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Henry Stevens

A *36*

FEW PLAIN WORDS

ABOUT

MORMONISM,

SHOWING THAT

Latter-Day Saints are no Saints at all,

PROVED BY

Extracts from their Writings.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

A Few Plain Words about Popery & the Pope. 180th Thousand.
Pope or Queen, or What Should we do at the Coming Election.
&c. &c.

"But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.—*Gal. i. 8.*

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A FEW PLAIN WORDS ABOUT MORMONISM.

SOME few years ago I heard that a respectable young man in the country whose friends I knew very well, had joined the Mormonites or Latter Day Saints, and that in consequence he had sold off all his things, and taken his wife and children, mother and sister, to some place very far back in America, where all the sect were to live. I could not learn what they were to do there in particular, different from other people, except that a grand Temple was to be built, to which every one who joined them was expected to pay.

That people should emigrate to America is not so uncommon a thing as to occasion any surprise; the only oddity about it is, that any body should fancy that he *cannot* serve God here as well as anywhere else, since every person in this country is at liberty to worship God as he thinks right, so long as he does not harm his neighbours. It strikes me that *change of heart* is much more important in the matter of serving God, than *change of place*. The ancient Jews thought that acceptable worship could only be offered at *Jerusalem*, and their neighbours, the Samaritans, believed that *Mount Gerizim* was the place where men ought to worship; but our Lord taught them that, in the dispensation he was about to introduce, neither the one nor the other place was exclusively essential,—that God looks to the heart.

A year or two after this person had left the country, a letter came from him, in which he talked very large not only of what was going to happen to the nations of the earth, but of the part which he and his friends were going to take in it; no less than being horns of iron to push them together.

This young man was I believe a very decent person in his way—a country wheelwright, and doing a tidy business in the cart and wheelbarrow line, but assuredly none of his English friends imagined his abilities were of that stamp to be of much account in “pushing nations;” and if his new acquaintance led him to believe he was going to be so employed, they were much deceived; for not very long ago his friends heard that his body had been found dreadfully mutilated, supposed to have been robbed and murdered by the Indians.

Such was the melancholy end of his dreams of ruling over others; and as many thousand people have left this country with the same notions; and persons are now very busy in different parts of Great Britain trying to persuade others to take the same steps, I have been led to examine the principles and writings that teach we cannot be christians in *every country*, but must, if we would be saved, *forthwith* subscribe one tenth of our property to be laid out on building schemes in California, and prepare to break up our homes here, no matter how comfortably settled, or how unfit we may be for a change of country.

It is quite clear even to the simplest reader, that the *Bible* gives no warrant for all this, and therefore we are at once met with the assu-

rance that the Bible is not enough for us, but that an Angel appeared to one Joseph Smith, and directed him to a certain stone box which had been hidden for 1400 years under ground, full of golden plates which were engraved with curious characters. We are told that he was directed to keep these plates from every body's sight; that in the box was an immense pair of spectacles, called Urim and Thummim, which he was to put on, and then he would be able to read the characters which an Angel would translate for him into English; and as he could not write himself, another person must copy it from his mouth.

Now I will not say that it is impossible for God to make a revelation of his will to Joseph Smith or anybody else. It does not belong to mortal man to say that God cannot do this or that thing; but we are quite safe in saying that if God should make another revelation to man, it will be one worthy of his character, as a Being of Infinite Holiness, Wisdom, and Love.

We are also quite safe in saying that any revelation from God intended for our use, would be such as to commend itself to our *understandings*; for God commands our obedience as a *reasonable service*. For instance we know the Bible to be the Word of God, because its contents agree with the *character* of God. It tells us what we could never have known, had not the wisdom of God revealed it to us in the Bible; and all the efforts of learned men in past ages to overthrow its authority, have only the more firmly established its truth.

We also observe that copies of the Scriptures in the ancient languages and of the greatest antiquity, are spread over the world. That these manuscripts are open to the inspection of the learned, that they have been examined and compared one with the other, both by enemies and friends. And of late years, by the discovery of the meaning of the figures on the Egyptian tombs in the pyramids, the truth of the Christian's Bible has been wonderfully confirmed; while, strange to relate, within the last twelve months, there has been dug up in the ruins of Nineveh, sculptured stones containing an account of the very sums paid by Hezekiah to the King of Nineveh.

We see then that the Bible not only declares itself to be the Word of God, but that it is *proved* to be so by every kind of testimony. Hence the most learned men who have investigated its claims acknowledge its authority, and even bad people whose practices it condemns, believe it is what it professes to be. Indeed so clear is the evidence of its divine authority, that it is impossible *after* a thorough *examination* of it, to be an unbeliever, for even those places which may appear at first sight to an unlearned person most difficult to explain, prove to be correct; and the researches of travellers and learned men in the present age, have made clear many things which puzzled our forefathers.

