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MORMONISM UNMASKED:

OR,
THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN A FIX.

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IN a religious age like the present, when almost every one makes a profession of some sort, it is not at all surprising that such a system as Mormonism, held by a people calling themselves "Latter-day Saints," should have gained for itself followers amongst the illiterate and uninformed portion of the community, and those who have never known the awfulness of sin, the majesty of God's law, and the inflexibility of divine justice—but that it should have been received, advocated and upheld by men of education and intelligence is only to be accounted for from the fact that the Lord, in his sovereignty, suffers some unstable minds to be led captive by the devil at his will. If ever mimicry was carried to its height in the outworks of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ by any people, it is by the Mormons. Not an ordinance nor an order that was observed in the days of the apostles but what these people have: hence the subtlety of the delusion: but while both the orders and the ordinances are outwardly attended to, if the efficient power is wanting, what are they (according to one of their own ministers) but 'mere child's play'? What is the use of baptising for the remission of sins, if sins still remain unforgiven? What advantage is it to have hands laid on for the reception of the Holy Ghost, if the Holy Ghost is not felt and experienced in his fruits and effects? To what purpose is the anointing with oil if the sick are not restored. Certainly, none whatever. And yet this is really the case. I have conversed with several of them, and the amount of their testimony is, that they experienced nothing particular either when they were baptised or when hands were laid on them for the reception of the Holy Ghost. One man said the evidence he had of forgiveness was, that he had behaved more like a husband to his wife since he had been through the ordinance—and the effect of the imposition of hands was the removal of a sinking at his stomach which he was previously troubled with. Another said, that he merely felt comfortable. Another, that he prophesied to his brothers and sisters—but what the nature of the prophecy was, he could not tell me, and intimated that it was too mysterious for me to understand, unless I was one amongst them, and taught by the same spirit. And another was perfectly satisfied that he had received the Holy Ghost, because several persons had recovered

from sickness *some time after* he had laid hands on them and anointed them with oil, forgetting that, in all probability, they would have got well as soon by the ordinary means if he had kept his hands off from them, and let his oil remain in the flask. Another instance which they adduce, is that of an elderly woman pronounced by the medical profession to be in dying circumstances and without the slightest hope of recovery was waited upon by an elder, who anointed her with oil, and prayed over her, and recommended her to *discontinue taking medicine*; in a few days she began to amend; in about a week she was able to leave her bed; and in a short time after was fit to be out; *but it is not expected that she will ever be perfectly well!* Now this they consider as a miraculous effect of the anointing and an answer to the prayer of faith: but who does not see through the flimsiness of such a conclusion? Is it not a fact that more disease is produced than is cured by physic—and who does not know that when people get tired of it, and leave it off, and adopt a regular natural course of living, that health is the result? Hence when the faculty have drugged their patients till they are ashamed to drug them any longer they recommend them to *leave off medicine* and repair to the country, when to their astonishment, a return of health is the consequence; now the patient imagines that it is the change of air that has produced the alteration; no such thing; it is *the absence of medicine*; for if they had remained in town without drugs, and taken the same exercise that they did in the country, the same benefits would have followed. And so in this case: if this woman had *left off her physic before*, she would have reaped the advantage of doing so, and proved that the elder's oil was as ineffectual as his prayer, and we know the estimation in which that is held; for it is written that "the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." But the greatest misfortune of those gentlemen of healing notoriety is, that they do their work in such a bungling manner: we first hear that their patients are a little better; then that they get worse again; after awhile that they are able to be about; and, in some cases that they die, in spite of all their efforts; but never that they are *instantaneously or permanently cured*. But the Lord and his apostles did not do their work like this; it was only for them to speak, or lay hands on, and the thing was done, and

done effectually; and in no one instance do we hear of a failure. And until I see something like a genuine cure amongst the Mormons, I shall continue to suspect that they are influenced by a very different spirit. Other evidences might be adduced, but it would be needless to multiply them, as they are all of a similar character; one thing is quite certain, and that is, that they expect to be saved for what they do; for, according to their own shewing, none of their *personal* transgressions were atoned for by Jesus Christ; and it is observable that in all their writings and all their discourses, they never so much as mention his glorious righteousness, in which his brethren will stand complete, and which "he is made unto them," (1 Cor. i. 30); neither do we find that they ever speak of sin as being a grief or trouble to them, although they talk so much about baptism for its forgiveness. Why it is ridiculous to talk about the removal of a thing we never felt to be in our way—and more ridiculous still to talk of its being taken out of the way, and yet not feel or know that it is gone. The truth is, they believe that their men in office are invested with divine authority to forgive sins which they infer from John xx. 23, "Whosoever's sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them:" and when they have been through the ordinance, and these men have told them that "by virtue of the holy priesthood and authority of Jesus Christ," their sins are forgiven, they go away as satisfied that it is so, as though the Lord himself had come down and given them absolution. If he had ever invested man with such power, or had intimated that he intended to do so, I should have been amongst the last to raise an objection to it; but when I find that in no age of the world, from the creation to the present time, such authority was ever given to a creature, but that it was universally acknowledged, even amongst the pharisees themselves, that "none could forgive sins, but God only," (Mark ii. 7,) language is literally beggared in attempting to express the impious audacity that Mormons assume in "rushing in, where angels fear to tread!" But that passage of Scripture, "Whosoever's sins ye remit," &c. has some signification—what does it mean? I will tell you. It must be understood *ministerially* or *instrumentally*: that is, when one of the Lord's ministers, or some private christians who, taught by the Holy Spirit, is enabled, through the preaching of the gospel, or conversation, to bring forward such truths from the Word of God as are exactly suitable to the case of some heaven-born soul, who is anxiously enquiring how he can have his sins forgiven, and the Lord is pleased to bless that word with savour and unctuousness, so that the effect experienced is as powerful as though he had said with an audible voice, 'Son, thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace.' Such a man *ministerially*, or *instrumentally*

forgives sins. This is the way that thousands have been loosed on earth who now range at liberty in heaven; and thousands more will be able to testify to the same emancipating power. On the other hand, when one of God's servants describes the awful condition of one who dies in his sins, and the only effects produced, are that the heart is still more hardened, and a greater enmity against the truth manifested, and such a man quits this world unchanged, his sins are virtually retained, and he is ministerially bound in everlasting chains. But as their religion does not consist in the work of God in the heart, but merely in what the apostle calls "*bodily exercise which profits but little*," (1 Tim. iv. 8,) while they are contending for the mere shell of godliness, the heaven-born and heaven-taught are running away with and feasting upon the kernel. But let us take a glance at their system. They begin with roundly asserting that the gospel was removed from the earth about the year 420, and was not restored again until an angel brought it to Joseph Smith in September 22, 1827, and in support of such an assertion, quote the 6th verse of the 14th chapter of Revelations, arguing from thence, that if it had not been removed, there would have been no necessity for an angel's bringing it again. Now the Mormons' gospel consists principally in, 1st, *New Revelations* continually made from God to men. 2nd, Baptising people in water, that they may, by that mean obtain forgiveness of sins. 3rd, The outpouring of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner, conferring on men the ability to speak in tongues,—heal the sick,—unstop the deaf ears,—open the eyes of the blind,—cast out devils,—and perform many extraordinary things! If this is the gospel of salvation, I am free to confess that we have no such things in the literal sense now; and some of them, such as baptism, in the way they understand it, we never did have. But the simple meaning of *Gospel*, is a declaration of the manner in which the Lord saves sinners. It may be, and is, loaded with a great many more words, whereby its meaning is obscured and thousands of souls are perplexed and deluded; but the plain and simple signification of it is couched in the above eleven words, and I have not the least hesitation in declaring that such a gospel never has been removed from the earth, and I believe never will till all the redeemed by the precious blood of Christ are brought safely home to glory. Besides, I don't see why the circumstance of an angel's flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach, &c., should lead to the conclusion that it must have been removed from the earth; for if it had been removed, so would have been the people interested in it: but the Lord says, *this generation* shall not pass away till all be fulfilled, (Matt. xxiv. 34,) by which he must have meant the *chosen generation* spoken of in 1 Pet. ii. 9, because the generation in the common acceptation

of the term then living, besides several other generations have passed away, and yet all is not fulfilled; but the Lord's seed, (Isa. liii. 10,) his brethren, (Heb. ii. 11,) those who are joint heirs with him, (Rom. viii. 17,) his peculiar people, (1 Peter ii. 9,) who contend for the real truth as it is in him, like the Jews, who were a type of them, always have been found some where on the earth, and continue even to this very day. The Lord said that the gospel must be published amongst all nations before his second coming. (Matt. xxiv. 34.) and a period may arrive in which he may exert some extraordinary power to accomplish that object; and, as angels are emblematical of swiftness and purity, this figure may have been chosen to point out the rapid progress that the gospel shall make in those days, and its simplicity and perfect freedom from the traditions of men with which it is encumbered: but it does not appear that that time has come yet, and when it does, I don't think that an angel literally will be employed; for *this treasure* always has been put into earthen vessels, (2 Cor. iv. 7,) and it should be remembered that what John saw was in *vision*, and we know that vision is not *reality*; he saw several monstrous beasts, but I suppose no one will contend that they were *real*, but used merely as emblems; and so of the angel and his preaching. But such a meaning is not implied in the text: for, admitting that an angel did appear to Joseph Smith, and shewed him where the book of Mormon was deposited; this was very different from preaching the gospel to them that dwell on the earth, &c., and has nothing whatever to do with it; in fact, there is no similarity between them, and therefore is one of the most ill chosen texts that could have been selected for their purpose. But to their gospel.

1st.—New Revelation; that is, something made known that was previously concealed. Now, where the Lord has made a promise, we are warranted in looking for its fulfilment; but, I am not aware that he has promised any further revelation than that which we find in the books of the Old and New Testament, which contain every thing that is necessary to be known for his people's direction in life, hope in death, and salvation in eternity. I have conversed with several of them, at different times, and repeatedly attended their places of worship, in order to discover, if possible, the truth of their bold assertions, and obtain satisfactory proof of the high position they assume; but I have found that, so far from their being better acquainted with truth than myself, they were totally ignorant of some of its fundamental branches; and, that, instead of their preaching being a source of instruction, as the result of direct revelation, it has usually been a tirade of abuse of all other sects, and an exaltation of themselves, at their expense; and, that the exercise of tongues, prophesying, &c., which they pro-

fess to have, is but a very bad attempt at mimicking those gifts, which were possessed by the Apostles of old. All the new revelation that I have met with amongst them is, their book of Mormon; (which I am quite prepared to prove, is no more a revelation from God than is the history of *Robinson Crusoe*, or the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*;) unless their newly discovered god is the effect of new revelation, which they make out to be "just such an one as themselves:" for they say, that he is not acquainted with what is done on the earth unless angels communicate it to him; or he comes down in person to ascertain it for himself—that they can fully *comprehend* him, or he would not be an object of their worship: for, that, no man can properly worship a being that he cannot comprehend: and, that, he is not omnipresent, but can only be in one place at a time: besides which, they impute to him an incapability of performing what he wishes to see accomplished, and an uneasiness in consequence—a perpetual anxiety. The exercise of angry and passionate feelings as the result of disappointment, and a variety of other absurdities too numerous to mention, and only applicable to fallen humanity. But while it is declared that "he is perfect in knowledge" (Job xxxvi. 4,) that "no thought can be withheld from him" (Job xlii. 2,) that "Jesus knew their thoughts" (Matt. ix. 4,) that "the Lord understands thoughts afar off" (Psalm cxxxix. 7—10,) that "none by searching, can find out God or the Almighty to perfection, that it is as high as heaven, deeper than hell, longer than the earth, broader than the sea," (Job. xi. 7,) that "the heavens and heaven of heavens can not contain him," (1 Kings viii. 27,) "that none can hide himself in secret places, that he cannot see them, that he *fills* heaven and earth," (Jer. xxiii. 24,) that it is impossible to flee from his presence, that he is in heaven, in hell, in the uttermost parts of the sea, in fact every where, (Psalm cxxxix.) That "he doeth as he pleaseth in the armies of the heavens and amongst the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 35,) that "he is of one mind and none can turn him," (Job xxiii. 13,) that "in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand pleasures for evermore," (Psalm xvi. 11,) that he is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever," (Heb. xiii. 8.) While I say such declarations as these stare me in the face, I must believe that the god of the Mormons is such an one as the Lord referred to in the days of his flesh, when he said, "ye worship ye know not what," (John iv. 22.)

