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## Old America - Ancient Peru

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**Abstract:** Series of articles dealing with archaeological, anthropological, geographical, societal, religious, and historical aspects of ancient America and their connections to the Book of Mormon, which is the key to understanding “old American” studies.

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## Old America.

BY G. M. O.

### ANCIENT PERU.

THE Peruvian Empire included the greater part of Western South America, north and south of the equator, "and, as a nation, they were (says Brownell) when discovered by Europeans, perfectly unique. Such refinements in government, such unity of purpose and such perfect system as were observable in all their customs and usages, have never been even attempted, much less accomplished, by any other community throughout the globe." Rumors of this wonderful country excited the Spanish marauders, and their thirst for gold led to many expeditions in search of the land where gold was more abundant than iron among themselves. Balboa discovered the Pacific while searching for Peru, A. D. 1511. He was led across the isthmus by an Indian chief who told him of that ocean, beyond which there was a country where all the common utensils were made of the precious metal. At the bay of Panama he heard more of this mysterious land of riches. He endeavored to find it, but did not go far enough down the coast. In his company of adventurers at this time was Francisco Pizarro. By intrigue Balboa lost his life and his murderer, Pedrarias, founded the city of Panama, in 1519. During the year 1524 an expedition was fitted out in this new city to go in search of the golden country. The leaders of the enterprise were Pizarro, who could neither read nor write, Almagro, a reckless soldier of fortune, and de Luque, the Spanish vicar of Panama. They formed an alliance to discover and rob Peru. The vicar furnished most, if not all the funds; the others were to do the work. Pizarro being commander in chief, sailed down the coast exploring, burning, and robbing villages, until he reached the fourth degree of north latitude, when lack of provisions and needed repairs to his frail vessels compelled his return. The governor, Pedrarias, becoming interested in the affair, a second voyage was made. One of the vessels of this expedition went half a degree south of the equator and encountered a vessel "like a European caravel," in fact a Peruvian "balsa," loaded with merchandise, vases, mirrors of burnished silver, and woolen and cotton fabrics, curiously woven. But it became necessary again to send back to Panama for supplies and repairs. Pizarro was in the meantime left on an island near Tumbuz. Here he was doomed to wait for seven months, and was finally obliged to visit Spain to get the aid necessary to carry out his designs; and it was not until 1531 that the destruction of the Peruvian empire commenced.

The history of this conquest, and the appalling scenes of rapine and blood, the wholesale robbery and ruin wrought by the heartless horde of adventures, is generally known. Pizarro, landing at Tumbuz, marched into the country, sending word to the Inca that he came to aid him in suppressing the civil war, that had but lately threatened the empire. The great Inca, Huayna Capac, the conqueror of Quito, had divided his empire between his two sons Huascar and Atahuallpa, but the brothers could not agree. Huascar had been defeated, thrown into prison and finally killed. Pizarro, by treachery most atrocious, contrived to seize Atahuallpa, at a city called Caxamalca, murdering over ten thousand of the principal Peruvian nobles and, at the same time, people who had visited his camp, unarmed and friendly. This proceeding threw the whole

empire into confusion, and made the conquest easy. The Inca was required to fill a room with gold as the price of his ransom. It was taken by the Spaniards, their promises were broken and the Inca Atahuallpa was cruelly put to death. The country subjugated, it was not long before the great empire of Peru was reduced to the same condition and under the same circumstances as Mexico had been a few years before.

The Peruvians were highly skilled in agriculture and in some kinds of manufactures. It was only by their proficient system of industry, surpassing all other nations in that respect, that their wealth was acquired and their great public works accomplished. Europeans learned from them the use of the fertilizer called guano, and their aqueducts and canals for irrigation astonished the conquerors. Their skill in stone cutting, as seen and examined by modern builders, in what is left of their temples, aqueducts, roads, and other great edifices, calls forth only admiration from the beholder. In the arts of spinning, weaving and dyeing they had great proficiency. Their cotton was fine, and of woolen cloth they had four varieties made of the wool of the vicuna or llama. Considerable taste and skill were displayed in the designs and ornaments interwoven in their cloth. "They possessed the secret of fixing the dye of all colors, flesh color, yellow, gray, blue, green, black, etc., so firmly in the thread, or in the cloth already woven, that they never faded during the lapse of ages; even when exposed to the air or buried (in tombs) under ground. Only the cotton became slightly discolored, while the woolen fabrics preserved their primitive lustre. It is a circumstance worth remarking that chemical analyses made of pieces of cloth of all the different dyes prove that the Peruvians extracted all their colors from the vegetable and none from the mineral kingdom. In fact the natives of the Peruvian mountains now use plants unknown to Europeans producing from them bright and lasting colors." (Von Tschudi, Travels in Peru). Dr. Wood (Wandering Sketches, p. 125-6) also gives various descriptions of beautiful woven cloth found by him while excavating among the ruins of an ancient Peruvian temple.

