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THE TRUE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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CHAS. A. SHOOK.

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JOSEPH SMITH, Jr., THE "PROPHET."

The True Origin *of* **The Book of Mormon**

By

CHARLES A. SHOOK

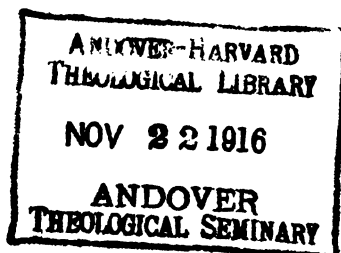
Author of
**CUMORAH REVISITED,
THE TRUE ORIGIN OF MORMON POLYGAMY**

The nature of the message in the Book of Mormon is such that, if true, no one can possibly be saved and reject it; if false, no one can possibly be saved and receive it. Therefore every soul in all the world is equally interested in ascertaining its truth or falsity.

—Oren Pratt.

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Foreword

From the year 1834 to the present, the majority of anti-Mormon polemics and writers have held to the view presented in these pages that the Book of Mormon is nothing more than Solomon Spaulding's "Manuscript Found," revamped. Now and then one has been found who has doubted or denied this theory, but, generally speaking, it is the impregnable rock upon which the anti-Mormon forces have taken their stand.

Having been raised in the Reorganized Mormon Church, I was, from boyhood, taught that this claim is a myth; that the "Manuscript Found" had come to light in Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, in 1884, and that it bears no resemblance, whatever, to the Book of Mormon. The influence of this training followed me even after I had apostatized, and for some years, in papers read before ministerial associations and elsewhere, I denied the Spaulding theory and attributed the Book of Mormon to the joint work of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. In this position I was, later, confirmed by reading the book, "Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism," by D. H. Bays (1897), whose views, I found, coincided exactly with my own. It was not until a copy of A. T. Schroeder's little booklet, "The Origin of the Book of Mormon, Re-examined in Its Relation to Spaulding's 'Manuscript Found,'" fell into my hands that I began to see the strong points in the Spaulding theory which I had overlooked. Becoming convinced from the reading of Schroeder's arguments that there was more to the Spaulding theory than I had supposed, I set myself to the task of collecting and analyzing the evidences with

the result that I am as satisfied to-day that the Book of Mormon originated in the brain of Solomon Spaulding, the dreamer of Conneaut, as I am that "Thanatopsis" originated in the brain of Bryant or "Evangeline" in the brain of Longfellow.

The Mormons have not treated the position of their opponents fairly in this controversy. They have started out by *assuming* that the Honolulu manuscript is the "Manuscript Found," and then have asserted that those who oppose them claim that the Book of Mormon came from it. But this is not true. From 1834, every opponent of Mormonism, who has given due consideration to the evidences in the case, has differentiated between the manuscript discovered in Honolulu and the "Manuscript Found," denying that the Book of Mormon came from the former and claiming that it came from the latter. The effort of the Mormons to confuse the public mind on this point is strongly suggestive of the tactics of the ink-fish, which, finding itself pursued by the enemy and in sore straits, emits an inky fluid in order that it may escape under its cover.

Already the claim has been made that my books have been written with the view to lining my pockets. In closing, I wish to brand this accusation as absolutely false. Not one cent of profit or royalty from the sale of this book will find its way into my wallet. The money and labor expended upon it have been expended wholly in the interests of truth and not with the thought of remuneration. Having become convinced myself that the Book of Mormon is a monstrous fraud, I have felt it my duty to present to the world the evidences which convinced me of this fact. Hence this book.

CHARLES A. SHOOK.

EDDYVILLE, Neb., Jan. 1, 1914.

The True Origin of the Book of Mormon

CHAPTER I.

The Rise of Mormonism—The Historical Outline of the Book of Mormon—The Proposition Stated.

Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, was born in the village of Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont, December 23, 1805. He was the fourth of ten children and was reared in poverty, ignorance, bigotry and superstition. When he was ten years of age, his father took the family to western New York, where they settled at Palmyra, in Ontario (now Wayne) County, four years afterward removing to the village of Manchester, a few miles distant.

In the year 1820, Joseph became very much interested in religion through the revivals that were conducted in Manchester by the Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists, and, being somewhat perplexed to know just which sect to join, he decided to petition the Lord for enlightenment. So, retiring to the forest, he made the matter the subject of prayer. While he was praying, the Father and the Son appeared to him in vision, told him that he must join none of the existing sects, that their creeds were an abomination, and that their professors were all corrupt. When Joseph related this vision to one of the Methodist preachers in his neighborhood, the preacher told him that it was all of the devil and that there are

no such things nowadays, they having ceased with the apostles.

