ANCIENT AMERICA.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, in a recent lecture in San Francisco upon the above subject, took occasion to say that his face once crimsoned in Egypt when asked by a scholarly native engaged in the Cairo Museum how the buried and half-buried cities of Central America and the pyramidal ruins of Yucatan and southern Mexico compared with those of Egypt. The lesson was: "Visit and study the wonders of your own country before traversing foreign lands." The speaker pronounced the railroad from Vera Cruz to the City of Mexico a splendid specimen of engineering. The Aztec Anahuac, the vale of the Montezumas, has an area of some 600 square miles. It was the sunny home of the old Aztecs. The Aztec and Toltec relics preserved in the City Museum of Mexico were intensely interesting, inasmuch as they established the fact of maritime relations and inter-oceanic intercourse between the Toltecs and the Phœnicians and Egyptians. As the Lamentian rocks, far to the north of us, constitute the oldest range of rocks in the world; as Cholula is considered the oldest pyramidal structure known, why may it not be true that this is the old world, and that the Egyptians learned pyramid-building from the ancient Americans of this continent? "I saw," said the speaker, "carved upon templed ruins in Yucatan, hawks' and other birds' heads similar to those upon the temples, tombs and obelisks of Egypt. Among the ruins of Uxmal and Palenque I saw the carved cross and the same phallic symbols so common in India, Phœnicia and the East; and I further saw the chiseled serpent, the mummy-shaped sarcophagus, the winged rod and the lamp immortal, so frequently seen in Egyptian tombs and temples. Few men of research doubt the existence and sinking of the Atlantis Isle; doubt that there were commercial relations in ancient times between this country, Toltecs probably, and the old nations of Europe and Asia. Strabo, living before Christ, said 'that the art of night-sailing was taught in ancient Tyre.' This indicates a knowledge of the mariners' compass. Possibly the second expedition sent out by Necho II, an ancient Egyptian king, reached this continent. The first expedition of this king sailed down the Indian ocean, doubled the Cape, and entered the Pillars of Hercules. The ancients in some respects equaled if not excelled us. The Aztecs conquered the Toltecs and then adopted more or less of their arts and sciences. The calendar stone that now rests against the side of the Roman Catholic Cathedral in the City of Mexico is a Toltec rather than an Aztec production. Is it asked, 'Who were the Toltecs?' They were the descendants of the Nahuas, and this was a conglomerate nationality, made up of the autochthonic races and the remnants of those who peopled the Atlantis Isle. Traveling in Yucatan is hardly safe and very inconvenient. Merida, the capital, has but one hotel, and that is kept by a Spaniard. It is 65 miles from Merida out to Uxmal. The Maya Indians in these regions are friendly, but the southern tribes are warlike."

FARM LIFE.—A writer in *Scribner's Magazine* asserts that the farmer, having the most sane and natural occupation, ought to find life pleasant. He alone, strictly speaking, has a home. How can a man take root and thrive without land? He writes his history upon his field. How many ties, how many recourses he has; his friendship with cattle, his team, his dog, his trees; the satisfaction in his growing crops, in his improved fields; his intimacy with nature, with bird and beast, and with the quickening elemental forces; his co-operations with the clouds, sun, seasons, heat, wind, rain and frost. Nothing will take the various social distempers, which the city and artificial life breed, out of a man like farming—like direct and loving contact with the soil. It draws out the poison. It humbles him; teaches him patience and reverence, and restores the proper tone to his system. Cling to the farm, make much of it, put yourself into it, bestow your heart and your brain upon it, so that it shall savor of you and radiate your virtue after your day's work is done.

FINGER ROCK.—Echo canyon, in Utah, contains many remarkable features in the way of rock formation, caused by erosion or the wearing away of the soft soil, leaving hard rocks prominent. These assume fantastic shapes, which have been named according to the resemblance which they are supposed to bear to the object from which they are named. Hence Finger Rock, as in our illustration, Pulpit Rock, Devil's Slide, and numerous others.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

The recent difficulties concerning the obelisk which the Khedive of Egypt presented to Americans, had its origin in the natural dislike of the Egyptians to the dismantling of their country of works of art. The *Young Egypt*, published at Alexandria, in Arabic and French, expresses its sentiments in the following manner:

"America is making preparations to take away from us the sole obelisk of Cleopatra which we now possess. This news astonishes us, and we cannot believe that it is true. This monument belongs to the country, and no one can dispose of it without the authorization of the nation. If this be allowed, we may find some day that the pyramids are transformed into stone quarries and used for building houses. The time has come when more attention should be given to the preservation of our artistic wealth, and more respect accorded to the vestiges of the past, which once made Egypt glorious."

The New York *Star* some time ago published a long account of the artificial manufacture of this obelisk by an American, who was employed for the purpose by the Khedive, at the time of the donation of a similar one to England. It was alleged that the religious superstitions of the people would not permit the removal of the original, and so it was resolved to hoodwink them into the belief that an imitation obelisk would be palmed off on the English. While to the British the Khedive explained that the original would be sent to England and the imitation kept to satisfy the religious prejudices of the priests. So the American sculptor made an exact counterpart of the original, done in cement after the manner of a Portland cement pavement. Of course there is nothing fabulous in the *star* story. In any event it will not make much difference to New York whether the obelisk is original or a base imitation, provided it came from Egypt, it will do. We sympathize with the Egyptians in their efforts to stop the removal of their works of art. The removal of a pyramid is well suggested by *Young Egypt*. We bespeak one for the Pacific coast. —*Mining and Scientific Press.*

FINGER ROCK, ECHO CANYON, UTAH.