We may say of the Bible, like every other work of God, that the more it is examined, the more beautiful it appears; while the finest works of men when examined by a microscope, are full of defects and

blemishes. Now I propose to apply this test to the Book of Mormon, which the Mormonites say is the Book of God too. If it be so, we shall certainly find the tokens of its divine author, for "as for God his work is perfect." We should not take a bank note without satisfying ourselves that it was genuine; how much less then should we receive that for a revelation of the Most High God, which we have not the most undoubted evidence is such.

If my master sends a letter to me with particular directions to do certain things, and a long time afterwards another letter contradicting it, is brought to me by a stranger who says he comes from my master, I should of course examine it very carefully, and if I find the writing not at all like what I *know* to be his, I naturally think it is not a true document, and pay no attention to it. Let us then in a spirit of fairness examine whether the Book of Mormon contains such marks as must stamp it in the mind of any plain person of ordinary common sense as an imposture, or whether it has such internal excellence as to be worthy of the origin claimed for it.

The Book of Mormon is a volume containing about two thirds as much as the Old Testament. It consists of fourteen separate books, said to have been written at different times by different persons, extending over a period of about 1000 years, from about 600 years before Christ, to the year of our Lord 420, when the plates from which Smith's translation is said to be made, were hid in a stone box in a hill called Cumorah, in the State of New York, by the prophet Moroni. The purport of the book is to teach that America is the Land of Promise; that Mount Zion is there, and that all who do not flee there will perish.

It principally relates in very clumsy and ungrammatical language, the wars and contentions of nations who are said to have once lived on the American continent, and of one family of whom the present American Indians are said to be the descendants. We are informed that America was first peopled at the time of the building of the *Tower of Babel* by a party of 22 persons; these became mighty nations, who were totally destroyed from off the land just before the arrival of a small party of Jews from Jerusalem, in the first year of Zedekiah, king of Judah. They had left their sacred records on gold plates, which fell into the hands of the new comers. This party it seems crossed the Pacific Ocean, and landed on the Western coast of South America. Ten years afterwards another party left Jerusalem, who landed in North America; and with the adventures of this last colony the Book of Mormon commences. It states that a pious Jew named Lehi, who lived in Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah, was commanded by God to take his family and depart into the wilderness.

"And it came to pass that the Lord commanded my father, even in a dream, that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness. And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.

And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and

the land of his inheritance, and his gold and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness; and he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he travelled in the wilderness in the borders which are near the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

And it came to pass that when he had travelled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water. And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God." Page 8.

After a time Lehi had a dream, in which he was commanded to send his sons back to Jerusalem, to get some plates of brass which contained the Law and the genealogy of their families, which were in the hands of one Laban, of the same tribe, who would not give them up, and drove them away; but Nephi came back in the night, and gives this account of his proceedings:

"And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. Nevertheless I went forth, and as I came near unto the house of Laban, I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine. And when I came to him I found that it was Laban. And I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof, and the hilt thereof was of pure gold, and the workmanship thereof was exceeding fine: and I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; but I said in my heart, never at any time have I shed the blood of man; and I shrunk and would that I might not slay him. And the Spirit said unto me again, behold the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands; yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord; and he also had taken away our property.

And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again, slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. Behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish, than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.

And now, when I, Nephi, had heard these words, I remembered the words of the Lord which he spake unto me in the wilderness, saying, that inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the *land of promise*. Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass. And again—I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause, that I might obtain the records according to his commandments. Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword." Page 8.

Here we see the Holy Spirit of God is made to use the very argument which the Apostle says is damnable, "to do evil that good may come," and to incite to wilful murder and robbery; for from what follows, it does not appear but what these pretended plates really belonged to Laban. But let us proceed. Nephi and his brothers returned with the plates to their father:

"And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifices and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel. * * And it came to pass that my father Lehi also found upon the plates of brass, a genealogy of his fathers; WHEREFORE he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph. * * And thus my father Lehi did discover the genealogy of his fathers. And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records." Page 11.

Now I do not hesitate to affirm, that the above Extracts, brief as they are, and extending only to the eleventh page of the book, contain so much of absurdity and contradiction, as will upon examination convince the simplest believer in the Bible, that he must give up either the Book of Mormon, or the Book of God, for that they cannot both be true. Let us examine these statements, and compare them with the Bible.

First. That a Jew and his family are commanded to leave Judea, to be taken to a *Land of Promise*, which turns out to be America.