They very strenuously insist that no man is at liberty either to preach the gospel, or administer the ordinances, unless divinely ordained by *direct revelation*, and quote two or three passages from the Old Testament, to shew the fearful consequences that attended such presumption; and one also,

from Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, upon which they lay particular emphasis, that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." But they should have remembered that, although the Lord had strictly forbidden any but divinely appointed persons to officiate in that dispensation to which the passage in question exclusively refers; pointing us at once to the Great High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ; whose office and atoning for the sins of his church, no mere man could have sustained, and therefore no mere man dared to undertake: it was not so in the gospel dispensation. It is true that he himself ordained his Apostles; but he nowhere forbids others preaching and administering his ordinances; and indeed, when his disciples on one occasion were so officious as to inform him that they saw some casting out devils in his name; who, of course, were not divinely appointed, and even took it upon themselves to prohibit them—he replied, "*forbid them not.*" Besides, we will come to their favourite book of Mormon, page 203, where one Alma is described as not only preaching to the people, baptizing them in the name of the Lord; but, actually baptizing himself, and all *without divine authority*: for the fact of John being emphatically called *the baptist*, is conclusive evidence that the ordinance was never observed before his time, and is at least one proof that the book is an invention of man; because the circumstance referred to, is said to have occurred several hundred years previous. But, I ask, Who ordained Joseph Smith? "Oh, (says Mr. Pratt, in his tract on Divine Authority, page 4,) the Apostles, Peter, James and John, came down from heaven for the purpose." Indeed! And on page 11, of another of his tracts, called *Remarkable Visions*, he says, "It was an angel that ordained him;" although, in the above mentioned tract, he tells us that angels have no such authority. What a pity that certain characters have not a better memory.

But this is not the only mistake that this divinely inspired apostle has made; for speaking of the promise that the Lord made to the thief on the cross, (Luke xxiii. 43.) "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise:" and endeavouring to evade the fact, that paradise is a state of blessedness, where the Lord's people will dwell with him when they have put off mortality, he says, "Instead of Jesus going directly from the cross into his kingdom, he went to a certain prison," and puts the question, "Did the thief go with him?" And then draws this inference—"If Jesus went to preach in prison that day, the thief must have gone with him, and that Paradise must mean a place of departed spirits, without respect to its being either good or bad."—*Kingdom of God*, Part II. page 8.

Now, we have not the slightest evidence, from the Word of God, that he did go to preach in that prison, on that particular day; and I am very much inclined to

believe that he did not go there at all personally; for the scripture positively states that *he went by the spirit*; and besides, he was not quickened by the Spirit till the third day after he died. (See 1 Peter iii. 18, 19.) But, if we are as much at liberty to believe that Paradise is a prison, and consequently a bad place, as we are to believe that it is a place of happiness, there would not have been much cause for glorying in the person spoken of in 2 Cor. xii. 4; who "heard unspeakable words:" neither would the realization of that promise in Rev. ii. 7. afford much encouragement to those who are seeking for bliss and satisfaction, under an impression that it is to be found in such a place.

But to shew how this eminent saint of latter days is trying to pull down his own system about his ears, it most positively asserts, in the *Book of Mormon*, page 358, that "The spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, are taken home to that God who gave them life: and the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called *Paradise*; a state of rest and peace from all their troubles, care and sorrow:" so that I must conclude that *new revelation* has discovered to Mr. Pratt a Paradise, that neither the Bible, or the *Book of Mormon*, know any thing of.

Another specimen of new revelation may be seen on the first page of a tract called *The Absurdities of Immaterialism*; where he says, "It is a necessary truth, that space is boundless, and that duration is endless, abstract from our existence, or the *existence of any other being*. If neither the universe, nor its *Creator* existed, these eternal, unchangeable, and necessary truths would exist unperceived and unknown." Now, the query is here: If God created *all things*, "boundless space," was one of the things which he created; and if he is before all things, and by him all things consist; or, in other words, subsist, (Col. i. 16, 17.) "endless duration," is one of the things subsisting; consequently, if the *Creator did not exist*, it would be a literal impossibility for either "boundless space or endless duration," to have an existence.

A further evidence of new revelation is given on page 5, Part I, of the *Kingdom of God*: where he makes a complete sweep of the personality of the Holy Ghost; which, it appears, he has been already charged with; and in attempting to defend himself, makes the case ten times worse. His words are, "The Holy Spirit is a material substance—is omnipresent—*extends* through all space." Here he acknowledges the Spirit to be a substance, and *extending* through all space. But, in another place he says, "If a substance be infinitely *extended* it ceases to be a person."—*Absurdities of Immaterialism*, page 9. And, on page 30, he positively declares, that, "an *omnipresent person* is impossible:" hence, according to his own shewing, he believes that the Holy Spirit is not a person: beside which, he in-

variably uses the impersonal pronoun, *it*, in reference to the Spirit. How he intends to reconcile his theory with the following texts, which all have *personal* pronouns, (without another revelation) I must leave to the decision of the reader. Isaiah xl.—1 Cor. xii. 11.—John xiv. 26.—John xv. 26.—John xvi. 8, 13, 14.

Again, we are told on page 11, of *Remarkable Visions*, that "Joseph Smith was baptized (no doubt for the remission of sins, for Mormons never baptize for anything else,) in 1829;" although he had the testimony of an angel, somewhere about six or seven years previous, that his sins were forgiven without baptism for their remission.—*Ibid* 2. I wonder how it was that the Lord could, on the one hand, depart from the usual order in this instance, and forgive without the ordinance; and how it was, on the other hand, that Joseph should observe an ordinance to obtain that which he had been in possession of for above six or seven years; because that to which they attach the most importance—their strong hold—the very citadel of their system, is baptism for the remission of sins, founded on Acts ii. 38; which they actually believe to be a saving ordinance, deducing their conclusion from the *Book of Mormon*, and 1 Peter iii. 12.—"The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us." Now if the observance of that ordinance is the only way of obtaining forgiveness, the angels must have been mistaken when they told J. Smith that his sins were forgiven some years before he was baptised. But there is nothing more delusive, than that of being led away by mere sounds, taking appearances for realities, and grasping at shadows, under an impression that they are substances. If men will take the Scriptures in this way, according to their literal reading, without (as they say) note or comment, and square their practice by the precepts; believing that they literally mean what is said, and say what is literally meant, they will make them unsay in one place what they say in another; and thus perpetually plunge themselves into inextricable difficulties. Take the following just as they are, and literally carry them out in practice and see where they will lead to:—"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat if thou be a man given to appetite." (Prov. xxiii. 1, 2.) Here is a man with a good appetite, commanded to commit suicide, and yet, "no murderer hath eternal life." (1 John iii. 15.) So that according to this, the Lord is bidding men to commit sin that he will not pardon. Again, "except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John vi. 53.) And "take eat, this is my body, and this is my blood, drink ye all of it." (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.) From which you must infer, that unless you become cannibals you are a set of dead men; and, yet, man is forbidden to shed man's blood. Again, "I was alive without the law; but when the commandment came sin revived,

and I died." (Rom. vii. 9.) Here we have a dead man relating the effects which the law produced. These are a few, out of the many, that might be brought forward to shew the consequences of such false logic.

But, it is not true, that they always take the Scriptures literally; for when they find themselves in a fix, they have no objection even to an interpolation, rather than acknowledge themselves in error: for instance, the Scriptures say, "no man hath seen God at any time." (1 John iv. 12.) They say, "no natural man hath seen God."—*Reply to Remarks on Mormonism*, page 4. Now here is a word which is neither in our version, nor the original, added, to enable them to carry their point. So much for their favorite opinion, that "the Scriptures are not of private interpretation," and that they never alter, add to, or take from the text, to serve their purpose. Now, it is well known, that the Bible, being an eastern book, is written in a figurative style: that is, one thing is spoken of, while another thing is meant: thus, "baptism for the remission of sins," is spoken of; this is the figure; but the reality, and that which is meant, is the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection, in fact the entire work of Jesus Christ, for their complete atonement, for he says, "I have a baptism to be baptised with, (meaning his overwhelming work,) and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" (Luke xii. 50,) for if the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sins, (Heb. x. 4) neither can water, nor has the Lord intended that it should; for it is written, "without shedding of blood is no remission;" (Heb. ix. 22.) again, Col. i. 14: and, again, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) If it is a saving ordinance, Annanias and his wife, and Simon Magus, must be saved, for they were baptised; and the thief that was crucified with the Lord, must be damned, for he was not baptised. But it is no such thing, but as Peter has it in 1 Peter iii. 12; merely a figure; and says in the verse preceeding that already quoted, that "eight souls (meaning Noah and those with him) were saved by water." Now, will any man of common rationality, contend that the water was the means of saving them? Certainly not. What then? Why the Ark, which was a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom his own chosen people are saved from an ungodly world, and where they will be safe when it is again given up to destruction. Being saved by baptism then, evidently means the baptism, or great work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which this ordinance beautifully represents: for the water itself is an emblem of grief or trouble; the going down into it, a symbol of departure out of the world, and entombment; and the coming up out of it, a representation of the resurrection from the dead: and for a clearer understanding of the meaning might be thus explained:—The waters of the flood, which overwhelmed a wicked world and completely destroyed sin from off the earth,

