


CHAPTER X.


The Hieroglyphics of America—The "Caractors"—Mormon
"Collateral Evidence" Frauds—Conclusion.




Probably no invention that man has made has been as useful to him as has the alphabet. It has proved as essential to his progress in civilization as the air he breathes is to the life of his body. Without it his wide-spread business and political relations would be impossible, and he would be as ignorant of the achievements of the past as the brute is of his origin.

But the alphabet, as we have it to-day, is not the sudden invention of a moment, but is the growth of centuries, developing through various stages from the picture-writing of our savage ancestors. The stages through which the art of writing has passed may, for convenience, be stated as the representative, the symbolic and the phonetic, though, as there are no hard and fast lines between these successive stages, this classification may be considered somewhat arbitrary.

Bancroft describes and illustrates these various stages of writing as follows: "Picture-writing may be divided, according to the successive stages of its development, into three classes, representative, symbolic and phonetic, no one of which except the last in its highest or alphabetic, and the first in its rudest, state, would be used alone by any people, but rather all would be employed together. In the representative stage a  might express a human hand, or, as the system is perfected, a large, small, closed, black or red hand; and finally 'Big

Hand,' an Indian chief; and all this would be equally intelligible to American or Asiatic, savage or civilized, without respect to language.

"Symbolic picture-writing indicates invisible or abstract objects, actions or conditions, by the use of pictures supposed to be suggestive of them; the symbols are originally in a manner representative, and rarely, if ever, arbitrarily adopted. As a symbol the  might express power, a blow, murder, the number one or five. These symbols are also independent of language.

"Phonetic picture-writing represents not objects, but sounds by the picture of objects in whose names the sound occurs; first words, then syllables, then elementary sounds, and last—by modification of the pictures or the substitution of simpler ones—letters and an alphabet. According to this system, the  signifies successively the word 'hand,' the syllable 'hand' in handsome, the sound 'ha' in happy, the aspiration 'h' in head, and finally, by simplifying its form or writing it rapidly, the  becomes , and then the 'h' of the alphabet."—*Native Races, Vol. II.*; pp. 536, 537.

By "the record of America's great and glorious past," the Book of Mormon, we are informed that the ancient Americans employed phonetic systems of writing. Their official written language, which they were pleased to call the "Reformed Egyptian," possessed, so we are told, an alphabet which was made up of characters either identical with, or resembling, the characters in the written languages of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Greeks, Hebrews and Romans.

I deem it best to let the Mormons themselves state their own position on the origin of their Reformed Egyptian alphabet. Apostle Kelley, president of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, and a standard authority

in the Josephite Church, writes: "These evidences all unite, and confirm the truth of the claims of the 'Book of Mormon,' that it answers to the prediction found in the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah concerning the 'Sealed Book,' and that it came forth in fulfillment thereof; that it is a true record of the ancient inhabitants of America; and that they did occupy this land in pre-historic times, and were an intelligent, God-fearing and accomplished race of people; that they understood the arts and sciences, and had a regular and well-defined system of writing; that their alphabet was derived from the old original alphabet, from which all the alphabets of modern Europe were derived, and was composed of characters identical with and resembling the Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, Greek, Hebrew and Roman letters, with symbols, circles and pictorial emblems."—*Presidency and Priesthood*, pp. 291, 292.

There are two assertions made in this extract which it will be well for the reader to keep in mind: First, that the characters of the written language of ancient America were alphabetic; and, secondly, that they were of exotic origin, being identical with characters in the written languages of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Hebrews and Romans. How a Brinton or a Thomas would smile were they to read the wise conclusions of Apostle Kelley!

The evidences by which Mr. Kelley's claims must be tested are from two sources: the evidences from the monuments and the evidences from the manuscripts. And these will confine our investigations entirely to Central America and Mexico, there being no proof, whatever, that any tribe south of the Isthmus of Panama or north of the northern boundary line of Mexico employed marks to represent sounds, the hieroglyphics in

use outside of this territory being purely ideographic in character.

In Central America and Mexico the ancient inhabitants painted or engraved their characters on several

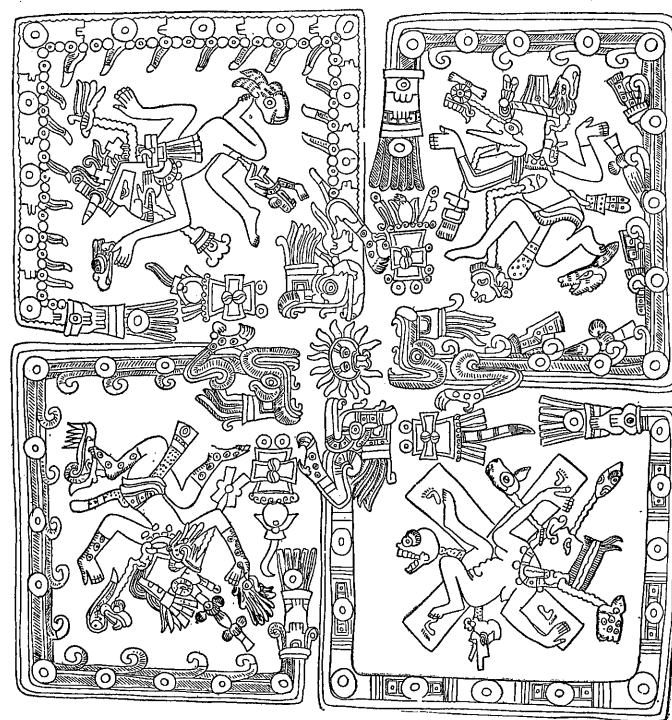


FIGURE 14. MEXICAN PICTOGRAPHS, PAGE 43, BORGIAN CODEX.
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materials, such as stone, wood, pottery, plaster, cotton cloth, skins and a kind of paper made from the maguey plant. The monuments on which they engraved their hieroglyphics were chiefly buildings, altars and obelisks

and the work among the Mayas was evidently done with chay-stone points, while among the Mexicans the engraving implements were sometimes of bronze. The manuscripts of the former were made of native paper cut into strips ten inches wide and of any desired length, which were folded in the manner of a screen and were enclosed between boards, painted and ornamented with various designs. The paper was coated with a white wax on which were painted, on both sides, the hieroglyphics in such colors as brown, red, yellow, blue and black. The manuscripts of the latter were made of cotton cloth, prepared skins or maguey paper, chiefly the latter, and were usually made as the Mayas made their books. The Maya manuscripts which have come down to us are four in number: the Codices *Troanus* and *Cortesianus*, probably parts of the same book, which are now in Madrid; the Codex *Peresianus*, which is in Paris; and the Codex *Dresdensis*, which is in Dresden. Unfortunately for the cause of science, many of the most valuable of the Mexican manuscripts were destroyed by the fanatical Bishop Zumarraga soon after the Conquest, and but few escaped. These are the Codices *Mendoza*, *Vaticanus*, *Telleriano-Remensis*, *Borgianus*, *Bologna* and some others of less importance. The Quiches had a sacred book, the "Popul Vuh," as did also the Cakchiquels, which was called the "Records of Tecpan Atitlan."

The hieroglyphics of the Mexicans are very different from those of the Mayas, being of a lower grade, and, evidently, of not so great an antiquity. "The graphic system of the Mayas of Yucatan," says Brinton, "was very different from that of the Aztecs. No one at all familiar with the two could fail at once to distinguish between the manuscripts of the two nations. They

are plainly independent developments."—*Essays of an Americanist*, p. 232. The Mexican writing is highly pictographic, while that of the Mayas is to a large degree phonetic, therefore, if it can be proved that the writing of the latter is not Reformed Egyptian, the claim of the Mormons falls to the ground, for there is no other system in America which had reached so high a degree of development.

The Maya characters are grouped together in groups, each of which is called a "glyph," or, by the French writers, a "katun." As the glyphs often have rounded outlines, and slightly resemble the cross-section of a pebble, this style of writing is called "calculiform writing," from the Latin *calculus*, a pebble. The glyphs are arranged either in rows or in columns and the direction in which they are to be read has long been an unsettled question. Professor Thomas, in speaking of a part of the inscription on one of the tablets from the Temple of the Cross at Palenque, says, however: "Notwithstanding the fact that but few of the characters have been determined, the direction in which the inscription is to be read is known. It begins with the large symbol in the upper left-hand corner of the left slab. This covers the space of four symbols of the ordinary size. Each of the following seven, reading downward, covers two spaces, the whole being counted as two columns. The third and fourth columns, in which the characters are separate, are read from left to right, two and two, or by pairs, from the top downward, and the fifth and sixth columns follow in the same order."—*American Archaeology*, pp. 246, 247.

For a long time it was thought that a translation of the characters on the monuments and in the manuscripts of Yucatan and Chiapas might throw some light on the

ancient history of the Mayas, but this fond hope will now have to be relinquished. "We need not search for the facts of history, the names of mighty kings, or the dates of conquests," says Brinton; "we shall not find them. Chronometry we shall find, but not chronicles; astronomy with astrological aims; rituals, but no records. Pre-Columbian history will not be reconstructed from them. This will be a disappointment to many; but it is the conclusion toward which tend all the soundest investigations of recent years."—*Mayan Primer*, p. 28.

THE AMERICAN HIEROGLYPHICS.

(1) *Did the Ancient Americans Employ a Uniform System of Phonetic Writing?*

According to the Book of Mormon, the Reformed Egyptian was invented by Nephi I., and was employed in both Americas. The period of time in which it was in use was about one thousand years, and the countries inhabited by those who employed it were Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Central America, Mexico and the United States. But archæological research discloses that the ancient American tribes were not uniform in their manner of writing and that only those who inhabited Central and Southern Mexico, Yucatan and Guatemala had progressed far enough in the art to employ marks to represent sounds, the writing of the tribes south of the Isthmus of Panama and north of the northern boundary line of Mexico being purely ideographic in character.

On the absence of phonetic writing in Peru, Bancroft says: "The more ancient nations have left nothing to compare with the hieroglyphic tablets of Central America, and the evidence is far from satisfactory that they possessed any advanced art in writing."—*Native Races*, Vol. IV., p. 792.

And, in speaking of the same people, Squier writes: "Fortunately for our knowledge of the people of the past ages, who never attained to a written language, they were accustomed to bury with their dead the things they most regarded in life, and from this we may deduce something of their modes of living, and gain some idea of their religious notions and beliefs."—*Peru*, p. 73.

Though a few of the Peruvian tribes used pictographs to some extent, the ordinary, and almost universal, way of carrying on communications among them was by the *quipu*. This instrument was a cord about two feet long from which small threads were suspended in the form of a fringe. The cord and the threads were dyed different colors and were tied into different knots by which different ideas were conveyed. The color white represented silver; the color yellow, gold; or white signified peace, and red, war. Notwithstanding the *quipu* sufficed for several practical purposes, when the subject of the communication was known, it was inadequate in the transmission of historical knowledge to succeeding generations.

On the absence of phonetic writing north of Mexico we have the following:

"None of the tribes north of Mexico had made the discovery that marks can represent sounds."—*Dellenbaugh*, p. 39.

"Nothing as yet justifies us in supposing that the Mound Builders were sufficiently advanced in civilization to have an alphabet."—*Nadaillac*, p. 166, Footnote.

