

HARDWARE IN HISTORY.

An extremely interesting address on the subject of "Hardware in History" was delivered before the Massachusetts Hardware Dealers' Association, by Mr. A. W. Parmelee. We cannot give the whole of it to-day, but shall make copious extract.

Mr. Parmelee begins by stating that a grave has been unearthed on the continent of America covered with strata and soil of geological formation, which it must have taken 10,000 years to form. Its hewn stone casing and inscriptions give evidence of the chisel and the hammer. The ornaments and the kitchen hardware enclosed with the body are cunningly wrought and well-devised. Evidence accumulates that nations have flourished and disappeared, upon this continent, so far back in time that the mind cannot conceive it.

We have mummies that are older than any in Egypt. These, in turn, are antedated by other peoples long since lost in antiquity. Ages before the flood they were raising corn in Ohio, and mining copper, silver and gold in various localities; they were weaving cloth, making dyes of all colors, from herbs, berries and minerals. The facts revealed point to a people who filled teeth with gold, and who operated for cataract in the eye—one of the most delicate attempts known to modern surgery. If this remote people could do these things, shall we suppose that they did not have the finest tools, and that they did not know all about fashioning, tempering and polishing them? From whom should they obtain these and similar tools except from the hardware merchant?

The American nations built public works as great or greater than any known in Europe. The Peruvians had public roads two thousand miles long. Humboldt pronounced them among the most stupendous works ever produced by man. They built magnificent bridges of stone, and even invented suspension bridges thousands of years before they were introduced to Europe. In Central America and Mexico the wonderful ruins tell of a dense population. One city covers a space six miles in diameter. Its long avenues are lined with ruins of public buildings, palaces, factories, edifices and halls, in continuous lines, like our modern cities. These evidences of former grandeur cover an immense territory, including many of our Southern and Western States. One fort in the little Miami River, Ohio, has a circuit of four or five miles, and an embankment of 20 feet high. It could garrison 60,000 men, with their families and provisions.

They had a chain of fortifications reaching from the State of New York across Ohio to the Wabash, and many other works of equal magnitude; yet nowhere in history can I find an ancient spade or shovel or wheelbarrow.

In the valleys of the Mississippi and tributaries, and throughout Ohio and many other portions of this country, are evidences of pre-historic man which baffle our present knowledge. Whatever the purpose of these mounds was, the fact that there are over 10,000 of them in Ohio gives some idea of the extent of the ancient people who built them. They are far more numerous in Southern localities, and in the Gulf of Mexico. To have such works possible, under any circumstances, there must have been settled life with its accumulations and its organized industries. They had their manufacturers and merchants; and they used implements of agriculture, of war, and of peace. No trace of their dwellings, or their factories, or stores is left. Their circular earthwork enclosures are perfect circles, and their square enclosures as perfect squares. They are constructed with geometrical precision, which implies a knowledge of science. Implements made of copper, silver, obsidian and greenstone, finally wrought, are found in abundance. Their axes, single and double, adzes, chisels, drills, or gravers, lance-heads, knives, bracelets, pendants, and the like, of copper; their ornaments made of silver and mica from the Alleghenies, and shells from the Gulf of Mexico, all testify to their organized industries. They had the art of spinning and weaving.

Some of the wrought ornaments of the mound builders equal in finish and beauty the finest manufactured by the ancient Peruvians. They made chain; and they had a great store of copper, flax, and other rich commodities.

The history of the conquest of Mexico reads like a fairy tale. Our present object, however, is to reflect that these great peoples had their merchants, their manufacturers; and that they engaged in the hardware business as we do to-

day. The ancient graves disclose almost every article of hardware known to us at the present day: bodkins, screws, horse shoes, shawl pins, buckles, knives, helmets, shields, tweezers, door-keys, sheep shears, &c.

While it appears that in very ancient times the natives of Central America possessed copper implements for tilling the fields, and knew the use of the chisel, researches show that the use of the axe and hatchet, in various forms, the blow-pipe, the cooper adze and the meat-chopping knife, are far back in time. They made nails; and they are believed to have brought the manufacture of bronze to great perfection; and are even said to have possessed the art of tempering brass.

Those of us who have seen iron pipes buried in the earth return to oxides and to sand in a few years' time, and those of us who wonder what becomes of all our pins, can understand that through the ages that have elapsed, all traces of ordinary implements of hardware may well have disappeared again and again; nevertheless, bones and implements have been found in certain strata of the earth, the age of which is known to geologists. Some of these long preceded the flood. The more enduring stone is naturally found where perishable hardware of other varieties has disappeared.

In a pre-historic cave in France there have been found the remains of the bear, and of man, together with numerous well-made implements of stag or reindeer's horn, carefully fashioned and bevelled, with holes drilled therein; knives and other weapons; and the bear's tooth carved in the shape of a bird's head and drilled. This cave had a cement floor or layer of made-ground of an ossiferous and vegetable character, strengthened with fragments of stone. There are also ashes and charcoal, showing the existence of a fire.

The use of the bow appears to have been known from the beginning of time; and the bow-drill of our present day appears through all the history of antiquity. The flint arrow-head and the long bow are also common to mankind, in all ages, and in all lands. Stone implements of various kinds, and in some cases for uses which we can hardly conjecture, also appear to have accompanied man almost from his earliest stages. The varying types of these stone implements mark the date of the starting point of manufactures and the arts. We find among them flint knives, scrapers, agricultural implements, and domestic utensils. We have found, in this country, immense beds of flint flakes, showing that these implements were made at regular factories, and the chips and imperfect implements found in these beds indicate that they were made upon a very large scale; and that there was the manufacturer, and hence the merchant; and, of course, the drummer.