is a figure of that stupendous work of the Saviour, called by himself a *baptism*, whereby he, in submitting to be immersed in the waves and billows of divine wrath, entirely and for ever drowned all the sins of the church, and by which baptism we are saved: seeing that as an evidence of his having accomplished his undertaking, he has risen from the dead; because he adds in a parenthesis, it is "not the putting away fleshly filthiness, (or, in other words, sin,) no, that was all done when Christ said, "It is finished!" (John xix. 30.) For by his one offering, he hath perfected for ever, (or, for ever made pure and spotless, and incapable of condemnation from any quarter) all them who are sanctified, (Heb. x. 14.) or set apart, or chosen to salvation; but the answer of a good conscience towards God. All persons, therefore, who are taught of God their own filthiness and guiltiness, and need of the precious blood of Christ to cleanse them, and are baptized in water, in obedience to the Lord's command, do not literally wash away their sins, nor have their sins forgiven on that account; for I repeat, that it is only by the Lord Jesus Christ's being baptized, immersed, or overwhelmed in the flood of divine wrath, in payment of the penalty due to justice, that sins can be everlastingly washed away, and by faith in such a sacrifice, that forgiveness can be experienced; but simply set forth as by a picture, the manner in which they are washed away or forgiven, and hence the meaning of being baptized for the remission of sins, or being baptized to wash away sins. But this is not all: for no man can be saved, say they, who refuses to be born of water and of the spirit, (John iii. 5.) by which they mean baptism and the laying on of hands. Now, refusing to be born, certainly appears very curious in this enlightened age of the world; but then, as they are a curious sort of people, we must reckon it as all of a piece with the rest of their curiosities. A birth implies a conception, and that implies a begetting: now, how is this accomplished in the soul? I answer, sovereignly and secretly; for, "the wind bloweth where it listeth, (here is the sovereignty) and thou hearest the sound thereof," and seest the effects produced, "but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whether it goeth: (here is the secrecy) so (that is, just in this manner) is every one who is born of the Spirit." (John iii. 8.) Now, it is said of them of old, when they begat children, that they knew their wives, and if we refer to Rom. viii. we shall see in what way the Lord's children are begotten, conceived, and born. It says, "Whom he did foreknow (here is the begetting,) them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son: (here is the conception and embryo,) moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called;" (here is the birth). "Called by grace." (2 Tim. i. 9.) "Called from darkness into light." (1 Peter ii. 9.) "Called to be saints." Rom. i. 7.) And except a man is thus born again of God, he cannot

see the kingdom of God; because his eyes are closed in a death of "trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 2.) But, say they, although he may see the kingdom as Moses saw the promised land, he cannot enter it unless he is "born of water and of the Spirit;" and to be born of water is to be baptized; *this is first*: and to be born of the Spirit, is to receive the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands after baptism. Well, you know, there is such a thing as "turning the truth upside down," and here they have done it to the very letter: for they acknowledge that a man must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and confess his sins, before he is a fit subject for baptism; but the idea of a man's believing before he is born, and making confession before he has utterance, is really so much beyond my capacity to comprehend, that I must have the faith of a Mormon before I can believe it: for when it can be proved that a blind man can see before his eyes are opened—a deaf man can hear before his ears are unstopped—a dumb man can speak before his tongue is set at liberty—and a dead man can perform the functions of life before he is quickened:—then, but not till then, can it be admitted, that a man who is dead to all that is spiritual can listen to the gospel—that a man who is blinded by sin and the devil can see any beauty in it, or his own need of it—and, that a man who is dead in trespasses and sins can believe in the Lord, or make confession thereof to salvation, unless made alive in Christ by the power of the Spirit: because "dead in trespasses and sins," and alienated from the life of God, is the state of every human being born into this world. It may be denied, but experience and revelation testify of its truth: one says, "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one!" (Job xiv. 4.) Another, "I was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity." (Psalm li. 5.) Again, "Man is born like a wild ass's colt." (Job xi. 12.) And again, "Man goeth astray from the womb speaking lies." (Psalm lviii. 3.) Man then, born into this world in a state of spiritual death must be made alive in Christ before he can be made a fit subject for his kingdom; this is the work of God; (Eph. ii. 1.—Col. ii. 13,) and when he is made alive from the dead, he begins to feel and believe that he needs those things that are promised. Now, he could not believe without faith, and this being a "fruit of the Spirit," (Gal. v. 22.) is communicated with the life given, and is made to thrive and flourish in the soul by the work of the Holy Ghost; hence, it is called, "The faith of the operation of God;" (Col. ii. 12,) and the "Faith of God's elect," in distinction from a natural faith such as described in *Pratt's Kingdom of God*, Part II. The birth, therefore, here mentioned, cannot mean baptism—1st, because believing and confessing cannot precede life; 2nd, because the simile will not admit of it, baptism never being compared to it, but on the contrary to its opposite, a burial; (Col. ii. 12,) and to be born and buried by the

same process, would be as much out of place, as to have the midwife and the sexton to perform correspondent duties. Well, what does it mean? I will tell you. You will observe that the Lord says, "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh*." Now, it is positively asserted that "*flesh* and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; (1 Cor. xv. 50.) and as expressly declared that the sons of God are not born of the will of the *flesh*, but of God; (John i. 3.) and that doubtlessly because, 1st, "*in the flesh dwelleth no good thing*;" and, 2dly, "*the carnal, (or *fleshly*,) mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither in deed can be*;" (Rom. viii. 7) but the Lord's being determined upon having "a people formed" by and "for himself, to shew forth his praise," *creates* them anew. Now, this is a work far, very far, beyond the capabilities of mortals to effect: they may work materials up that he has *created*, but they will never be able to *create* any thing themselves, for that is entirely and exclusively his own prerogative, hence, they are emphatically called "*his workmanship*." (Eph. ii. 10.) And, water being an element expressive of *purity*, on account of its cleansing and purifying properties, and also declarative of unconditionality, being as freely bestowed as the air we breathe; the figure is chosen, 1st, to set forth the pureness of the birth in opposition to that which is *fleshly*, and consequently impure: and, 2dly, the freeness of it as contrasted with the many conditions that men would make us believe are expected from us; to be born, therefore, of water and of the spirit, simply means, 1st, to be born of a principle of *purity*, for "whosoever is born of God sinneth not;" and, 2dly, to be born freely, without any other condition on the part of the creature, than is required of the new-born infant that passively emerges from the womb of the mother: and he that is thus born shall be nourished by the sincere milk of the word, (1 Peter ii. 2.) shall grow up and increase with the increase of God; (Col. ii. 19.) until he arrives at the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus; (Eph. iv. 13.) and shall not only see the kingdom, but enter in and dwell there (1 Thess. iv. 17.) and go no more out for ever; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Rev. iii. 12.)

But, besides, baptism as a condition of forgiveness, and being *born* by the same process as they are *buried*, their atonement for the original transgression of the whole human race, but not for the actual sins of any is quite as far fetched, and equally erroneous; and bespeaks but little ingenuity on the part of those who conceived it: for, if they had calculated upon the consequences it involves, I think they never would have been so weak as to have risked the publication of it. If atonement was made for the original transgression of the whole human race, without any exception, when the Saviour died, then every human being since that event, must be born into

this world like a sheet of paper; and, you may write good or bad upon it as you please: in other words, as pure and spotless as was Adam when he came from the hands of his creator: and this is just their view of the matter. "Little children" (say they) "are whole: they are not capable of committing sin—the curse of Adam is taken from them, in Christ, that it hath no power over them. Little children need no repentance neither baptism. They are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world." Book of Mormon, page 627. But, I would ask is sorrow, grief, and pain the effects of sin? Yes. Is sobbing and crying, expressive of these things? Yes. Do *infants* sob and cry? They do. Why? Because, they experience these evils. What does it argue? Why, that they are the subjects of inbred *sin*. Again, must the soul that sins *die*? Ezek. xxviii. 4. And is *death* the wages of sin? Rom. vi. 23. The scriptures say so. Do *infants* die? Certainly. How is that? Death can have no claim on the sinless. *Infants*, then, partake of inherent sin, or they could not die; so much for the innocency of infants.

It will be remembered, that it was prophesied by Daniel, chap. ix. 24, that, at a certain time, "*the transgression should be finished, and an end made of sins*"; evidently, alluding to that memorable period, when Christ should be offered to bear the *sins of many*. Heb. ix. 28. And when the Saviour had accomplished his work, to shew, that it was *completed*—he said, "*IT IS FINISHED*." John xix. 30. Now, if all the *sins* of that people, whom he came to save (Matt. i. 21.) as well as the original *transgression*, which was theirs by imputation, had not been included in that one great sacrifice, the prophesy would not have been fulfilled; and the Saviour's declaration must be a base falsehood. But, there is another question; were the sacrifices under the law for the Israelites alone, and a figure of him who was to embody the whole of them in his own person—or, were they offered, indiscriminately, for any body, and every body, and no body knew who? Unquestionably for *Israel only*; (for, it would have been at the peril of Aaron's life, to have offered a sacrifice for the atonement of the Canaanites, or any of the nations around;) and, doubtless, pointed out to that all-sufficient sacrifice which was offered *once*; (not for the whole human race, nor for their imputed transgression,) but, for Israel, after the spirit, of which Israel after the flesh was a type. And, were they made for the *actual daily sins and infirmities* of those who offered them, or for the *original transgression* of our first parents, which is also ours by inheritance? For the former, certainly, including the latter as far as it extends to those who will be saved—the one being the effect of the other. Well, then, if the type is an exact representation of the anti-type, there is not a *single sin* of the whole church of Christ but what was completely atoned for, when Jesus said,

"It is finished:" and hence, the challenge which no one has ever yet dared to accept; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Rom. viii. 33. I will now, point out the result, consequent, upon such a doctrine. Suppose I do come into this world in a state of innocence; still I am a practical transgressor. I am polluted by sinning, and have followed lying vanities, and nothing can enter heaven that is defiled, or that maketh a lie. Rev. xxi. 27. What is to atone for my actual sins? Oh, say they, you must be baptised to wash away your sins; and they really mean what they say, in the strict and literal acceptation of the words. Well, admitting, merely for argument, that baptism would wash away all the sin that I had committed up to the time that I was baptised; I should sin again afterwards. Paul did; for he speaks of the continual risings of it. Rom. vii. 21. Peter did; for we read that "he dissembled, and was to blame." Gal. ii. 11. And Barnabas and Paul quarrelled, and nearly got to fighting about Mark. Acts xv. 38, 39. And some of the best of men are the subjects of *falls and infirmities* perpetually; and even the Mormons are not exempt from them, unless *open adultery* is no longer reckoned in the catalogue of crimes: besides, we are told that, even the thought of folly is sin; (Prov. xxiv. 9.) and that there is not a just man upon earth. (Eccl. vii. 20.) No, not even those, whom the Lord hath justified, (Rom. vii. 30.) that sinneth not. Such being my position, how could I obtain forgiveness again? There is no such thing as a repetition of baptism for the remission of sins; and the Lord says, "he will by no means clear the guilty." Ex. xxxiv. 7. What must I do? It will be in vain for me to go and plead the mercy of God on the ground of Jesus being "the advocate with the Father and the propitiator of my sins"—(1 John ii. 1, 2.) all my sins that I have committed since baptism: for, he will justly say, no. It was only for original sin, that sin which was yours imputatively, by virtue of your being a child of Adam that I atoned for; I had nothing to do with your personal transgressions; you should have taken care to have kept yourself pure while you was pure; for, nothing that is impure can dwell where I am, and therefore, you must take the consequences of your own folly! Awful consideration! and yet, this is the conclusion we must inevitably arrive at, from the belief of such a doctrine. But, enough—the soul sickens at such monstrosity, and turns away to the contemplation of another feature.