"American archæologists have been more or less interested in the question whether or not the Mound Builders had a written language. All the evidence is against the supposition."—*MacLean*, p. 90.

"They"—the Mound Builders—"had seemingly made

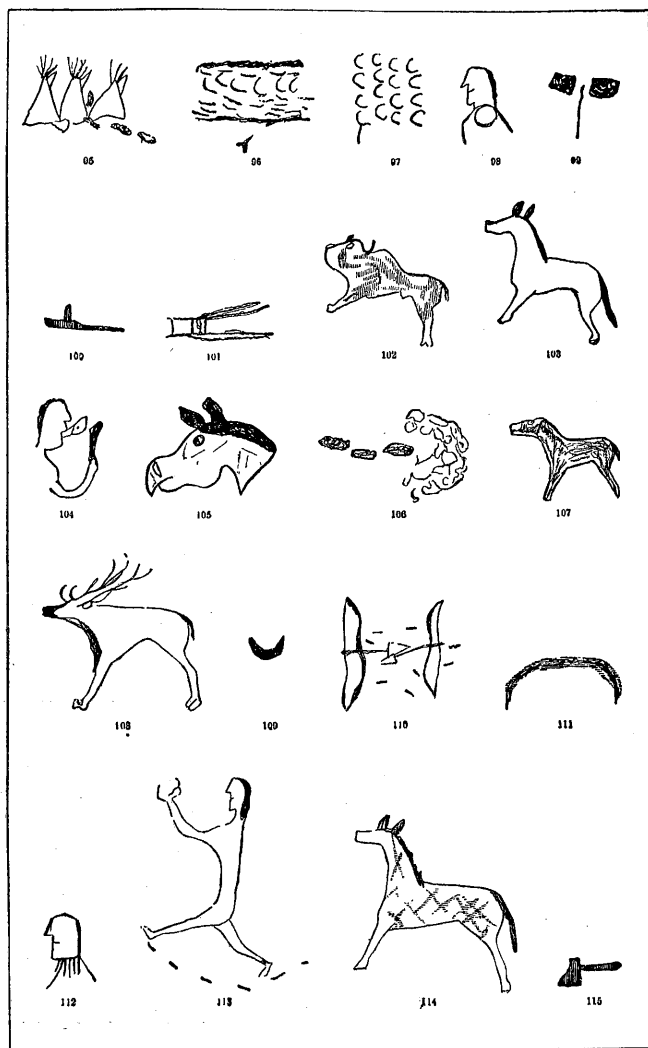


FIGURE 15. INDIAN PICTOGRAPHS.
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no approach to the higher grades of hieroglyphic writing."—*Bancroft*, Vol. IV., p. 786.

"No well authenticated mound-builder hieroglyphics have as yet come to light."—*Short*, p. 419.

"He"—the Ohio Mound Builder—"failed to grasp the idea of communication by written characters."—*Moorehead*, p. 200.

By these statements the reader will see that the claim of the Book of Mormon, that the ancient Americans employed a uniform phonetic system of writing throughout both North and South America, is not true.

(2) *The Character of American Hieroglyphics—Are They Alphabetic?*

The assertion of Mr. Kelley, that the ancient Americans employed an alphabet, now demands our attention. That the ancient Central Americans and Mexicans had developed their graphic systems so far as to use characters to represent sounds many of the best students of American archæology believe, but that they had advanced so far as to use alphabets like the Egyptian, Greek, Hebrew and Roman alphabets, is not sustained by a single fact which has been brought to light.

All that can be said for the phonetic element in the Mexican system of writing is comprised in this extract from Brinton: "As I have observed, the native genius had not arrived at a complete analysis of the phonetic elements of the language; but it was distinctly progressing in that direction. Of the five vowels and fourteen consonants which make up the Nahuatl alphabet, three vowels certainly, and probably three consonants, had reached the stage where they were often expressed as simple letters by the method above described. The vowels were *a*, for which the sign was *atl*, water; *e* represented by a bean, *etl*; and *o* by a footprint, or

path, *otli*; the consonants were *p*, represented either by a flag, *pan*, or a mat, *petl*; *t*, by a stone, *tetl*, or the lips, *tentli*; and *z*, by a lancet, *zo*. These are, however, exceptions. Most of the Nahuatl phonetics were syllabic, sometimes one, sometimes two syllables of the name of the object being employed. When the whole name of an object or most of it was used as a phonetic value, the script remains truly phonetic, but becomes of the nature of a rebus, and this is the character of most of the phonetic Mexican writing."—*Essays of an Americanist*, pp. 206, 207.

But the fact that the Mexicans employed signs for the sounds of a, e, o and possibly for p, t and z does not necessarily prove that these signs were alphabetic, for the sounds a, e, o, p, t and z are sometimes syllabic sounds, as in a-sleep, e-lope, o-bey, pe-culiar, te-nacious and ze-bra. It is a significant fact that the lancet, said to be the sign for z, stands for the syllable zo in the name Mo-quah-zo-ma, Montezuma. But be this as it may, as the Mexican phonetics are mingled with symbols and ideograms which far exceed them in number, it can be stated without reserve that they had not progressed far beyond the ideographic stage. And this refutes Apostle Kelley's absurd claim that the ancient inhabitants of Mexico, and the rest of the New World, derived their alphabet "from the old original alphabet, from which all the alphabets of modern Europe were derived."

The writing of the Mayas, though further advanced than that of the Mexicans, had not reached the alphabetic stage. Those who have made it a special study may be divided into three classes: First, those who maintain that it is wholly or mainly ideographic; secondly, those who consider it chiefly phonetic; and, thirdly, those

who regard it as mainly ideographic, but who think that it is occasionally phonetic. To the first class belong the German writers, Forstemann, Schellhas and Seler; to the second, the French writers, De Bourbourg, De Rosny and De Charency, with such American investigators as Thomas, Cresson and Le Plongeon; and to the third that able Americanist, Dr. D. G. Brinton.

Though a number of alphabets have been constructed by different students of this language, none of them have proved to be of much value to modern investigators. Landa's was the first and was constructed in 1570. In 1883 his alphabet was extended by De Bourbourg and De Rosny, who defined twenty-nine letters, with numerous variants, from the Codices and the inscriptions. In 1885 Dr. Le Plongeon published his "Ancient Maya Hieratic Alphabet According to Mural Inscriptions," which contains twenty-three letters with variants. Dr. H. T. Cresson also attempted to reduce the Maya hieroglyphics to an alphabet. "His theory," says Brinton, "was that the glyphs stood for the names of pictures worn down to a single phonetic element, alphabetic or syllabic. This element he conceived was consonantal, to be read with any vowel, either prefixed or suffixed; and the consonant was permutable with any of its class, as a lingual, palatal, etc."—*Mayan Primer*, p. 15. Besides these, De la Roche-foucauld's alphabet of twenty-seven letters appeared in 1888 and that of Thomas, with twenty characters, in 1893. Brinton pronounces the former fanciful and says of the latter: "Aside from the doubtful character of many of his analyses, the fact that this 'key' has wholly failed to add any tangible, valuable addition to our knowledge of the inscriptions is enough to show its uselessness; and the same may be said of all the attempts mentioned."—*Ibid*, p. 17.

Latter-day Saints are especially interested in Le Plongeon's "Ancient Maya Hieratic Alphabet," because many of its characters are plainly identical with characters in the alphabet of the Egyptians, and publish it side by side with the Egyptian alphabet in the Appendix to their "Report of the Committee on American Archæology." They believe that this alphabet settles the question that the ancient Americans employed the Reformed Egyptian writing as the Book of Mormon declares. In an article, "Book of Mormon Characters," published first in *Zion's Ensign*, and afterwards in the *Evening and Morning Star*, of Independence, Missouri, for February, 1907, the writer, Mr. Fred B. Farr, says: "There is much to substantiate the belief that this Reformed Egyptian with which the plates were inscribed was of a phonetic character, or like shorthand. The hieratic writings of the Egyptians was of this nature, and we are informed by Professor Le Plongeon and others that the writings of the ancient people of this country bear a strong resemblance to that class."

Now I frankly concede that if Dr. Le Plongeon's alphabet is the key which unlocks the mysteries of Palenque and Chichen Itza, the conclusion that the ancient Mayas employed the Egyptian alphabet logically follows, for the two alphabets, as they appear in the "Report of the Committee on American Archæology," are identical in most of their signs. But has research corroborated Le Plongeon and established the correctness of his alphabet as Mormons try to make their readers believe? It most emphatically has not. Le Plongeon's alphabet was first published in the supplement to the *Scientific American* of January, 1885, and afterwards, I believe, in his "Sacred Mysteries of the Mayas." Yet, notwithstanding it has been before the scholarship of the world for twen-

ty-three years, the hieroglyphical sphinx has not yet spoken and our Americanists are still at work trying to solve the riddle of the past.¹ But Mormons are willfully blind to this significant fact.

Rejecting, as most students have done, the theory that the Maya writing is alphabetic, we adopt the theory that the phonetic elements which it contains are purely syllabic and that these are used in connection with symbols and ideographs which in no way stand for the sound of the name of the thing they are intended to represent.

Of the character of the Maya writing, Brinton speaks as follows: "We do not find a developed phonetic system, and yet one more than pictographic. The figures are combinations of symbols, ideograms and phonetic equivalents, the last mentioned being in sufficiently large proportion to render some knowledge of the Maya language necessary to an interpretation of the records."—*Myths of the New World*, p. 26.

Dr. Schellhas gives this as his decision on the character of the Maya hieroglyphs: "The Maya writing is ideographic in principle, and probably avails itself, in order to complete its ideographic hieroglyphs, of a number of fixed phonetic signs."—*Essays of an Americanist*, p. 200.

And Prof. Cyrus Thomas says: "As frequent allusion is made herein to the phoneticism or phonetic value of

¹ So far has Le Plongeon's "Maya Hieratic Alphabet" dropped out of sight that, although I placed an order with two of the largest publishing-houses in the country, I was not able to obtain a copy, either new or second-hand, of his "Sacred Mysteries," in which it is explained. One of these publishing-houses informed me that while it was out of print, a second-hand copy might be picked up for \$18 or \$20. In reply I authorized them to get me a copy, if possible. Later they wrote that although they had made the effort a copy could not be found. The other publishing-house simply notified me that the book was out of print and not obtainable. If this alphabet is the key that unlocks the mysteries of the Maya hieroglyphics, why has it dropped so quickly and completely out of sight?

the written characters or hieroglyphs, it is proper that the writer's position on this point should be clearly understood. He does not claim that the Maya scribes had reached that advanced stage where they could indicate each letter-sound by a glyph or symbol. On the contrary, he thinks a symbol, probably derived in most cases from an older method of picture-writing, was selected because the name or word it represented had as its chief phonetic element a certain consonant sound or syllable. If this consonant element were *b*, the symbol would be used where *b* was the prominent consonant element of the word to be indicated, no reference, however, to its original signification being necessarily retained. Thus the symbol for *cab*, 'earth,' might be used in writing *Caban*, a day name, or *cabil*, 'honey,' because *cab* is their chief phonetic element.

