

A NEW WONDER.

Petrified Giant, Ten Feet Two and a Half Inches Tall, and well Proportioned.

From the Syracuse Standard.

The valley of Onondaga has a romance of beauty in its wild scenery, and as the home of the famous tribe of red men of the forest—the Onondagas—around whose council fires the chiefs and young warriors of the Six Nations assembled to consult on matters of great moment. It commences at the head of Onondaga Lake, having a broad surface where the main part of our city stands, and moderate hill-side boundaries, until we pass two miles south of the city bounds, where the bed of the basin begins to narrow away and the hills on either side to be more abrupt and higher. It continues to decrease in width, until it terminates against Tully Hill, a distance of fourteen miles from the lake. Its beauty of wild scenery is perhaps in greatest perfection in that part known as the Indian Reservation—still held by the Onondaga tribe—somewhat south of the centre of the valley. Two main roads lead up the valley, one at the base of the hills on either side; and riding along either of them on a pleasant day, an admirer of nature's wild grandeur has ample occasion of admiration. The gentle slope, rising way back and up as if touching the clouds, and the more abrupt and rugged, shrub-covered, not less high hills, miniature mountains, with every now and then a ravine down which the water leaps playfully along till it reaches the plateau below and into the little creek on its way to the ocean—it is a landscape of beauty not easily described.

Just now this valley is the scene of an excitement, in the finding of a supposed petrification of a human being—a giant. The point of interest is on the south side of the valley, opposite and just beyond the little village of Cardiff, in the town of Lafayette—twelve miles from this city, on a farm belonging to Mr. William C. Newell.

On Saturday last Mr. Newell thought to dig a well some six or seven rods east of his house, and a trifle southeast of his barn. The spot is probably thirty feet below the house, and the surface soil is a loose, half sand, half dark muck, the natural washing from the hills above. It is not more than twenty rods from the creek, the channel of which is thought to have been at or very near this spot many years ago. Mr. Newell and a hired man, in digging, had gone down but two and a half feet, when something hard was struck, which was believed to be a stone. They thought but little of it at first, expecting to have to break it loose and pry it out. But throwing out a few more shovels of earth from its side, the feet of a man appeared. A few minutes more of labor exposed the legs up to the calf; and now their interest being excited, they began to dig carefully all around it, until the whole form of a man—a petrified giant—was brought to view. The neighbors began to hear of what was found, and of course went at once to see.

Mr. Silas Forbes, who resides a mile and a half distant, came to the city Saturday evening and apprised us of the new found wonder, and Sunday we went to see it. The story was a big one, and not liking "Silver Lake Snaks," we wanted to see before telling our readers. And here is what we saw:

The form of a man, lying on his back, head and shoulders naturally flat; at hip a trifle over on right side; the right hand spread on the lower part of the abdomen, with fingers apart; the left arm half behind, and its hand against the back opposite the other; the left leg and foot thrown over the right, the feet and toes projecting at a natural angle. The figure was of apparent lime stone, a mixture of the gray and blue, common in most parts the country, and seemed perfect in every particular. The muscles are well developed; the ribs might be counted; the nostrils are perforated so as to admit a large sized finger up near two inches; the lines of toe and finger nails are plainly marked; the left ear is partially gone, but the right one is perfect and in proportion to the other parts; the nose finely shaped; the forehead high, and the "Adams' apple" at the throat just projecting out, as is most common with men. The appearance of the "countenance" marks the Giant of the Caucasian race, and not the Indian. If a work of art, the artist has failed in any effort at hair on the head.

We obtained measurements of this wonderful petrified specimen of a past race—(or, possibly, sculpture)—and they are as follows:

From top of head to instep sole—or natural standing height—ten feet two and one-half inches.

From point of chin to top of head, twenty-one inches.

Nose, from brow to tip, six inches—across base of nostrils three and a quarter inches.

Mouth, four inches.

From extreme of shoulders, three feet.

Hand—Across palm, seven inches; through wrist, five inches; second finger, from knuckle joint, eight inches.

Leg—From hip joint to knee joint, three feet; through thigh, one foot; through calf, nine and a half inches.

Foot, nineteen and a half inches long.

We have said that the whole was perfect. And so it appeared, except a few flakes dropped off while the work of exhumation was going on; and perhaps others yesterday. If any well proportioned man will make measurement of himself as above, he will see a striking agreement of ratio.