They say that as "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," (Rom. x. 17,) if the word is preached and heard, it is the sinner's place to believe it. Well, this is very true as far as it goes; but then it does not go far enough: for if *faith is a fruit of the Spirit*, (Gal. v. 22,) a man may hear, and hear the truth too, for a century together, and yet not be able to believe only as the Spirit works faith in

the heart; and this is the reason why we read that "the word preached did not profit, not being mixed with *faith* in them that heard it," (Heb. iv. 2.) Very much has been said about faith by all denominations of professors; indeed so much that we are almost lost in a labyrinth of words; but I think it might be very easily reduced to two particulars; namely, *the faith of nature*, and *the faith of God's elect*. The first is that described by Mr. Pratt, in his *Kingdom of God*, Part II.; and such as every man with the use of his intellects is capable of exercising, and if you please, cultivating; but the second differs, inasmuch as it is required to believe spiritual and supernatural things. The natural man may believe that he is a sinner, in the common acceptation of the term; but he does not believe that he is such as the Word of God describes in Paul's 7th chapter to the Romans and other places, and that all which he esteems as righteousness, the Lord holds as filthiness, that he never did a particle of good in all his life that will avail him anything as a recommendation to God's favor. He may believe that he can repent, if he pleases; and may have made up his mind to do so at some convenient season; but he cannot believe that it is the Lord's prerogative to give repentance, (Acts v. 31,) and that no one repents effectually unless it is with repentance thus bestowed. He may have a nominal belief that there are such persons as God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Holy Ghost; but he cannot believe in their character and offices; he cannot believe that the Father chose from all eternity a number of the human race which no man can number, (Rev. vii. 9 and Ephes. i. 4,) and determined to save them spite of all that men or devils might do to oppose it; that the Lord Jesus atoned for all their sins (Heb. ix. 28) worked out, by his spotless life, a perfect and complete righteousness for them, makes it over to them, (Rom. v. 19,) and brings them all safe to eternal glory. That the Holy Spirit raises them out of their abject and carnal state, through their relation to Adam, by quickening them into spiritual life, gives them faith, teaches them all things necessary for their eternal well-being, and guides them into all truth, (John xvi. 13.) He may believe that there is a heaven and a hell, and that men may go to the former if they like, and all may avoid the latter if they please; but he cannot believe that "the election hath obtained the first and the rest were blinded," (Romans xi. 7); that "the Lord hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth," (Romans ix. 18); that "he doeth as he pleaseth in the armies of the heavens, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or dictate to him what he shall do," (Dan. iv. 35); he cannot believe any of these things nor any of the doctrines of grace; for although he may sometimes give an assent to them in deference to those with whom he stands con-

nected, who do believe them; yet in his heart he hates them with a perfect hatred; to believe the former and merely to assent to the latter is no very difficult matter; but for a natural man really to receive the things of the Spirit of God without being quickened by that Spirit, is an utter impossibility: for it is written that to such a man 'they are foolishness, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, (1 Cor. ii. 14); and therefore I assert that that faith which is not "of the operation of God," (Col. ii. 12,) is a dead faith and not a whit better than the faith of devils, (James ii. 19.) Again, miracles are not performed amongst professors. Now, say they, because men have not faith. And why have they not faith? I ask. It is replied, because they seek not for it. And why do they not seek for it? Because they don't want it: the plain English of which is, they do not feel their need of it: and the reason of this is because they have not hearts to feel; their's are *stoney hearts*, and until the Lord takes them away and gives them hearts of flesh, (Ezek. xi. 19,) they never will feel. Faith "is the gift of God," (Eph. ii. 8,) and sovereignly bestowed upon whomsoever he pleases; it follows therefore if men have it not, it is because he has not given it to them; consequently if miracles have ceased because men have not faith, we must conclude that it is his sovereign pleasure that they should cease; for if he wished them to be continued, it would only be for him to give men faith, and the thing would be accomplished at once.

That which the Mormons talk of is mere foolishness; for they think if they have but faith they can do *anything*; forgetting that they must also have divine authority. This will be seen by referring to the miracles performed by Moses. He did not go to Pharaoh and say I have *faith* to bring such and such plagues upon you and the Egyptians; but the Lord having told him in private what he would do in public, he believed the word spoken, and had faith to exercise his rod, not at his own discretion, but in that way, and that way only, that the Lord authorised him; and that man who takes upon himself to perform a miracle without first receiving a commission direct from God, is not a man of faith most assuredly—but a man of presumption, for the Lord has said nothing to him to call for an exercise of his faith. It will also be seen by reference to the 11th chapter of Paul to the Hebrews—and you may take any example you please. We will take Abraham;—"By faith Abraham *when he was called* to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. Now he had divine authority for what he did; the Lord had *told him* to go out, and knowing that he always was as good as his word, he had faith to believe him in this instance: but Mormons have no such authority: they

say they have—but it is mere pretence: all the authority they have is by one man ceremonially conferring it on another: the elder on the teacher, the president on the elder, and so on, up to *their* apostles, who had theirs from Joseph Smith, who *pretended* to have had his either from an angel or from two of the Lord's apostles, but no one can tell which—but most likely from an angel (*of darkness*), for God himself has never spoken to a single individual of them, nor can they produce the least proof of it: for when we ask them to give us a display of the miraculous power which they presume to be invested with, as the Lord and his apostles did, in the open daylight, where no trickery could be practiced without its being detected; they say, would you have us perform a miracle upon you? Would you wish us to strike you blind? or deprive you of your speech? or, what would you have us do? Poor presumptuous mortals! When the Lord has *told you* to strike a man dumb, or deprive him of his eyesight, you will be at liberty to do so, and we will stand in awe of you; but until then, we must pity you folly and delusion, and hope the Lord will give you repentance for your arrogance. But if they had the power of making the lame to walk and the blind to see, and the *wife of one of their elders had lost her sight, and the child of another was a cripple*, nay, the *father himself incapable of using some of his limbs*, would they not exercise their gifts in restoring to the one her eyesight, and to the others the use of their limbs? Certainly. But they do not. And why? Because they say they have not faith to be healed. A very convenient excuse. Now be honest, and acknowledge that these persons are too intimately acquainted with the deception that is practised, and too well satisfied of the inability of the assumed miracle workers, from the repeated failures that occur, to believe, for a moment that they would receive any benefit from their mummery, even if they were to submit to a trial of their pretended skill: besides, if the Lord was to interpose miracles upon every trifling occasion, they would soon degenerate into very insignificant things, and be thought no more of than the most ordinary occurrences in nature, and consequently thwart the very object for which they were employed.

They also speak in *tongues*, but for what purpose it is difficult to determine. They say they are for signs; because, I suppose, Paul said so. Now, if they were to go into the various nations of the earth, and preach the gospel to the people in the languages which were spoken by each, without previously learning them, it would be a sign of the divinity of their mission; or, if persons from different nations went into one of their assemblies in Britain, who did not understand English, and some of their members, who had not learned any other than their own mother tongue, were to stand up and preach the gospel in languages which each of these foreigners could under-

stand, it would be another sign that the Spirit had given them utterance, and a strong proof that they were commissioned and sent of God: for it is observable that the original use and intention of tongues was for this very purpose: for instance—the multitude to whom the Apostle spake on the day of Pentecost, consisted of people speaking a variety of languages: now they fully understood all that was said, each in his own, and were convinced from what they heard of the truth of the Apostle's doctrine, embraced it accordingly; and when they left Jerusalem, carried it with them to their own native places. Tongues, in this case, were made that use of for which they were intended, and were, as Paul says to the Corinthians (xiv. 27.) “*a sign*, not to them that *believe*, but to them that *do not believe*.” but it is not so with Mormons, what they utter is mere jargon, not for the benefit of strangers or foreigners, but merely with a view of making a display; for, if you ask them what language they speak in, they cannot tell you, and the only use they know of for tongues is, that they are ornaments to the church. Paul thanked God that he spake with more tongues than the whole church put together: and the reason is obvious: he had to preach to more nations, and in more languages than perhaps any one man ever did before, or ever will again; and if he had not been endowed with such a gift, his visits amongst foreigners would have been almost useless; and yet gifted as he was, he says, that he would rather speak *five words* that might be understood, than ten thousand in a tongue or language unknown to his auditory; evidently implying that edification was the sole object that he had in speaking at all: awful, indeed, then must be the situation of that people who, though unendowed with such a gift, will nevertheless presume to ape it. If this is not sinning against the Holy Ghost, I have yet to learn what such a sin consists in.

They, likewise, make a great deal of the 17th and 18th verses of the sixteenth chapter of Mark—“And these signs shall follow them that believe,” &c. Now, the first question that arises is, has this scripture been fulfilled? I contend that it has in the days of the Apostles. The reader will observe, that it does not say these signs shall follow *all* them that believe; neither does it say, they shall follow in *all* ages; nor, do I suppose, that it was either expected or realized in *all*, even in the earliest ages of christianity; in fact, it is quite evident that they did not, or we should not read of Timothy's often *infirmities*, (1 Tim. v. 23.) nor of Paul leaving Trophimus *sick* at Miletum. (2 Tim. iv. 20.) That they did follow in *some* that believed is quite certain. Thus, the Lord's promise was fulfilled—the fact is recorded and I am satisfied: and Mormons themselves with all their pretensions to miraculous gifts are obliged to acknowledge that so far from *all* partaking of them, they are confined to *some*,

though, for my part, I am very much inclined to think either that they do not perform any miracles at all, (for I have seen none, though I have anxiously looked for them, not with a vain curiosity, but from a sincere desire to satisfy myself of the divinity of their system,) or, if they do it is through diabolical agency: for that such things are done by some other power than that of God is certain; (see Exodus vii. and viii.) and the Lord solemnly assures us (Matt. vii. 22, 23.) that *many* will say to him, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will he profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. But it is no where said, that miracles shall cease, say they. No, and it is no where said, that they shall continue. The next question is—do they follow any that believe in our day? I should say they do. Let us look at the signs—1st, “In my name they shall cast out devils.” Now, devils are the powers of darkness in a variety of forms; and when a man believes through the operation of the Spirit upon his soul, he is enabled to overcome, and dislodge all such powers, and although they may come again and annoy him at times, they are no longer allowed to dwell in him. 2dly, “They shall speak with new tongues.” Every soul that is born of God, is created *anew*; (Gal. vi. 15.) is a *new* creature in Christ; (2 Cor. v. 17.) and serves him in *newness* of Spirit. (Rom. vii. 6.) The tongue he spake with before he was called by grace, was either a profane or a mere moral one, that which he speaks with now is a spiritual and heavenly one; before called, carnality was the subject of his conversation—now the things of God are his theme—and why this change? He has got a *new* tongue. 3dly, “They shall take up serpents.” Now, the serpent was more cunning than any other beast of the field which the Lord God had made;” (Genesis iii. 1.) and is a striking figure of some insinuating crafty system of religion, such as Mormonism, which promises a vast many great and glorious things to its votaries: such as forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost with ability to perform many wonderful works, and a little heaven upon earth in or upon the borders of California, but leaves them to the disappointment of finding that their promises are as empty and fallacious as their hearts are of godliness; and, that sin and the devil are as formidable in the western continent as in the British isles. Such serpents as these, believers shall take up, and shew up as I am doing in this pamphlet, I shall extract their stings, and deprive them of their venom; and though they may even afterwards twist and turn, and assume a variety of delusive shapes, they shall be rendered altogether harmless and inoffensive to those who believe. 4th—“If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt

