

LETTER FROM T. R. PEALE, ESQ., UPON THE LARVÆ OF INSECTS
FOUND IN THE GREAT SALT LAKE.WASHINGTON, *May 12th*, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR:—The exuviæ of insects which you have brought from the shores of the Great Salt Lake proves, on examination, to have been deposited by aquatic diptera.

In the mass, I can detect fragments of the larvæ shells of the pupa, and small portions of a mature *Chironomus* and other Tipulidæ. More than nine-tenths of the mass is composed of larvæ and exuviæ of *Chironomus*, or some species of mosquito—probably undescribed; the fragments being too imperfect to determine.

You are best able to determine, first, whether mosquitoes exist at any time at the Great Salt Lake in such unparalleled numbers as this organic matter indicates; or, secondly, whether the salt of the lake water has preserved their exuviæ, so that it has accumulated through a great length of time.

A few fragments of insects I have been able to determine as belonging to the Linnæan genus *Nepa*, which is aquatic, and a very few others as Hymenopterous, &c.

In the hope of soon seeing your Report on the most interesting portion of our continent,

I remain

Yours truly,

T. R. PEALE.

CAPTAIN H. STANSBURY,
Corps Topographical Engineers,
Washington.

I am not aware that mosquitoes exist in such unusual abundance in the vicinity of the lake; but incline to the opinion of Mr. Peale, that the accumulation of the immense masses of these exuviæ is to be attributed to the preservative qualities of the lake water.

H. S.