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Looking Back at Ancient America

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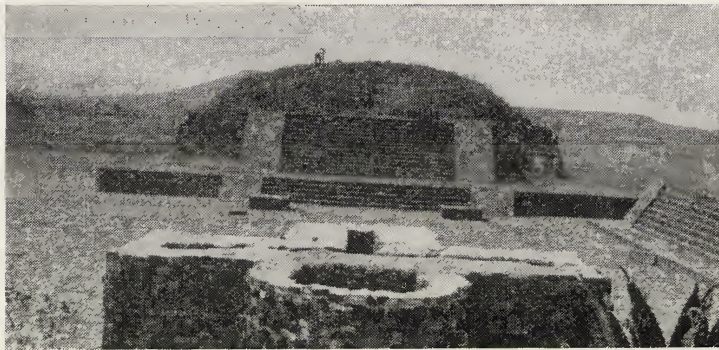
LOOKING BACK AT *Ancient America*

By WILLIAM and DEWEY FARNSWORTH



CEMENT BLOCKS IN MUSEUM AT SAN JUAN TEOTIHUACAN

Throughout Mexico and especially in San Juan Teotihuacan which is twenty-eight miles northeast of Mexico City, are found evidences of cement of superior quality. While the modern grades are composed chiefly of coarse gravel with a topping of cement, the ancients used fine sand for their base, effecting a product which has endured for hundreds of years. Added to this, these ancient builders seemed to have perfected also the art of coloring cement, remnants of which are found in numerous places. These huge blocks of cement in the museum at Teotihuacan are covered with hieroglyphics and pictures depicting the art of writing in its primitive form.



PYRAMIDS AT TOLUCA

(Above and Below)

Near Mexico City is situated the picturesque little village of Toluca whose archaeological zone of about eleven pyramids has recently been uncovered. Only three mounds have been entirely excavated, "Calmecatl" or priests college on the lower level, "Quetzalcoatl" pyramid higher up, and above this the "Temple of Tlaloc" and "Tzompantli" or house of skulls, on the outer wall of which may be seen ten sculptured skulls in stone, likewise protruding from the same walls 250 "pegs" of stone four inches in diameter to which it is thought were hung the heads of sacrificed prisoners. These pyramids are formed of uncut stones and cement and the round structure shown in the picture is the only one of its kind to be found on the American continent. The round open excavations in the foreground have been a source of dispute to archaeologists as to their use. They may have been cisterns for the storage of water, or grain bins. Some have even ventured the opinion that because of their blackened interiors they were used as fire boxes for the melting of ores.



Brevities

By Albert L. Zobell, Jr.

ACTUALLY there is a difference of only seven hundred ninety-three words between the number of words attributed to Jesus of Nazareth, as recorded by Matthew, whose account of the Savior's career is more complete than any other of the New Testament authors, and the number of words uttered by the resurrected Christ during His ministry on the American continent, as recorded in the Book of Mormon in Third Nephi. St. Matthew gives 14,148 words and Third Nephi 13,355 words as spoken by the Redeemer.

But Nephi, referring to the instructions the assembled throngs received from Christ, freely admitted: "And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach the people." (3 Nephi 26:6.)

We may contrast the comparative scarcity of direct information in these two books with the mass of knowledge that daily comes within our grasp: a metropolitan newspaper could print the 27,503 words quoted by both Matthew and Nephi in less than four and one-half pages of newsprint, while a radio station could easily broadcast the same information in four hours and forty-five minutes. The news editor figures that eight hundred words fill a column, eight columns make a page, and a radio announcer averages one hundred words a minute.

Sixty-one men have become members of the Quorum of the Twelve during the past one hundred and six years. Their average age upon appointment has been forty and three-fourths years. They have served for an average of twenty years each. The youngest Apostle to be ordained was George A. Smith, who was twenty-two years of age; the oldest to be appointed was Charles W. Penrose, at seventy-two. Alonzo A. Hinckley had the shortest career as an active member of the Council of the twelve: two years and two months. Franklin D. Richards was a quorum member for the longest period: fifty years and ten months.

Six of the original Apostles, chosen in 1835, lost the faith and were excommunicated. Eleven of the sixty-one Apostles were excommunicated; two of these returned to the Church. Two Apostles suffered martyrdom for their belief.

Twenty Apostles attained office before the Saints settled Utah; one of these, Willard Richards, was ordained while on a mission in England.