"In a previous work I have expressed the opinion that the characters are to a certain extent phonetic—are not true alphabetic signs, but syllabic. And at the same time I expressed the opinion that even this definition did not hold true of all, as some were apparently ideographic, while others were simply abbreviated pictorial representations."—*Sixteenth Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 205.

The syllabic signs in the Mexican and Mayan writing differ, however, in an important respect from the syllabic signs on the bricks and tablets of Assyria. In the written language of the Assyrians the syllabic signs had lost their pictorial character and were written with wedges arranged in various ways; in the written languages of the Mexicans and Mayas the syllabic signs still retained their pictorial character, being the pictures of things the sounds of whose names, or of certain syllables of whose names, when put together, made the sound of the word

represented. A simple illustration of this principle is found in the name of the Aztec king, Montezuma. This name is written with a mouse-trap and an eagle's head transfixed with a lancet and surmounted with a human hand. In the Nahuatl language the word for mouse-trap is *montli*, from which we have the syllable *mon* or *mo*; the word for eagle is *quauhtli*, from which we have *quauh*; the word for lancet is *zo*, from which we have the syllable *zo*; and the word for hand is *mailt*, from which we have *ma*. Putting these syllables, each of which is represented by a pictograph, together and we have Mo-quauh-zo-ma, the name of the Mexican chief. This principle is further illustrated by the device which the English gallant had embroidered on his gown with which to show his devotion to the lady of his heart, Rose Hill. It consisted of the pictures of a rose, a hill, an eye, a loaf of bread and a well, which being interpreted is, "Rose Hill I love well." Another illustration of this principle is in the word "chairman," which in rebus-writing of our day would be written with pictures of a chair and a man.

To this kind of ancient American writing Brintor gives the name of *ikonomatic* writing, from the Greek *eikon*, a figure or image, and *onoma*, a name. This is the highest stage that any system in America reached, and Apostle Kelley's claim, made without any proof whatever, that the ancient Americans employed an alphabet, falls to the ground. In all of their phonetic writing they wrote with syllables, not with letters, while the greater part of their signs were pure ideographs having no phonetic value whatever.

(3) *The Origin of American Hieroglyphics—Are They of Exotic Origin?*

Apostle Kelley asserts that the ancient Americans had an alphabet, not only, but also that this alphabet was

"composed of characters identical with and resembling the Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, Greek, Hebrew and Roman letters, with symbols, circles and pictorial emblems." And Apostle J. R. Lambert, of the same church, in his "Objections to the Book of Mormon and Book of Doctrine and Covenants Answered and Refuted," p. 71, says: "Since it is now admitted that the aborigines used Egyptian, we are under no obligations to prove it; and as the Book of Mormon claims to be a history of the aborigines of America, we thus establish harmony between the claims of the book and the facts in the case, and it remains for our opponents to prove that whoever wrote the historical part of the Book of Mormon learned all that he knew about the use of Reformed Egyptian from the antiquarian discoveries which had been made before the Book of Mormon was written."

I can not refrain from saying that these gentlemen, if they had given the subject of American writing the study which it deserves, stated what they positively knew was not true. The ancient Americans did not use characters identical with Egyptian, Chaldean, Assyrian, Greek, Hebrew and Roman characters, neither is it conceded that they used Reformed Egyptian or any other kind of Egyptian, the theories of the Mormon witnesses, Delafield and Le Plongeon, being disproved by both time and research. The key that has unlocked the mysteries of ancient Egypt does not fit the lock which holds the door to the secrets of ancient America. If the ancient Americans employed letters from the alphabets of the Old World, why have they not been found engraved on their monuments and inscribed in their manuscripts? Why have their monuments not been made to speak by the Egyptologist and Assyriologist? There is but one answer to these questions, and that is that the written

languages of America possess a character peculiar to themselves, and that they were not derived from the languages of the Old World. In opposition to the absurd claims of Messrs. Kelley and Lambert, let me place the statements of men who are authorities in this branch of American archæology.

"The American hieroglyphics contain no element to prove their foreign origin, and there is no reason to look upon them as other than the result of original native development."—*Bancroft*, Vol. II., p. 551.

"Notwithstanding the oft-repeated assertion that a resemblance between Egyptian and Maya hieroglyphics exists, no one of the Egyptologists so successful in their chosen field has been able to decipher the Maya writing."—*Short*, p. 418.

"So far as now understood, there is no relationship between any kind of Amerindian writing and that of other races. Like everything else pertaining to the Amerind people, the development appears to have been purely indigenous."—*Dellenbaugh*, p. 80.

The Mayas attributed the invention of their writing to Zamna and to a time after they had become settled in Central America. "It is to Zamna that the Yucatecs ascribed all their progress; tradition attributes to him the invention of hieroglyphic writing, and he was the first to teach the people to give a name to men and to things."—*Prehistoric America*, p. 348.

And Thomas thinks that the Mayan system was developed out of a primitive system of picture-writing. He says: "The more I study these characters the stronger becomes the conviction that they have grown out of a pictographic system similar to that common among the Indians of North America."—*Discovery of America*, by *Fiske*, Vol. I., p. 132, Footnote.

(4) *The Age of the American Hieroglyphics.*

On the age of the hieroglyphical systems of the Mexicans and Mayas but little can be said. There are a few facts, however, which help us to arrive at a conclusion as to the approximate time in which these nations began their use. I think that I am safe in saying that there is nothing to warrant the opinion that they antedate the first century of our era, nor that they were invented by a "vanished race" which preceded the advent of the Mexican and Central American tribes, for but few archæologists will any longer claim for the ancient cities of these countries a greater antiquity than nineteen hundred years and "vanished races" no longer hover on the horizon of pre-Columbian history.

The Maya writing was certainly invented after the migration of that people from the north, for the Huastecs, the Mayan tribe which broke off in the migration southward, have never practiced it and it bears no relationship whatever to the Mexican system. This would seem to confine its origin and development wholly to Central America. And this is fully in accord with the tradition of the Mayas already given that Zamna was the inventor of their hieroglyphics. On the other hand, it is just as clearly established that the hieroglyphics were invented before the Mayas entered Yucatan, for they are found engraved on the monuments of Palenque and neighboring cities which were built before the erection of the Yucatec cities. This evidence seems to indicate that the Mayan hieroglyphical system reached its highest stage after the migration from the north, but before the settlement of Yucatan, which, I think, would establish its invention at sometime between 1 A. D. and 400 A. D.

On the antiquity of the Mayan hieroglyphics Nadail-

lac says: "The myths and traditions that have been collected may date back to a time before the Christian era, but the hieroglyphics are certainly not so old."—*Pre-historic America*, pp. 260, 261.

Mexican writing, without question, is not as old as the Mayan. Even if we go by tradition alone we can not date its invention beyond the sixth century of our era, and the probabilities are that it is not so old.

THE "CHARACTERS."

Joseph Smith says that in the month of February, 1828, he copied a number of characters from the plates, part of which he translated, and sent them by Martin Harris to Prof. Charles Anthon and Dr. Samuel Mitchell, of New York, for their examination. The characters which Smith claims were not translated may be seen in Figure 16.

The account of Harris as to what took place at New York is as follows: "I went to the city of New York and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof to Professor Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments; Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic, and he said that they were the true characters. He gave me a certificate certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates

in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him.

"He then said to me, 'Let me see that certificate.' I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying that there was no such thing now as ministering angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him, he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, 'I can not read a sealed book.' I left him and went to Dr.

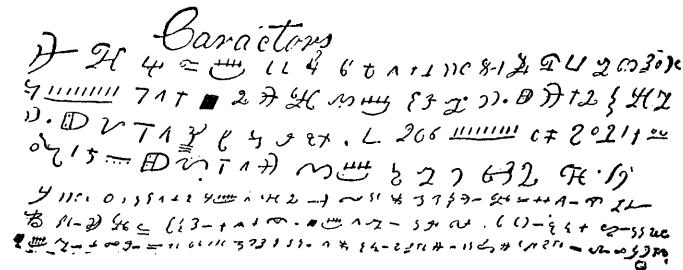


FIGURE 16.

Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation."

This account is one of the stock-in-trade arguments of the Mormons, who declare that the visit of Harris to Professor Anthon and the latter's statement that he could not read a sealed book are a fulfillment of Isa. 29: 11: "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed."

But Professor Anthon gives a very different account of his interview with Harris, in which it does not so

plainly appear that his words are a fulfillment of the prophecy quoted. In a letter, dated at New York, February 17, 1834, in answer to an inquiry from E. D. Howe, Esq., of Painesville, Ohio, author of "History of Mormonism," he says: "The whole story about my having pronounced the Mormonite inscription to be 'Reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics' is perfectly false. Some years ago, a plain, and apparently simple-hearted, farmer called upon me with a note from Dr. Mitchell, of our city, now deceased, requesting me to decipher, if possible, a paper, which the farmer would hand me, and which Dr. M. confessed he had been unable to understand. Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick, perhaps a hoax. When I asked the person, who brought it, how he obtained the writing, he gave me, as far as I can now recollect, the following account: A 'gold book,' consisting of a number of plates of gold, fastened together in the shape of a book by wires of the same metal, had been dug up in the northern part of the State of New York, and along with the book an enormous pair of 'gold spectacles!' These spectacles were so large, that, if a person attempted to look through them, his two eyes would have to be turned towards one of the glasses merely, the spectacles in question being altogether too large for the breadth of the human face. Whoever examined the plates through the spectacles, was enabled not only to read them, but fully to understand their meaning. All this knowledge, however, was confined at that time to a young man, who had the trunk containing the book and spectacles in his sole possession. This young man was placed behind a curtain, in the garret of a farmhouse, and being thus concealed from view, put on the spectacles occasionally, or, rather, looked through one of the glasses,

deciphered the characters in the book, and, having committed some of them to paper, handed copies from behind the curtain, to those who stood on the outside. Not a word, however, was said about the plates having been deciphered 'by the gift of God.' Everything, in this way, was effected by the large pair of spectacles. The farmer added, that he had been requested to contribute a sum of money towards the publication of the 'golden book,' the contents of which would, as he had been assured, produce an entire change in the world and save it from ruin. So urgent had been these solicitations, that he intended selling his farm and handing over the amount received to those who wished to publish the plates. As a last precautionary step, however, he had resolved to come to New York, and obtain the opinion of the learned about the meaning of the paper which he brought with him, and which had been given him as a part of the contents of the book, although no translation had been furnished at the time by the young man with the spectacles. On hearing this odd story, I changed my opinion about the paper, and, instead of viewing it any longer as a hoax upon the learned, I began to regard it as part of a scheme to cheat the farmer of his money, and I communicated my suspicions to him, warning him to beware of rogues. He requested an opinion from me in writing, which of course I declined giving, and he then took his leave, carrying the paper with him. This paper was in fact a singular scrawl. It consisted of all kinds of crooked characters disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets. Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sideways, were arranged in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude

delineation of a circle divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican calendar given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived. I am thus particular as to the contents of the paper, inasmuch as I have frequently conversed with my friends on the subject, since the Mormonite excitement began, and well remember that the paper contained anything else but '*Egyptian hieroglyphics.*' Some time after, the same farmer paid me a second visit. He brought with him the golden book in print, and offered it to me for sale. I declined purchasing. He then asked permission to leave the book with me for examination. I declined receiving it, although his manner was strangely urgent. I adverted once more to the roguery which had been in my opinion practiced upon him, and asked him what had become of the gold plates. He informed me that they were in a trunk with the large pair of spectacles. I advised him to go to a magistrate and have the trunk examined. He said the 'curse of God' would come upon him should he do this. On my pressing him, however, to pursue the course which I had recommended, he told me that he would open the trunk, if I would take the 'curse of God' upon myself. I replied that I would do so with the greatest willingness, and would incur every risk of that nature, provided I could only extricate him from the grasp of rogues. He then left me.