Joseph received his second vision on the evening of September 21, 1823. According to his account, he had retired to bed and had betaken himself to prayer, when his room was lighted with a heavenly light and a personage stood before him who gave his name as Moroni.¹ Moroni told Joseph that he had come from the presence of the Almighty; that there was a work for him to do; that his name should go out among the people for both good and evil, and that there was a set of gold plates deposited which contained an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and with them two stones, called the Urim and Thummim, by means of which they were to be translated. The following day, Joseph repaired to the spot, which he had seen in vision and which was on a hill near Manchester, where he found the plates as represented. His description of their depository, the manner of their burial and the events that occurred, is as follows:

Convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario County, New York, stands a hill of considerable size, and the most elevated of any in the neighborhood. On the west side of this hill, not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates deposited in a stone box. This stone was thick and rounding in the middle on the upper side, and thinner toward the edges, so that the middle part of it was visible above the ground, but the edge all around was covered with earth. Having removed the earth and obtained a lever which I got fixed under the edge of the stone and with a little exertion raised it up, I looked in and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the Breast-plate, as stated by the messenger. The box in which they lay was formed by laying stones together in some kind of cement; in the bottom

¹ In the first account of this angel visit, the angel's name was given as Nephi.

of the box were laid two stones crossways of the box, and on these stones lay the plates and other things with them.

I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger and was again informed that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would until four years from that time; but he told me that I should come to that place precisely in one year from that time, and that he would there meet with me, and that I should continue to do so until the time should come for obtaining the plates. Accordingly as I had been commanded, I went at the end of each year, and at each time I found the same messenger there, and received instruction and intelligence from him at each of our interviews respecting what the Lord was going to do and how and in what manner his kingdom was to be conducted in the last days.—*Church History* (Josephite), Vol. I., p. 16.

In the month of October, 1825, Smith hired out to a Mr. Josiah Stool, or Stowell, of Chenango County, New York, who took him to Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, and set him to work digging for a lost silver mine. During this time, he boarded with a man by the name of Isaac Hale, and became deeply in love with his daughter, Emma. The Hales were very much opposed to his suit on account of his habits, and so he finally eloped with Emma and was married to her at the house of Squire Tarbill, in South Bainbridge, Chenango County, New York, January 18, 1827.

On September 22, following, Smith received the plates from the hands of the angel, being told that he would be held responsible for their safe-keeping, and that if he let them go through carelessness or neglect he would be cut off. Joseph soon observed the need of caution, for no sooner did his neighbors hear of his pretensions than they began all manner of persecutions. This made it necessary for him to leave Manchester, where he had been living since his elopement, and he removed to the home of his wife's parents in Harmony, Pennsylvania,

being assisted in a financial way by Mr. Martin Harris, a wealthy farmer from near Palmyra, who gave him fifty dollars.

Apostle Parley P. Pratt gives us the following description of the plates and the Urim and Thummim by which they were translated:

These records were engraved on plates, which had the appearance of gold. Each plate was not far from seven by eight inches in width and length, being not quite as thick as common tin. They were filled on both sides with engravings, in Reformed Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume as the leaves of a book, and fastened at the edge with three rings running through the whole. This volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters or letters upon the unsealed part were small, and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction, as well as much skill in the art of engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument, called by the ancients the Urim and Thummim, which consisted of two transparent stones, clear as crystal, set in two rims of a bow. This was in use in ancient times by persons called seers. It was an instrument by the use of which they received revelation of things distant, or of things past or future. —*A Voice of Warning*, p. 73.

In the month of February, 1828, Martin Harris came to visit Smith at Harmony, and obtained from him a transcript of characters from the plates, which he took to New York and submitted to Dr. Mitchell and Professor Anthon, two learned linguists of that city, for their examination. Harris afterwards declared that Anthon pronounced the characters to be Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldaic and Arabic, and said that Smith's translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen from the Egyptian.¹

¹ Anthon afterwards positively denied making any such statement, and said: "This paper was, in fact, a singular scrawl. It consisted of all kinds

Harris returned to Palmyra, arranged his business and then came to Harmony, where he began to write for Joseph. Between April 12 and June 14, 1828, he succeeded in writing 116 pages of foolscap, which, with Smith's permission, he carried home to Palmyra to read to his wife. This manuscript came up missing, and it afterwards leaked out that Mrs. Harris in a rage had burned it. For his carelessness, Harris lost his place as Smith's scribe and Joseph was told that he need not translate that portion of the record again.¹

The work of translation was now interrupted until April 15, 1829, when Oliver Cowdery appeared on the scene. He had been a schoolteacher in the Smith neighborhood in New York, and, hearing of Joseph's claims from his parents, he had come down to Harmony to visit him. On the 17th of April, following, the work of translation was resumed, and continued without further interruption until it was completed. David Whitmer gives the following description of the manner in which the plates were translated:

I will now give you a description of the manner in which the Book of Mormon was translated. Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, and put his face in the hat, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something

of crooked characters disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him a book containing various alphabets. Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sideways, were arranged in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican Calendar given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived."—*History of Mormonism*, p. 271.