Now this is flatly contradicted by God's express words, for his promise to Abram was,

"Unto thy seed have I given *this* land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." *Gen. xv. 18.*

Second. That a family of pious Jews rejoiced and offered sacrifices and burnt offerings in the *wilderness*, being descendants of *Joseph*.

Here are *two* palpable contradictions to God's Word.

1. They are said to offer sacrifices *in the wilderness*, but God's express law was on this wise:

"But *when* ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and *when* he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; then there shall be a *place* which the Lord your God shall *choose* to cause his name to dwell there; *thither* shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the *heave* offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the Lord. And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maid-servants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you. *Take heed* to thyself that thou *offer not* thy burnt offerings in *every place* that thou seest: but in the place which the Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes, *there* thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee." *Deut. xii. 10, 14.*

2. The descendants of *Joseph* had no right to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings unto the Lord, for it was strictly prohibited in the Law, and for this very crime Korah and his company were destroyed. God set apart the descendants of *Aaron* to offer sacrifice, and expressly forbade every other, under pain of death.

And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar, to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that *no stranger* which is not of the seed of *Aaron*, come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Korah and his company." *Numbers xvi. 39, 40.*

"Therefore thou and thy sons with thee, [*Aaron*] shall keep your priests' office for every thing of the altar, and within the veil, and ye shall serve: I have given your priests' office as a service of gift; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death." *Numbers xviii. 7.*

We have now to notice the ridiculous absurdity that *Lehi* did not know "the genealogy of his fathers" till he had these plates from *Laban*. That is, he actually did not know what tribe he was of, although he was a married man with a grown up family. Now to fully understand the nonsense of this, we must bear in mind that every head of a family, except of the tribe of *Levi*, had an estate given to him

by Joshua, which land could not be sold. If there had been nothing else therefore to tell him, the very possession of this estate was public proof, as plain as the sun at noon day, of the tribe to which he belonged; besides which we know there was nothing about which a Jew was more particular than his genealogy, which was kept in public registers, down to the time of Christ. If Lehi and his children did not know they were descendants of Joseph, we must also assume that when he married, his wife's family did not know the tribe of their new relative, and that in their intercourse with other Jews, they had never heard of it. Why it is just as impossible as for a man who is walking every day to be ignorant that he has the use of his legs.

After sojourning some years in the wilderness, Nephi the son of Lehi, was filled with wisdom to build a ship, the "workmanship whereof was exceeding fine," in which they all embarked for America; but after some days it is said, the brothers of Nephi were "lifted up into exceeding rudeness," and bound him with cords. "And it came to pass that after they had bound me, insomuch that I could not move, 'the compass which had been prepared of the Lord, did cease to work, 'wherefore they knew not whither they should steer the ship." After some days however they loosed Nephi, and then we are told, "And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold I *took the compass*, and it *did work whither I desired it.*" Page 43.

Now all this must certainly be Joseph Smith's, and no angel's, for it is pure nonsense. Smith was an ignorant countryman, born and bred some hundreds of miles from the sea side; he had *heard* of a compass, but most certainly had never *seen* one, and had not the least idea of the way in which it is used, or he could never have talked about "*taking it*," and its "*working whither he desired.*"

It cannot surely be necessary to quote more evidence in proof of its being not only an imposture, but one that can only delude the most ignorant of mankind. But it may be well in another interesting particular, to compare it with God's own blessed Word. The books of the Bible were written at different periods widely apart. It is known that some Books were written during and after the Babylonish Captivity; and accordingly, as might be expected, there is a gradual change in the language, from the pure Hebrew of the earlier parts, to the mixed Hebrew and Chaldaic. Now in the Book of Mormon we have continually a style of writing belonging to a later age, used before its time. We have words pretended to be written at a time in which they were not in use, and the same word being used in different languages at the same time. All these blunders are impossible to divine inspiration, but marvellously like the imposture of an ignorant man who did not know the meaning of the words he was using.

For instance, the words *Messiah* and *Christ* are the same, the one being Hebrew and the other Greek, both meaning the "anointed." Hebrew writers therefore who lived hundreds of years before the Greek language was used, could not use Greek expressions; and we never find

the word Christ in the *Old Testament*, but *Messiah*; but it is used repeatedly in the Book of Mormon, for Nephi the Jew, who lived 600 years before Christ, continually uses this Greek word :

"For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the Angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Page 97.