"I have thus given you a full statement of all that I know respecting the origin of Mormonism, and must beg you, as a personal favor, to publish this letter immediately, should you find my name mentioned again by these wretched fanatics."

The points of disagreement between the accounts of Harris and Anthon are:

(1) Harris declares that he called upon Anthon first and afterwards upon Mitchell; Professor Anthon claims that he came to him with a note from the Doctor.

(2) The characters, which Harris says he submitted to Anthon, are arranged in horizontal rows; those which Anthon saw were arranged in perpendicular columns.

(3) Harris claims that some of the characters were translated; Anthon makes no mention of such a translation.

(4) Among the characters which Anthon saw were a number of stars and half-moons; these do not appear in the transcript which Mormons claim Harris had.

(5) Harris asserts that Anthon gave him a certificate "certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were the true characters;" Anthon says that Harris requested his opinion in writing, but that he declined giving it.

(6) Harris declares that Professor Anthon said, "I can not read a sealed book;" Anthon mentions no such admission, and from his condemnation of the characters one would infer that no such declaration was ever made. And

(7) Harris says that Professor Anthon pronounced the characters Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic; the professor says that the whole thing was a "hoax," and that it consisted of distorted Hebrew, Greek and Roman letters, crosses, half-moons, stars and flourishes.

The case stands thus: Anthon vs. Harris. Which will you believe? On the one hand we have a scholar of acknowledged ability and veracity, and on the other an ignorant farmer, whom even the Mormons admit lied under other circumstances. This interview bears on the face of it the marks of being a cleverly laid scheme to fulfill a prophecy which had already been fulfilled eighteen centuries before.

(1) *Are the "Caractors" Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic?*

The question that is raised by Professor Anthon's purported statement is not, "Are the 'Caractors' *similar* to the Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldaic and Arabic?" but, "Are they *identical* with the written characters of these languages?" Anthon being made to say that they "*were* Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic" and "*were* the *true* characters."

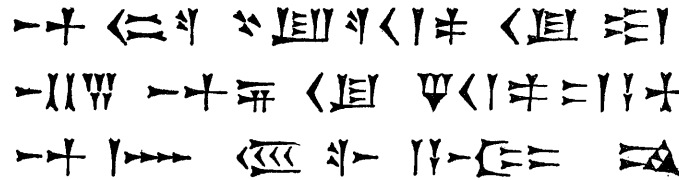
In order that the reader may see for himself that this claim of identity is utterly false, I have prepared Figure 17, which may be compared with Figure 16. The Egyptian characters in the former I have copied from "Egyptian Language," by Budge; the Assyrian from "First Steps in Assyrian," by King; the Aramaic or Chaldee from the Hebrew Bible and the Arabic from Gesenius' Lexicon. A careful comparison of the two cuts will reveal the fact that the "Caractors" are neither identical with the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, the wedge-shape inscriptions of the Assyrians, the block letters of the Arameans nor the running hand of the Arabians, and the only reasonable conclusion that the intelligent reader can come to, in the face of Anthon's denial, of ever having made the statement attributed to him, and these facts, is that the statement attributed to him is a forgery made to fulfill Isa. 29: 11, a prophecy which met its fulfillment more than eighteen hundred years ago. I challenge the Mormon Church to make good the claim that they have flaunted before the Christian public for seventy-five years, that the "Caractors" *are* Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, and demand that until they do they refrain from using Anthon's purported statement further.

EGYPTIAN, ASSYRIAN, ARAMAIC AND ARABIC CHARACTERS.

Egyptian.



Assyrian.



Aramaic.

וּשְׁאֵר כְּנוּחֵי עַל-אֶרְצֵהּ שֵׁשׁ
 מִלֶּדֶד פָּרַח וּבְתֵב הַנְּשִׁיתֶינָה
 בְּהוֹם בְּעֵל בְּתוֹב אֶרְצֵהּ מִיתוֹ

Arabic.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 بِأَبْنِ بَرٍّ بَرٍّ بَرٍّ خَلْقَ نَبِيٍّ وَكَهْبِ قَبْرِ
 مَسَا حَرِّ هَلْكَ بَقِ ١٥ ج بَرِّ بَرِّ بَرِّ بَرِّ بَرِّ

FIGURE 17.

In his well-known work, "Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism," pp. 261, 262, Rev. D. H. Bays, who for twenty-seven years was an elder in the Reorganized Church, publishes a letter of explanation and inquiry concerning the "Caractors," which he had sent to several Orientalists, and which reads as follows:

"DEAR SIR:—I herewith inclose what purports to be a fac-simile of the characters found upon the gold plates from which it is claimed the Book of Mormon was translated. The advocates of Mormonism maintain that these characters are 'Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic.'

"So far as I am informed, these characters have never been submitted to scholars of eminence for examination; and as the languages named fall within your province, including Egyptology and archæology, your professional opinion as to their genuineness will be of great value to the general reader, in determining the exact truth with respect to this remarkable claim."

I have omitted from this letter, as not being relevant to the present discussion, four questions relating to the use of Egyptian and metallic plates among the Hebrews; the replies to these questions will also be omitted from the letters of his correspondents.

To the inquiry of Mr. Bays, Pres. James B. Angell, of the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, replied as follows: "I have submitted your letter and inclosure to our professor of Oriental languages, who is more familiar with the subjects raised by your question than I am. He is a man of large learning in Semitic languages and archæology. The substance of what he has to say is:

"1. The document which you enclose raises a *moral* rather than a *linguistic* problem. A few letters or signs are noticeable which correspond more or less closely to

the Aramaic, sometimes called Chaldee language; for example, s, h, g, t, l, b, n. There are no Assyrian characters in it, and the impression made is that *the document is fraudulent.*"

In answer to the letter of Mr. Bays, Charles H. S. Davis, M.D., Ph.D., of Meriden, Connecticut, author of "Ancient Egypt in the Light of Recent Discoveries," and a member of the American Oriental Society, American Philological Society, Society of Biblical Archæology of London and Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, wrote: "I am familiar with Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, and have considerable acquaintance with all of the Oriental languages, and I can *positively assert* that there is not a letter to be found in the fac-simile submitted that can be found in the alphabet of any Oriental language, particularly of those you refer to; namely, Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic.

"A careful study of the fac-simile shows that they are characters put down at random by an ignorant person—with no resemblance to anything, not even shorthand."

Dr. Charles E. Moldenke, of New York, said to be "probably the best Egyptian scholar in the country," replied to Mr. Bays from Jerusalem, Palestine, December 27, 1896, as follows: "Your letter dated November 23 I have just received. I will try to answer your questions as far as I am able. I believe the plates of the Book of Mormon to be a fraud.

"In the first place, it is impossible to find in any old inscription, 'Egyptian, Arabic, Chaldaic and Assyrian' characters mixed together. The simple idea of finding Egyptian and Arabic side by side is ridiculous and impossible.

"In the second place, though some signs remind one of those of the Mesa Inscription, yet none bear a resemblance to Egyptian or Assyrian."

Although these letters clearly establish that the "Caractors" are frauds, Apostle Heman C. Smith, of the Josephite Church, in his "Truth Defended; or, A Reply to Elder D. H. Bays," takes up the cudgel in their defense and in a weak and an evasive effort tries to show, first, that Mr. Bays misrepresented his church in saying that "the advocates of Mormonism maintain that these characters are 'Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic,'" and, secondly, that these letters do not prove what he tries to prove by them, as they contradict one another.

In attempting to answer the charge of Mr. Bays, that "the advocates of Mormonism maintain that these characters are Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic," Apostle Smith says: "When Mr. Bays wrote as he says he did to certain linguists the following, he misrepresented the facts: . . .

"The advocates of Mormonism' have maintained nothing of the kind.

"All there is to it is that Martin Harris has been quoted as saying that Professor Anthon so determined and informed him."—*The Truth Defended*, p. 31.

It is not to be wondered at that the Latter-day Saints wish to shirk the responsibility of claiming that the "Caractors" are Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, especially when a competent scholar declares that "there is not a letter to be found in the fac-simile submitted that can be found in the alphabet of any Oriental language." But the unkindest cut of all is for them to try to shift the responsibility of this claim to the shoulders of Professor Anthon, and that, too, when he has expressly denied that he ever said that the transcript

he saw contained Egyptian hieroglyphics, or was anything else than a hoax and a deception.

If the Latter-day Saints have not maintained, as Apostle Smith tries to make his readers believe, that the "Caractors" are Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, why have they given Professor Anthon's purported statement their unqualified indorsement for the last seventy years? . And why have they made use of this purported statement to sustain their claim that the ancient Americans employed Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic characters? Apostle Kelley in his "Presidency and Priesthood" commences Chapter XI. with a quotation from Anthon's letter to Howe, in which it is said that the transcript contained "Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sideways," and also one from Anthon's purported statement to Harris, in which Anthon is made to say that the "Caractors" are Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, and then proceeds to show that in agreement with these statements the ancient Americans did employ Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, Arabic, Greek, Hebrew and Roman letters. He says, p. 259: "Is there anything surprising, then, in the discovery of the records of these peoples, that they should be found to contain Hebrew, Greek, Chaldaic, Egyptian and Arabic characters? Would it not be more surprising if they were not found? Smith was right, then, in his announcement that he had discovered and had in his possession the true characters used in writing by those pre-historic nations, and Anthon's statement confirms that of Smith, as do also the historical facts cited." If Mr. Kelley does not indorse both the purported and the genuine statement of Professor Anthon, that the characters sent to him were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian, Arabic,

Greek, Hebrew and Roman, why does he say that "Anthon's statement confirms that of Smith" that he "had in his possession the true characters," which he (Kelley) claims were Hebrew, Greek, Chaldaic, Egyptian and Arabic? Why does he seek so diligently to show that the writings of the ancient Americans "would appear very much as set out by Professor Anthon"? I was associated with the Mormon Church from my early youth up to my young manhood and Mr. Smith is the first whom I have ever heard deny that "the advocates of Mormonism maintain that these characters are Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic."

In his effort to destroy the force of the letters of Anthon, Angell, Davis and Moldenke, Apostle Smith tries to show that they contradict one another. "This is the contradictory mass that Mr. Bays relies on as evidence in rebuttal. Mr. Angell finds signs on the fac-simile more or less closely resembling *Chaldee*; Mr. Moldenke finds signs that remind one of those on the Mesa Inscription; and Mr. Anthon finds Greek, Hebrew and Roman letters; while Mr. Davis finds *no resemblance to anything*."—*The Truth Defended*, p. 126.