¹ "Behold, I say unto you, that you shall not translate again those words, which have gone forth out of your hands; for, behold, they shall not accomplish their evil designs in lying against those words."—*Doctrine and Covenants*, 3: 6.

resembling parchment would appear; and on that appeared the writing. One character at a time would appear, and under it was the interpretation in English. Brother Joseph would read off the English to Oliver Cowdery, who was his principal scribe, and when it was written down and repeated to Brother Joseph to see if it was correct, then it would disappear, and another character with the interpretation would appear. Thus the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God, and not by any power of man.—*Whitmer's Address*, p. 12.¹

On the 15th of the following month, John the Baptist appeared and ordained Smith and Cowdery to the Aaronic priesthood, after which, by the Baptist's command, they baptized and reordained each other.

Soon after Smith's arrival in Harmony, he formed the acquaintance of Peter Whitmer, of Fayette, Seneca County, New York, and in the month of June following his ordination, Whitmer's son, David, came to visit him and urgently invited him to accompany him home and remain until the translation should be finished. Smith acceded, and from this time, until their apostasy in 1838, the Whitmers were among his staunchest friends and most devoted disciples.

During the course of the translation, it was ascertained that the Lord intended to provide three special witnesses who were to have the privilege of viewing the plates. Almost immediately after this discovery, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris requested Joseph to inquire of the Lord if they might not be these special witnesses. Joseph did so, and through the Urim and Thummim received a favorable answer, upon which they all retired to the forest, where, after fervent and

¹ If the characters were interpreted for Smith upon the seer-stone, upon what principle was he a translator? Would not this, also, make the Almighty responsible for every grammatical and rhetorical error in the book? If not, why not?

humble prayer, the plates were shown to them by the angel. Their testimony follows:

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us: wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; 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, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY,
DAVID WHITMER,
MARTIN HARRIS.

Soon after this, the following testimony was obtained from eight other witnesses who had been permitted to view the plates:

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did

handle with our hands: and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith hath shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER.	HIRAM PAGE.
JACOB WHITMER.	JOSEPH SMITH, Sen.
PETER WHITMER, Jr.	HYRUM SMITH.
JOHN WHITMER.	SAMUEL H. SMITH.

When Smith and Cowdery had been ordained to the Aaronic priesthood, John the Baptist informed them that if they would continue faithful, they would also be admitted into the Melchisedec, or higher, priesthood of which Peter, James and John held the keys. They now became anxious to have this promise fulfilled, and so made their desire the subject of fervent prayer. At length, while tarrying before the Lord in a chamber in Whitmer's house, the word of the Lord came to them commanding Joseph to ordain Oliver, and Oliver Joseph, to the eldership of the Church of Jesus Christ.

When the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed, the copyright was secured, June 11, 1829, by Joseph Smith, "Author and Proprietor." The work of publication, which occupied seven months,¹ was let out to Mr. Egbert Grandin, of Palmyra, New York, who agreed to print five thousand copies for the sum of three thousand dollars. Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, furnished the means for the publication of this edition, and J. H. Gilbert, whose name will be frequently mentioned in the pages of this book, set the type.

¹ Letter of J. H. Gilbert to Th. Gregg, dated at Palmyra, New York, December 30, 1834.

THE
BOOK OF MORMON:

AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY THE HAND OF MOR-
MON, UPON PLATES TAKEN FROM
THE PLATES OF NEPHI.

Wherefore it is an abridgment of the Record of the People of Nephi; and also of the Lamanites: written to the Lamanites, which are a remnant of the House of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile; written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of Prophecy and of Revelation. Written, and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed; to come forth by the gift and power of God, unto the interpretation thereof; sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by the way of Gentile; the interpretation thereof by the gift of God; an abridgment taken from the Book of Ether.

Also, which is a Record of the People of Jared, which were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to Heaven: which is to shew unto the remnant of the House of Israel how great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL God, manifesting Himself unto all nations. And now if there be fault, it be the mistake of men: wherefore condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of CHRIST.

BY JOSEPH SMITH, JUNIOR,
AUTHOR AND PROPRIETOR.

PALMYRA:

PRINTED BY E. B. GRANDIN, FOR THE AUTHOR.

1830.

FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE OF FIRST EDITION OF MORMON BOOK.

TITLE-PAGE PALMYRA EDITION OF THE BOOK
OF MORMON.

On April 6, 1830, the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" was organized at Fayette, Seneca County, New York, with six members, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Samuel Smith, Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer and Peter Whitmer; Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery becoming elders of the same.

This, in brief, is the history of the rise of Mormonism as given by the Mormons themselves. It is one of the strangest phenomena of human history that a story so absurd and foundationless, and one in which the reputable citizens of Smith's own neighborhood placed not the least bit of credence, should be accepted as a truthful account of what actually happened, by hundreds of thousands of people. It must be because men love darkness rather than light and fiction rather than fact.

THE HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Turning our attention now to the Book of Mormon as a reputed sacred history of ancient America, we find that it is written on the plan of the Bible and is divided into fifteen different books, as follows: 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, Words of Mormon, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, Nephi, Disciple of Nephi, Mormon, Ether and Moroni. Historically, these books cover a period of about twenty-six centuries and describe two distinct nations of people, the Jaredites and Nephites; the Book of Ether being an abridged history of the former, the other fourteen of the latter.

