



Type: Magazine Article

The Book of Mormon (Continued) (3)

Author(s): Daniel Tyler

Source: *Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 12, No. 16 (15 August 1877), pp. 182–183

Published by: George Q. Cannon & Sons

middle ages, and has often decorated the trophies in military fetes.

Our ancestors attributed to the tooth of the Narwhal, which they called the tooth of the Unicorn, marvelous medicinal virtues. They considered it an infallible antidote to all poisonous substances; they were persuaded that it counteracted all the hurtful properties of venomous substances. Charles IX., dreading lest he should be poisoned, was very careful to put into his cup of wine a piece of the Sea Unicorn's tooth. Ambroise Pare was the first who dared to lift up his voice against these errors.

Very soon afterwards the Unicorn ceased to be an object of exorbitant price on account of its rarity and its supposed virtues. It passed from the apothecary's laboratory to the naturalist's collection, where it was long preserved under the name of horn or tusk of the Unicorn.

The true nature of this tusk was shown for the first time by a naturalist of the Renaissance, one Wormius, who had found it affixed in its socket in a skull similar to that of a whale. But it was not till 1671 that Frederick Martens gave a tolerably correct description of the Narwhal. These Cetaceans live in the neighborhood of Iceland, and in the seas which wash the shores of Greenland. They gather together in the creeks of the ice islands, and travel in bands. It would be very difficult to take them if they did not live in troops; for, when isolated, they swim with such rapidity as to escape from all pursuit. But when they are near together they mutually embarrass each other, and are easily caught. When the fishing-boats glide cautiously in between their long files they close their ranks, and press against each other so much that they paralyze each other's movements; they become entangled in the tusks of those near them, or else, lifting their heads in the air, they rest their tusks on the backs of those which are in front of them. They can from that minute neither retreat, nor advance, nor fight, and they fall under the blows of the sailors who are in the boats.

The Icelanders manufacture with the Narwhal's tusks their arrows for the chase, and the poles which they use in the construction of their huts; but they do not eat its flesh, because they believe it to be venomous. This is not the case, however, with the Greenlanders, and other inhabitants of the north, who esteem it excellent. They dry it by exposing it to the smoke. The oil furnished by the Narwhal is, it is said, perforable to that of the whale.

Naturalists are not agreed as to the use of the Narwhal's formidable weapon. They say that they use it in their attacks on the whale, and that they kill this monster by running their swords into its belly. Lacedpede says that their tusks have been found deeply implanted in the bodies of whales; but other authors formally deny that battles ever take place between these two terrible combatants.

Narwhals sometimes rush with prodigious speed and force against vessels, which they no doubt take for some gigantic prey. If the animal attack the ship on the side as it is sailing, the tooth, imbedded in the wood, breaks off; but if it attack it from behind, the Narwhal remains fixed to the ship; it is then dragged along and towed till it dies.

Certain naturalists, relying on the fact that the Narwhal's tusk is smooth towards the end, which is sometimes rounded and, as it were, worn away, have concluded that the animal uses its horn for piercing the ice, when it wants to come up and breathe, and to save itself a long journey to the open water. Others have thought that these traces of wear and tear of its weapon arise from the friction of it in sand or

against rocks, when the animal is looking there for its food, which consists of cuttle fish, flat fish, cod, ray, oysters, and other mollusks. And, lastly, it has been stated that the Narwhal uses its natural lance for attacking its prey, for killing it, and perhaps also for tearing it up before it devours it. Thus the Narwhal's tooth would seem to be at the same time an instrument which serves to satisfy the wants of the ordinary life of the animal, useful to it for its respiration, its nutrition, and, at the same time, an offensive and defensive weapon.

Narwhals are not always brutal and warlike. Scoresby saw some very merry bands of these marine animals; they raised their horns and crossed them, as if they were going to fence, and they followed the ship with a sort of wild curiosity.

The ivory of the Narwhal's tusk is an object of great value, for it is more compact, harder, and susceptible of a finer polish than that of the elephant. It is on this account that visitors to the library of Versailles are shown a walking-stick made of narwhal ivory inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Of this ivory is made the throne of the kings of Denmark, which was to be seen, and which is, perhaps, to be seen still, in the Castle of Rosenberg.

The female of the narwhal has no tusk, or rather its tusk is rudimentary and undeveloped.

THE BOOK OF MORMON.

BY DANIEL TYLER.

(Continued.)

BY reading the blessings of the patriarch Jacob upon the heads of Ephraim and Manassah, the two sons of Joseph, as recorded in the 48th chapter of Genesis, we find that they were to grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. He also says that Ephraim shall become a multitude of nations. In this connection he tells Joseph that he has given him a portion above that which he took out of the hand of the Amorite with his sword and bow. From the language here used we are left to infer that he should share with his brethren in the general inheritance, and have an additional inheritance somewhere else. He is here speaking more particularly of his (Joseph's) two sons, that they were to inherit this extra portion, but gives no clue to the locality of the extra inheritance. Were this all that was recorded on this subject we should be left to find the "midst of the earth" on one or the other of the two hemispheres, and search for a multitude of nations apparently of the same origin. Unless history or revelation were to inform us who they were, we should have to guess whether or not they sprang from the two sons of Joseph, but then all would be uncertainty and doubt.

