

## THE GREAT WEST.

We too have seen the great west, having visited it in 1818, and having spent most of the last six months on its mighty rivers and fertile plains. The importance of the valley of the Mississippi, notwithstanding all which has been spoken and written about it, is not likely to be overrated. It is difficult still for those who have not traversed it to realize that "the territory is 8000 miles in circumference, extending from the Alleghany to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Gulf of Mexico to the lakes of the north; and that it is the largest territory, and most beneficent in climate, and soil, and mineral wealth, and commercial facilities ever prepared for the habitation of man, and qualified to sustain in prosperity and happiness the densest population on the globe."

"By 24,000 miles of steam navigation, and canals, and rail roads, a market is brought near to every man, and the whole is brought into near neighborhood.

"When I first entered the west," continues Dr. Beecher, "its vastness overpowered me with the impression of its uncontrollable greatness, in which all human effort must be lost. But when I perceived the active intercourse between the great cities, like the rapid circulation of a giant's blood; and heard merchants speak of just stepping up to Pittsburgh—only 600 miles—and back in a few days; and others just from New-Orleans, or St. Louis, or the far west; and others going thither; and when I heard my ministerial brethren negotiating exchanges in the near neighborhood—only 100 miles up or down the river—and going and returning on Saturday and Monday, and without trespassing on the Sabbath; then did I perceive how God, who seeth the end from the beginning, had prepared the west to be mighty, and still wieldable, that the moral energy of his Word and Spirit might take it up as a very little thing.

"This vast territory is occupied now by ten states, and will soon be by twelve. Forty years since it contained only about 160,000 souls; while now it contains little short of 5,000,000. At the close of this century, if no calamity intervene, it will contain, probably, 100,000,000—a day which some of our children may live to see; and when fully peopled, may accommodate 300,000,000.

"It is half as large as all Europe; four times as large as the Atlantic states, and twenty times as large as New-England. Was there ever such a spectacle—such a field in which to plant the seeds of an immortal harvest—so vast a ship, so richly laden with the world's treasures and riches, whose helm is offered to the guiding influence of early forming institutions?"  
—Dr. Ely.

## DISCOVERY OF MUMMIES AT DURANGO, MEXICO.

A million of Mummies, it is stated, have lately been discovered in the environs of Durango, in Mexico. They are in a sitting posture, but have the same wrappings, bands and ornaments of the Egyptians; among them was found a poignard of flint, with a sculptured handle, chaplets, necklaces, &c., of alternately colored beads, fragments of bones polished like ivory, fine worked elastic tissues, (probably our modern India Rubber cloth,) moccasins worked like those of our Indians to-day, bones of vipers, &c. It is unknown of the mummies above mentioned what kind of embalment was used, or whether it was nitrous depositions in caves where they were found. A fact of importance is stated, that the shell of the necklace of a marine shell found at Zacatecas, on the Pacific, where the Columbus of their forefathers probably therefore landed

from the Malay, Hindostan or Chinese coast or from their islands in the Indian ocean.—*Phil. Presbyterian.*  
On what authority?—Ed. Ex.

LUTHER ON EDUCATION.—The great reformer towered far above the age in which he lived in his estimate of common schools. In 1524, he published in the German language an exhortation to the magistrates of all the cities of Germany, urging on them the duty of providing for popular education. No doubt the impulse thus given has contributed to the noble system which now prevails in Prussia. Among other things he says: "Dear sirs, since it is found necessary to expend so much every year on artillery, bridges, embankments and numberless other things, in order that a city may have temporal peace and comfort, how much rather should we give as much towards our poor needy youth, by bringing up a few men to be their schoolmasters? Is it not as plain as day, that in three years one may now train up a lad, so that in his fifteenth or eighteenth year he shall have more learned than heretofore all our cloisters and high schools? For truly, what hath any one learned in past years in our schools and monasteries, but to be asses, blocks, and dolts? The wealth of a state consists not in having great treasures, solid walls, fair houses, weapons and armour; but the best and noblest wealth, and safety, and might of a state consists in having clever, learned, wise, honorable, and well-bred citizens, who shall be able to gather abundance of riches and every thing good, and also to keep and profit by what they have gained?"

## THE PRAIRIE FLOWERS.

One of the prettiest sights I have yet seen in the west is the flowers of the prairie. I have spoken of the vastness and beauty of the prairies as a whole—of their utility and abundance—and were I to go into a detail and analyze their great whole, I should find a far more beautiful picture of nature, painted by the Great Designer of the universe, than I have yet attempted to draw. What would the sky be above us without the stars of heaven? and what, with no irreverence may I ask, would be the prairie without its flowers? The sky is 'boundless and beautiful,' and the prairie, too, is 'boundless and beautiful;' but how much more beautiful is the seeming infinity of space above us when studded with the stars of heaven! How much more beautiful, too, is the prairie decked with flowers, painting the 'encircling vastness' in all the variety and shades and gorgeousness of the rainbow! A prairie in spring and summer is a flower garden, and a garden of wild flowers to my eye is more attractive than any thing I have seen in the cultivated gardens of the best florists. Every where violets spring from the prairie earth as the poet told us they would from the flesh of the 'fair and unpolluted' Ophelia. The tall grass waves in the breeze, bending, rising, and rolling to and fro, like the waves of the ocean after a tempest, giving a grassy surface to the land for miles and miles. The prairie grass seems to move as 'Barnam wood to Dunsinane, when Macbeth trembled and gave up the ghost.' In the midst of all this, as gems upon the diadem of a queen, flowers of every hue and form spring up. Linnæus himself would have gazed in wonder and admiration upon a spot like this, for from the borders of the prairie to its centre, and from the centre to the border again, are seen almost every production of nature.

\* From giant oaks that weave their branches dark,  
To the dwarf moss that clings upon their bark!