The first people to inhabit America, according to the Book of Mormon, were the Jaredites, who came from the tower of Babel under Jared and his brother, the latter a prophet of the Lord. Leaving Babel, the Jaredites are said to have journeyed northward into Armenia and from there westward over southern Europe to Spain,

the Book of Mormon land of Moriancumer. Here they dwelt on the seashore for four years, at the close of which time they put to sea in eight cigar-shaped barges,"¹ and landed, after a voyage of 344 days, upon "the east coast of Central America, near the mouth of the river Motagua."—*Report of Committee on American Archaeology*, p. 70.²

Here they are said to have founded a government, to have built large cities (the ruins of which still remain), to have practiced the arts and customs of an advanced civilization, and to have settled the adjacent country.

From Central America, the Jaredites are said to have spread their borders northward until, finally, they included within their boundaries all of the territory of the present United States. Many Mormon writers identify them with the mythical "Mound Builders," and attribute the earthworks of the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys to their construction, a theory that is nullified by the more recent archaeological researches, which make it necessary to identify the "Mound Builders" with our Indian tribes.³

After dwelling here for about sixteen hundred years, spreading over the extensive country mentioned and suf-

¹ "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."—*Ether*, 1: 5.

² This committee was appointed at the General Conference of the Reorganized Church, held at Lamoni, Iowa, April 6-19, 1894, for the purpose of outlining and preparing a map of Book of Mormon history.

³ See Chapter VI. of my "Cumorah Revisited; or, The Book of Mormon, and the Claims of the Mormons, Re-examined, from the Viewpoint of American Archaeology and Ethnology," for a full discussion of the question of the nationality of the Mound Builders.

fering from dissensions and revolts, the Jaredites came to an end in civil war in a battle fought about 600 B. C. at "Hill Ramah" in western New York, in which thousands were slain in a few days, only two escaping—Coriantumr, one of the generals, and Ether, a prophet of the Lord. The former was afterward discovered by the people of Zarahemla and dwelt with them "nine moons;" Ether wrote a history of his people on a set of plates and hid them in such a manner that they were afterwards discovered by their successors. This, in brief, is the history of the first colony of immigrants to reach our shores as given in the Book of Mormon.

The book further claims that in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, there was dwelling at Jerusalem a prophet and righteous man by the name of Lehi. Lehi had four sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi, and, as the wickedness of the city was great, he was commanded to take them and his wife, Saraiah, and depart into the wilderness. After their departure, the sons returned to Jerusalem at two different times, first to obtain a set of brass plates which contained the genealogy of their fathers, and, second, to induce the family of Ishmael to join them.

After eight years, by the command of God, this little company, now augmented by the addition of Ishmael's family, built a ship and launched out into the Indian Ocean, committing themselves to the care of God. The voyage was a stormy one, but, notwithstanding this, they successfully crossed the sea, and, in due time, landed "on the coast of Chili, not far from the thirtieth degree, south latitude."—*Report of Committee on American Archaeology*, p. 11.

Here, they found all manner of beasts—the cow, ox, ass, horse, goat and wild goat; also such ores as gold,

silver, iron and copper. Nephi began at once to keep a record of his people, and for this purpose he made a set of plates and began to engrave thereon their history in the "Reformed Egyptian"¹ language. In course of time, Lehi died and the company broke up into two contending factions, the Nephites and Lamanites, named from his two sons, Nephi and Laman. The Nephites were enlightened and civilized; the Lamanites degenerated into common savages—they were the ancestors of our Indians.

Sometime after the division, the Nephites moved northward into what is now Colombia and Venezuela, their land of Zarahemla, where they found a colony of people called the Mulekites or Zarahemlaites, who had come over from Jerusalem about the time of its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, under Mulek, one of the sons of Zedekiah. From this time onward, the Nephites and Zarahemlaites were one people.

Being a prolific people, and having their numbers increased by the addition of the Zarahemlaites, the Nephites now sent out colonies into Central America and Mexico and, finally, into the United States, so that in the short space of one thousand years from the time of their landing upon American soil, and notwithstanding their wars with the Lamanites, they inhabited the whole of North America as far to the northward, at least, as the Great Lakes.

But at last they met their downfall. Drunken with the pride of their wonderful achievements, they had forgotten God, and with this forgetfulness came national deterioration, so that they fell an easy prey to their inveterate foes, the Lamanites. Near "Hill Cumorah"

¹ This has been verbally objected to, it being claimed that the "Reformed Egyptian" was not invented until later, but see "Joseph the Seer," p. 145, where Elder Blair coincides with my statement.