them.' Errors of every religious kind are deadly things, because they partake of the nature of sin, and that sin is a deadly thing, needs no explanation; they act as opiums, stupefying the will, bewildering the judgment, and estranging the affections: those who are not interested in the Lord's great salvation, drink them to their own destruction. Mormonism is one of them; and whosoever drinks in its blasphemies, swallows down its deceptions, and quits this time-state enveloped in its delusion, will find to their never-ending sorrow, that its deadliness is eternal. Believers may drink them, and do; but they are unharmed by them. I drank Mormonism—and my whole soul was full of confusion, and though it sadly annoyed me, the Lord would not suffer it to hurt me, and to his name be all the praise. 5th—'They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' Hands are the instruments of *action, work, or exertion*: to lay on hands, therefore, is to be *active, to work*; and to *exert* ourselves; and not like the blind fatalists of old, say, if it is the sick man's fate to recover, he will recover; but, if it is not his fate to recover he will not recover; and so we will not employ any aid. No: God has connected the means with the ends, and has taught us by experience that certain means will accomplish certain ends. And when Christians *exercise* their abilities, *exert* their powers, and *labour* in the use of all the lawful means that skill has furnished them with, for the restoration of the sick; at the same time, accompanying such efforts with fervent prayer, which is called lifting up holy hands—relying on the promise; they may, in this sense, be said to "lay hands on" them, (in opposition to the barbarous customs of some nations neglecting their sick and infirm, refusing any instrumentality, and leaving them either to recover as they can or perish :) and if they are curable, the Lord will hear the prayer of faith, and save the sick; and when *hands* have been thus *employed*, they shall recover: and, thus we see the promise fulfilled in the letter of it, in the apostle's days and in the spirit of it in ours. But, supposing it was a truth, (which it is not) that Mormons really did possess all those gifts that they make so much boast of; they would be no evidence of their salvation: for, we are told, that a man may have all those, and yet be nothing and profit nothing. 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3. But, so far from a saint's being nothing he is said to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. Rom. viii. 17. And that the spirit is given to him to profit withal: the gift of the Spirit then, whereby a man is enabled to believe that he is a sinner, and deserving of eternal damnation; and that Jesus Christ is a suitable Saviour to deliver him therefrom, and to call him Lord, even *his* Lord, as Thomas did; and the gift of the Spirit, whereby he may work miracles, are two distinct things: for, we are expressly told, that

no man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. xii. 3. And, yet Thomas called him Lord, even *his* Lord. Some time before the Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles to enable them to work miracles: proving at once, that if a man possess the one he must be saved. Heb. x. 39. If he possess the other only he may be damned. Heb. vi. 4, 6.

And, now, having demolished their out-works and razed their citadel with the ground, I shall proceed to dig up their foundation, and scatter it to the winds; and, although, much of the matter I shall employ, has been previously before the public in another form; the only reasons I shall offer, by way of apology, for introducing it again are the following:—1st, Because it contains truths which cannot be destroyed; and 2nd, Because some hundreds, amongst the Mormons, (especially in London) have never had that opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, which they may have in this publication.

It is, no doubt, well known to some, though, perhaps not to all—that the book of Mormon is the foundation of their system; and one Joseph Smith of America, the tool (in the hands of a Sidney Rigdon,) that laid it. Now, strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless true; that, although, the system is based on this very book from which it takes its name; there are comparatively few amongst them, who have read it—being quite content to pin their faith to the sleeves of their officials, rather than take the trouble of examining for themselves.

A correspondent of the *Episcopal Recorder*, published in Philadelphia, describes another agent of this superstition—named Harris, and a visit which this writer received from him, in Palmyra, in 1827.

The following is an extract from his statement: Harris remarked—

"That he reposed great confidence in me as a minister of Jesus Christ, and that what he had now to communicate, he wished me to regard as strictly confidential. He said, he verily believed, that an important epoch had arrived—that a great flood of light was about to burst upon the world; and, that the scene of Divine manifestation was to be immediately around us. In explanation of what he meant, he then proceeded to remark, that a GOLDEN BIBLE had recently been dug from the earth, where it had been deposited for thousands of years; and, that this would be found to contain such disclosures as would settle all religious controversies, and speedily bring on the glorious millenium. That this mysterious book, which no human eye, of the present generation had yet seen, was in the possession of Joseph Smith, jun., ordinarily known in the neighbourhood, by the more familiar designation of Joe Smith; that there had been a revelation made to him, by which he had discovered this sacred deposit, and two transparent stones through which, as a sort of spectacle, he could read the Bible, *although the box or ark that contained it had not yet been opened*; and, that, looking through those mysterious stones, had transcribed from one of

the leaves of this book; the characters which Harris had so carefully wrapped in the package which he was drawing from his pocket. The whole thing appeared to me so ludicrous and puerile, that I could not refrain from telling Mr. Harris that I believed it a mere hoax, got up to practise upon his credulity, or an artifice to extort from him money, for I had already, in the course of the conversation, learned that he had advanced some twenty-five dollars to Joe Smith as a sort of premium, for sharing with him in the glories and profits of this new revelation. For, at this time, his mind seemed to be quite as intent upon the pecuniary advantage that would arise from the possession of the plates of solid gold, of which this book was composed as upon the spiritual light it would diffuse over the world. My intimation to him, in reference to the possible imposition that was practised upon him, however, was indignantly repelled.

"Before I proceed to Martin's narrative, however, I would remark in passing, that Smith, who has since been the chief prophet of the Mormons, and was one of the most prominent ostensible actors in the first scenes of this drama; belonged to a very shiftless family near Palmyra. They lived a sort of vagrant life, and were principally known as *money diggers*. Joe, from a boy, appeared dull, and utterly destitute of genius; but, his father claimed for him, a sort of second sight—a power to look into the depths of the earth, and discover where its precious treasures were hid. Consequently, long before the idea of a GOLDEN BIBLE entered their minds in their excursions for money digging, which usually occurred in the night, that they might conceal from others the place where they struck upon treasures.—Joe was generally their guide—putting into a hat a *peculiar sort of stone* he had, through which he looked, to decide where they should begin to dig. According to Martin Harris, it was on one of these night's excursions, Joe, while he lay on his bed, had a remarkable dream. An angel of God seemed to approach him, clad in celestial splendour. This Divine messenger assured him that he, Joe Smith, was chosen of the Lord, to be a prophet of the Most High God; and to bring to light hidden things that would prove of unspeakable benefit to the world. He then disclosed to him the existence of this GOLDEN BIBLE, and the place where it was deposited; but, at the same time, told him that he must follow implicitly, the Divine direction, or he would draw down upon him the wrath of heaven. This book, which was contained in a chest or ark, and which consisted of metallic plates, covered with characters embossed in gold; he must not presume to look into under three years. He must first go on a journey to Pennsylvania—and there, among the mountains, he would meet with a very lovely woman, belonging to a highly respectable and pious family, whom he was to take for his wife. As a proof that he was sent on this mission by Jehovah, as soon as he saw this designated person, he would be smitten with her beauty; and, though he was a stranger to her, and she was far above him in the walks of life, would at once be willing to marry him, and go with him to the ends of the earth. After their marriage he was to return to his former home, and remain quietly there until the birth of his first child. When this child had completed his second year, he might then proceed to the hill

beneath which the mysterious chest was deposited, and draw it thence and publish the truths it contains to the world. Smith awoke from this dream, and according to Harris, started off towards Pennsylvania, not knowing to what point he should go. But the Lord directed him, and gained him favour in the eyes of such a person as was described to him.* He was married, and had returned. His first child had been born, and was now about six months old. Joe had not been altogether obedient to the heavenly vision. After his marriage and return from Pennsylvania, he became so awfully impressed with the high destiny that awaited him, that he communicated the secret to his father and family. The money-digging propensity of the old man operated so powerfully, that he insisted upon it that they should go and dig, and see if the chest was there—not without any view to remove it until the appointed time, but merely to satisfy themselves. Accordingly, they went forth, in the stillness of night, with their spades and mattocks, to the spot where slumbered this sacred deposit. They had proceeded but a little while in the work of excavation, when the mysterious chest appeared: but, lo! instantly it moved and glided along out of their sight. Directed, however, by the clairvoyance of Joe, they again penetrated to the spot where it stood, and succeeded in gaining a partial view of its dimensions: but, while they were pressing forward to gaze at it, the thunders of the Almighty shook the spot, and made the earth tremble, a sheet of vivid lightning swept along over the side of the hill, and burnt terribly around the spot where the excavation was going on, and again, with a rumbling noise, the chest moved off out of their sight. They were all terrified, and fled towards their home. Joe took his course silently along by himself. On his way homeward, being alone and in the woods, the angel of the Lord met him, clad in terror and wrath: he spoke in a voice of thunder, and forked lightning shot through the trees and ran along upon the ground: the terror of the divine messenger's appearance instantly struck Smith to the earth, and he felt his whole frame convulsed with agony, as though he was stamped upon by the iron hoofs of death himself. In language most terrific did the angel upbraid him for his disobedience, and then disappeared. Smith went home trembling and full of terror; soon, however, his mind became more composed. Another divine communication was made to him, authorising him to go alone, and bring the chest, and deposit it secretly under the hearth of his dwelling, but by no means to look into it. The reason assigned by the angel for this removal, was that some report in relation to the place where this sacred book was deposited had gone forth, and there was danger of its being disturbed. According to Harris, Smith now followed the divine direction: he was in possession of the two transparent stones laid up with the GOLDEN BIBLE; by looking through which he was enabled to read the golden letters on the plates in the box. How he obtained these spectacles *without opening the chest*, Harris could not tell. But still, he had

* Now, whether the angel commanded him to steal this young woman, does not appear from his own statement, but that of his father-in-law (which you shall presently hear,) plainly shows that there was anything but honest dealing in the matter.

them, and by means of them he could read all the book contained. The book itself, was not to be disclosed until Smith's child had attained a certain age; then it might be published to the world. In the interim, Smith was to prepare the way for the conversion of the world—by transcribing the characters from the plates, and giving translations of the same. This was the substance of Martin Harris's communication to me upon our first interview. He then carefully unfolded a slip of paper, which contained three or four lines of characters, as unlike letters or hieroglyphics of any sort as well could be produced, were one to shut up his eyes, and play off the most antic movements of his pen upon paper: the only thing that bore the slightest resemblance to the letter of any language that I had ever seen, was two upright marks joined by a horizontal line that might have been taken for one of the Hebrew characters. My ignorance of the characters in which this pretended ancient record was written, was to Martin Harris new proof that Smith's whole account of the divine revelation made to him, was entirely to be relied upon. The golden plates were said to be engraved in Egyptian hieroglyphics, although the native language of the Jews of course was Hebrew; but the reason assigned is, that the record might be comprised in a smaller space; but I am greatly mistaken, if writing in such characters would not occupy more room than the same amount of matter written in Hebrew; but, be this as it may, the true reason for broaching this story was, that if Smith had professed a knowledge of Hebrew—there were plenty of men qualified to expose his ignorance by a few plain questions, but by professing to translate characters which were not even known to the learned, he thought he should escape detection; but his subtlety deceived him, and in an unlucky moment he fell into a snare, and the fiction was neatly exposed. The Rev. H. Caswell an episcopal clergyman and professor of a college, paid a visit to Nauvoo (the city of the Mormons,) to obtain information respecting the people. In the course of an interview with the prophet, he produced an ancient book in a strange language, which excited much interest among the assembled Mormons, who were eager to know its contents. The book was handed to Smith, who upon examination, pronounced it to be a "Dictionary of Egyptian Hieroglyphics;" Mr. Caswell then coolly informed the company that the volume was a Greek Psalter! The way that Smith made his transcripts and translations for Harris was the following:—Although in the same room, a thick curtain or blanket was suspended between them, and Smith, concealed behind the blanket, pretended to look through his spectacles, or transparent stones, and would then write down, or repeat, what he saw; which, when repeated aloud, was written down by Harris, who sat on the other side of the suspended blanket. Harris was told that it would arouse the most terrible divine displeasure if he should attempt to draw near the sacred chest, or look at Smith while engaged in the work of deciphering the mysterious characters. *This was Harris's own account of the matter to me.*

"It was not till the discovery of the manuscript of Spaulding, of which I shall subsequently give some account, that the actors in this imposture thought of calling this pretended revelation the BOOK OF MORMON. This book which profes-

sed to be a translation of the GOLDEN BIBLE brought to light by Joseph Smith, was published in 1830, to accomplish which Martin Harris actually mortgaged his farm.

