

CHRISTIANITY IN ANCIENT AMERICA.



O those who have a knowledge of the history of America extending no further back than the time of its discovery by Christopher Columbus, it will seem strange to learn that the America of pre-Columbian ages possesses a history as interesting as it is important—a history, whose records bear unimpeachable testimony to the unity of the human race, and to the early Christianization of the tribes of the Western Continent.

When the Spaniards first visited America they were astonished to find evidences of Christian civilization, which plainly indicated that the religion of Christ had been introduced into Mexico, Central America, and Peru, through the agency of Christians from some foreign country, either from Asia or from Europe.

Not only had the American aborigines well defined conceptions of the primeval truths of religion, but they also possessed clearly-limned traditions with regard to many of the revealed truths of the Christian dispensation, which plainly proves that they had received their knowledge of those subjects from some foreign source.

According to the learned P. de Roo, in his "History of America before Columbus," the ancient Mexicans and Peruvians believed in the existence of one Supreme Being, in man's immortality, and in an everlasting reward and punishment. Their knowledge of the Universal Deluge was very distinct, nor was the Tower of Babel forgotten by them. These facts, however, are not so very astonishing, since almost every nation and tribe under the sun has preserved in its records a knowledge, more or less distorted, of these primitive truths. But we begin to be astonished upon learning that the mystery of the Blessed Trinity was not unknown to the ancient Mexicans. Indeed, they celebrated the first feast of their year in honor of a certain idol, which although but one idol, was worshipped under three different names, and although having three names, was worshipped as one and the same god. These three names were 'Totec,' the frightful and terrible Lord; 'Xipe,' the disconsolate and maltreated man; 'Tlatlau-