(the same as the Jaredite "Ramah") in western New York, the decisive battle was fought about 400 A. D., and the Nephite people were nearly all exterminated. Most of those who escaped, "dissented" to the Lamanites, and from them, it is thought, have come the tribes of "white Indians."¹ Moroni, a prince of royal blood who did not "dissent," hid himself from his enemies, and, in the year 420 A. D., finished the record of his people upon the plates and deposited them in "Hill Cumorah," where they were discovered by Joseph Smith on the twenty-second day of September, 1823.

This is, substantially, the historical account of the Book of Mormon. Wild and weird as it is, it has appealed to those of a dreamy, visionary nature with marvelous effectiveness. And the Mormon churches are largely made up of the dreamy, visionary class. If you take the dream and vision out of Mormonism, you will have but very little left.²

THE PROPOSITION STATED.

Since about the year 1832, it has been asserted by the opponents of Mormonism that, instead of being a true and authentic history of the ancient inhabitants of America, the Book of Mormon is, in fact, a story written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a Congregational³ clergyman, for the purpose of whiling away the hours of his poor health and providing him the means of paying his debts. Although all anti-Mormon writers and polemic

¹ "White Indians" is a misnomer. No such Indians, strictly speaking, ever existed. The term is applied to the lighter tribes of the American race.

² This is more apparent to one who has been in the faith than to an outsider. The child that is raised a strict Mormon is taught to carefully regard his dreams. Visions that, to ordinary people, are the effects of a disordered stomach or overworked nerves, are to the good Mormon the voice of the Lord.

³ Or Presbyterian.

have not adopted this view,¹ it is the one most usually relied upon to account for the origin of the book, and, when understood, is one of the most effective arguments that can be brought to bear against the delusion.

The Spaulding theory is, briefly, this: About 1809, Solomon Spaulding, who was then living at Conneaut, or New Salem, Ohio, became very much interested in the aboriginal works of the country and began to write romances based upon them. One of these, which described a colony of Jews who came over from Jerusalem under the leadership of Lehi and Nephi, he entitled "The Manuscript Found." In 1812, Spaulding removed from Conneaut to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and put this manuscript in the hands of one Robert Patterson, for publication. Patterson had an employe by the name of J. Harrison Lambdin, who, in turn, had a friend by the name of Sidney Rigdon, who frequently lounged around the printing-office. The manuscript, at length, came up missing, and Rigdon was suspected of the theft. This suspicion was afterwards confirmed by the fact that he exhibited such a manuscript which he said had been written by a preacher by the name of Spaulding. This manuscript, it is claimed, Rigdon worked over, and, through the assistance of Smith and Cowdery, palmed off upon the religious world as a new revelation from God, the Book of Mormon.

Of course the Mormons strenuously deny any connection whatever between the Book of Mormon and "The Manuscript Found," declaring that the latter was discovered in the possession of Mr. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu,

¹ Chief of these is the Rev. D. H. Bays, now deceased, who, after serving as a missionary in the Reorganized Church for twenty-seven years, apostatized and wrote his "Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism," in which he denies the above position.

Sandwich Islands, in 1884, and that, upon comparison, it is shown to be entirely different from the former. The Brighamite paper, the *Deseret News*, for July 19, 1900, says:

The discovery of the manuscript written by Mr. Spaulding and its deposit in the Library at Oberlin College, Ohio, . . . has so completely demolished the theory once relied upon by superficial minds that the Book of Mormon was concocted from that manuscript, that it has been entirely abandoned by all opponents of Mormonism, except the densely ignorant or unscrupulously dishonest.

I deny the charge. The opponent of Mormonism, who holds to the theory that the Book of Mormon originated in Spaulding's "The Manuscript Found," is neither "densely ignorant" nor "unscrupulously dishonest." The Honolulu manuscript is not now, and never has been, "The Manuscript Found," but another manuscript, upon an entirely different subject, which was written before Spaulding began his Jewish story. It never was claimed that the Book of Mormon originated in the manuscript found in the Sandwich Islands. That manuscript was known of and was described by the opponents of Mormonism as early as 1834, but it was expressly denied that it had any connection, whatever, with the Book of Mormon. The "densely ignorant" and "unscrupulously dishonest" are the Mormons who purposely confuse the public mind by confounding these manuscripts and speaking of them as one and the same.

CHAPTER II.

The Character of Joseph Smith—The Affidavit of Peter Ingersoll—The Affidavit of Willard Chase—The Affidavit of William Stafford—The Affidavit of Isaac Hale—The Signed Statements of the Citizens of Palmyra and Manchester, New York—The Mormon Attempt to Exonerate Smith.