"It is a volume containing five-hundred and eighty-eight duodecimo pages, consisting of fifteen different books, purporting to be written at different times, and by different authors, whose names they respectively bear. The period of time which these historical records profess to cover is about a thousand years, if we commence with the time of Zedekiah, King of Judah, and terminate with the year of our Lord 420. But, if we date from the confusion of tongues, it will then range over a period of 2600 years.

"This book has exerted a most important influence in giving some plausibility to the claims set up by the originators of the Mormon impostures. I am quite confident there never would have been any permanent converts to Mormonism had not this volume been ushered into existence. The story of the GOLDEN BIBLE, like a thousand previous, and no less marvellous tales, told by Joe Smith, would have long since sunk into oblivion but for the publication of this book. Its origin, and how it came into being, is, with some, a grave question. It is quite certain that neither Joe Smith, nor Martin Harris, had intelligence or literary qualification adequate to the production of a work of this sort. Who then was its author? The Mormons say that it is a revelation from God,—that the successive narratives spread upon its pages are the identical records engraven upon the metallic plates to which we have already referred, that were like the leaves of a book, and that the writing upon these plates was in the reformed Egyptian language. Now, had the originator of this fabulous history, upon which the book of Mormon is based, kept entirely behind the scenes up to the present period, had there been no clue by which the authorship of this figment of the imagination could be traced, it would still have been abundantly evident to every intelligent person, that it was the product of some shrewd and designing mind, who calculated to find his advantage in gulling the credulous and superstitious. The people of Palmyra, at the commencement of the printing of this book, only laughed at the ridiculousness of the thing, and wondered at the credulity of Harris. As the publication progressed, and the contents of the book began to be known, the conviction became general that there was an actor behind the scene, moving the scenery of far higher intellectual qualification than Smith or Harris—and subsequent circumstances have discovered him, in the person of Sidney Rigdon. In a little work published in America, entitled *Religious Creeds and Statistics*, the author gives a brief sketch of Mormonism; and among other things, inserts a letter, or statement, written by Isaac Hale, the father-in-law of Joe Smith, giving some account of his first acquaintance with him. While at Palmyra, I met with a respectable clergyman of the Episcopal Church, who had formerly belonged to the Methodist connexion, that was acquainted with Mr. Hale. He speaks of his living near the Great Bend, in Pennsylvania. He was professedly a religious man and a very zealous member of the Methodist Church. The letter to which I have referred, is accompanied with a statement, declaring that Mr. Hale resides in Harmony, Penn;

appended to the letter, also, is Mr. Hale's affirmation, or affidavit of the truth of the statement there made, taken before Charles Dimon, justice of the peace; and there is also subjoined the certificate of William Thompson and David Dimock, associate judges of the Court of Common Pleas, in the county of Susquehanna, declaring that 'they have for many years been personally acquainted with Isaac Hale, of Harmony Township, who has attested the foregoing statement, or letter, and that he is a man of excellent moral character and of undoubted veracity.'

The letter, or statement, above referred to, is as follows:

"I first became acquainted with Joseph Smith, junr., in November, 1825. He was at that time in the employ of a set of men who were called 'money-diggers'; and his occupation was that of seeing, or pretending to see, by means of a stone placed in his hat, and his hat placed over his face. In this way he pretended to discover minerals and hidden treasure. His appearance at this time was that of a careless young man, not very well educated, and very saucy and insolent to his father. Smith and his father, with several other money-diggers, boarded at my house while they were employed in digging for a mine that they supposed had been opened and worked by the Spaniards, many years since. Young Smith gave the money-diggers great encouragement at first; but when they had arrived, in digging, to near the place where he had stated an immense treasure would be found, he said the enchantment was so powerful, that he could not see. They then became discouraged, and soon after dispersed. After these occurrences, young Smith made several visits at my house, and at length asked my consent to marry my daughter Emma. This I refused; and gave him my reasons for so doing; some of which were, that he was a stranger, and followed a business that I could not approve. He then left the place. Not long after this he returned; and while *I was absent from home, carried off my daughter into the state of New York, where they were married without my approbation or consent.* After they had arrived at Palmyra, New York, Emma wrote to me, inquiring whether she could have her property, consisting of clothing, etc. I replied that her property was safe, and at her disposal. In a short time they returned, bringing with them a Peter Ingersol, and subsequently came to the conclusion that they would move out, and reside upon a place near my residence. Smith stated to me that he had given up what he called 'glass looking,' and that he expected to work hard for a living and was willing to do so. Soon after this, I was informed they had brought a wonderful book of plates down with them. I was shown a box, in which it was said they were contained, which had, to all appearance, been used as a glass box, of the common sized window glass. I was allowed to feel the weight of the box, and they gave me to understand that the book of plates was then in the box; into which, however, I was not allowed to look. I enquired of Joseph Smith, junr., who was to be the first that would be allowed to see the book of plates? He said it was a young child. After this, I became dissatisfied, and informed him, that if there was anything in my house of that description, which I could not be allowed to see, he must take it away; if he did not I was determined to see it.

After that the plates were said to be hid in the woods.

"About this time Martin Harris made his appearance upon the stage; and Smith began to interpret the characters or hieroglyphics which he said were engraven upon the plates while Harris wrote down the interpretation. It was said that Harris wrote down one hundred and sixteen pages and lost them. Soon after this happened Martin Harris informed me that he must have a greater witness, and said he had talked with Joseph Smith about it; Joseph informed him that he could not, or durst not shew him the plates, but that he (Joseph) would go into the woods, where the book of plates was, and that when he came back Harris should follow his track in the snow, and find the book, and examine it for himself. Harris informed me afterwards that he followed Smith's directions, and could not find the plates, and was still dissatisfied.

"The next day after this happened, I went to the house where Joseph Smith, junr., lived, and where he and Harris were engaged in their translation of the book. Each of them had a written piece of paper, which they were comparing, and some of the words were—'My servant seeketh a greater witness, but no greater witness can be given to him.' There was also something said about 'three that were to see the thing,' (meaning, I supposed, the book of plates,) and that, 'if the three did not go exactly according to orders, the thing would be taken from them.' I enquired whose words they were; and was informed by Joseph that they were the words of Jesus Christ. I told them that I considered the whole of it a delusion, and advised them to abandon it. The manner in which he pretended to read and interpret it was the same as when he looked for the money diggers, with the stone in his hat, and his hat over his face, WHILE THE BOOK OF PLATES WAS, AT THE SAME TIME, HID IN THE WOODS!

"After this, Martin Harris went away, and Oliver Cowdery came and wrote for Smith, while he interpreted, as above described. This is the same Oliver Cowdery, whose name may be found in the book of Mormon. Cowdery continued a scribe for Smith until the book of Mormon was completed. Joseph Smith, junr., resided near me for some time after this, and I had a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, and somewhat acquainted with his associates. And I conscientiously believe, from the facts I have detailed, and from many other circumstances, that the book of Mormon, (so-called,) is a silly fabrication of falsehood and wickedness, got up for speculation, and with a design to dupe the credulous and unwary, and in order that its fabricators might live upon the spoil of those who swallowed the deception.

ISAAC HALE."

Another affidavit of some importance is that of the neighbour and confidential friend of Smith, Peter Ingersol, he says, "One day he came and greeted me with a joyful countenance. Upon asking the cause of his unusual happiness, he replied in the following words:—As I was passing yesterday across the woods after a heavy shower of rain, I found in a hollow some beautiful white sand that had been washed up by the water. I took off my frock and tied up several quarts of it, and then went home. On my entering the house I found the family at dinner, who

were all anxious to know the contents of my frock. At that moment I happened to think of what I had heard about a history, found in Canada, called "The Golden Bible." So I very gravely told them it was the Golden Bible: to my surprise they were credulous enough to believe what I said. Accordingly, I told them that I had received a command to let no man see it, for says I, no man can see it with the naked eye and live. However, I offered to take out the book and show it to them, but they refused to see it and left the room. Now, said Joe, I have got the damned fools fixed, and will carry out the fun,!"*

"I shall have occasion hereafter to refer to the loss of the one hundred and sixteen pages spoken of by Harris, and to the manner in which they were lost, as this fact will not only tend to illustrate Harris's character, but to throw some farther light upon the sinuous track which was pursued to palm off the book of Mormon as a divine revelation. Smith and Cowdery, at the time referred to by Mr. Hale, were deriving their illumination from Rigdon, who had a copy of the manuscript written by Mr. Spaulding, of which I shall soon speak. The true authorship of what constitutes the basis of the book of Mormon unquestionably belongs to Mr. Spaulding. I do not say the book of Mormon is an exact copy of his *Historical Romance*, as Mrs. Davidson, formerly the wife of Spaulding, very properly denominates it. No intelligent or well educated man would have been guilty of so many anachronisms and gross grammatical error as characterize every part of that book; for while Mr. Spaulding's *Historical Romance* is unquestionably the groundwork of this volume, the christianized character of the work, the horatory clauses about salvation through the blood of Christ, and the adaptation of the whole to meet the peculiar religious views of Martin Harris, and Sidney Rigdon and to tally with the pretended discovery of Joe Smith, are evidently parts of the work added to Mr. Spaulding's manuscript. In further corroboration of this idea, I will just advert to a few facts. In this record, some portion of which were professedly written *six hundred years before* the appearance of the Saviour, the various persons in the drama seem as familiar with the events of the New Testament, and all the doctrines of the gospel, as any preacher of the present day. Now no intelligent and well educated man would be guilty of such a solecism as that of putting into the mouth of a Jew, who had lived about 400 years before the birth of Christ, a flippant discourse about things, as though they were then familiarly known when they did not occur till some 500 years afterwards. Again:

