

XVIII. *Notice of some Remains at Goza, near Malta. Communicated in a Letter from Captain W. H. SMYTH, R. N., F. R. S. and S. A., to THOMAS AMYOT, Esq. F. R. S. Treasurer.*

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Read 8th May 1828.

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Crescent, Bedford, May 6th, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR,

I BEG to enclose you three Drawings,<sup>a</sup> shewing the situation and appearance of those primitive and colossal remains, existing on the island of Goza, called the "Giant's Tower" by the natives. I am only able to send you the mere Views, because the measurements I took, and the remarks I made upon the spot, were given to my late friend Colonel Otto Beyer, the then resident Governor. To this gentleman we owe the clearing out of these antiquities, and it was his intention to have submitted to the public a very detailed account of his Operations, but sudden death frustrated the measure.

In the absence of the Colonel's researches, I may briefly state, that the inclosed Sketches give the appearance of the "Giant's Tower" sufficiently exact for those conversant in what are called Druidical, or Celtic structures, to estimate their probable uses. And as from the total want of literal, or symbolical characters, such uses, and the date of construction, must rest mainly upon vague and conjectural hypotheses, I send them rather as silent evidences of men and days beyond record, than as matter which can be discussed with any certainty.

The erection of ponderous masses of stone was a practice both extensive and undefined, but from various vestiges existing wherever

<sup>a</sup> See the Plates XXVI. XXVII. XXVIII.

early navigation was carried, they may be attributable to Punic or Phœnician origin.

In support of this opinion, it may be proper to add, that Goza was the Gaulos of ancient geographers, and that it is now called Wadish, by the natives. It is rather higher than Malta, on which it is dependent, and is more fertile, its fruits, cottons, and sugar canes, being in great esteem. The edifices in question are near the district of Casal Rabatto, and they are constructed with the common calcareous sandstone of the vicinity. The present inhabitants are a temperate, and hardy race; and are so strongly attached to their country, that they endearingly term it "*the Flower of the World.*" They are of an athletic, yet active form; but with a physiognomy, especially marked by the nose and lips, approaching to that of the Africans.

Various Troglodytic grottos attest that a pastoral people occupied the site, at a very remote period: and a remarkable peculiarity in the agriculture of the island is, an immemorial practice of cultivating the declivities of hills, by means of successive terraces—a mode which has usually been termed "Canaanite," from the supposed country of its origin.

Agreeably to written testimony, Malta was occupied by a colony of Phœnicians, an enterprising people, versed alike in the arts of war and peace; and upon a comparison of various ancient authorities, the probable time of their first establishment was about 1500 years anterior to the Christian æra. Now, although Malta was frequently subjugated by other powers, the Phœnicians and Carthaginians became so identified with the Phæacians, or supposed aborigines of the island, that the subsequent intercourse with Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Normans, and Spaniards, appears to have had but little comparative effect on the language, habits, or customs, of the Maltese. But in Goza this is more strikingly the case, on account of its secondary political importance; and could we but find an alphabet of their harsh jargon, in proof, I have little doubt that what is now considered merely in the

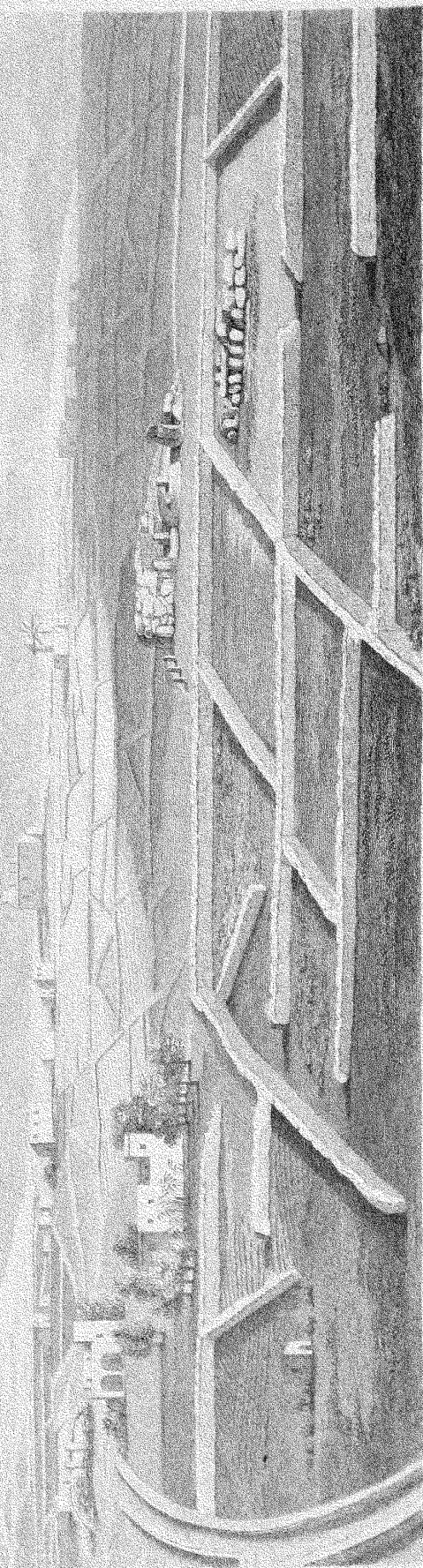
light of an Arabic dialect, would turn out to be closely allied to the Punic tongue.