The early life of Joseph Smith was spent in an environment of superstition and deception that peculiarly fitted him for the part that he was afterwards to play as the prophet of "the new dispensation." His father before him was a man of questionable veracity and indolent habits, who spent a considerable part of his time in "witching" with a hazel rod,¹ or practicing other ceremonies of a like mysterious nature, in order that he might discover lost mines and buried treasures; while his mother was a common fortune-teller, who turned many a penny by tracing in the lines of the open palm the fortune

¹The "rod" was almost as much of an essential part of the paraphernalia of early Mormonism as the seer-stone. In a revelation given to Oliver Cowdery at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April, 1829, I find the following: "O, remember these words and keep my commandments. Remember this is your gift. Now this is not all, for you have another gift, which is the gift of working with the rod: behold, it has told you things: behold, there is no other power save God, that can cause this rod of nature to work in your hands, for it is the work of God; and therefore whatsoever you shall ask me to tell you by that means, that will I grant unto you, that you shall know." This appears in the "Book of Commandments" 7: 3, but, as it smacked too much of superstition and dark practices, it was subsequently disguised in the "Doc. and Cov." 8: 3, to read: "O, remember these words, and keep my commandments! Remember this is your gift. Now, this is not all thy gift, for you have another gift, which is the gift of Aaron; behold, it has told you many things; behold, there is no other power save the power of God that can cause this gift of Aaron to be with you; therefore doubt not, for it is the gift of God, and you shall hold it in your hands and do marvellous works; and no power shall be able to take it away out of your hands, for it is the work of God."

of the inquirer.¹ With these examples before him, there is little wonder that, in the earlier years of his life, Joseph easily fell into questionable habits and engaged in dark practices, or that later he became one of the prime deceivers in the fraud of Mormonism.

As the foregoing characteristics of the Smith family were well known throughout their immediate neighborhood, and even in that vicinity for miles around, they were not very successful in obtaining, among their acquaintances, adherents to their peculiar religious claims and beliefs. Not a single man of wealth or influence, from either Palmyra or Manchester, excepting Martin Harris, ever joined their standard. The few from that locality, outside of Harris, who followed the Smiths into the Mormon delusion, were all of the lower strata and were largely pals of their midnight mysteries.

At first, Joseph began his deceptions on a small scale and contented himself with simply "peeping" for hidden treasures, but, being phenomenally successful in this small way, he conceived the idea of launching out in a more colossal deception, and, through the assistance of Rigdon, Cowdery, Pratt and others, Mormonism was the result. And, as he found a few who bit at the bait of the "money-digger," he has also found many who have bitten at the bait of the "prophet."

When Smith first promulgated the claim that he had found and deciphered the golden plates, his story was treated with silent contempt by the majority of his acquaintances. Knowing his poor reputation for veracity at home, they supposed that his tale would find few believers abroad. But, when the Mormons had left New York and had become settled at Kirtland, Ohio, and hun-

¹ Mrs. Dr. Horace Eaton in "Hand-book on Mormonism," p. 1.

dreds had begun to flock to their standard, they saw the necessity of doing something to counteract the influence of the delusion, and so gave to the world, in the form of affidavits and signed statements, what they knew of the eccentricities and poor practices of the Smith family.

A number of these affidavits and statements were published in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled," of 1834, and are copied here for the purpose of giving the reader a true history of the early operations of the Smiths and also showing that Joseph was not above being a party to the transformation of one of Spaulding's novels into a "truthful" and "divine" history of the ancient inhabitants of America.

THE AFFIDAVIT OF PETER INGERSOLL.

PALMYRA, Wayne County, N. Y., Dec. 2, 1833.

I, Peter Ingersoll, first became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen., in the year of our Lord, 1822. I lived in the neighborhood of said family, until about 1830; during which time the following facts came under my observation.

The general employment of the family, was digging for money. I had frequent invitations to join the company, but always declined being one of their number. They used various arguments to induce me to accept of their invitations. I was once ploughing near the house of Joseph Smith, Sen., about noon, he requested me to walk with him a short distance from his house, for the purpose of seeing whether a mineral rod would work in my hand, saying, at the same time, he was confident it would. As my oxen were eating, and being myself at leisure, I accepted the invitation. When we arrived near the place at which he thought there was money, he cut a small witch-hazel bush, and gave me direction how to hold it. He then went off some rods, and told me to say to the rod, "Work to the money," which I did in an audible voice. He rebuked me severely for speaking it loud, and said it must be spoken in a whisper. This was rare sport for me. While the old man was standing off some rods, throwing himself into various shapes, I told him the rod did not work. He seemed much surprised at

this, and said he thought he saw it move in my hand. It was now time for me to return to my labor. On my return, I picked up a small stone and was carelessly tossing it from one hand to the other. Said he, (looking very earnestly,) "What are you going to do with that stone?" "Throw it at the birds," I replied. "No," said the old man, "it is of great worth;" and upon this I gave it to him. "Now," says he, "if you only knew the value there is back of my house," and pointing to a place near, "*there*," exclaimed he, "is one chest of gold and another of silver." He then put the stone which I had given him into his hat, and stooping forward, he bowed and made sundry manœuvres, quite similar to those of a stool-pigeon. At length, he took down his hat, and, being very much exhausted, said, in a faint voice, "If you knew what I had seen, you would believe." To see the old man thus try to impose upon me, I confess, rather had a tendency to excite contempt than pity. Yet I thought it best to conceal my feelings, preferring to appear the dupe of my credulity, than to expose myself to his resentment. His son Alvin then went through with the same performance, which was equally disgusting.