Though the figure has all the appearance of stone, nevertheless the outer surface shaves off with a knife without materially dulling the blade. This was tried, but of course was not allowed to proceed to disfigure Mr. Giant. A scale that fell from the bottom of one of the feet looks much like gold quartz, but still is softish and crumbles readily, with a sort of soft sand stone result. It rests on half sand, half clay bottom, the earth above being, as we have already said, of a lighter character.

News of this remarkable discovery rapidly spread, and yesterday when we were there, people were coming and going, from a circuit of four or five miles around, in farm wagons, carriages and buggies, and on foot to see it.

John A. Clarke, being at Cardiff Saturday evening to speak on temperance, took occasion for a lamp-light view. Returning to the city near midnight, he told the story and was telling it all day yesterday. Not one in fifty of his hearers would believe the counsellor, generally esteemed reliable though he is. Still before the day was over a dozen or more went out to satisfy their curiosity, and returned with full confirmation—and more too, and the "petrified Giant" is now the absorbing topic.

Mr. Newell has stumbled upon an "elephant" in this Giant. His neighbors say it is a fortune to him. It is averred that he was offered \$5,000, \$10,000 and even \$20,000 for it; that a clergyman offered his farm in exchange for the monster—but these offers were all declined. We talked freely with Mr. N. He was quiet and modest, and we doubt if he has received any such proposals, except perhaps jokingly. He indicated no such thing. Yet he seems anxious to have the "thing" brought out all right if possible, be it what it may, and therefore guards it by day and by night.

During Saturday night the surface water had settled in the pit so as to cover the image. The wise men of Cardiff were consulted. One said, bail out the water—exposure to the air will do no harm. The other said, leave it thus until some scientific man comes to decide as to the prospects of destructibility. And the latter's advice was adopted. Yet, when the water was undisturbed and clear, the whole could be seen perfectly plain. Later in the day Dr. J. F. Boynton, the geologist, drove out with Mr. John Greenway, the water was bailed out, and Dr. B. made a thorough inspection of his Giantship, put his arms under the neck, and fairly hugged the monster.

The general impression is that it is a petrification of one of those large human beings of which all of us have heard so much in our youthful days, and have read accounts of in maturer years—not here but somewhere else. A book lies before us, having account of several, varying from eight to eleven feet; but we stop not to extract therefrom. Prof. Boynton, from a hasty examination, is of opinion that it is a work of art—a sculpture from stone. If this theory be correct, it would be scarcely less interesting than if a petrification. In the one case arises the speculation as to a gigantic race of beings that may have inhabited portions of this "new world" hundreds of years before Columbus discovered it; the other as to how long ago the artist did the work, and where came he, or his ancestors, from? Men nigh to a hundred years, and who have resided in the country seventy of them, have never heard allusion to such a thing; the Indian traditions speak not of it. The record of the first white man in this region—Catholic Jesuits—is of something over two hundred years. That record preserves matters of less interest than this would be; but not this. Then again we say it would have scarcely less interest as a work of the chisel, than as a petrification.

Our city is talking about the Giant. The story has passed from one to another till very many, probably ten thousand, of our citizens have already heard it. The interest is great in it, inasmuch that it has been almost impossible for us to thus disjointedly write about the great wonder, because of the constant interruption by visitors who are anxious to hear from one who has actually seen.

No doubt hundreds will be off this morning for personal observation. Don't be in a hurry, good friends, for while we vouch for the truth of what we have herein said, and a thousand witnesses can verify to from actual inspections, we say, don't be in a hurry. And our reason is just this—

Dr. Boynton informs us that he now has the Giant wonder in charge; that early this morning it will be fenced around, and no more visitors will be allowed to see it at present. The work of getting it out and bringing to this city will be commenced forthwith, and the desire is to avoid interruption, as well as to secure the greatest success in the prosecution of the work, and to preserve it as perfectly as possible. The curiosity of people is to touch and try, click off a little piece here and a little piece there "just to see." So it is thought best not to have a rush of visitors until in a proper place to see; but scientific men, of course may inspect it at any time.

We understand by Dr. Boynton and Mr. Greenway, that it is to be brought to this city, and here to be kept, as the property of the city of Syracuse and county of Onondaga.