"The peculiar style of Holy writ is borrowed throughout, and as regards words and names, many separate languages are drawn upon, proving the assumed writer of early ages to have all the information of our day before him. The difficulty arising from the red colour of the Indian skin, so different from that of the Jews is overcome by the arbitrary and easy medium of a miracle. Their color is said to have been changed, as a punishment for their sins. Things are spoken of which it is well known were not invented till late times. For example, it is said by Nephi, in allusion to a

mutiny that took place on his voyage to America, 'And it came to pass after they had loosed me behold I took the compass and it did work whither I desired it.' Besides antedating the discovery of the needle's polarity by several centuries, the writers here evidently misunderstand the use of the compass altogether. A Mormon elder being pressed on the subject of this blunder, pointed to the account of St. Paul's voyage, which has this sentence in the English version: we *fetched a compass*, and came to Rhegium.' The misapprehension of this sentence, the first words of which mean merely, 'we made a circuit' had obviously led to the blunder of the composers of the book of Mormon. The history of the pretended Israelites is continued in the books of Enos, Jarom, Zeniff, &c.; and through them all, we find one signal proof, not only of imposture, but of the ignorance of the impostors, repeated with singular pertinacity. Every successive prophet predicts to the Nephites the future coming of Christ; the writers have fallen into the vulgar error of mistaking an epithet for a name; the word '*Christ*,' as all educated persons know, is not a name, but a Greek title of office, signifying 'The Anointed,' being, in fact, a translation of the Hebrew word *Messiah*. It is true that in modern times, and by a corruption that is now become inveterate, the term is used by some who know no better, as if it were a proper name, or at least, an untranslatable designation; but this is a modern error, and has been avoided by most of the oriental churches. Now the use of a Greek term, in an age before the Greek language was formed, and by a people with whom it is impossible for Greeks to have intercourse, and moreover, whose native language was of such peculiar construction as not to be susceptible of foreign admixture, is a mark of forgery so obvious and decisive, that it ought long since to have exposed the delusion: besides, however, illiterate and uninformed the composers of the book of Mormon might have been, if they had written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he would have taken good care to have prevented any error creeping in through their ignorance.

"A second Nephi takes up the history at a period contemporary with the events recorded in the New Testament; it asserts that the Lord exhibited himself to the Nephites after his resurrection, and the words attributed to him bear still more conclusive evidence of the ignorance of the impostors:—'Behold I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are.' Book of Mormon, page 509. And again, 'I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.'—*Ibid* page 510. In addition to the former blunder respecting the name *Christ*, we have the name *Jesus* in its Greek form; and not, as the Hebrews would have called it *Joshua*: but we have furthermore, the name of the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet given as a metaphorical description of continued existence to a nation that had never heard of the Greek language. It is quite clear that the writers mistook Alpha and Omega for some sacred and mystic sounds to which particular sanctity was attached; and wrote them down without perceiving that they were an evidence of forgery so palpable as to be manifest to school boys.

Numerous passages might be produced from

* See Mormonism and the Mormons, by Daniel P. Kidder, New York.

the *Book of Mormon*, to show how directly they stand opposed to the sacred text, although professedly written under the influence of the same spirit; but one or two shall suffice.

"The Lord's command to the Israelites respecting their food was 'Eat not of it raw.' But the Lord is made to say, by the authors of the *Book of Mormon*, 'I will make your food sweet that ye cook it not,' Page 41. 'What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man, which is in him,' (1 Cor. ii. 11.) 'I can tell you concerning your thoughts,' Page 131. 'There is none that doeth good, no not one,' (Rom. iii. 12.) 'Ye can do good,' Page 481. 'Who hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,' (2 Tim. i. 9.) 'Called and prepared from the foundation of the world, according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works, and repentance, and righteousness before God.'—*Book of Mormon*. Passages are quoted from the New Testament, which could not have had an existence till some hundreds of years afterwards; for instance—'He has said, that the righteous shall sit down in his kingdom to go no more out: but their garments shall be made white through the blood of the Lamb.'—*Ibid*, Page 344. Again, 'He hath said, that no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of heaven.'—*Ibid*. Again, 'God has said, that the inward vessel shall be cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also.'—*Ibid* 426.

"Once more, 'We read, that in that great and last day, there are some who shall be cast out and consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling the words which say—they that have done good shall have everlasting life, and they that have done evil, everlasting damnation.'—*Ibid* 474. Where has the Lord said these things but in the *New Testament*? They also have the words '*religion, church, dissenter*,' (*ibid* 370,) which were no where in use before the coming of Christ; and I am greatly mistaken if the word *dissenter* had birth, till the days of OLIVER CROMWELL. Some passages are not even common sense: take the following. 'They have gone to their God because of their love and of their hatred to sin.' *Ibid* 319. 'Now, Korihor said unto him, I do not deny the EXISTENCE of a god; but I do not believe THAT THERE IS A GOD.' *Ibid* 330. 'I am their Redeemer, but they would not be redeemed.' *Ibid* 223.

"In one place, through a breach of grammatical consistency, they make the Lord to say, that he is the creator of all the sin that exists in the world. 'It is I that taketh upon me the sins of the world, for it is I that have CREATED THEM.'* *Ibid* 223. Hence, it is evident, that these parts and numerous others of a similar character, were added to the original document of Mr. Spaulding, by Rigdon, through Joe Smith. Another proof, that considerable alterations were made in the document referred to, stands in connexion with the fact to which I have already adverted; the loss of the one hundred and sixteen pages, which

were never replaced. These pages were lost in the following way:—Harris brought home the manuscript pages, and locked them up in the house, thinking them quite safe. But his wife, who was not then, nor ever afterwards became a convert to Mormonism, took the opportunity when he was out, to seize the manuscript, and put it into the hand of one of her neighbours for safer keeping. When the manuscript was discovered to be missing, suspicion immediately fastened upon Mrs. Harris; she, however, refused to give any information in relation to the matter, but simply replied: 'If this be a divine communication, the same being who revealed it to you can easily replace it.' Mrs. H. believed the whole thing to be a gross deception, and she had formed a plan to expose it in the following manner:—Taking for granted that they would attempt to re-produce the part she had concealed, and that they could not possibly do it verbatim, she intended to keep the manuscript until the work was published; and then put these 116 pages into the hands of some one who would publish them, and show how they varied from those published in the book of Mormon. But, she had to deal with persons standing behind the scene, and moving the machinery that were too wily thus to be caught. Harris was indignant at his wife beyond measure; he raved most violently, and it is said, actually beat Mrs. H. with a rod; but she remained firm, and would not give up the manuscript. The authors of this imposture did not dare to reproduce this part of the work; but, Joe Smith had immediately a revelation about it, as follows:—'As many false reports have been circulated respecting the book of Mormon, and also many unlawful measures taken by evil designing persons to destroy me, and also the work; I would inform you that I translated, by the power of God, and caused to be written 116 pages, the which I took from the book of Lehi, which was an account abridged from the plates of Lehi, by the hand of Mormon, which said account, some person or persons have stolen and kept from me, notwithstanding my utmost exertions to recover it again; and, being commanded of the Lord that I should not translate the same over again, for satan had put it into their hearts to tempt the Lord their God, by altering the words, that they did read contrary from that which I translated and caused to be written; and, if I should bring forth the same words again, or in other words, if I should translate the same over again, they would publish that which they had stolen, and satan would stir up the hearts of this generation, that they might not receive the work: but, behold, the Lord said unto me, I will not suffer that satan shall accomplish his evil design in this thing: therefore, thou shalt translate from the plates of Nephi, until ye come to that which ye have translated, which ye have retained; and, behold, ye shall publish it as the record of Nephi; and, thus will I confound those who have altered my words. I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work: yea, I will show them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.'

"This was the expedient to which they resorted, in order to avoid replacing the lost page. Had they, however, been transcribed verbatim from Mr. Spaulding's manuscript, they would, undoubtedly, have reproduced them, and urged the

* For a more extensive exposure of the inconsistencies of this Golden Bible, see "Mormonism weighed in the Balances and found wanting;" by Alexander Campbell. London: Hall, Virtue, & Co. 25, Paternoster Row.

fact of their being able to do so, as a still further proof of their divine inspiration. But as there was considerable new matter mingled up with Mr. Spaulding's sketches, it was impossible for them to produce the one-hundred and sixteen pages, just as they were before; and therefore, they devised this expedient to relieve themselves from the necessity of reproducing them.

"The origin of the work of Mr. Spaulding, which, unquestionably, forms the entire groundwork of the book of Mormon, is thus described by Mrs. Davidson, formerly the wife of Mr. Spaulding. Her statement was published some time in the winter of 1840, in the *Boston Recorder*, to the Editor of which it was sent by John Storms, the Congregational Minister in Holliston; accompanied with a certificate from two highly respectable Clergymen, Mr. Austin and A. Ely, D.D., residing in Monson, Mass., the then place of residence of Mrs. Davidson, stating that she was formerly the wife of Solomon Spaulding, and that since his decease she had been married to a second husband by the name of Davidson; and that she was a woman of irreproachable character, and a humble christian, and that her testimony was worthy of implicit confidence.

"As the *Book of Mormon*, or *Golden Bible*, (as it was originally called) has excited much attention; and is deemed, by a certain new sect, of equal authority with the sacred Scriptures, I think it a duty which I owe to the public, to state what I know touching its origin.

"That its claims to a divine origin are wholly unfounded, needs no proof to a mind unperturbed by the grossest delusions. That any sane person should rank it higher than any other merely human composition, is a matter of the greatest astonishment; yet, it is received as divine by some who dwell in enlightened New England, and even by those who have sustained the character of devoted christians. Learning recently that Mormonism had found its way into a church in Massachusetts, and has impregnated some with its gross delusions, so that excommunication has been necessary, I am determined to delay no longer in doing what I can to strip the mask from this mother of sin, and to lay open this pit of abominations.

"Solomon Spaulding, to whom I was united in marriage in early life, was a graduate of Dartmouth College, and was distinguished for a lively imagination and a great fondness for history. At the time of our marriage, he resided in Cherry Valley, New York. From this place, we removed to New Salem, Ashtabula county, Ohio, sometimes called Conneaut, as it is situated on Conneaut Creek. Shortly after our removal to this place, his health sunk, and he was laid aside from active labours. In the town of New Salem, there are numerous mounds and forts, supposed by many to be the dilapidated dwellings and fortifications of a race now extinct. These ancient relics arrest the attention of the new settlers, and become objects of research for the curious. Numerous implements were found, and other articles evincing great skill in the arts. Mr. Spaulding being an educated man, and passionately fond of history, took a lively

interest in these developments of antiquity; and in order to beguile the hours of retirement, and furnish employment for his lively imagination, he conceived the idea of giving an historical sketch of this long lost race. Their extreme antiquity led him to write in the most ancient style, and as the Old Testament is the most ancient book in the world, he imitated its style as nearly as possible. His sole object in writing this imaginary history was to amuse himself and his neighbours. This was about the year 1812. Hull's surrender at Detroit, occurred near the same time, and I recollect the date well from that circumstance. As he progressed in his narrative, the neighbours would come in from time to time to hear portions read; and a great interest in the work was excited amongst them. It claimed to have been written by one of the lost nation and to have been recovered from the earth, and assumed the title of "Manuscript Found." The neighbours would often inquire how Mr. Spaulding progressed in deciphering the manuscript; and when he had a sufficient portion prepared, he would inform them, and they would assemble to hear it read. He was enabled from his acquaintance with the classics and ancient history, to introduce many singular names, which were particularly noticed by the people, and could be easily recognized by them. Mr. Solomon Spaulding had a brother, Mr. John Spaulding, residing in the place at the time, who was perfectly familiar with the work, and repeatedly heard the whole of it read. From New Salem, we removed to Pittsburgh, Pa. Here Mr. Spaulding found a friend and acquaintance, in the person of Mr. Patterson, an editor of a newspaper. He exhibited his manuscript to Mr. Patterson, who was very much pleased with it, and borrowed it for perusal. He retained it for a long time, and informed Mr. Spaulding that if he would make out a title page and preface, he would publish it, and it might be a source of profit. This Mr. Spaulding refused to do, Sidney Rigdon who has figured so largely in the history of the Mormons, was at that time connected with the printing office of Mr. Patterson, as is well known in that region, and as Rigdon himself has frequently stated, become acquainted with Mr. Spaulding's manuscript, and copied it. It was a matter of notoriety and interest to all connected with the printing establishment. At length, the manuscript was returned to its author, and soon after we removed to Amity, Washington county, &c., where Mr. Spaulding deceased in 1816. The manuscript then fell into my hands, and was carefully preserved. It has frequently been examined by my daughter, Mrs. M'Kenstry, of Monson, Mass., with whom I now reside, and by other friends.

