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The Lamanites (5 December 1874)

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Abstract: Discusses the prophecy that the Lamanites will become a "white and delightsome people," and conjectures that the Three Nephites are ministering to them.

yard, all of whom were taken on board the schooner by their boats, manned by the survivors of the ill-fated *Birkenhead*. This accomplished, we made sail for Simon's Bay, but owing to contrary winds our voyage was tedious. As we neared the place of our destination, we saw a steamer coming towards us, which proved to be the *Rhadamanthus*, which had been dispatched to pick up the survivors of the *Birkenhead*, some of the men who had got on shore, having walked across the country and given the account of the disaster. You can form no idea of the anxiety of the people at Simon's Bay for the safety of the women and children, and those in the boats, for they had been informed that we had neither food nor water; and in one boat was thirty-nine souls, young and old, and about twenty in the other, besides those who were supposed to be on the wreck, and for eighty or ninety people to be without food or water for three or four days, naturally caused a great deal of anxiety for their safety. For those who had reached the shore did not know of our good fortune in being picked up by the *Lioness*.

We were taken in tow by the *Rhadamanthus*, towed into Simon's Bay, and transferred to H. M. S. *Castor*, where we found a sumptuous repast awaiting us.

We remained on board the *Castor* three days, and while there that generous disposition so characteristic of sailors was manifested towards the survivors. I have learned by experience that if a man has passed through danger and shipwreck he can sympathize with those in like circumstances, and hence the kindness of those on board the *Castor*, some of whom had passed through like perils.

H. M. ship *Amazon*, of twenty-six guns, Captain Trowbridge, shortly afterwards sailed into the harbor, and the survivors of the *Birkenhead* were transferred to her. The *Amazon* had been from England five years, stationed in the Chinese seas. She sailed from Simon's Bay in March, 1852, and after a run of a few days sighted St. Helena.

SEAS OF GRASS.

OUR western prairies stretching as far as eye can reach, and covered with tall grass moving with a wavelike motion in the wind, have often been compared to seas. But our prairies do not deserve the name of seas of grass as well as do the great llanos, or grass plains of South America.

The llanos of Venezuela occupy an area which Humboldt estimated at 153,000 square miles—a space equal to that occupied by the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania. These immense plains are as flat as the surface of the sea in a calm, and the whole weary level is covered with tall, rank grass.

We are told that one might travel over this dead plain for over eleven hundred miles, from the delta of the Orinoco river to the Andes of Pasto, and not encounter an eminence one foot in height. Yet there really is one slight inequality. This is called a *mesa*, and is a gentle knoll swelling very gradually to an elevation of a few yards. This slight elevation, rising so gradually that the eye does not perceive it, is the water-shed which divides the water that falls during the rainy season, sending a part to the southeast to feed the Orinoco, and a part to northwest to feed the streams flowing to the north.

During the rainy season, from April to the end of October, the great seas of grass became seas of shallow water. The tropical rains pour down in torrents, and the swollen rivers overflow their low banks, sending their floods over hundreds of square miles of the vast plain. Great numbers of horses and

cattle, which have not been able to escape to the vast elevation of the *mesa*, or water-shed, are drowned. When the water subsides, leaving behind a rich, fertilizing sediment, the great plains become beautiful with the tall, flowering grasses of the South American plants, while in the neighborhood of the rivers a few fan-palm trees wave their broad leaves, and delicate mimosas, or sensitive-plants, skirt the river shores.

This is the period during which the llanos deserve their name as seas of grass. Later in the season, when the thirsty earth and heated air have succeeded in drinking up the last remains of the overflow of water, the llanos might be called seas of dust, for the grass has been burnt to powder by the intense dry heat, and the air is filled with dust raised, says Mangin, in his "Desert World," by currents caused by local differences of temperature, even when there is no wind. The dust thus moved in stifling waves is sometimes still farther agitated by opposing winds. When these meet, the dust and sand are caught up into enormous pillars with broad tops spreading out like inverted pyramids, which whirl through the hot air like the sand-spouts of the Saharan Desert, or the water-spouts of the ocean.

The poor animals, which during the rainy season were in such peril of drowning, are now, after a short period of happiness exposed to equal danger and worse pain, from the dry waves of dust and an agonizing thirst. How eagerly, then, they listen to the first sounds of the distant thunder, heralding the welcome, life-restoring rain! It comes; and for awhile, before the floods reach their height, the vast plains, covered with verdure and furnishing food to thousands of happy animals, become again the gentle waving seas of grass.—*St. Nicholas*.

THE LAMANITES.

BY JOHN NICHOLSON.

(Continued.)

THE writer's belief is that the personages who are visiting and instructing the Lamanites are those apostles of the Nephites, to whom it was given never to taste of death, but to live to behold the doings of the Father unto the children of men until the coming of Christ in His glory, in the clouds of heaven, when those blessed apostles will be changed in the twinkling of an eye, which means, by comparison, that the transition will be exceedingly quick. These good men had the great desire that they might bring the souls of men to Christ while the world shall stand. This was a very good desire, and the Lord was well pleased with them for having it, and He is not only well pleased with them on that account, but He will also be well pleased with you my young readers, if you have it in your hearts to do good to your fellow creatures.

Seeing that the desire to live to bring the souls of men to Christ was granted to those Nephite apostles, is it not reasonable to suppose that they are the ones who are seeking to bring the Lamanites to a knowledge of the Savior? If it be not they who can it be? For they had the promise of being permitted to do this great work, and it appears that they are being used as instruments in the hands of God in bringing to pass the promises made to the Nephite fathers, that the Lamanites who should live on this land in the latter days should receive the record of their forefathers (the Book of Mormon) and be brought to a knowledge of their Savior. This is bringing souls to Christ.