But, in the first place, there can be no disagreement between Anthon on the one hand and Angell, Davis and Moldenke on the other, for they did not see the same transcript, that which Anthon saw containing letters arranged in *perpendicular* columns, and that which was submitted to the others containing characters arranged in *horizontal* rows. In the second place, the divergence of opinion, to which Mr. Smith calls the attention of his readers in order to divert their minds from the real point at issue, counts for nothing, as it is only such as may reasonably be expected when different individuals view marks put down at random as the "Caractors" are.

It would be almost an impossibility to make a mark without imitating, more or less closely, the characters of some written language, the resemblance being more noticeable to some minds than to others. To one of these writers the correspondence between some of the "Caractors" and the Chaldee is sufficiently close to be mentioned; to another they bear no resemblance to anything, not even shorthand. In the third place, these writers are a unit on the real point at issue. They are agreed that the "Caractors" are neither Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian nor Arabic, Angell stating that "the impression made is that the document is fraudulent;" Davis, that "there is not a letter to be found in the fac-simile submitted that can be found in the alphabet of any Oriental language;" and Moldenke, that none of the signs "bear a resemblance to Egyptian or Assyrian." No effort that Mormonism may make can vindicate the genuineness of the "Caractors;" they are neither Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian nor Arabic.

(2) *Are the "Caractors" American?*

Mormons universally insist that the characters said to have been submitted to Professor Anthon were those of the official language of the Nephites, and were in use in ancient times in both Americas from Peru on the south to the Great Lakes on the north. As the ancient Americans, like the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians, were in the habit of inscribing their hieroglyphics on imperishable materials, if the "Caractors" are genuine, we may expect to find them engraved on the monuments of the old nations of the New World. In order to ascertain whether or not characters similar to those said to have been submitted to Professor Anthon have been found among the antiquities of America, I wrote the following letter to the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution:

BUCHANAN, Michigan, Jan. 15, 1908.

SECRETARY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir—Inclosed you will find a fac-simile of the "Caractors" said to have been copied from the famous Palmyra plates by Joseph Smith and sent by him to Prof. Charles Anthon, of New York, in February, 1828. Mormons claim that these "Caractors" are "Reformed Egyptian," the language of the ancient inhabitants of America, and that Professor Anthon pronounced them Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic. Will you inform me if such characters have, to your knowledge, been found on any of the monuments or in any of the manuscripts of ancient America? Yours truly, CHARLES A. SHOOK.

To my inquiry I received the following reply:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 28, 1908.

MR. CHARLES A. SHOOK, Buchanan, Michigan.

Dear Sir—Your letter of January 15th has been referred to Dr. I. M. Casanowicz, of the Division of Historic Archæology, who states that the characters regarding which you make inquiry are neither Egyptian nor Chaldaic, Assyrian nor Arabic; and they have not been found on any American monument or manuscript. The slip on which the characters are represented is returned herewith. Very respectfully yours,

R. RATHBUN,

Assistant Secretary in charge of the National Museum.

If the "Caractors" are not Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic, and have not been found engraved on the monuments or inscribed in the manuscripts of ancient America, the honest and intelligent reader can come to no other conclusion than that they are frauds, which have been presented to the public in order to deceive, and frauds, too, which were not beyond the ability of a Smith and a Harris to execute.

Even the superficial observer who will only casually compare the "Caractors" with the Maya writing (Figures 18, 19, 20), the most advanced system of ancient America, will not fail to discover a difference between the two as great as that which exists between our own writing

and that of the Chinese. The two are fundamentally unlike in, at least, two apparent respects.

In the first place, the "Caractors" are simple figures, while the Maya glyphs are complex and are composed of a number of elements grouped together and sometimes surrounded by a rim, as in the Egyptian cartouch.

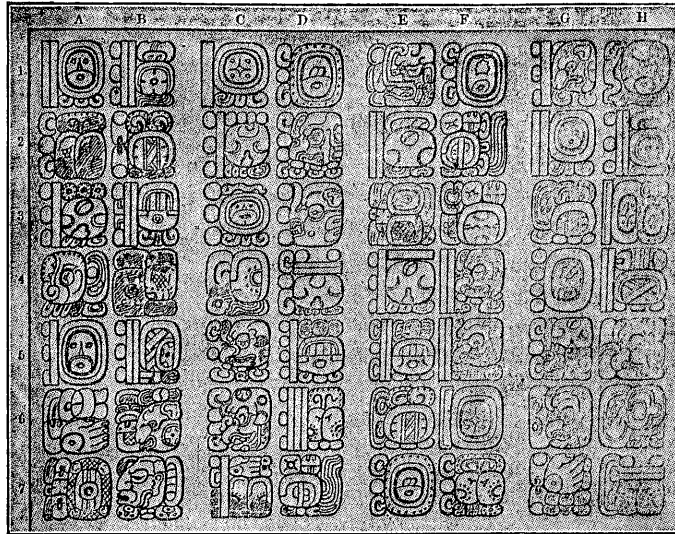


FIGURE 18. MAYA HIEROGLYPHICS FROM PALENQUE.
Permission U. S. Bureau Ethnology.

Secondly, the "Caractors" are not pictographic in any sense, while the Maya glyphs, or parts of them, generally retain their pictographic character, being the pictures of feet, hands, faces, etc., more or less conventionalized. Professor Thomas remarks as follows upon the frequent occurrence of human heads: "In all the Maya manuscripts we find the custom of using heads as symbols, almost, if not quite, as often as in the Mexican codices.

Not only so, but in the former, even in the purely conventional characters, we see evidences of a desire to turn every one possible into the figure of a head, a fact still more apparent in the monumental inscriptions."—*Third Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 64.



FIGURE 19. MAYA HIEROGLYPHICS FROM COPAN.

Nowhere in America have characters been found resembling those said to have been submitted to Anthon, except within the mound-area of the United States, and even there only upon plates and tablets which are acknowledged to be archaeological frauds by all good archaeologists. The reputation of much of the Mormon

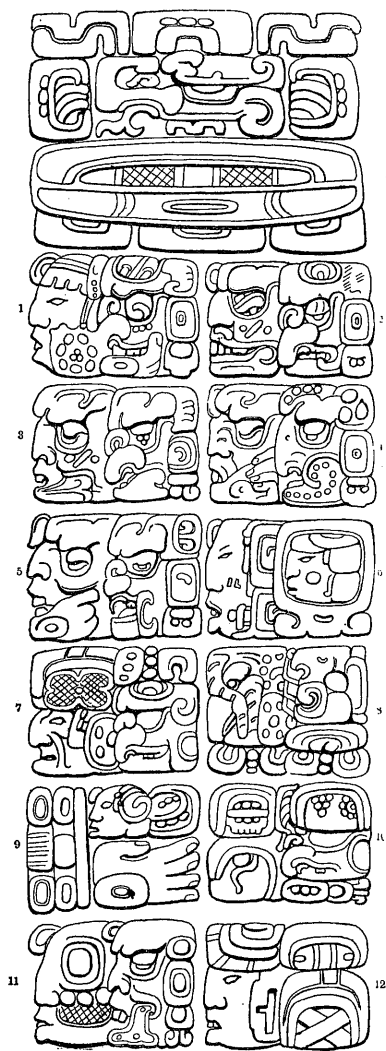


FIGURE 20.
Permission U. S. Bu. Ethno.

evidence has suffered greatly at the hands of recent research, as we shall soon see.

(3) *The "Caractors" Are, Many of Them, Deformed English.*

Instead of "Reformed Egyptian" many of the "Caractors" are deformed English, as any one will observe who will compare them with English letters, figures and signs. I have counted thirty-six different characters in the fac-simile, some of them occurring more than once, which are either identical with, or which closely resemble, the English. Figure 21 will illustrate this. The fact is that Joseph Smith, in drawing the transcript, employed different kinds and styles of English letters, changing a few of them to make the im-

posture less observable. Latter-day Saints are very quick to see a resemblance between the "Caractors" and the letters in the Maya and Egyptian alphabets of Le Plongeon; will they be as quick to see the similarity between the "Caractors" and the English? If similarity proves anything, it proves that the transcript is a bold, bare forgery and one not above the ability of a Smith or a Harris to execute.

MORMON "COLLATERAL EVIDENCE" FRAUDS.

From time to time, in different parts of the territory once inhabited by the Mound Builders, plates and tablets have been found containing supposed hieroglyphical writing. In some instances these "relics" have been of copper,

Mormon Caractors	English Characters
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
0	0
206	206
;	;
:	:
+	+
^	^
A	A
B	B
C	C
D	D
E	E
F	F
G	G
H	H
I	I
J	J
K	K
L	L
O	O
t	t
U	U
V	V
X	X
()	()
=	=

FIGURE 21.

but in most they have been of stone ingeniously engraved. Chief among these plates and tablets are the Grave Creek Tablet, said to have been found in the large burial mound at Grave Creek, West Virginia, in 1838; the Kinderhook Plates, found in a mound at Kinderhook, Pike County, Illinois, in 1843; the Newark Tablet, discovered by David Wyrick near Newark, Ohio, in 1860; the Davenport Tablets, taken from mounds near Davenport, Iowa, in 1877; and the remains of a copper musical instrument, found near Mendon, Illinois, in 1888.

These plates and tablets are among the choicest of the evidences of Mormonism, and Mormon writers devote considerable space in their works on American archæology to their description, asserting that they establish two of their claims: That the Mound Builders employed a phonetic system of writing, and that they wrote on metallic plates. Elder Etzenhouser writes: "The claim of the Book of Mormon that the ancient American nations had written on metallic plates, was thought to be its sure defeat; but plates and various materials containing hieroglyphical writing have since been found in such abundance that the claim is now fully sustained."—*The Book Unsealed*, p. 42. Following this he gives descriptions of the Kinderhook Plates, the Mendon Plates and the Davenport Tablets, having previously given an account of the Newark Tablet.

But of the plates and tablets mentioned there is not one whose claim to genuineness has been positively established, because of which they are all rejected by most archæologists, though two of them have found a few who have been willing to come to their defense. Some of these "relics" have been made and "planted" out of simple mischief; others, to establish certain religious beliefs; and still others, to be found and sold at

a fabulous price as specimens. But these facts the Mormons persistently ignore, repeatedly referring to these finds as though there were no question as to their genuineness.

The Grave Creek Tablet.

The Grave Creek Tablet was found on the 16th day of June, 1838, during the excavation of the large burial mound at Grave Creek, West Virginia. At the time of

its excavation this mound was owned by Mr. Jesse Tomlinson, the entire work of opening it, which cost twenty-five hundred dollars, being under the direction of Mr. Abelard B. Tomlinson. At first a shaft ten feet in height was sunk

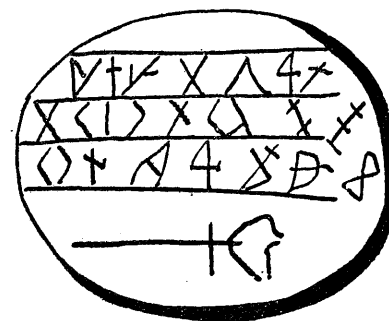


FIGURE 22. GRAVE CREEK TABLET.

into the mound upon the north side, along the original surface, to the depth of 111 feet, at the end of which a vault was discovered twelve feet long by eight wide and seven high. This vault was formed by upright timbers placed around the sides supporting others which served as a roof. The latter decaying away, a great mass of earth and stones had fallen into the interior. In this vault two skeletons were found, one of which was surrounded by 650 shell beads. After this another shaft was sunk into the mound from the summit, and, at a distance of thirty-four feet from the bottom, another chamber was discovered containing one skeleton surrounded by over

two thousand shell discs, two hundred pieces of mica, seventeen bone beads and copper bracelets and rings weighing seventeen ounces. It was in this vault that the tablet mentioned is said to have been found.