"After the book of Mormon came out, a

copy of it was taken to New Salem, the place of Mr. Spaulding's former residence, and the very place where the manuscript found was written. A woman preacher, appointed a meeting there; and in the meeting read, and repeated copious extracts from the book of Mormon. The historical part was immediately recognized by all the older inhabitants, as the identical work of Mr. Spaulding, in which they had all been as deeply interested years before. Mr. John Spaulding was present, and recognized perfectly the work of his brother. He was amazed and afflicted, that it should have been perverted to so wicked a purpose. His grief found vent in a flood of tears, and he arose on the spot, and expressed to the meeting his sorrow and regret that the writings of his deceased brother should be used for a purpose so vile and shocking. The excitement in New Salem became so great, that the inhabitants had a meeting, and depicted Dr. Philastus Hurlbut, one of their number, to repair to this place, and to obtain from me the original manuscript of Mr. Spaulding, for the purpose of comparing it with the Mormon Bible, to satisfy their own minds, and to prevent their friends from embracing an error so delusive. This was in the year 1834. Dr. Hurlbut brought with him an introduction, and request for the manuscript, which was signed by Messrs. Henry Lake, Aaron Wright, and others, with all of whom I was acquainted, as they were my neighbours when I resided at New Salem. I am sure that nothing would grieve my husband more, were he living, than the use which has been made of his work. The air of antiquity which was thrown about the compositions, doubtless suggested the idea of converting it to purposes of delusion. Thus an historical romance, with the addition of a few pious expressions and extracts from the sacred Scriptures, has been construed into a new Bible, and palmed off upon a company of poor, deluded fanatics as Divine. I have given the previous brief narration, that this work of deep deception and wickedness may be searched to the foundation, and the authors exposed to the contempt and execration they so justly deserve.

"MATILDA DAVIDSON.

The farther Martin Harris went into this delusion, the more he became infatuated. He had already embarked a large portion of his property in the bringing out the publication of the book of Mormon, and though many things had occurred that would have convinced any rational man that he had been the subject of a deep laid scheme of deception, he still seems to have shut his eyes and gone on in the dark. At first Martin Harris was assured that the golden plates on which this record was engraven, would be his, and that it would be perfectly

lawful to subject them to public inspection; but as the managers of this imposture proceeded, they found it necessary to advance with more caution. Hence it was revealed to Joe Smith, that he would be authorized to show them only to three individuals who should assist in bringing forward this work. This was a lure to secure the continued co-operation of Harris. To convince Harris that he would be highly privileged, it was foretold in the book of Ether, written by Moroni (book of Mormon, p. 548) that he that should find the plates should have the privilege of showing them to three persons.

We are told by Oliver Cowdery that it was a 'stone box' that contained the metallic plates. Mr. Smith's father in law who saw and handled the box where Smith himself said they were, tells us that "it was a box such as is used for common window glass" and consequently a wooden one, and I think there is as much dependance to be placed upon his statement (which must be altogether disinterested) as in those whose subsistence depends upon the continuation of the system. But if such things ever did have an existence, is it not strange that no one tells what became of them? Were they so valueless as not to be worth preserving? most people attach an importance to the mere casket on account of the jewel it holds; but here both jewels and casket are gone and no one knows whither. Appeals are made to the persons who are said to have seen the plates, but what is their testimony worth? Where is Oliver Cowdery? separated from the church for *immoral conduct*. Where is David Whitmer? and the rest of the witnesses? I leave it for the Mormons to reply: and what shall we say to Martin Harris's testimony? Listen! a gentleman in Palmyra, bred to the law, a professor of religion, and of undoubted veracity, says, that on one occasion he applied to Harris, and asked him distinctly,—"Did you see those plates?" Harris replied, he did. "Did you see the plates and the engraving on them with your bodily eyes?" Harris replied, "Yes, I saw them with my eyes, they were shown unto me by the power of God, and not of man." "But did you see them with your natural, your bodily eyes, just as you see this pencil case in my hand? Now say no or yes to this." Harris replied, "Why I did not see them as I do that pencil case, yet I saw them with the eyes of faith: I saw them just as distinctly as I see any thing around me, though at the time they were covered over with a cloth." Statements like this require little comment. He saw them with the eyes of faith, he says, which is tantamount to saying that he only believed he saw them; the same as a man who had never left Great Britain, might say that he saw Africa with the eyes of his faith

because some one might have told him there was such a place, and given him a description of it, and he believed their report.

From the whole of the foregoing history of this plot the reader will perceive, that the finding of ancient ruins, in America in 1847, and the discovery of other things at a subsequent period, which Mormons set up as one testimony of the truth of their pretended revelation, proves thus much: 1st, That it might have been inhabited before the deluge. 2nd, That it was inhabited, at one time, by an intelligent people, who were acquainted with the arts and sciences. 3rd.—That some of the Israelites were a portion of the inhabitants in fulfilment of the Lord's word. Deut. xxviii. 25. 4th.—That the finding of some of these antiquities, being prior to the production of Mr. Spaulding's manuscript, would naturally lead him to make use of those very discoveries to ground his fictitious history upon: for, from what has been discovered of ancient ruins, Mr. Spaulding would conclude, that much still remained to be discovered; and, consequently, would allow his imagination a very extensive scope. Some few years after, Cartherwood and Stephens discovers forty or forty-four cities, just about where Mr. Spaulding speaks of cities standing; and from this, it is considered by Mormons, that nothing less than divine inspiration could have foretold it: but, where is the man, who cannot perceive how easily a person may merely imagine things, and those very things take place at subsequent periods, that before, only floated in the brain? Circumstances of this kind might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, where common gipsies have guessed at things foretold them accordingly; and, they have taken place years afterwards, almost to the very letter. Such evidence, therefore, in favor of Mormonism, amounts to just nothing. One main, if not the only object of the imposture, has been to exalt Joseph Smith, as a grand head and director of the church; the other offices being filled by creatures subordinate to his will, and shares in the plunder of the dupes. There are two distinct orders of church dignitaries—1st, The MELCHIDIC, or High Priesthood: 2nd, The AARONIC, or Lesser Priesthood: both of which, embrace a variety of figures. There are also, subordinate presidencies, ruling over towns or districts, called stakes; and the appointment of these stakes in new regions, in North America, afforded Mr. Smith a favourable opportunity for speculating in town lots: the acquisition of wealth, therefore, is at the bottom of it all; and much as they may denounce the carnality of the present day, both amongst churchmen and dissenters, (and not without cause) in preaching for hire, and divining for money, they are hardly a whit behind them in their devotion to mammon;

for, notwithstanding their elders, and some of their underlings may give their services gratuitously; their hierarchy and even their presidents, do not eat bread 'in the sweat of their face,' but would much rather live at the expense of their poor deluded votaries, than adopt the practice of a Paul, in labouring with his hands for his daily subsistence, determined to be chargeable to no man, that the ministry might not be brought into disrepute.

The whole mystery of the origin of Mormonism is cleared up by Mrs. Davidson's statement; and I have seen no attempt made to deny its truth worthy of a moment's consideration. I am aware, that an endeavour has been made, by Mr. Flanigan to invalidate the testimony of Mrs. Davidson; and every effort has been used, and every nerve appears to have been strained, to get up something to overturn her unvarnished, straightforward statement: but, divest it of its defamatory and extraneous matter, and what does it all amount to? Why, just this: 'that S. Rigdon, in a letter bearing date, May 29, 1839, merely denies, without bringing one proof, all that Mrs. Davidson has asserted; and P. Pratt confirms what he says:' but, I will put it to the candid reader to decide, which is entitled to the greatest credit, two persons both deeply interested in the success of the deception, or those who had no other end to answer, than that of undeceiving the deluded by a declaration of truth? The whole of that letter, from its commencement to its close, is little more than a tissue of abuse of Mrs. Davidson, and those with whom she stood connected; and not a falling that they were the subjects of, (which christian charity would have thrown a veil over), but what has been dragged forth to public inspection. A system that seeks thus to support itself at the expense of others, bespeak at once, the rottenness of the foundation it rests upon; and, especially when it is remembered that that very person who has vilified the advocates of truth, has himself forfeited the position which he held, through conduct, as flagrant, or more so, than that which he attempted to lay at the door of those, who had prudence enough to avoid such fanaticism as few beside weak minds, are so foolish as to be entangled with. Sidney Rigdon knew, when he was penning that letter, that he was writing most glaring falsehoods—he knew that it was himself that dictated to Joseph Smith, the subject matter of the book of Mormon, though concealed from the others that were concerned in it. He knew, that as soon as the manuscript was completed, he withdrew from the scene of action; and, with Campbell, Scott, and others, began to preach the doctrine of Baptism for the remission of sins in the literal sense; and, that he was the man with whom the doctrine, in that

sense originated: he knew that it was his intention to return, as soon as a favourable opportunity occurred; and, to keep up the deception, appeared as a stranger to Mr. Smith when introduced to him; affected surprise at the book of Mormon as something new to him; and allowed those, who presented it to him, to use a great deal of persuasion and argument, before he consented to read it; and then pretended to a violent struggle of mind before he acknowledged that he believed and embraced it. But, enough: to pursue the matter further, would be superfluous: my object in these pages is not with a view to make any favourable impression on the officers of the Mormons, because, Mormonism being the craft by which

they get their bread, the attempt would be hopeless; but, if it be possible, to induce some of my less favoured fellow creatures, to think and act like rational men, and thus be a means of delivering them from the ridiculous nonsense, which cunning men are perpetually getting up to forward their own worldly interests under the cover of religion. Mr. Pratt may call the latter part of this pamphlet, "the old Spaulding story;" and Mr. Flanigan may load it with opprobrious epithets, but contempt is neither argument nor proof: its antiquity I admit—its falsehood I deny—its truth I maintain; and am bold to challenge the most intrepid of the sect, to disprove the facts that it contains—and thus I leave it.



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