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Excavations in Mexico City

Author(s): Charles E. Dibble

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Abstract: A series of brief comments in which the author presents archaeological findings, architectural notes, and myths and legends that deal indirectly with the Book of Mormon. Dibble discusses the wheel, ancient irrigation methods, metals, Mexican and Mayan codices, Quetzalcoatl, ancient buildings, and numerous other related items. The thirteenth part covers archaeological work in Mexico City.

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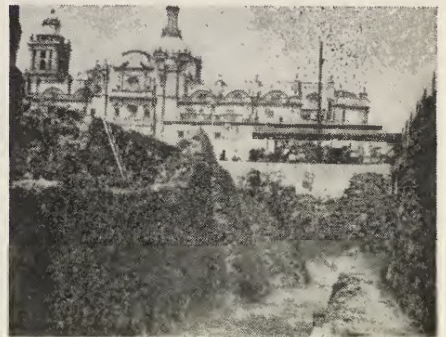
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EXCAVATIONS IN MEXICO CITY

By Charles E. Dibble
 Roosevelt Fellow,
 Institute of International Education

THE Aztec capital, Tenochtitlan (present day Mexico City), was situated on an island in Lake Texcoco. At the time of the Conquest the inhabitants of this island city communicated with the mainland in canoes or by means of three causeways.

As the native Indians were converted to Christianity, their stone idols were tumbled from their lofty pyramids; their temples were razed and burned. To erase from view forever the symbols of their cult, the images of their gods were defaced, thrown into the lake or buried, and then, as though to seal them for all time, colonial buildings were erected over the ruins.



THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE TEMPLE HUITZILPOCHTLI (AZTEC WAR GOD). IN THE BACKGROUND IS A COLONIAL BUILDING ON THE DEBRIS OF AZTEC PALACES AND TEMPLES.

Excavations to erect new buildings around the Central Plaza of Mexico City prove to be veritable archeological expeditions. Monoliths, buried over four centuries ago, reappear; some of them are badly marred, yet still others preserve remains of the original colors. Recently a stone monument of the goddess Coatlicue (serpent goddess) was recovered. Still more recently a representation of the Feathered Serpent (Quetzalcoatl) was found in the excavated debris. The majority of these remains once decorated the main ceremonial center of Tenochtitlan.

As foundations for new buildings are made, additional remains are certain to appear as evidence of the might and splendor of Tenochtitlan.