In America we do indeed find a multitude of nations. It is admitted that they are of the same origin, and are even supposed to have descended from the ancient Israelites. Those learned who think they are descendants of ancient Israel do not suppose that they sprang from the one tribe of Joseph, but that they are descendants of the ten tribes. This theory, however, is not sound, as we are told that the ten tribes went a year and a half's journey into the north country. From Palestine, from which land these tribes went, America is not the north, but the west country. In the 49th chapter of Genesis, and 22nd verse, we find the following language: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall," and in the 26th verse,

Jacob says to Joseph: "The blessings of thy father (Jacob) have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." Jacob's progenitors had been promised all of the land of Palestine for an everlasting inheritance. But Jacob, who wrestled and prevailed with God, had received another portion. Whether this extra portion of land was the blessing he received from the heavenly personage, the Bible does not inform us. It is evident, however, that it took an extra struggle or a great amount of faith and perseverance to obtain it, from the fact that he speaks of having "prevailed."

We have already learned that the branches of Joseph "ran over the wall." In the 14th chapter of Exodus and 29th verse, we find it stated that when the Red Sea was divided, "the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." The great waters are spoken of as walls in other places in the sacred writings. Now, if the divided waters of the Red Sea were as walls to the Israelites, how much more might the great Atlantic or Pacific Oceans be so called! We find Joseph receiving with his brethren his portion in Palestine to which he was justly entitled; but this did not debar him from the extra portion. This was to be in addition to the portion he was to inherit through the promise made to Abraham, which was renewed unto Isaac and confirmed unto Jacob—that they and their seed should inherit the whole land of Palestine. Being of the seed of Abraham, he was just as much entitled to his portion of his father's estate in Palestine as either of his brothers. He was not excluded by any will or testament of his father, nor did he by any act on his part forfeit his birthright to it. Hence the facts are that it was only the branches that should run over the wall who were to receive the extra portion, while the body of the tree and the roots thereof still remained on the other side. Now the question arises, in what direction the branches must run to get over the wall, or sea of waters. It is evident that they had a wall to the east and west of them more than to the north or south. The patriarch does not inform us which point of the compass the branches would take, nor is it important to our purpose. If you will spread your map before you and trace the lines from Palestine, either east across the Pacific or west across the Atlantic, the result will be the same, with this exception, that in the one case they would land on the east side of the American continent, and in the other on the west. The result of traveling east or west would be the same in both cases. From this standpoint, then, the land of North and South America is the blessing which Jacob obtained over and above that which had been promised to his father and grandfather, Isaac and Abraham. That the entire continent was here promised to Joseph, is plain from the fact that Jacob says that the blessing which he had obtained above his progenitors which he sealed upon the head of Joseph extended to "the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." (The Italics are mine to give force to those two important words.) To find the utmost bound we only need cast our eyes upon the map of the world, where we will find the Rocky and other ranges of mountains running the whole length of North America, and the Andes in South America. In the "midst" of this great continent we find a multitude (about three thousand) of nations apparently of the same origin. As their great ancestor said would be the case with Joseph's seed, we find them hated and "shot at," and, as

Isaiah said, "meted out and trodden under foot." The 18th chapter of Isaiah points to the same land, as that already found to have been pointed out by Jacob as the inheritance of the branches of Joseph; hence, it is but reasonable to conclude that the record of Joseph, which was in the hands of Ephraim, spoken of by Ezekiel, would be kept on this continent, from the fact that it could only be kept where the parties resided who kept it.

(To be Continued.)

Biography

JOSEPH SMITH THE PROPHET.

(Continued.)

WHEN Joseph heard about the trouble in De Witt he went there; but he had some difficulty to get into the place, as all the principal roads were guarded by the mob. He found the Saints nearly destitute of food, and there was no prospect of obtaining more. Steps were instantly taken to inform the governor of the condition of affairs. It was hoped that he might give the people of De Witt the needed protection. Several respectable gentlemen who were not members of the Church, but who had seen the conduct of the mob, made statements under oath, in which they set forth the treatment the Saints had received and the perilous condition they were in. They also offered their services to go themselves and present the case to the governor. But there was not a more wicked mobocrat in the whole State of Missouri than Lilburn W. Boggs, the governor. He had no aid, not even sympathy, for the persecuted Saints. His reply was, that "the quarrel was between the 'Mormons' and the mob, and they might fight it out." In the meantime, General Parkes made his appearance in the vicinity. In a letter written to General Atchison on October 7th, 1838, Parkes said, "nothing seems so much in demand here (to hear the Carroll County men talk) as Mormon scalps. As yet they are scarce." He further added: "as yet they (the Saints) have acted on the defensive as far as I can learn. It is my settled opinion the Mormons will have no rest until they leave." Parkes did nothing to protect the Saints or check the mob. His excuse was that Bogart's men would not be controlled, and were with the mob in feeling. This Bogart was the captain of a company of militia under Parkes, and was a Methodist preacher by profession. He was a bitter enemy to the Saints, and a thorough mobocrat. The Saints were forbidden to go out of town on pain of death, and if they attempted to go for food, they were shot at. If any of their cattle or horses went where the mob could get hold of them, they were stolen. Parkes did nothing to check these outrages. The most of the leading men of the State were filled with the spirit of mobocracy, and he with the rest. There was scarcely a man who had the courage to stand up and maintain the right. Parkes said that he would be compelled to draw his men off from the place, for fear they would join the mob.

The mob kept increasing in numbers; and knowing that the governor and the officers were as much traitors as themselves, they had no fear of the law before their eyes. The provisions of the Saints were entirely gone, and they were tired