Revised The same may be said of the terms "Holy Ghost," and "Bible;" both are words that could not have been used by an ancient Jew who wrote at the time the Book of Mormon is said to have been written. The word "Bible" is of very late date. The Jews had no word to express its meaning, for "*they had no Bible.*" Their sacred writings were termed the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. But Joseph Smith makes Nephi prophesy of us who will not believe his revelations, as follows :

"And my words shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel. And because my words shall hiss forth, many of the Gentiles shall say, a bible, a bible, we have got a bible, and there cannot be any more bible." "Thou fool, that shalt say, a bible, we have got a bible, and we need no more Bible." "And because that I have spoken one word, ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be, until the end of man; neither from that time henceforth and for ever. Wherefore, because that ye have a bible, ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written." Page 107.

I might multiply these passages by hundreds, in which the words Jesus Christ, Holy Ghost, Bible, Alpha and Omega, and other phrases, prove indisputably that the whole book is a *modern* imposture. What would be thought if I pretended to have found an old Monkish Journal a thousand years old, in which the writer should give an account of his journey to some Saint's tomb in Scotland, in language like this.

"I took the omnibus which passes the door of our Monastery, to the Bristol Station, and left by the express train. At Swindon I got a cup of tea and a sandwich. On my arrival at Paddington, I discovered I had left behind, my umbrella and portmanteau; but they were telegraphed for, and in the evening a policeman brought them to me in the coffee room. I felt too tired to walk, and therefore took a cab to the Edinburgh Steam Packet Office. I made the man drive a little out of his way that I might see the Crystal Palace, in which the Great Exhibition was held, of which I read so much in the newspapers. I noticed in passing, the new Parliament Houses, and the statues of the Duke of Wellington at Hyde Park and the Exchange, but above all, the splendour of the plate glass in the shops, and the brilliancy of the gas in the streets."

What would be thought of the person who pretended that this was a translation from an ancient document? and yet the Book of Mormon is just as barefaced an imposture as this would be. I shall refer to but one more of the books, which though placed last in the volume, is the first in point of time. The book of Ether professes to give an account

of an emigration to America, at the time of the building of Babel; and a very remarkable voyage it must have been,—shut up with “flocks and herds,” in close vessels, without any air to breathe, but what they got by unplugging a hole, for upwards of *Eleven Months*. *no sh*

“And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did go to work, and also his brethren, and built barges after the manner which they had built, according to the instructions of the Lord. And they were small, and they were light upon the water, even like unto the lightness of a fowl upon the water; and they were built after a manner that they were exceeding tight, even that they would hold water like unto a dish; and the bottom thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the sides thereof were tight like unto a dish; and the ends thereof were peaked; and the top thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; and the door thereof, when it was shut, was tight like unto a dish. And it came to pass that the brother of Jared cried unto the Lord, saying, O Lord I have performed the work which thou hast commanded me, and I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me. And behold, O Lord, in them there is no light, whither shall we steer. And also we shall perish, for in them we cannot breathe, save it is the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish. And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared, behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top thereof, and also in the bottom thereof; and when thou shalt suffer for air, thou shalt unstop the hole thereof, and receive air. And if it be so that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole thereof, that ye may not perish in the flood.” *Page 520.*

“And it came to pass that when they had prepared all manner of food, that thereby they might subsist upon the water, and also food for their flocks and herds, and whatsoever beast, or animal, or fowl that they could carry with them. And it came to pass that when they had done all these things, they got aboard of their vessels or barges, and set forth into the sea, commending themselves unto the Lord their God. And it came to pass that the Lord God caused that there should a furious wind blow upon the face of the waters, towards the promised land; and thus they were tossed upon the waves of the sea before the wind. And it came to pass that they were many times buried in the depths of the sea, because of the mountain waves which broke upon them, and also the great and terrible tempests which were caused by the fierceness of the wind. * * And thus they were driven forth, three hundred and forty and four days upon the water; and they did land upon the shore of the promised land.” *Page 527.*

It seems they attained to great prosperity, but got quarrelsome, and their warfare must have been of a curious sort, for they could *lay siege to a wilderness!*

“And it came to pass that the brother of Shared did give battle unto him in the wilderness of Akish: and the battle became exceeding sore, and many thousands fell by the sword. And it came to pass that Coriantumr *did lay siege to the wilderness*, and the brother of Shared did march forth out of the wilderness by night, and slew a part of the army of Coriantumr, as they were drunken.” *Page 545.*

At length one universal desire for slaughter seems to have possessed the whole nation, for we are told:

“And it came to pass that when they were all gathered together, every one to the army which he would, with their wives and their children; both men, *women, and children being armed* with weapons of war, having shields, and breast-plates, and head-plates, and being clothed after the manner of war, they did march forth one against another, to battle.” *Page 548.*

The conclusion of this bloody tragedy forcibly reminds one of the Irishman's cats in a sawpit, which ate each other up all but the tail.