Another time, the said Joseph, Sen., told me that the best time for digging money, was in the heat of summer, when the heat of the sun caused the chests of money to rise near the top of the ground. "You notice," said he, "the large stones on the top of the ground—we call them rocks, and they truly appear so, but they are, in fact, most of them chests of money raised by the heat of the sun."

At another time, he told me that the ancient inhabitants of this country used camels instead of horses. For proof of this fact, he stated that in a certain hill, on the farm of Mr. Cuyler, there was a cave containing an immense value of gold and silver, stands of arms, also, a saddle for a camel, hanging on a peg, at one side of the cave. I asked him of what kind of wood the peg was. He could not tell, but said it had become similar to stone or iron.

The old man, at last, laid a plan which he thought would accomplish his design. His cows and mine had been gone for sometime, and were not to be found, notwithstanding our diligent search for them. Day after day was spent in fruitless search, until, at length, he proposed to find them by his art

of divination. So he took his stand near the corner of his house, with a small stick in his hand, and made several strange and peculiar motions, and then said he could go directly to the cows. So he started off, and went into the woods, about one hundred rods distant, and found the lost cows. But, on finding out the secret of the mystery, Harrison had found the cows, and drove them to the above-named place, and milked them. So that his stratagem turned out rather more to his profit than it did to my edification. The old man, finding that all his efforts to make me a money-digger had proved abortive, at length ceased his importunities. One circumstance, however, I will mention, before leaving him. Sometime before young Joseph found, or pretended to find, the gold plates, the old man told me that in Canada, there had been a book found, in a hollow tree, that gave an account of the first settlement of this country, before it was discovered by Columbus.

In the month of August, 1827, I was hired by Joseph Smith, Jr., to go to Pennsylvania, to move his wife's household furniture up to Manchester, where his wife then was. When we arrived at Mr. Hale's in Harmony, Pa., from which place he had taken his wife, a scene presented itself truly affecting. His father-in-law (Mr. Hale) addressed Joseph, in a flood of tears: "You have stolen my daughter, and married her. I had much rather have followed her to her grave. You spend your time in digging for money—pretend to see in a stone and thus try to deceive people." Joseph wept, and acknowledged *he could not see in a stone now, nor never could*; and that his former pretensions in that respect, were all false. He then promised to give up his old habits of digging for money and looking into stones. Mr. Hale told Joseph, if he would move to Pennsylvania and work for a living, he would assist him in getting into business. Joseph acceded to this proposition. I then returned with Joseph and his wife to Manchester. One circumstance occurred, on the road, worthy of notice, and I believe this is the only instance where Joe ever exhibited true Yankee wit. On our journey to Pennsylvania, we could not make the exact change at the toll gate near Ithaca. Joseph told the gate tender that he would "hand" him the toll on his return, as he was coming back in a few days. On our return, Joseph tendered to him 25c, the toll being 12½. He did not

recognize Smith, so he accordingly gave him back 12½¢. After we had passed the gate, I asked him if he did not agree to pay double gateage on our return? "No," said he, "I agreed to *hand* it to him, and I did, but he handed it back again."

Joseph told me, on his return, that he intended to keep the promise which he had made to his father-in-law; "but," said he, "it will be hard for me, for they will all oppose, as they want me to look in the stone for them to dig money." And, in fact, it was as he predicted. They urged him, day after day, to resume his old practice of looking in the stone. He seemed much perplexed as to the course he should pursue. In this dilemma, he made me his confidant, and told me what daily transpired in the family of Smiths. One day he came and greeted me, with a joyful countenance. Upon asking the cause of his unusual happiness, he replied in the following language: "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 the table, eating dinner. They 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 commandment to let no one 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 d—d fools fixed, and will carry out the fun." Notwithstanding, he told me he had no such book, and believed there never was any such book, yet, he told me that he actually went to Willard Chase, to get him to make a chest, in which he might deposit his golden Bible. But, as Chase would not do it, he made a box himself, of clapboards, and put it into a pillow-case, and allowed people only to lift it, and feel of it through the case.

In the fall of 1827, Joseph wanted to go to Pennsylvania. His brother-in-law had come to assist him in moving, but he himself was out of money. He wished to borrow the money

of me, and he presented Mr. Hale as security. I told him in case he could obtain assistance from no other source, I would let him have some money. Joseph then went to Palmyra; and, said he, "I there met that d—n fool Martin Harris, and told him that I had a command to ask the first *honest man* I met with for fifty dollars in money, and he would let me have it. I saw at once," said Joe, "that it took his notion, for he promptly gave me the fifty."

Joseph thought this sum was sufficient to bear his expenses to Pennsylvania; so he immediately started off, and since that time I have not been much in his society. While the Smiths were living at Waterloo, William visited my neighborhood; and, upon my inquiry how they came on, he replied, "We do better there than here; we were too well known here to do much."