The Grave Creek Tablet is described as "an oval disc of white sandstone nearly circular in form, about three-fourths of an inch thick, and an inch and a half in diameter."—*The Mound Builders*, p. 91. On one of its sides were engraved three lines of "characters," twenty-two in all, and a peculiar symbol formed of a naked sword and a human head.

Many have been the attempts to decipher the supposed hieroglyphics on this tablet. One scholar found among them four characters which he claimed were ancient Greek; another claimed that four were Etruscan; five were declared to be Runic; six, ancient Gaelic; seven, old Erse; ten, Phenician; fourteen, old British; and sixteen, Celtiberic. M. Maurice Schwab, in 1857, translated the inscription to read: "The Chief of Emigration who reached these places (or this island) has fixed these statutes forever." At a conference of Americanists held at Nancy, in 1875, M. Levy Bing reported that the inscription contained twenty-three Canaanite letters which he translated as follows: "What thou sayest, thou dost impose it, thou shinest in thy impetuous clan and rapid chamois." And M. Oppert, to give additional variety, translated it: "The grave of one who was assassinated here. May God to avenge him strike his murderer, cutting off the hand of his existence."

But even among those who consider this tablet a genuine mound relic there is a strong doubt as to the characters representing a written language. MacLean, who believes that it was found as stated, says: "This stone has been given more importance than it really

merits. The inscription takes in too wide a range of alphabetical characters to represent one distinctive language. If it does represent a language, then inscriptions containing similar characters would have been found in different localities. If, in reality, it does represent a language, then the Mound Builders must be placed higher in the scale of civilization than any other nation has ever attained under similar conditions. That the stone or tablet was deemed of some importance by the owner is proved from the fact of its having been entombed with him. It may have possessed, to him, some mysterious importance in his journey to the future state of existence; and hence a charm to protect him from the evil influences that might beset him."—*The Mound Builders*, p. 94.

If, then, this stone is genuine, it may have been inscribed by the hand of an European and buried in the mound after 1492, as there is a strong probability that the mound is of comparatively recent erection; or it may have been engraved by an American Indian without any reference to an alphabet and without any intention of conveying an idea phonetically, the marks being simply put down at random and the whole used as an amulet or charm. Before this tablet can be made to do service as evidence that the Mound Builders employed an alphabet it must be proved that the characters or marks are alphabetic, and this can not be done.

Elder Phillips tells us that "some of the characters on this tablet resemble Book of Mormon characters transcribed by Joseph Smith."—*Book of Mormon Verified*, p. 34. But this proves nothing, as some of them more or less closely resemble the English; for instance, the letters A, D, T and X and the figures 1, 4 and 8. This shows the fallacy of such an argument.

But there are a number of reasons for believing this tablet to be a fraud

In the first place, its anomalous character would seem to prove it such. "Science and civilization," says Dr. Haven, "do not leave solitary monuments," and if the Mound Builders had possessed a written language we should find more evidences of it than a few characters carved upon a single piece of sandstone. Says Professor Thomas: "The folly of relying upon such relics as this Grave Creek Tablet as evidence of a written language is apparent from the above conclusions. That Schoolcraft and other savants mentioned could have believed the inscription to have been alphabetic, and a genuine mound-builder's relic, and yet made up of several alphabets, would be inconceivable but for the undeniable evidence. This simple fact ought to be sufficient to cast it aside as unworthy of consideration. However, it may be added that since Dr. Daniel Wilson's sharp criticism, and Professor Reed's critical examination of the evidence, this relic is discarded by most archæologists."—*Twelfth Rept. Bu. Am. Ethno.*, p. 632.

Again, the contention among those who excavated the mound in regard to who found it would seem to bring it further into disrepute. Mr. A. B. Tomlinson, who directed the work, declares: "I removed it with my own hands." And Mr. P. B. Catlett, who did the brickwork, just as strongly declares: "I was the man who found the stone." Besides this, a report current soon after the finding of the tablet that it had been manufactured by one David Gatewood, and dropped into the excavation as a hoax, has also done much to weaken the evidence of its genuineness in the minds of most archæologists.

For these and other reasons the tablet is pretty generally thought to be fraudulent. Colonel Whittlesey de-

clares that it "is now universally regarded by archæologists as a fraud."—*Archæological Frauds*, No. 33. Short says: "The 'Grave Creek Mound Tablet' we believe is now shown unquestionably to be an archæological fraud."—*North Americans of Antiquity*, p. 419. Foster says: "The alphabetical characters inscribed on the 'Grave Creek Stone,' and the 'Holy Stone of Newark' with its Hebrew letters, which have called out from philologists a wonderful amount of learning, one is disposed involuntarily to associate with the famous stone which served as the basis of Mr. Pickwick's fame."—*Prehistoric Races*, p. 400. While Brinton, after mentioning the graphic systems of the Mexicans and Mayas, the pictographs of the Panos, the quipu of the Peruvians and the wampum and mnemonic aids of other American tribes, remarks: "This exhausts the list. All other methods of writing, the hieroglyphs of the Micmacs of Acadia, the syllabic alphabet of the Cherokees, the pretended traces of Greek, Hebrew, and *Celtiberic* letters which have from time to time been brought to the notice of the public, have been without exception the products of foreign civilization or simply frauds."—*Myths*, p. 28.

When Mormon archæologists have established the genuineness of the Grave Creek Tablet it will then be time for them to discuss the close similarity of its characters to the "Caractors" of Joseph Smith's transcript.

The Kinderhook Plates.

The notorious Kinderhook Plates were found in a mound near Kinderhook, Pike County, Illinois, April 23, 1843. The account of their finding, as written by Dr. W. P. Harris, and published in the Mormon paper, the *Times and Seasons*, of Nauvoo, Illinois, is as follows:

characters. Said plates were very much oxidated. The bands and rings on said plates mouldered into dust on a slight pressure.

ROBERT WILEY,	IRA S. CURTIS,
W. LONGNECKER,	J. R. SHARE,
GEO. DECKENSON,	FAYETTE GRUBB,
G. W. F. WARD,	W. P. HARRIS,
W. FUGATE.	

This account of the finding of these plates has ever been put to good use by the Mormons. Whenever the claim that the Mound Builders employed a phonetic system of writing is questioned it is immediately referred to; and from the pulpit and through the press it is flung out as an answer to the challenge to produce the evidence that the ancient Americans wrote upon plates of metal.

Within a few days after the finding of these relics Joseph Smith came out with a translation of them. In his *Diary* for Monday, May 1, 1843, appears the following:

I insert *fac-similes* of the six brass plates found near Kinderhook, in Pike County, Illinois, on April 23, 1843, by Mr. R. Wiley and others. While excavating a large mound they found a skeleton about six feet from the surface of the earth, which must have stood nine feet high. The plates were found on the breast of the skeleton and were covered on both sides with ancient characters.

I have translated a portion of them and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham, through the loins of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the Ruler of Heaven and Earth.

Apostle Kelley gives us a *fac-simile* of the twelve sides of these six plates in his "Presidency and Priesthood," and also a long description of them copied from the *Quincy Whig*, and then adds: "There are characters on these plates that resemble letters in the Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Chaldaic and Hebrew alphabets, and they

are arranged in columns, resembling very much in form and arrangement, according to Professor Anthon, the ones that were submitted to him by Mr. Harris, as copied by Mr. Smith from the plates in his possession, from which he translated the 'Book of Mormon,' yet none would be so audacious as to presume to say that they had been copied by some 'bungling' hand, with the various ancient alphabets, as mentioned, before him, with a view to perpetrate a fraud."—*Presidency and Priesthood*, p. 283.

That the Kinderhook Plates were engraved by a "bungling" hand some have been just audacious enough to presume to say. We have on hand a full confession of the imposture by one of those implicated in it, and by that confession we learn that these plates were made of copper, not brass, by the "bungling" hands of Bridge Whitton, the village blacksmith, and that they were engraved by the "bungling" hands of two of his confederates, Robert Wiley and Wilbur Fugate, for the express purpose of hoaxing the Mormons.

Mr. Wilbur Fugate, one of the nine witnesses who signed the certificate given above, wrote the following letter to Mr. James T. Cobb, of Salt Lake City, Utah, which explains how and why this fraud was perpetrated.

MOUND STATION, Illinois, June 30, 1879.

MR. COBB:—

I received your letter in regard to those plates, and will say in answer that they are a humbug, gotten up by Robert Wiley, Bridge Whitton and myself. Whitton is dead. I do not know whether Wiley is or not. None of the nine persons who signed the certificate knew the secret, except Wiley and I. We read in Pratt's prophecy that "Truth is yet to spring up out of the earth." We concluded to prove the prophecy by way of a joke. We soon made our plans and executed them. Bridge Whitton cut them (the plates) out of some pieces of copper; Wiley and

I made the hieroglyphics by making impressions on beeswax and filling them with acid and putting it on the plates. When they were finished we put them together with rust made of nitric acid, old iron and lead, and bound them with a piece of hoop iron, covering them completely with the rust. Our plans worked admirably. A certain Sunday was appointed for digging. The night before, Wiley went to the mound where he had previously dug to the depth of about eight feet, there being a flat rock that sounded hollow beneath, and put them under it. On the following morning quite a number of citizens were there to assist in the search, there being two Mormon elders present—Marsh and Sharp. The rock was soon removed, but some time elapsed before the plates were discovered. I finally picked them up, and exclaimed: "A piece of pot metal!" Fayette Grubb snatched them from me and struck them against the rock and they fell to pieces. Dr. Harris examined them and said they had hieroglyphics on them. He took acid and removed the rust, and they were soon out on exhibition. Under this rock was dome-like in appearance, about three feet in diameter. There were a few bones in the last stage of decomposition, also a few pieces of pottery and charcoal. There was no skeleton found. Sharp, the Mormon elder, leaped and shouted for joy, and said Satan had appeared to him and told him not to go (to the diggings), it was a hoax of Fugate and Wiley's, but at a later hour the Lord appeared and told him to go, the treasure was there.

The Mormons wanted to take the plates to Joe Smith, but we refused to let them go. Some time afterward a man assuming the name of Savage, of Quincy, borrowed the plates of Wiley to show to his literary friends there, and took them to Joe Smith. The same identical plates were returned to Wiley, who gave them to Professor McDowell, of St. Louis, for his Museum.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }
BROWN COUNTY. } ss.

W. Fugate, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that the above letter, containing an account of the plates found near Kinderhook, is true and correct to the best of his recollection.

W. FUGATE.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30th day of June, 1879.

JAY BROWN, J. P.

