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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.

written agreement respecting the training of children has been entered into before marriage, and exhibited to the Governor of the city or province, this must be observed; if no such agreement has been executed, the father may have the child educated according to the creed he professes. Illegitimate children receiving support from public funds shall be educated in the Lutheran doctrine, although the parents may belong to other permitted confessions. The prescribed fees for special church services cannot be claimed from the adherents of other authorized communities, unless the service has been requested by them. With the limitations and exceptions prescribed by the constitution or by this statute, no distinction shall be made in the rights and duties of Swedish citizens because of divergencies in Christian faith. Several sections are devoted to regulations as to converts from the Evangelical Lutheran doctrine, who are not to be received into other communities without formal notice having been given; and they must be above eighteen years of age. The adherents of other confessions may not participate in the treatment or decision of questions affecting the church or public education. If a person who gives notice of leaving the Swedish Church holds any public office, he shall be dismissed from the same, unless the office be of such a character that he might be appointed to it without respect to creed, and the King, or

the authority appointing to such office, considers it reasonable to continue him in the same. No change is made in the laws concerning the adherents of the Mosaic faith. The fines are to be divided between the accuser and the poor. The proposed statute to alter existing laws affecting those "who embrace or spread erroneous doctrines" proposes that any one who publicly promulgates, or, to the seducing of others, otherwise spreads doctrines contrary to the Lutheran Evangelical faith, shall be punished by fine varying from 50 to 300 rix-dollars, or by imprisonment from two months to a year; but no restriction is made hereby with respect to the liberty in religious exercises and instruction granted to the adherents of other confessions than the Lutheran. If any one not a Swedish citizen has been punished under this statute, he shall not be allowed, at the expiration of the punishment, to continue in the kingdom. A translation of the Norwegian law of 1845 is also given, and in its main features it is similar to the proposed law for Sweden. Dissenters are exempted from payments to the Established Church and its officers; but tithes and the contributions or taxes attached to the property in their possession must be paid. Dissenters, however, have to pay rates for the poor, schools, or other public institutions, and to observe the enactments concerning the Sabbath and the festivals of the Established Church.

## AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES,

### CORROBORATIVE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

(Continued from page 626.)

(From Chambers's "Papers for the People," Number on *Ruined Cities of Central America*,"\* published in 1850.)

"There is more of melancholy in the interest attached to an inquiry into the vestiges of the past throughout America than in that connected with similar researches throughout the civilized portions of the Old World. In the latter we start from a highly-developed state of civilization to seek for the slender source whence the mighty stream has sprung; and when we have found this, we turn round with a feeling of delight and wonder to mark the blessings which it has spread as it extended. Even in cases—as, for instance, that of Etruria, which we have treated in a former number—where a great nation and a mighty civilization have ceased to occupy a place in

the world, we have nevertheless the assurance that this civilization laid the germ of another which succeeded it; and that, though absorbed and superseded, it has not been fruitless or utterly lost. In America the case is different. The civilization which now flourishes in many portions of that extensive continent is in no manner connected with their past history or their ancient inhabitants. It has, on the contrary, proved the most inveterate foe of both, with contemptuous superiority leaving the first utterly unheeded, while with relentless cupidity it has persecuted the latter almost to extermination; and it is not until within a comparatively very recent period that the intruders on the soil of the New World have stopped to consider whether the history of the despised and persecuted red man might

\*"Central America," throughout this extract, is used, as the author says, "as a political, not as a geographical designation."



not be worthy of some attention. That this is the case is now generally admitted; and the conclusions towards which almost all the inquiries into the early history and past civilization of the red race of America seem to tend are indeed of the utmost interest, as they lead to a strong presumption that the nations and tribes inhabiting these regions at the period of the arrival of the Spaniards were not people emerging from a state of barbarism and slowly working their way up in the social scale, but that, on the contrary, they were descendants of a more civilized race sinking gradually from the high position they had once maintained, while some of them, having outsped the others in their downward career, had already sunk into the condition of savages. These opinions have indeed but slowly gained ground, and are not as yet by any means generally entertained. So accustomed have historians hitherto been to see a movement from barbarism upwards, that when the European foot first stumbled over the vestiges of an ancient and extinct civilization in the wilds of America, speculative intellects at once set to work to find out what could have been the race that preceded the red men in the occupation of these countries, and which had probably been exterminated by them. When the Spaniards, in 1517, after twenty-five years' occupation of the West India islands—their first discoveries in the New World—landed upon the coasts of Central America, they were struck with amazement at the contrast between the state of the countries which now opened to their view and those with which they had previously become acquainted in these regions. Instead of naked and timid savages gathered together in tribes independent of and often hostile to each other, struggling for subsistence among the difficulties of uncultivated nature, and unacquainted with the simplest arts of civilized life, they here beheld populous nations living under the dominion of powerful monarchs, subject to the rule of systematic governments and established laws, skilled in arts and manufactures, enjoying all the benefits of organized society, and dwelling in cities which seemed to the dazzled eyes of the newcomers to rival in magnificence those of the Old World. The city of Mexico, situated in an extensive plain, and built partly on the banks of a large lake, and partly on several small islands on its bosom, was, at the time of the Spanish invasion, approached by artificial roads, thirty feet in width, and

extending from two to three miles in length. The temples dedicated to the religious worship of the people, the palaces of the monarch, and the dwellings of persons of distinction were, according to the description of the invaders, of gigantic dimensions and magnificent structure, while the habitations of the lower orders were of the humblest character, being merely huts resembling those of the Indians of the rudest tribes. The building assigned to Cortez and his companions, when they visited as friends the monarch whose downfall they were plotting, was a house built by the father of Montezuma, spacious enough to accommodate all the Spaniards and their Indian allies. It consisted, according to the description of the former, of apartments ranged round extensive courtyards, the whole being enclosed by a stone wall with towers, which served for defence as well as ornament. The most striking architectural features in the city of Mexico were the temples; and foremost among these was the great Teocalli—that is, House of God, situated in the principal square, and one of the first destroyed by the Spaniards when they became masters of the city. This temple, which was dedicated to Tezcatlopa, the god first in rank after Teoth, the Supreme Being, and to Meritli, the god of war, consisted of a truncated pyramid formed by five terraces, ascended by broad flights of steps. The sides of the pyramid faced the four cardinal points; its base was 318 feet long, and its perpendicular height 121 feet. It was stated by the Mexicans themselves to have been built on the model of great pyramids of a similar nature, which were spread over the face of the country, and which the traditions of the people ascribed to the Toltecs, the nation from which they had received their civilization. On the truncated top of the pyramid were placed the sacrificial stone and the statues of the gods, among which those of the sun and moon were of colossal dimensions, and covered with plates of gold. Around the main building was a wall of hewn stone, ornamented with knots of serpents in bas-relief. Within the precincts of the wall, or immediately adjoining it, were the dwellings of the priests. Edifices of a similar character were represented as existing throughout Mexico and the adjoining countries; and the capital itself was said to contain no less than eight temples almost equal in size to that just described, besides two thousand of inferior dimensions.

(To be continued.)

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ANTEDILUVIAN AXES.—“Captain Ashe asserts that iron axes were used in the Ohio country, in America, LONG BEFORE THE FLOOD.”—*Ashe's "America."*