.

Praying that you may ever enjoy much of the Holy Spirit, I remain yours faithfully,

WILLIAM MOSS.

AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES,

CORROBORATIVE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

(Continued from page 227.)

(From the *New York Daily Times*, March 21, 1855.)

"The antiquities of America extend from the eastern shores of Maine and Massachusetts to the Pacific, and from the great lakes and British dominions to Peru and La Plata, in South America; in fact, throughout the extent of both continents. Immense forests grow over the ruins of large cities, and the gigantic size of the trees, with indications that other generations of trees sprung up and grew before them, prove that the ruins were in existence before the Christian era. In every portion of the United States, interesting ruins have been discovered. In the State of New York have been found sculptured figures of 100 animals of different species, executed in a style far superior to anything exhibited by any of the existing tribes of Indians. The State of Ohio abounds in ruins of towers and fortifications, with extensive mounds and pyramids. At Marietta, in this State, beautiful pottery, silver and copper ornaments, and pearls of great beauty and lustre have been dug up from the earth. In the caves of Tennessee and Kentucky, mummies have been found in a high state of preservation, clothed with cloths and skins of various texture, inlaid with feathers. Like discoveries have been made at Carrollton. Near Milwaukee, in the State of Wisconsin, ruins

of huge fortifications appear. Similar ruins appear in the State of Missouri. On the south side of the Missouri River, in the western portion of this State, is an inclosure of some 500 acres, which includes the ruin of a building (no doubt ancient tower,) with walls 150 feet high, and 80 feet wide at the base, attached to which are a redoubt and a citadel, with work much resembling the structure of a tower in Europe. But it is in the south of Mexico that magnificent and beautiful ruins present themselves in great abundance. The most extensive ruins are to be found at Uxmal and Palenque, in the south-east of Mexico. At Uxmal are immense pyramids coated with stone, and quadrangular stone edifices and terraces. The highest of these pyramids is 130 feet, and on the summit it supports a temple; on one of the façades of the temple are four human figures, cut in stone with great exactness and elegance. The hands are crossed upon the breast; the head is covered in something like a helmet; about the neck is a garment of the skin of an alligator; and over each body is a figure of death's head and bones. At Palenque are immense ruins, a city of great extent, with the remains of a royal palace. One temple, that of Copan, was 520 feet by 650, and supposed to have been as large as St. Peter's at Rome. Another temple of great dimensions is here,

having an entrance by a portico 100 feet long and 10 feet broad: it stands on an elevation of 60 feet. The pillars of the portico are adorned with hieroglyphics and other devices. Different objects of worship have been found—representations of the gods who were worshipped in this country. These temples, with 14 large buildings and many other objects of curiosity, stand here as monuments of ancient greatness, to remind us of the remote origin of a mighty empire. This city has been described as the Thebes of America, and travellers have supposed that it must have been some 60 miles in circumference, and contained a population of 3,000,000 souls. Centuries must have elapsed and dynasties succeeded each other before such orders of architecture were introduced, and a length of time must have passed before an empire would become sufficiently powerful to erect such a temple and possess a city of such vast extent. In looking back to the past, we feel interested in the imagination that this people was once in the noonday of glory, enjoying all the fruits and luxuries of an advanced civilization. In this country is exhibited the largest pyramid in the world—that of Cholula, near Puebla. It covers 44 acres and is about 200 feet high. On its summit was a temple, and in the interior has been discovered a vault, roofed with beams of wood, containing skeletons and idols. Several smaller pyramids surround this large one. It appears to have been formed by cutting a hill into an artificial shape. Its dimensions are immense, being nearly three miles in circumference and about 400 feet high. It is divided into terraces and slopes, covered with platforms, stages, and bastions, elevated one above the other, and all formed with large stones skilfully cut and joined without any cement. In some respects the style of architecture resembles the Gothic, being massive and durable; in other respects it resembles the Egyptian; yet the general construction, manner, and style of architecture is different from anything hitherto described in the world. As in Egypt, hieroglyphics on stone denote remarkable events which no man has yet been able to decipher. Dark shades rest on the antiquities of America, and few rays of light enliven the gloom. We have ancient history to inform us of the events of Egypt—how that empire was founded, and how it prospered and fell. We have the same on record of Babylon and Nineveh, of Greece, and Rome, and Carthage. But not the least information have we relative to those who erected these cities—what people, and from whence they came; not a ray of light to dispel the dark gloom which seems to rest on the early history of America. Architec-

ture, sculpture, painting, and all the arts that adorn civilized life have flourished in this country, at a period far remote. There is evidence sufficient to prove that those cities were in ruins at least 1,600 or 1,800 years ago. In Palenque is the remains of an altar, over which grows an immense cedar, whose powerful roots enshrine it. The whole city is overgrown with mahogany and cedar trees of enormous size. The concentric circle of some of these trees—the well-known cycles for a year—have been counted, which showed they were more than 800 years old; and there were indications of another generation of trees having sprung up before them. How few reflect on the fact that America is an old dominion—the seat of an ancient, mighty empire. These facts are opening themselves every day to the eye of an astonished world, and it is hoped that the spirit of inquiry, which seems at present to animate all classes of learned men, may throw more light on the early history of this remarkable region."

(From the *San Francisco Herald*.)