From various geological evidences, it appears that Malta, and Goza, were once component parts of a larger mass; and that the channels by which they are now separated, were caused by a subsidence of the strata: indeed, the cliffs of both islands, by the obvious freshness, and breadth, of the fractured faces, evince the loss which they have sustained. This fact is further confirmed, to the eye of the Antiquary, by vestiges of roads, close to the same cliffs; and also, by the scattered Cyclopean relics, which are met with in the investigation.

I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,

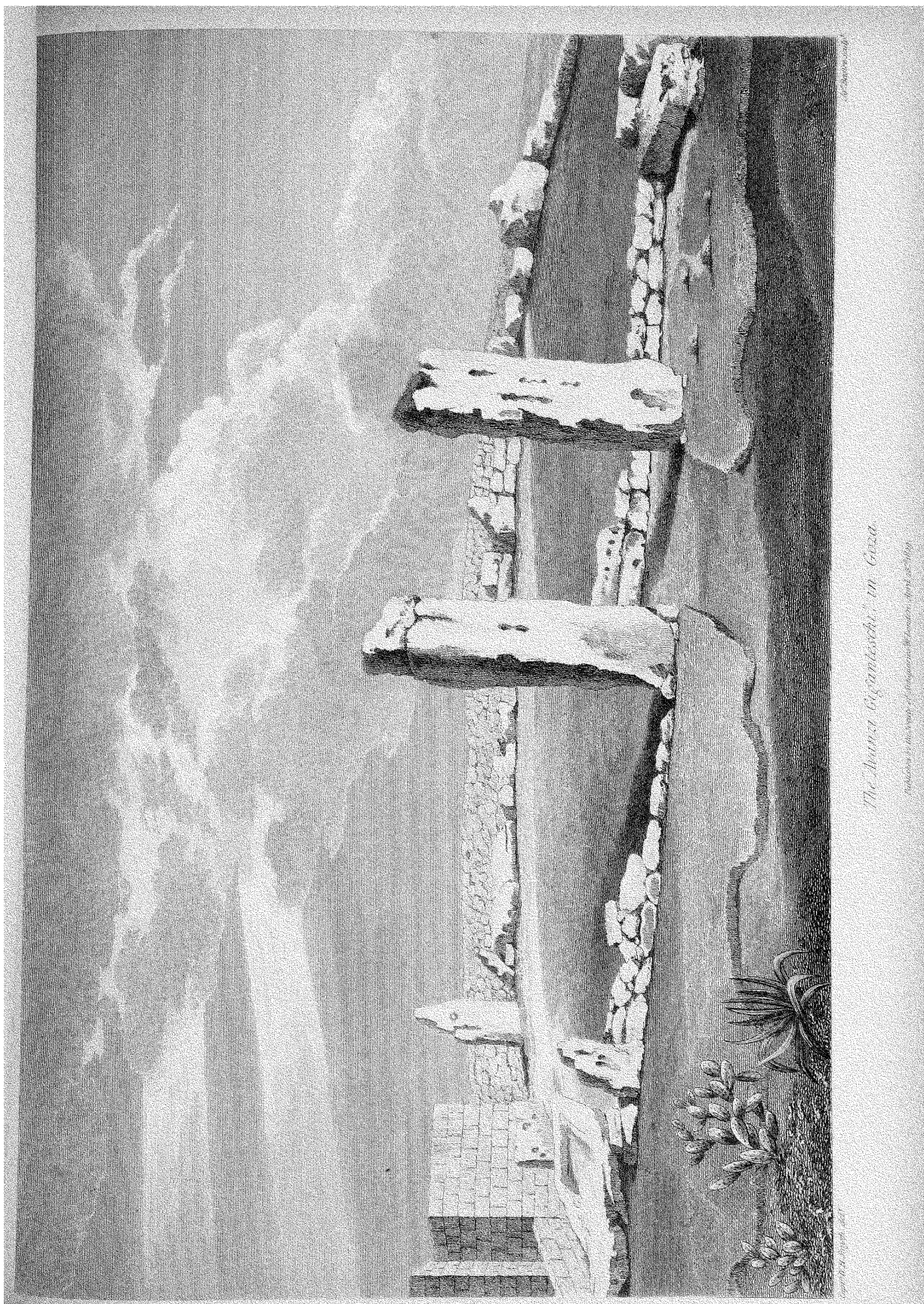
WILLIAM HENRY SMYTH.