Since the writer commenced this article regarding the Lamanites he has been enabled to glean some more information

on the subject, which he hopes will be as interesting to the general readers of the INSTRUCTOR as it is to him, to whom it is intensely so, as an important matter connected with the progress and development of the work of God.

It will probably be remembered by most of the readers that there was some trouble with the Indians of the Uintah Reservation about two years ago, and that, in consequence, General Henry A. Morrow, then Commandant at Camp Douglas, held a consultation with them at Springville, in which he was assisted by Elders A. K. Thurber, then Bishop of Spanish Fork, Lyman Woods, of Springville, and others. The result of the consultation was that several of the leading Indians, or, as they should really be called, Lamanites, went to Washington, to see the President of the United States and other leading men of the nation, that they might lay their grievances before them, with a view to having their condition made better, they being dissatisfied, and probably with good reason, with the Indian agents of the government. After these Indians of the delegation had been to Washington and returned home, one of them related a very curious incident which he said occurred to him while there. He told his experience, so the writer is informed on good authority, to Brothers A. K. Thurber, S. P. Davies and A. L. Farnsworth, and the substance of the narrative as told the writer, is to the effect that, while in his room, in a hotel, at Washington, he was visited by a personage, on three different evenings, who conversed with him in a similar strain to what the messengers did who visited Toobuka, as described in the first chapter of this article.

The chief described the visitor as a person with a very beautiful, bright face, and in every way like a man. His conversation was God-like. He told the chief that it was very wrong to kill people or to steal, and counseled him never to do such things. He also told him about the Book of Mormon being a record of the forefathers of the Indians, and told him that there was still another book about the fathers of the Lamanites that the Lord would reveal, but when it would be brought forth the Lamanites would be a very different people from what they are now. They would be peaceful and industrious, and would cultivate the ground like the whites. He also stated that the "Mormons" were the friends of the Indians, and other things of similar purport.

A matter that is coincident with one statement of the Indian regarding what he said the visitor told him about the coming forth of another record, is that the Lord has promised in His due time, when the people are more righteous, to reveal the portion of the plates which were not translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, but which were sealed, and which are probably still in care of the angel from whom Joseph Smith received the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated; and this was probably the other book or record referred to by the messenger.

(To be Continued.)

WASTED TIME.—Lost wealth may be restored by industry.—the wreck of health regained by temperance.—forgotten knowledge restored by study.—alienated friendship smoothed into forgetfulness.—even forfeited reputation won by penitence and virtue. But who ever looked on his vanished hours.—recalled his slighted years.—stamped them with wisdom.—or effaced from heaven's record the fearful bolt of wasted time?

THE greatest truths are the simplest, and so are the greatest men.

ANIMAL PLAGUES IN INDIA.

From the Pen and Plow.

As an Anglo-Indian of some twenty years' experience, I have often chuckled over the ignorance of folks at home on what really constitutes the animal plagues of life in India. There is an impression abroad that snakes and scorpions are as common in an Indian bungalow as black beetles and spiders in a London lodging house; but so far from this being the case, in all my Indian service I have never yet seen a cobra inside a house, and I dare say I could count on my fingers all I have seen out of doors when shooting, hunting, etc. As for scorpions, I was stung by one once—and suffered very little pain by the way—but they are in no wise so plentiful as is supposed; indeed, in a clean, well-swept house, I doubt if the proprietor would see two scorpions in a year, and even these would most probably be in situations where a sting would be impossible. I have known a cheetah to take refuge under a lady's piano, and that, too, in one of the largest military stations of Southern India; but these are not the creatures from which the exile of the East suffers daily and constant annoyance; we must look elsewhere for the plagues that fever his blood, in combination with the heat and the servants. At the head of all I should place the Indian crow—*corvus splendens*, I believe he is scientifically called—a sooty, diamond eyed rascal, the pest of the country and the people. In the Madras Club, and in many private houses, they keep a servant with a pellet bow in his hand on purpose to drive away these impudent birds from the reception room; nevertheless, despite peon and pellets, *corvus splendens* will alight on the handsome punkahs, and maliciously defile them, and such books and papers as may be on the tables beneath. The fine statue by Chantrey of the revered Sir Thomas Munroe, at Madras, is a favorite resting place of this rascally bird, to whom nothing is sacred, and the general's head is so whitened by the crows that he might well be called Sir Thomas Guano.

The cunning of this crow is incredible. From what I have seen myself, I can quite believe Sir Emerson Tenent's story of the one crow pulling the dog's tail while the other snatched the bone from between his paws, for I have observed them do almost everything but talk, and they are especially great in the thieving line. It would almost seem as if the spirits of innumerable Fagins and Artful Dodgers must animate the crow, in accordance with the Hindoo doctrine of transmigration of souls, and I am sure that even Jack Sheppard himself could not "crack a crib" more speedily and effectively than this cunning bird. Sometimes, however, he catches a Tartar, in the shape of the cook, when on his marauding expeditions. The natives dislike killing these birds, even when caught in the act of carrying off their curry, but they revenge themselves upon the thief, when they catch him, after the humane fashion of the mild Hindoo, and pluck the bird all over, leaving him nothing but his wings and tail to get away with. A most miserable object does the ex-*corvus splendens* present under these circumstances. He is a veritable scarecrow, and I imagine soon dies of hypochondria or melancholia on the ledge of a roof.

The crow is a bold bird too, and I will give an instance of his audacity. One time my house became so infested with crows that I determined to thin their numbers with a breech-loader. Before this the crows and myself were on as good terms as was possible under the circumstances. They didn't "caw, caw," I believe, more than they could help about the