

around there believed they were placed there by the Chaldeans, but I told them that in all probability they were similar to the tablets found in Mexico and Peru."

From the two sets of photographs, which are not identical, showing that the collection taken must have been larger than that in the possession of either of my correspondents, and from Mr. Roberts's communications, I gather that the terra-cotta caskets, surmounted by sphinx-like and couchant winged animal figures, were at least five in number; that either in or near them were found complete specimens of pottery, stone dies for stamping the figures on the clay, pieces of copper larger than a cent, having the appearance of coin, and some six tablets, of which one is an effigy thoroughly mound builder in character. As I have already stated, I have made no attempt to decipher any of the tablets but the two of which Mr. Roberts sent me faithful copies, nor of the legends of the caskets beyond two which he also sketched for my benefit. In the uninitiated they are calculated to inspire incredulity. Sphinxes and cuneiform characters, together with a deluge scene, seem out of place in Michigan. Yet, sphinxes with men's faces such as these belong to the art remains of Buddhist India, and doubtless are known in Japan. The supposed cuneiform characters are not really such, those that have a wedge appearance being few, and scattered among the ordinary types of the Turanian syllabary. There are also some hieroglyphic or ideographic symbols with which I am not familiar. The deluge scene is misnamed, as investigators might have learned had they only taken the trouble to look at the object near the human figure on the top of the left side of the tablet. It is the stump of a tree, and indicates that the three lower compartments are stages in the Buddhist under-world.

The chief peculiarity in the writing on tablets and caskets, which, in the old Turanian syllabary throughout the world, I have met but rarely, is the grouping of characters, either by simple superposition or by adherence to a staff representing an open vowel or an aspirate syllable, such as *o*, *ha*, *ye*. As the documents are ecclesiastical rather than historical, consisting of what might almost be called charms, this mode of writing may have been an invention of the monks to add mystery to the formulas of their creed. A few ideographs occur in the tablets under consideration, such as the figure of a man, *hito*, and that of a deer, *shika*. These are simple enough; but more difficult are two conventional characters of much importance that play a considerable part in the funeral ritual. One of them is a crenelle, not unlike the Egyptian hieroglyphic for water, *ma*. But in Turanian script, such a crenelle has the consonantal value of *n* rather than of *m*, and has no relation to water directly. It may, however, represent the first syllable of the Japanese *nami*, a wave, which rises and falls. With reduplication, this would give *anon*, tranquillity, the Stoic frame of mind which Buddhism exalts, although it is hard to see how the