The manufacture of tomahawks, scrapers and chisels, and the skill required in fitting them to handles, gave employment to large numbers of men. These men were skilled mechanics, and had all the questions of wages, hours of labor, etc., which we have to-day. Perhaps they had their labor unions. These are the primitive hardware manufacturers. The potter's art we are not discussing, but it also dates back to the earliest epoch of man. How soon the potter's wheel or lathe was known we cannot yet determine.

Implements made of reindeer horn, shark's teeth, teeth of the cave bear, and of polished bone, are also found; while the needle, having an eye pierced at the base, was manifestly known to the cave dwellers and to earliest man. Bodkins, stilettons, saws and needles are found. The perfect flint drill, with sharpened point and cutting edge, also appears in the Stone Age. The spoon, made from the reindeer's horn, and delicate instruments made from polished horn and bone; the flint saw and the chisel; the bone harpoon and the horn comb were in use by the cave dwellers.

The plow is found in Ancient Egypt and in Ancient Peru; the axe of the Stone Age in Europe is the axe of the Stone Age in this country; the stone arrow-head of Switzerland is the same as the stone arrow-head of America.

The bronze chisel and the spear-head of oldest Europe are almost identical with those of North America. Both countries knew the use of the magnet, the signs of the zodiac, and they calculated eclipses, and watched the periods of the planets and constellations. The carpenter's and mason's tools of oldest Europe are almost identical with those we use to-day. Even the obelisks of Egypt have their counterpart in America. The division of time employed

at Thebes was strikingly similar to that found in use in Mexico. The round towers of ancient Ireland and Scotland are the same as those in New Mexico and Colorado. Ancient Phœnician idols of the horned god Baal are the same as those found in Dakota and Peru. Coins of ancient Tyre and of Central America are strikingly similar in size and in the device thereon.

We find in this country mounds shaped like the elephant, yet it is known that the elephant never existed here. In ancient Mexico, also, idols and bas-reliefs, faithfully portraying the elephant, have been found. These coincidences are mentioned to show that at various times, through vast antiquity, the old world and the new have, in some way, come together, and have interchanged knowledge, arts, forms of governments, implements of war and of agriculture.

Now who were the venturesome and ambitious men who undertook these voyages, and what was their incentive? I answer that it was the traders; and that they sold implements of war, of husbandry, of the chase, and of the domestic life; in other words they sold hardware and were the drummers. They pushed out into all quarters of the earth. Hardware and civilization have gone together since the Glacial Period.

The hardware implements found in these ancient graves record the progress of man, and fix his stage in the advancement of the race. Since time began commerce has been the great educator, explorer and mover of the world; and in the forefront of these exploits is the hardware merchant.

HAMILTON RETAIL GROCERS.

The last assembly of the Hamilton Retail Grocers' Association since the first of the year was the annual meeting. The reports of the secretary and treasurer showed the association to be in a flourishing condition. The election of officers resulted as follows:

President—A. Ballantine.

First Vice-president—J. O. Carpenter.

Second Vice-president—J. C. Bolligan.

Secretary—W. R. Harvey.

Treasurer—C. Bremser.

Executive Committee—C. H. Peebles, J. H. Horning, John Ronan, F. R. Close and A. Hayes.

Auditors—C. Holt and G. Powell.

Mr. J. H. Horning reported that the 9 o'clock Saturday closing system gave satisfactory results, and asked the other members to try it.

Mr. Adam Ballantine, who was re-elected president, made one of his neat speeches in again accepting the office. He reviewed the work of the association, and expressed pleasure at being able to report its affairs to be in such a satisfactory condition. Messrs. J. Ronan, F. R. Close, A. Ballantine, J. O. Carpenter and C. H. Peebles were appointed a committee to arrange for the purchase of glass jars for the coming season. The secretary, Mr. Harvey, read a communication from Mr. E. Sutton, secretary of the London Retail Grocers' Association, stating that the question of the inspection of the weights and measures had been discussed by that association, the feeling being that the present system of charging the grocer a fee is unjust and exorbitant. The London association expressed the opinion that the inspector should be paid a regular salary. The matter was left over for discussion at the next meeting.

LAKE OF THE WOODS COAL.

W. W. Watson has just returned from a trip to Buffalo Bay, on the west shore of the Lake of the Woods, eight miles north of the Warroad River, where he has spent the greater portion of last summer with a crew of men in search of coal. Speaking of his venture to a reporter, Mr. Watson said: "Some time ago it was discovered that the south wind would roll up the water in Buffalo Bay with coal dust, after which the shore would be covered with pieces of coal of apparent good quality. Last spring I engaged a crew of men and started digging in a low place near the lake; at eighteen feet they struck a ledge of canal coal a foot in thickness and of good quality. The progress of the work was hampered considerably by spring water. Later on in the summer a drilling outfit was put in operation, which has been working ever since. At 116 feet another strata of coal was struck, about the same in diameter as the first one. This proved that there was coal in paying quantities in the neighborhood, and the strata extends inland and upward."—*Winnipeg Free Press.*