“And it came to pass that when they had all fallen by the sword, save it were Coriantumr and Shiz, behold Shiz had fainted with loss of blood. And it came to pass

that when Coriantumr had leaned upon his sword, that he rested a little, he smote off the head of Shiz. And it came to pass that ~~AFTER~~ he had smote off the head of Shiz, that Shiz *raised upon his hands* and fell; and after he had struggled for breath, he died. And it came to pass that Coriantumr fell to the earth, and became as if he had no life." Page 549.

This Shiz must have been an extraordinary fellow, and it is a pity that he did not in return cut off Coriantumr's head; the narrative would then have been complete. Such however in sober seriousness, is a fair sample of the book which is alleged to have been dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, and to be of equal authority with the Old and New Testaments.

To have gone through the whole book, would have made this tract as large as the Bible itself; besides, we may tell the flavour of a leg of mutton from a *slice*, as well as if we ate the whole joint. I do not take much notice of the *incorrect language*, though it is not unfair to argue that if an Angel were sent from heaven to translate modern Egyptian into English, he would use *good* English, whereas the *whole* of the Book of Mormon is full of grammatical blunders, *except in the chapters taken from our Bible*; and this is a very curious fact, that though (as we are told) the angel inspired Joseph Smith with the *whole* translation, that part of it which contains matter similar to our Bible is correct, while all the rest is manifestly the writing of an ignorant man. The Mormonites allow that Smith was unlettered, and affirm that the whole book was taken down from angel's lips. How comes it then that the *new* matter is full of such blunders as an uneducated man would certainly make, while the *old* is quite correct. They would have us to believe that an Angel translates whole chapters of Isaiah from Egyptian, in precisely the same words as our translators used, and in other places makes blunders for which a common school boy would be whipped. Why this, if true, would be a miracle equal to that of finding the box itself.

The Mormonites say that this incorrectness is intended by the Spirit of God as a trial of the faith of the simple hearted; but if we allow that an angel might write very bad English, it must be granted that none but an angel of darkness could be concerned in stating absurdities and positive untruths, which plainly contradict the Word of God.

If the whole of the writings and teachings of Mormonism were confined to the Book of Mormon, we might safely let it alone, for it is such absurd, and (at the same time) such stupid stuff, that I am sure but few even of themselves read it. But Joseph Smith had an end in view, besides urging people to come to America;—they must not only come to America, but to that place in it which would suit his purpose, and when there, they must be governed by himself and his colleagues. He had found a dupe in a credulous farmer named Martin Harris, who advanced money to print his book, and picked up Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery, two associates who had more learning than himself, and as little principle. It is an old saying, that one lie needs more to

support it, and Smith soon found that the revelation of the Book of Mormon needed others to back it. These have been collected together and published under the title of "The Book of Doctrines and Covenants," which contains as much of absurdity and contradiction, as the "Book of Mormon" itself, while the following which is only one among many, shows that Smith knew how to take care of himself and his associates :

"And again, it is mete that my servant Joseph Smith, jun., should have a house built in which to live and translate. And again, it is mete that my servant Sidney Rigdon should live as seemeth him good, inasmuch as he keepeth my commandments." *Doctrines and Covenants, Page 214. February, 1831.*

Again, whenever Joseph had a question put to him which he found it inconvenient to answer, he had a revelation forthwith, forbidding him to reply to it. For instance, Martin Harris got a little suspicious about the Plates, and very naturally wished to see them ; Joseph forthwith had the following revelation, which you will observe, while it rebukes Harris, and establishes Joseph's supreme authority, holds out a hope that he shall see the Plates some time, if he is humble enough.

"Behold, I say unto you, that as my servant Martin Harris has desired a witness at my hand, that you, my servant Joseph Smith, jun., have got the plates of which you have testified and borne record that you have received of me ; and now, behold, this shall you say unto him, he who spake unto you said unto you, I, the Lord, am God, and have given these things unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and have commanded you that you should stand as a witness of these things, and I have caused you that you should enter into a covenant with me, that you *should not show them except to those persons to whom I commanded you* ; and you have no power over them except I grant it unto you. * * Behold, if they will not believe my words, they would not believe you, my servant Joseph, if it were possible that you could show them all these things which I have committed unto you. Oh ! this unbelieving and stiffnecked generation, mine anger is kindled against them.

Behold, verily I say unto you, I have reserved those things which I have entrusted unto you, my servant Joseph, for a wise purpose in me, and it shall be made known unto future generations ; but this generation shall have my word *through you* ; and in addition to your testimony, the testimony of three of my servants, whom I shall call and ordain, unto whom I will show these things, and they shall go forth with my words that are given through you.