The exposure of this fraud not only leaves the Mormon Church with one less prop for its claim that the Mound Builders wrote upon metallic plates and employed an alphabet, but it also proves Joseph Smith to be a false prophet and a deceiver for claiming to translate them.

The Newark Tablet.

The "Hebrew relics" found in mounds near Newark, Ohio, in the year 1860, are relied upon by Mormon archæologists to prove their claim that the ancient Americans were of Jewish descent. The description of these relics, as given in the *Prophetic Watchman* of September 14, 1866, is as follows:

"CURIOUS RELICS—ANCIENT ISRAELITES IN AMERICA.

"We are all more or less acquainted with the so-called 'Indian Mounds' found in various parts of our country. There are hundreds of them in Ohio alone—several near Newark, Licking County. Pipes, copper beads strung upon a vegetable fiber, human skeletons, skulls, bones of animals and birds, some charred by fire, as if they had been sacrificed upon a burning pile, have been obtained from them. For centuries it has been a most interesting subject of inquiry as to who built these mounds, and whence came their builders. Within the past few years some relics have been discovered, which are thought to throw light on the subject:

"The first is a little coarse sandstone, not quite an inch and a half high by about two inches long. It was found in the 'Wilson Mound,' and bears the face of a human being. On the forehead are five distinct *Hebrew characters*, which are interpreted to mean: 'May the Lord have mercy on him (or me) an untimely birth,' evidently an expression of humiliation.

"The second relic from the same mound is stone, closely resembling limestone. It is rather triangular than square in its form, and yet it differs widely from both. It represents an animal, and contains four human faces and three *inscriptions in Hebrew*, signifying devotion, reverence and natural depravity.

"The third stone was found in 1860, about three miles from Newark. It has a shape like a wedge, and is about six inches long, tapering at the end. On one end is a handle, and at the top are four *Hebrew inscriptions*.

"The last relic is an object of much interest. It was found in 1860, and has engraved upon it a figure of Moses, and the Ten Commandments. One side is depressed, and the reverse protrudes. Over the figure is a *Hebrew word* signifying 'Moses.' The other inscriptions are *almost literally* the words found in some parts of the Bible, and the Ten Commandments are given in *part and entirely*—the longest being *abbreviated*. The alphabet used, it is *thought*, is the *original Hebrew* one, as there are letters known in the Hebrew alphabet (not) now in use, but bearing a resemblance to them. All things on this stone point to the time *before Ezra*, to the lost tribes of Israel, and the theory is that some one of these tribes found their way into this continent, and settled where the State of Ohio now exists."—*Quoted in "Joseph the Seer,"* pp. 157, 158.

Apostle Blair also gives a number of other quotations from the periodicals of that time describing these tablets, and then remarks: "Now from these *relics* we learn just what was claimed by the Book of Mormon over thirty years before their discovery, (1) that the ancient inhabitants of America possessed a knowledge of, and wrote upon enduring substances, a modified form of the Hebrew language; (2) that they possessed the

writings of Moses and the prophets up to the times of Jeremiah, including *the first part of his writings to chapter 17, verse 9*, 'The heart is deceitful,' etc. . . . We find (3) that these sacred writings were hidden up in 'a stone box,' as were the plates of the Book of Mormon. Here, then, is a chain of evidence in support of the claims of the Book of Mormon that is as strong as it is strange, and one that can not fail to fasten conviction upon the mind of the unprejudiced enquirer, while it joyfully confirms the faith of the believer."—*Joseph the Seer*, pp. 160, 161.

The last relic mentioned in the *Prophetic Watchman* is the one that Mr. Blair refers to when he says that "these sacred writings were hidden up in 'a stone box.'" It is described by Mr. A. A. Bancroft as follows: "About eight miles southeast of Newark there was formerly a large mound composed of masses of freestone, which had been brought from some distance and thrown into a heap without much placing or care. In early days, stone being scarce in that region, the settlers carried away the mound piece by piece to use for building purposes, so that in a few years there was little more than a large flattened heap of rubbish remaining. Some fifteen years ago, the county surveyor (I have forgotten his name), who had for some time been searching ancient works, turned his attention to this particular pile. He employed a number of men and proceeded at once to open it. Before long he was rewarded by finding in the center and near the surface a bed of the tough clay generally known as pipe-clay, which must have been brought from a distance of some twelve miles. Imbedded in the clay was a coffin, dug out of a burr-oak log, and in a pretty good state of preservation. In the coffin was a skeleton, with quite a number of stone ornaments and emblems, and

some open brass rings, suitable for bracelets or anklets. These being removed, they dug down deeper, and soon discovered a stone dressed to an oblong shape, about eighteen inches long and twelve inches wide, which proved to be a casket, neatly fitted and completely water-tight, containing a slab of stone of hard and fine quality, an inch and a half thick, eight inches long, four inches and a half wide at one end, and tapering to three inches at the other. Upon the face of the slab was the figure of a man, apparently a priest, with long, flowing beard, and a robe reaching to his feet. Over his head was a curved line of characters, and upon the edges and back of the stone were closely and neatly carved letters. The slab, which I saw myself, was shown to the Episcopalian clergyman of Newark, and he pronounced the writing to be the Ten Commandments in ancient Hebrew."—*Native Races*, Vol. V., pp. 94, 95.

But this relic is a fraud.¹ After attracting world-wide attention and being made the basis of a vast amount of speculation, the true character of the Newark Tablet was exposed by accident after its owner's death. It seems that one David Wyrick, the county surveyor of Licking County, had espoused the belief that the Mound Builders were the descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes. Searching for years among their antiquities for evidence of this theory and finding none, he at last conceived the idea of manufacturing the tablet, burying it in the mound described and digging it up again in order to bring the scientific world to his belief. No one doubted his story until after his death, when the administrator, in cleaning up his office, found in a back room a number of pieces of slate upon which he had practiced carving Hebrew let-

¹ "Primitive Man in Ohio," Preface.

ters, and a Hebrew Bible with the identical figure of Moses, which appeared on the tablet, as a frontispiece. Archæologists have manifested considerable charity for Wyrick, however, believing that he had become half-crazed by repeated attacks of rheumatism and his failure to find the evidence he so long sought.

The best brief account of the operations of this man that I have seen is given in MacLean's "Mound Builders," pp. 119-121: "David Wyrick, of Newark, Ohio, was an uneducated man, but on the subject of mathematics possessed decided ability. He had held the office of county surveyor until he was forced to retire on account of long-continued attacks of acute rheumatism. He was regarded as an eccentric character and incapable of deliberate deception. He had adopted the idea that the Hebrews were the builders of the earthworks of the West, and as often as his disease would permit he sought diligently for proofs of his theory. His first discovery was made during the month of June, 1860. This discovery consisted in what is known as the 'Newark Holy Stone,' and was found about a mile southwest of the town, near the center of an artificial circular depression, common among the earthworks. As soon as he found it he ran away to the town, and there with exultation exhibited it as a triumphant proof of his Hebrew theory. Upon examination it proved to be a Masonic emblem representing the 'Key Stone' of an arch formerly worn by Master Masons. The Hebrew inscription has been thus rendered into English: 'The law of God, the word of God, the King of the earth is most holy.' The stone did not have the appearance of antiquity, and probably was accidentally dropped into the depression, and then covered over by the accumulation of loam and vegetable matter continually washed into the center of the cavity.

"Wyrick continued his researches and soon made a startling discovery. During the summer of 1860, with three other persons, he repaired to the spot where the stone mound had stood and there dug up the trough which had been re-entombed by the farmers in 1850. In the following November Wyrick, with five other men, met at this spot and made still farther examinations. They found several articles of stone, among which was a stone box enclosing an engraved tablet. Upon one side of the tablet is a savage and pugnacious likeness of Moses, with his name in Hebrew over his head. Upon the other side of this stone is an abridgment in Hebrew of the Ten Commandments. Archæologists never had much faith in the Holy Stone, and the discovery of Moses and the Ten Commandments soon established Wyrick's character as an impostor. 'Not long after this he died, and in his private room, among the valuable relics he had so zealously collected, a Hebrew Bible was found, which fully cleared up the mystery of Hebrew inscriptions "even in Ohio." This had been the secret and study of years by a poverty-stricken and suffering man, who, in some respects, was almost a genius. His case presents the human mind in one of its most mysterious phases, partly aberration and partly fraud.'"

The latter part of this quotation is an extract from Whittlesey's "Archæological Frauds," Tract No. 9.

It seems that others were also implicated in these frauds, as the following will show:

"A correspondent from Newark, Ohio, warns us that any inscribed stones said to originate from that locality may be looked upon as spurious. Years ago certain parties in that place made a business of manufacturing and burying inscribed stones and other objects in the autumn, and exhuming them the following spring in the

presence of innocent witnesses. Some of the parties to these frauds afterwards confessed to them; and no such objects, except such as were spurious, have ever been known from that region."—*Science*, Vol. III., No. 62, p. 467.

This is an editorial note supplementary to the account of the exhibiting of an inscribed stone, said to have been found at Newark, Ohio, by Dr. N. Roe Bradner, at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, which was published in the same magazine, Vol. III., No. 58, p. 334.¹

I am willing to let the reader decide for himself whether or not the inscribed stones from Newark constitute "a chain of evidence in support of the claims of the Book of Mormon that is as strong as it is strange, and one that can not fail to fasten conviction upon the mind of the unprejudiced enquirer,"

The Davenport Tablets.

In the year 1874 the Rev. Mr. Gass, an archæologist, began the exploration of a group of ten or twelve mounds about a mile below the city of Davenport, Iowa. These mounds were situated about two hundred and fifty feet from the Mississippi River and from eight to twelve feet above low-water mark. Excavations brought to light human bones and such articles as sea shells, copper hatchets, arrow-heads, pieces of galena, pieces of pottery, pipes and copper spool-shaped ornaments. One of the mounds in this group, known as Mound No. 3, which was about three feet high by sixty feet in diameter, was found to contain two graves. Only one of these was opened at that time and was found to contain five skeletons, two of them evidently intrusive burials. With

¹ March 14, 1884. "Fourth Rept. Bu. Am. Ethno.," p. 247.

the three which pertained to the original interment were found copper axes, carved stone pipes, bear's teeth, etc.

The second grave was not opened until the year 1877, when it was explored by Mr. Gass and a party of archæologists. Near the surface they found such modern relics as glass beads and the fragments of a brass ring, while at the bottom they found lying together on a bed

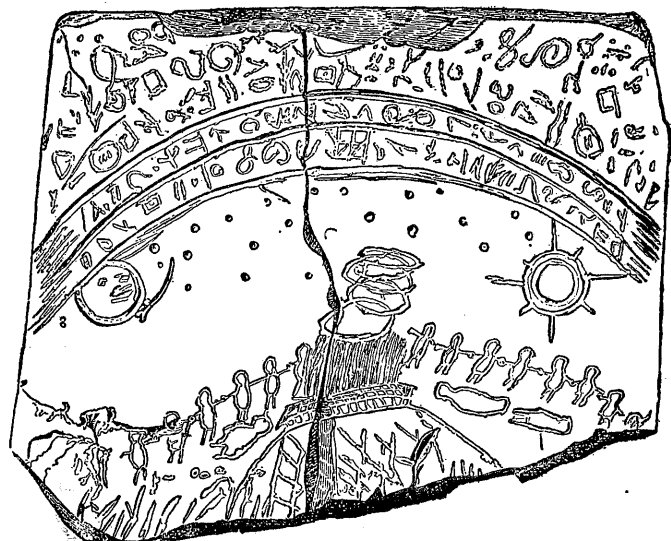


FIGURE 24. DAVENPORT TABLET.

of hard clay the two inscribed tablets about which so much has been written. The larger of these tablets is about twelve inches long by from eight to ten inches wide, and is made of dark coal slate; the smaller is about seven inches square and has small holes bored in the upper corners.