"Lieutenant Beale states that on his first trip across the continent he discovered in the midst of the wilderness north of the Gila what appeared to be a strong fort, the walls of great thickness, built of stone. He traversed it, and found it contained 42 rooms. In the vicinity, numerous balls of hard clay, from the size of a bullet to that of a grape shot, were met with. What was singular about them was the fact that frequently ten or twenty were stuck together like a number of bullets run out of half-a-dozen connecting moulds, or like a whole baking of rolls. It is difficult to say what these were intended for. They were so hard, however, that the smaller ones could be discharged from a gun. And now it remains for the antiquary to explore this most interesting region in the very heart of our country, and to say who were the people that inhabited it. They may have been the ancestors of the Aztecs whom Cortes found in Mexico, for they were known to have come from the north. Tradition relates that they sailed out from their northern homes directed by their prophets not to cease their march till they came across an eagle sitting upon a cactus with a serpent in its claws. This they found where the city of Mexico now stands, and there they established their dominion. This legend is still preserved in the device upon the Mexican dollar. Some remnants of the Aztecs still remained within a few years past at the ruined city of Grand Quivera, or Pecos, in the wilderness of New Mexico. Here, in deep caverns, they kept alive, with

reverential care, the sacred fire, which was always to burn until the return of Montezuma. It only went out about ten years ago, when the last Indian of the tribe expired. It may be that the Pimos, south of the Gila, are an offshoot of the great Aztec nation, left behind in their march to the south. The Pimos, it is known, are far

superior to the Indians of Mexico. They raise fine cotton, and from it manufacture all their clothing. Would that some Stevens or Layard would arise to explore the wonders that lie concealed within this great basin, and bring to light the history of the strange people that once inhabited it!"

(To be continued.)

LINES ON THE BIBLE, &c.

Inscribed on Sacred Scripture's page,
'Mongst things which most true hearts engage,
Are God's eternal love and laws
And virtue's triumphs o'er her foes,—
The record how in heaven above
Was framed a wondrous scheme of love,
That spirits born to God on high
Might have a time wherein to try
Their fealty to their Sovereign Lord,
In living by his holy word;
How earth was framed with wondrous skill,
Obedient to its Founder's will,
And spirits in their times came forth
To prove their own intrinsic worth,—
That, clothed in flesh, might learn to be
Acquainted with humanity,—
Through tasting sin's effects, might prize
The blessing which in virtue lies,
And, feeling evil, learn and know
That good must from obedience flow,—
By opposites appreciate
And learn to conquer and create,
For ever cherish truth, and be
As Gods to all eternity.

The Bible in its varied store
Of words and acts in days of yore,
Reveals the wisdom, power, and love
Of him who lives and reigns above;
How mercy in his dealings shone,
When man could not for sin atone;
How opened up a way to rest
For all with sin and grief opprest;
How man rebelled and God forbore,
Till justice would no mercy more;
How vengeance fell with kind intent
To save whoever should repent;
How love and mercy followed still
When man repenting turned his will;
How peace and true salvation flowed
To all who in obedience bowed;
How, in the hour when faith was tried,
The willing heart was satisfied;
How faith and works were ever owned,
And righteousness with glory crowned;
How treasure given sure returned
In blessings or in curses earned;
How heavy retribution fell,
When men were fully ripe for hell;
How Prophets gladly told the plan
Of God's eternal love to man,
Or, filled with pure celestial fire,
Poured forth on sin Jehovah's ire;
How, when their pilgrimage was o'er,
They suffered for the truths they bore,
Endured the tortures planned in hell,
Then left the earth with Gods to dwell.

And Mormon's record, pure and plain,
Though brief, reveals a mighty chain

Sheffield.

Of wondrous acts and wisdom pure—
Of virtue's blessings ever sure;
Of God eternally the same
To all who feared his holy name,—
A sure defence—a mighty tower
To all who trusted in his power;
How angels with the pure conversed,
And principles of life rehearsed;
How sin, and strife, and deadly war
Spread woe and desolation far;
Of Israel scattered, lost, and found;
Of their return, with glory crowned,
And how their Saviour should restore
All things and reign for evermore.

And Enoch's book to mortals brings
A knowledge of eternal things;
The mystery of redemption breaks;
Of wondrous things in plainness speaks;
In glowing language true portrays
The changing scenes of future days,
Down to the time when earth shall be
Redeemed and saved eternally.

And Abraham's book of precious things
A flood of light and glory brings;
Makes known to man how worlds on high
Trace out their orbits through the sky;
How order through creation reigns,
And less or greater still obtains;
How times and seasons roll away
Until submerged in endless day;
How endless increase shall be given
To all who keep the laws of heaven,
Till as the stars or ocean's sand
Their countless sons and daughters stand.

The Book of Covenants Divine,
Like a rich, exhaustless mine,
Abounds with gems of purest light
To show the path from error's night;
And as its pages light the way
To cheer and bless the "sons of day,"
God's wisdom, power, and love disclose
In duties, principles, and laws:
As steps which lead from earth to heaven,
Its precepts are to mortals given—
The echoes of Jehovah's voice,
Brought by the Prophet of his choice,
With promises which cannot fail
For all who *rightly* would prevail.

And other Scriptures pure and true
Are and shall be brought to view,
And every link of knowledge brought
To perfect those divinely taught:
Yea, every blessing ever given
To bless the sons of God in heaven
On those that overcome shall be
Conferred to all eternity.

WILLIAM CLEGG.