And now, again, I speak unto you, my servant Joseph, concerning the man that desires the witness. Behold, I say unto him, he exalts himself and does not humble himself sufficiently before me ; but if he will bow down before me, and humble himself in mighty prayer and faith, in the sincerity of his heart, then will I grant unto him a view of the things which he desires to see." *Doctrines and Covenants, March, 1829. Page 171.*

This quieted Harris for a time, but it would seem that he again got uneasy, and needed other revelations to keep him up to the mark, in one of which he is commanded not to "*covet his own property.*"

Wherefore I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant, Joseph Smith, jun., in my name. * * And again I command thee that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God.

Behold, this is a great and the last commandment which I shall give unto you concerning this matter ; for this shall suffice for thy daily walk, even unto the end of thy life. And misery thou shalt receive if thou wilt slight these counsels ; yea, even the

destruction of thyself and property. Impart a portion of thy property ; yea, even part of thy lands, and all save the support of thy family. Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer." *Doctrines and Covenants, Page 194. March, 1830.*

"And now I give unto you further directions concerning this land. It is wisdom in me that my servant Martin Harris should be an example unto the church, in *laying his monies* before the bishop of the church. *Doctrines and Covenants, Page 144.*

When Harris had sufficiently "humbled himself," the following wonderful testimony was published, signed by Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, and upon this *very curious* evidence, the whole world is required to swallow Joseph Smith's narrative.

"And they have been shown unto us by the *power of God*, and not of man ; and we declare, with words of soberness, that an Angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates."

Of all the rhodomontade ever pretended to be given as evidence of the truth of any fact, perhaps this is about the worst. If we wanted proof that the whole thing was Smith's own fabrication, we surely have it here in this pretended testimony. Smith says he had certain plates in his possession which none else must see till he had permission to show them. Suppose we take him at his word, what could be more simple and easy, when he had this permission, than for him to let these people look at them. If a man wants to convince me that he has a guinea in his pocket, the shortest way is for him to pull it out, and that satisfies me at once. What need for an angel to come from heaven to do that which Smith himself could have done as effectually in one minute.

The value of the evidence is not strengthened either when we examine the characters of the witnesses. Harris, we have seen, was the poor dupe whose only chance of getting back his money depended on the sale of the book. Oliver Cowdery may be better estimated by a revelation which Smith found it necessary to have concerning him on this wise :

"It is not wisdom in me that Oliver Cowdery should be entrusted with the commandments and the *monies* which he shall carry into the land of Zion, *except one go with him who will be true and faithful.*" *Doctrines and Covenants, November, 1831.*

And we afterwards find his name, with that of David Whitmer, in a document drawn up by Rigdon, (and signed by eighty-four of their own people,) wherein they are declared to be "united with a gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs of the deepest die, to deceive, cheat, and defraud the saints out of their property." So that we see the lying absurdity of the testimony matches wonderfully well with the characters of those who put it forth.

I have hitherto confined my observations to the two books which, though perhaps little read, are the standards of the Mormonist's faith, and were published in the lifetime of the founder of the sect. It sometimes however happens that the practical working of a system may be better than we should suppose from its origin, and that when it gets adopted by fresh parties, much that was objectionable in its origin, becomes, as it were, out of use and forgotten. I have therefore examined

some of the later Mormonite works, published by their greatest living writer, Orson Pratt.

"For seventeen hundred years the nations upon the eastern hemisphere have been entirely destitute of the *"kingdom of God."* "The King occasionally visited his subjects in ancient times, and once tarried with them for several years: but he received such cruel abuse from many of the people, that he left them, and went to some other part of his dominions. Where the King is gone the people cannot tell. I will now tell you the reason why the King has kept silence so long. It is because he has had no subjects to converse with; all have turned away from him, and advocated other governments as being the rightful and legal authority. They killed off and utterly destroyed every true subject of his kingdom, and *left not a vestige upon earth.*" *The Kingdom of God, Pages 1, 2, 3.*

Who of us has not heard or read of the martyrs who have died for the testimony of Jesus, rejoicing in the flames that they were counted worthy to suffer for his sake? who of us has not known some friend, or perhaps relative, who has departed in the faith, rejoicing in the hope that maketh not ashamed, and bearing joyful testimony that the Saviour's presence lighted their passage through the dark valley? Yet according to this Mormon writer, all this is a delusion, and we are to believe that the whole world has been destitute of the Kingdom of God, till the appearance of Joseph Smith, every stage of whose career is marked with imposture and ignorance.