They had great skill in the art of working metals, especially gold and silver. They had copper, tin, lead, quicksilver, and iron. "Iron mines were worked on the shores of Lake Titicaca, Peru, long before the discovery" (Baldwin's Pre-historic Nations). Iron ore was and still is abundant in that country. The gold and silversmiths had attained great proficiency in melting, refining and casting in moulds of clay the precious metals. Most of the gold and silver work of these artists at the time of the conquest was melted by the Spanish for coinage. One of the old writers, describing a palace, says, "They had an artificial garden, the soil of which was made of small pieces of fine gold, and this was artificially sown with different kinds of maize, which were of gold, their stems, leaves, and ears. Besides this they had more than twenty sheep (llamas) with their lambs, attended by shepherds, all made of gold." Gomara places this garden on "an island near Punu." Other early writers mention similar gardens. In a description of golden articles sent by Pizarro to Spain in 1534, there are mentioned "four llamas, ten statues of women of full size, and a cistern of gold so curious that it incited the wonder of all" (Baldwin). The old chroniclers mention nothing more frequently than the vast quantities of gold in Peru. It being more common than any other metal, the palaces and temples were covered with it. It was wrought into very beautiful designs for temple and household furniture and utensils, and imitations of almost every object found in nature. During the first twenty-five years of the conquest, the Spaniards sent to Spain from Peru \$800,000,000 worth of gold, all of which had been taken from

the Peruvians as "booty." The most perfectly manufactured articles of pottery have been found in tombs, some of them of very earthen clay. Rivero says "At this day there exist in many houses, pitchers, large jars, and earthen pots of this manufacture, which are preferred for their solidity to those manufactured by our own potters."

The Peruvians were inferior to the Central American nations in the arts of sculpture and ornamentation. Science was not very highly developed, but in the construction of their great roads and aqueducts their superior engineering skill displays itself. Their knowledge of botany is shown by the art of preparing colors and the many useful medicines in use. In astronomy they were behind the Central Americans; however, they had an accurate measure of the solar year, which they divided into twelve months, and they used mechanical contrivances with success to fix the times of the solstices and equinoxes. The art of writing in alphabetical characters, it appears was unknown to the Peruvians in the time of the Incas.

(To be Continued.)

## SUNDAY SCHOOL MATTERS.

WE have received from Elder George Goddard, Assistant General Superintendent of the Territorial Sunday School Union, in the form of a communication, the following, which will be doubtless read with interest by all who are in any way associated with the Sunday School cause:

"At our last two monthly meetings of superintendents and teachers we have recommended the appointment of a committee from the teachers of each Sunday School to canvass through their respective Wards with the view of increasing the number of subscribers to your invaluable periodical, and we also strongly urged upon each superintendent the benefits that would result to the children of their Sabbath Schools if they would make a more liberal use of it in their classes.

"In the 13th Ward Sunday School we called for nine volunteers, one for each block of the Ward, which was cheerfully responded to by both male and female teachers. Last Sunday several reported, and the result was very satisfactory, being an increase of from three to five on each block, making in the aggregate between thirty and fifty new subscribers from the 13th Ward. If the same plan were adopted in each school, and the result no more favorable than with us, it would add nearly a thousand new subscribers to your Salt Lake City list alone; and having equal confidence in the country superintendents (based on past experience) in their willingness to carry out our suggestions, we look for great results from a thorough canvass throughout the Territory, especially if Bishop Hunter's axiom is carried out, 'Many hands make light work;' in this way the yoke fits easy and the burden is light.

"We would respectfully suggest that the Questions on the Bible and Book of Mormon be reduced to one half their present number in each issue, to afford the children an opportunity of committing them more thoroughly to memory than they possibly can, as now published, a whole column being no easy task to accomplish.

"Will you please make known the name of Elder Levi W. Richards as the present secretary of the Desert Sunday School Union, for the benefit of the county superintendents, to whom their reports should hereafter be addressed?"

"We would not omit making honorable mention of his predecessor, Elder John B. Maiben, the faithful and devoted scribe of the Sunday School Union from its first organization until

within a few months past when he was called and ordained a Bishop, to labor in Manti, Saguone Co. May his future labors shed as bright a lustre as a servant of God as his past services have won for him!"

ELDER R. Ballantyne, Superintendent of Sunday Schools of Weber County, writes that a more universal interest is now being taken in Sunday Schools in that County. In North Ogden there are two Sunday Schools, in each of them a committee which are attended by nearly every school child of the district under the age of twenty years. In Ogden City, in order to awaken an interest and procure a better attendance at the Sunday Schools, committees have been appointed in some of the Wards, to visit the parents and impress upon them the necessity of sending their children regularly every Sabbath morning, and so far as the labors of the committee have extended, the results have been most gratifying. Like committees are about to be formed in the other Wards. Brother Ballantyne is devoted to the cause of Sunday Schools, and is actively engaged in bringing those of Weber County up to his conception of what they ought to be. His efforts in behalf of the INSTRUCTOR, as also those of other Superintendents from whom we have heard, are duly appreciated.

BY a letter from Thos. E. Daniels, Superintendent of the Payson Sunday School, we learn that a greater interest is being taken in Sunday School matters in that place than ever before, there being an average attendance of four hundred and fifty; which we would consider very good for so small a town as Payson is.

## ENIGMA.

BY ROLLO.

I AM composed of 16 letters:

My 10, 7, 16, 5 is a female's name;

My 6, 11, 16, 5 is to decrease;

My 11, 9, 5 is a beverage;

My 2, 15, 6, 5, 9 is a household article;

My 16, 3, 2 is an adverb;

My 15, 4, 5 is a number;

My whole is the name of a celebrated general.

THE answer to the Enigma published in No. 22 is CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS. The following have sent correct solutions: E. Ballinger, Pleasant Grove; J. H. Watkins, Ogden; M. C. Morris, Woods Cross; John Walton, Isabella Walton, Mill Creek; J. G. Barnes, Kaysville; Chas. Lindholm, Tooele; also E. H. Brooks, Nellie T. Cooper, Geo. S. Taylor, Wm. T. Couper, George Margetts and Wm. Jenkins, Salt Lake City.

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