*Structure of the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, and Aztec City, in Mexico.*

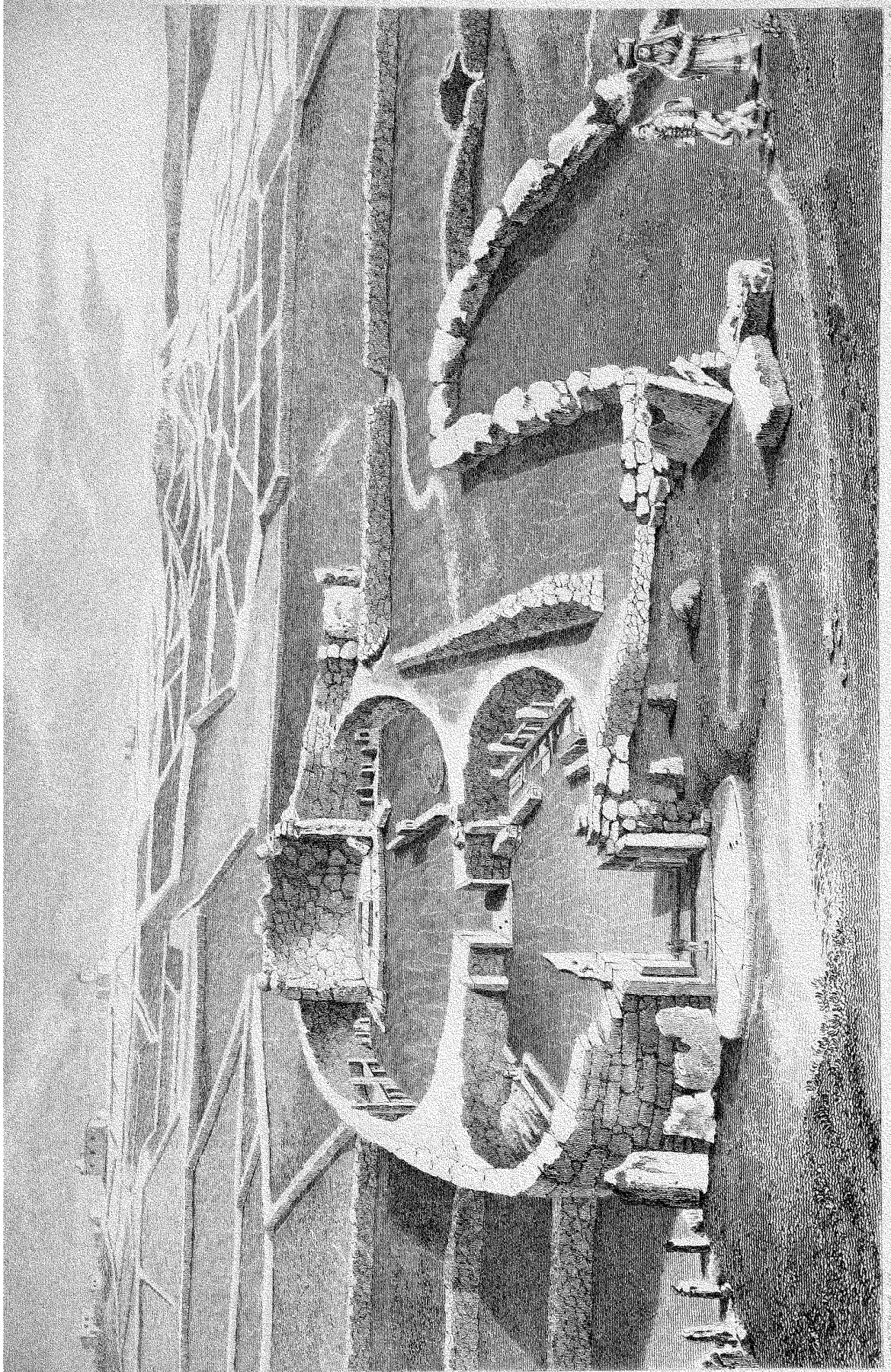
*Published by the American Museum of Natural History, New York, 1854.*





*The Avenue of the Sphinxes, in Giza.*

*Engraved by J. H. Sturt, from a drawing by J. H. Sturt.*



*Interior of the Temple of the Kings at Giza.*