With respect to the following quotations I will say but little, the subject is too awful; read them attentively, and with earnest prayer to God that his Holy Spirit may ever preserve you from such dreadful delusions. The path of error is a downward road, and the miserable victims who venture on it, do not know to what depths they may fall. It is the blessed privilege of the humblest christian to know that his Father is ever near, to hear and to answer his feeblest cry, and that when even two or three may be gathered together to seek him, he is in the midst of them; but of the wretched Mormons and the monster of their own creation whom they term God, may it not be said as of the priests of Baal, when they cried aloud to him, "But there was no voice, nor any that answered." And might we not say as Elijah did, "Cry aloud, for your God; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked?" How can a Mormonite pray when he believes that the deity he worships cannot be in two places at once? I dare not dwell on this; but I entreat you prayerfully to compare the passages of God's word with the Mormonite doctrines opposite, and you will not need other proof to convince you that Mormonism and Christianity are as opposed to each other as light is to darkness.

"The whole person of the FATHER consists of innumerable parts; and each part is so situated as to bear certain relations of distance to every other part. There must also be to a certain degree, a freedom of motion among these parts, which is an *essential condition to the movement of HIS LIMBS* without which he could only move as a whole."

"The Holy Spirit being one part of the Godhead, is also a MATERIAL SUBSTANCE of the same nature and properties in many respects, as the spirits of the Father and Son. It exists in vast immeasurable quantities in connexion with all material worlds. God

the Father and God the Son cannot be everywhere present; indeed they *cannot be even in two places at the same instant*; but God the Holy Spirit is omnipresent—it extends through all space, intermingling with all other matter, yet no one *atom of the Holy Spirit can be in two places at the same instant*, which in all cases is an absolute impossibility. Each *atom of the Holy Spirit* is intelligent, and like all other matter has *solidity, form, and size, and occupies space*. Two atoms of this spirit cannot occupy the same space at the same time, neither can one atom, as before stated, occupy two separate spaces at the same time. *In all these respects it does not differ in the least from all other matter.* * * Two persons receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, do not each receive at the same time the same identical particles, though they each receive a substance exactly similar in kind. It would be as impossible for each to receive the same identical atoms at the same instant, as it would be for two men at the same time to drink the same identical pint of water."

"As the persons of the Father and Son cannot be everywhere present, it is therefore impossible for them to attend in *person* to all the multiplied affairs of government among intelligent beings. *Ibid.* Page 5.

MORMONISM.

"The true God exists both in time and in space, and has as much relation to them as man or any other being. He has extension, and form, and dimensions, as well as man. He occupies space; has a body, parts, and passions; can go from place to place, can eat, drink, and talk, as well as man. Man resembles him in the features and form of his body, and he does not differ materially in size.

"The Godhead consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The FATHER is a material being. The *substance of which he is composed is wholly material.* It is a substance widely different in some respects from the various substances with which we are more immediately acquainted. In other respects it is precisely like all other materials. The substance of *his person occupies space the same as other matter.* It has *solidity, length, breadth, and thickness*, like all other matter. The elementary materials of his body are not susceptible of occupying, at the same time, the same identical space with other matter. The substance of his person, like other matter, *cannot be in two places at the same instant.* It also requires time for him to transport himself from place to place." *The Kingdom of God, Page 4.*

BIBLE.

"Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats."—*Psalm* l. 3.

"Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." *Jer.* xxxiii. 23, 24.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." *Psalm* cxxxix. 7, 10.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." *John* i. 18.

"And he said, Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me, and live." *Exodus* xxxiii. 20.

"—23 Thou shalt see my back, but not my face
Thou shalt not see

We know from the Bible, that there is but One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who ever liveth to make intercession for us; but Mormonism dethrones Jesus Christ, and puts Joseph Smith in his place. In their 281st hymn they say of Smith,

Of noble seed, of heavenly birth,
He came to bless the sons of earth;
O'er the world that was wrapt in silent night,
Like the sun, he spread his golden light.

The Saints, the Saints, his only pride,
For them he lived, for them he died!
Unchanged in death, with a Saviour's love,
He pleads their cause in the courts above.

I have hitherto examined only the RELIGIOUS pretensions of Mormonism, but it has another bait to cover its poisoned hook ; and I fear that many who would have laughed at Smith's lying revelations, have been ensnared by the promises of riches and happiness in a distant Mormon settlement. But when we look closer at their emigration scheme, we shall see that it has produced, and can produce, nothing but misery and ruin ; and that this alone furnishes proof positive, that the whole system is based on delusion.