On one of the sides of the larger tablet is what has

been named the "cremation scene." It is the picture of a mound upon whose summit a fire is burning. Around this is a circle of figures, evidently going through some kind of a dance, as they have hold of hands, while lying prostrate on the ground are a number more, who, it has been suggested, are human sacrifices about to be offered. Above the cremation scene are symbols of the sun and moon and above these an arch formed by three curved, parallel lines between and above which are a number of peculiar characters, some of them Arabic figures and Roman numerals.

On the reverse side of this tablet is what has been called the "hunting scene." Grouped promiscuously beneath a large tree which occupies the foreground are a number of men, animals and birds. Of men there are eight; of bison, four; of deer, four; of birds, three; of hares, three; of Rocky Mountain goats, one; of fish, one; of wolves, one; and of nondescript beasts, three. It has been stated that this scene suggests the knowledge that the ancient Americans had of the flood, as four of the human figures are said to be females, while a fifth has the appearance of a patriarch, probably Noah.

The smaller tablet has been called the "calendar stone," as it contains twelve zodiacal signs and three concentric circles. I copy the following description of it from Elder Walker's "Ruins Revisited," p. 210: "This tablet . . . represents a planetary configuration, the twelve signs of the Zodiac, known to all nations of old, and the seven planets, conjoined with six different signs. . . . The figures of the signs are the same which we find depicted on Egyptian, Greek, Roman and other monuments. . . . The signs Aries, Taurus, Gemini, are plain enough. Gemini is expressed by two sitting children, like the constellation of Gemini, at present Castor and

Pollux. Cancer is expressed by the head and shears of the animal. Leo and Virgo are likewise naturally delineated; and Virgo, as it seems to me, bears in her hand Spica. The same is to be said of the figures of Libra, Scorpio and Sagitarius. The latter is expressed by a bow and arrow, being nearly invisible. Capricornus was, as we learn from the astronomical monuments of the Egyptians, a species of antelope, and the same animal, though a little deformed, resembles our Capricornus. Aquarius and Pisces explain themselves, for the former was on ancient monuments, very often symbolized by an ampora. . . . These short lines placed below Pisces, Gemini, Virgo and Sagitarius argue that at that time, at the beginning of spring, the sun stood in Pisces."

Another tablet of limestone was found in Mound No. 11 of this group by the president of the Davenport Academy of Science, Mr. Charles Harrison, in 1878. On this tablet were rudely drawn a circle representing the sun, a crescent representing the moon, and a figure astride the circle which was colored a bright red. This is said to be the "memorial of a great eclipse of the sun."

The conclusions that have been drawn from these tablets are given by Mr. Walker as follows:

"1. The primitive inhabitants of America were no pre-Adamites, nor offspring of the monkeys, but Noachites.

"2. They belonged to the same nation by which Mexico and South America were populated, after the dispersion of the nations in 1590 B. C.

"3. The literature of the American Indians evidences that they immigrated from Japan or Corea or proper China.

"4. They must have come over prior to the year 1579 B. C.

"5. Our Indians, as well as those in Mexico and South America, knew the history of the deluge, especially that Noah's family then consisted of eight persons.

"6. The primitive inhabitants of America were much more civilized than our present Indians.

"7. The former understood the art of writing and used a great many syllabic characters, based upon the Noachian alphabet, and wrote from left to the right hand, like the Chinese.

"8. They were acquainted with the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac, and they referred the same stars to the same constellations as did the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and others.

"9. They had solar years and solar months, even twelve hours of each day. They knew the cardinal points of the zodiac, and cardinal days of the year.

"10. Their religious creed was that of the Babylonians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, etc., because they worshiped the planets and the twelve gods of the zodiac by sacrifices."—*Ruins Revisited*, pp. 210, 211.

These conclusions, with the preceding description of the "calendar stone," were copied by Mr. Walker from the "Report" of the Davenport Academy for 1882. He expresses his faith in the genuineness of these tablets in these words: "Some persons whose positions require that they should object to the above report now, or forever hold their peace, have arisen and objected; but with the many concordant facts before it, it falls into line without a shock."—*Ibid*, p. 211.

But the genuineness of these relics has never been satisfactorily established. Many archæologists reject them without question, while some others regard them simply as within the ability of modern Dakota tribes.

A number of things have worked against their genuineness. For instance, among the characters between the second and third parallel lines in the so-called "cremation scene," the word TOWN is very plainly to be made out, while in the "hunting scene" one of the men has on a modern hat. The figure 8 also occurs three times and the letter O seven. Adding to these facts the fact that the so-called "calendar stone" has a decidedly modern and European appearance and the reader will observe that their claim to genuineness is, to say the most, a very doubtful one. Professor Thomas says: "A consideration of all the facts leads us, inevitably, to the conclusion that these relics are frauds: that is, they are modern productions made to deceive."—*Twelfth Rept. Bu. Am. Ethno.*, p. 642.

But the presence of English letters and numerals on these tablets can be very plausibly explained by the theory that they were the work of some modern Dakota who not only understood the pictography of his own tribe, but who was also familiar with a few English signs and characters. This is the opinion of a number of our archaeologists. Dellenbaugh says: "The Davenport tablet has been pronounced, on good authority, to be within the powers of the Dakota tribes."—*North Americans of Yesterday*, p. 68.

This seems to have been demonstrated by Mr. Horatio N. Rust, of Pasadena, California, who presented drawings of the scenes on these tablets to a number of Dakota Indians. He says: "As I made the acquaintance of several of the older and more intelligent members of the tribe, I took the opportunity to show them the drawings. Explaining that they were pictures copied from stones found in a mound, I asked what they meant. They readily gave me the same interpretation

(and in no instance did either interpreter know that another had seen the pictures, so there could be no collusion)."¹

According to their interpretation the mound in the "cremation scene" is simply a dirt lodge, like those in use among different Indian tribes, from the aperture in the roof of which smoke is seen ascending. The figures hand-in-hand indicate that a dance is in progress, while the three prostrate on the ground, instead of being "human sacrifices," are those of two men and a woman who have fallen down exhausted. The smoke issuing from the roof indicates that it is winter-time and that fire is needed. The readiness and uniformity with which the Sioux interpreted these tablets would seem to indicate that they are genuine mound relics, manufactured by a member, or members, of the Dakota tribes, while the English letters and numerals and the "modern hat" would just as plainly seem to imply that they were manufactured after the engraver had become familiar with our civilization. The ten conclusions quoted by Mr. Walker from the "Report of the Davenport Academy" are simply preposterous and ridiculous.

The Mendon Plates.

The following description of certain plates with inscriptions upon them, said to have been found near Mendon, Illinois, is taken from the *St. Louis Chronicle* of February, 1889:

"Rev. S. D. Peet, the well-known antiquarian, is reported as having found in Illinois two cross plates which have all the appearance of being rude musical instruments. These plates are about fifteen inches square and there are places for strings and a bridge. Along the

¹ "Fourth Rept. Bu. Am. Ethno.," p. 251.

lower edge is a row of hieroglyphics *similar* to those on the famous Palmyra plates, said to have been discovered by Joseph Smith and from which he interpreted the Book of Mormon."

This quotation is another very sweet morsel for the Mormon tongue. I find it in "The Book Unsealed," p. 44; "The Book of Mormon Vindicated," p. 45, and "The Book of Mormon Verified," p. 31.

Deciding that the best way to get at the truth in this matter was to write to Mr. Peet himself, I sent the following letter, dated at Buchanan, Michigan, August 6, 1907:

REV. S. D. PEET, Chicago, Illinois:

Dear Sir—In several Mormon works, treating on American archæology, I find the following quotation, said to be taken from the *St. Louis Chronicle* of February, 1889: "Rev. S. D. Peet, the well-known antiquarian, is reported as having found in Illinois two cross plates which have all the appearance of being rude musical instruments. These plates are about fifteen inches square and there are places for strings and a bridge. Along the lower edge is a row of hieroglyphics *similar* to those on the famous Palmyra plates, said to have been discovered by Joseph Smith and from which he interpreted the Book of Mormon." The Mormons employ this quotation to prove that the ancient Americans used hieroglyphics, similar to those said to have been discovered by Joseph Smith, and that they wrote upon metallic plates. Will you kindly answer the following questions: (1) Did you find such plates? (2) If so, are you certain that they are of pre-Columbian origin? (3) Did they have upon them "a row of hieroglyphics similar to those on the famous Palmyra plates said to have been discovered by Joseph Smith"?

Yours,
CHARLES A. SHOOK.

To this inquiry Mr. Peet replied from Chicago, August 8, 1907, as follows:

"As to the musical instrument which was found near Mendon, not far from Quincy, Illinois, near a house that

had been occupied by a Mormon, I have nothing more to say than has been published. It was probably the top of a fiddle which somebody tried to make out of a piece of sheet copper. There was no such thing as a revelation contained on it."

I also find a note in his "Mound Builders," p. 44, touching the same point: "It has been intimated that the Mormons planted these tablets."—Davenport.—"The recent find at Mendon, Illinois, of a brass plate or sounding-board of a musical instrument, with similar characters, near a house once occupied by Mormons, confirms this conjecture."

Can it be that the Mormons buried these plates in order to suggest to their finders the possibility of there being some truth in the claim of Joseph Smith that he found metallic plates in Hill Cumorah?

CONCLUSION.

In closing this chapter and this book, I wish to bring before the reader in summarized form a few of the facts which I believe have been fully established in the preceding pages:

(1) That the American race is, and has been, one from the close of the Glacial Period to the present, and that the American Indians are not descendants of the children of Israel.

(2) That the civilization of the ancient races was indigenous and was not derived from either Egypt or Palestine, the analogies brought forward to prove such a derivation being mere coincidences.

(3) That none of the ancient peoples had attained to the stage of culture attributed to the peoples of the Book of Mormon, being ignorant of the arts of smelting and working iron and the use of alphabetic characters.

(4) That the theory of extinct races—that is, extinct in the sense in which Mormons use the term—is a pure fallacy, the ancient Mound Builders, Cliff Dwellers, Central Americans, Mexicans and Peruvians being the direct ancestors, in both blood and culture, of those races found here by the whites.

(5) That the ancient races were neither Jews nor Christians, but pagans and worshipers of the elements and phenomena of nature, mountains, rocks, trees, beasts, birds and men.

(6) That the ancient empires were very small as compared with the continent and did not comprehend parts of both Americas. And

(7) That the trend of migration in the Northern Continent was from north to south, instead of in the opposite direction.

Written across the claim of the historical credibility of the Book of Mormon, in letters so bold that every intelligent, honest eye may read them, is the word "TEKEL," "thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

THE END.