Smith's first revelation announced that heaven upon earth was to be established at Kirtland in Pennsylvania ; but when his bank there broke, and made it necessary for him to decamp, another pretended revelation fixed it in Missouri :

"Hearken, O ye elders of my church, *saith the Lord your God*, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the *land of Missouri*, which is the land which I *have appointed and consecrated* for the gathering of the Saints : wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the *city of Zion*. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom, here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence, is the centre place, and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court house : wherefore it is wisdom that the land should be purchased by the Saints ; and also every tract lying westward, even unto the line running directly between Jew and Gentile. And also every tract bordering by the prairies, inasmuch as my disciples are enabled to buy lands. Behold, this is wisdom, that they may obtain it for an *everlasting inheritance*." *Doctrines and Covenants, Page 165. July 1831.*

Nothing could be more positive than this, and accordingly his dupes spent their substance in building a splendid temple at Nauvoo ; but their domineering spirit and scandalous immoralities, aroused the bad feelings of the people about them ; bloody quarrels arose, the end of which was the murder of Smith and his brother, and the forcible expulsion of the whole body out of the State. Their famed Temple was burnt, and not one stone remains upon another in the spot which they were made to believe was appointed by God himself to be the place of gathering for all the Saints upon earth.

The poor dupes were now told that Zion was in the mountains of California, and their road to it for thousands of miles across the Rocky Mountains might be tracked by the graves of the miserable victims who perished in the way. No sooner however had they become settled a little, than the bitter fruits of Mormonism which had caused their expulsion from Missouri began to appear in their new city, and officers were appointed by the United States government, to visit the Salt Lake city, and report on the state of society there. Let us read what they say.

"We deem it our duty to state in this official communication, that polygamy, or plurality of wives is openly avowed and practised in the territory under the sanction of, and in obedience to, the direct commands of the Church. So universal is this practice, that very few, if any, leading men in that community, can be found who have not more than one wife each. The prominent men in the church, whose example in all things it is the ambition of the more humble to imitate, have each many wives ; some of them we are credibly informed and believe, as many as 20 or 30, and Brigham Young, the Governor, even a greater number. Only a few days before we left the territory, the Governor was

seen riding through the streets of the city in an omnibus, with a large company of his wives, more than two thirds of whom had infants in their arms. It is not uncommon to find two or more sisters married to the same man; and in one instance at least, a mother and her two daughters, are among the wives of a leading member of the church." *Times, January 20.*

Reader, if you have ever listened to the glowing descriptions of a Mormonite preacher, when he was describing the happiness of those who went to this paradise in California, did he tell you that these *omnibus rides* formed any part of the enjoyments of the Saints? And is this the sort of heaven upon earth to which you would like to take a daughter, or a sister, or a wife? Do you think a state of society such as this, is likely to be one of peace, or of strife and contention? By the laws of the United States, when the population of any region before unoccupied, amounts to a certain number, they may claim of Congress to be made a Separate and Independent State of the Union; and the Mormon leaders in pitching upon California for their new Zion, thought they had found a fertile home, far out of the way of other people, where they could establish a Government of their own, with a Mormon Governor, and Mormon Judges and Officers of every class. Here then was a prospect open to them, enough to tempt and satisfy the loftiest ambition; and their own Hymn Book (Hymn 290th) lets out that the secret of their anxiety to get their converts to California, is to aid in such projects as these:

We'll burst off all our fetters and break the Gen-
tile yoke;
For long it has beset us, but now it shall be
broke;
No more shall Jacob bow his neck;

Henceforth he shall be great and free,
In Upper California. O that's the land for me.
We'll reign, we'll rule, and triumph, and God shall
be our king,
The plains, the hills, and vallies, shall with hosan-
nas ring.

Every Mormonite preacher is in fact a recruiting sergeant for Brigham Young and his associates. Already there are tokens of war and bloodshed, which give us every reason to believe that the attempted reign of the Saints will end in their being put down as rebels against the general government of the United States, for the latest intelligence is this:

"The Mormons in the Utah territory are alleged to contemplate some act of defiance against the authority of the Federal Government, and as they are regarded with an animosity as unscrupulous as their own fanaticism, there will probably be a new assault upon them, which will end only with their extermination. It is said they were already arming and fortifying themselves, and had published a declaration of independence. As thousands of the working classes of England are understood to be preparing to join these people during the ensuing summer, a knowledge of the state of affairs may possibly check their infatuation." *Times, March 18.*

I give no opinion about Emigration in general, it may or may not be best in your particular case, but I trust I have satisfied you from their *own writings*, that the *religious* principles of Mormonism are entirely opposed to the Word of God; and let your own common sense decide whether a journey of 10,000 miles, to engage in a rebellion against the United States, can be the way to comfort and prosperity in this world, or to happiness in the world to come.