PETER INGERSOLL.

STATE OF NEW YORK, }
Wayne County. } ss.

I certify, that on this 9th day of December, 1833, personally appeared before me the above-named Peter Ingersoll, to me known, and made oath, according to law, to the truth of the above statement.

TH. P. BALDWIN,
Judge of Wayne County Court.

THE AFFIDAVIT OF WILLARD CHASE.

MANCHESTER, Ontario County, New York, 1833.

I became acquainted with the Smith family, known as the authors of the Mormon Bible, in the year 1820. At that time, they were engaged in the money-digging business, which they followed until the latter part of the season of 1827. In the year 1822 I was engaged in digging a well. I employed Alvin and Joseph Smith to assist me; the latter of whom is now known as the Mormon Prophet. After digging about twenty feet below the surface of the earth, we discovered a singularly appearing stone, which excited my curiosity. I brought it to the top of the well, and as we were examining it, Joseph put it into his hat, and then his face into the top of his hat. It has been said by Smith, that *he* brought the stone from the well; but this is false. There was no one in the well but myself. The next morning he came to me and wished to obtain the stone, alleging that he could see in it; but I told



HYRUM SMITH.

him I did not wish to part with it, on account of its being a curiosity, but would lend it. After obtaining the stone, he began to publish abroad what wonders he could discover by looking in it, and made so much disturbance among the credulous part of the community, that I ordered the stone to be returned to me again. He had it in his possession about two years. I believe, some time in 1825, Hiram Smith (brother of Joseph Smith) came to me, and wished to borrow the same stone, alleging that they wanted to accomplish some business of importance, which could not very well be done without the aid of the stone. I told him it was of no particular worth to me, but merely wished to keep it as a curiosity, and if he would pledge me his word and honor that I should have it when called for, he might take it; which he did, and took the stone. I thought I could rely on his word at this time, as he had made a profession of religion. But in this I was disappointed, for he disregarded both his word and honor.

In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon me, and wished to see that stone, about which so much had been said; and I told him, if he would go with me to Smith's, (a distance of about half a mile,) he might see it. But, to my surprise, on going to Smith's, and asking him for the stone, he said, "You cannot have it;" I told him it belonged to me, repeated to him the promise he made me, at the time of obtaining the stone: upon which he faced me with a malignant look, and said, "I don't care who in the devil it belongs to, *you* shall not have it."

In the month of June, 1827, Joseph Smith, Sen., related to me the following story: "That some years ago, a spirit had appeared to Joseph his son, in a vision, and informed him that in a certain place there was a record on plates of gold, and that he was the person that must obtain them, and this he must do in the following manner: On the 22d of September, he must repair to the place where was deposited this manuscript, dressed in black clothes, and riding a black horse with a switch tail, and demand the book in a certain name, and after obtaining it he must go directly away, and neither lay it down nor look behind him. They accordingly fitted out Joseph with a suit of black clothes and borrowed a black horse. He repaired to the place of deposit and demanded the book which was in a stone box, unsealed, and so near the top of the ground that he could

see one end of it, and raising it up, took out the book of gold; but fearing some one might discover where he got it, he laid it down to place back the top stone as he found it; and turning round, to his surprise there was no book in sight. He again opened the box, and in it saw the book, and attempted to take it out, but was hindered. He saw in the box something like a toad which soon assumed the appearance of a man, and struck him on the side of his head. Not being discouraged at trifles, he again stooped down and strove to take the book, when the spirit struck him again, and knocked him three or four rods and hurt him prodigiously. After recovering from his fright, he inquired why he could not obtain the plates; to which the spirit made reply, "Because you have not obeyed your orders." He then inquired when he *could* have them, and was answered thus: Come one year from this day, and bring with you your oldest brother, and you shall have them. This spirit, he said, was the spirit of the prophet who wrote this book, and who was sent to Joseph Smith, to make known these things to him. Before the expiration of the year, his oldest brother died; which the old man said was an *accidental providence!*

Joseph went one year from that day, to demand the book, and the spirit inquired for his brother, and he said that he was dead. The spirit then commanded him to come again, in just one year, and bring a man with him. On asking who might be the man, he was answered that he would know him when he saw him.

Joseph believed that one Samuel T. Lawrence was the man alluded to by the spirit, and went with him to a singular looking hill, in Manchester, and showed him where the treasure was. Lawrence asked him if he had ever discovered anything with the plates of gold; he said no; he then asked him to look in his stone, to see if there was anything with them. He looked, and said there was nothing; he told him to look again, and see if there was not a large pair of specs with the plates; he looked and soon saw a pair of spectacles, the same with which Joseph says he translated the Book of Mormon. Lawrence told him it would not be prudent to let these plates be seen for about two years, as it would make a great disturbance in the neighborhood. Not long after this Joseph altered his mind, and said L. was not the right man, nor had he told him

the right place. About this time he went to Harmony in Pennsylvania, and formed an acquaintance with a young lady by the name of Emma Hale, whom he wished to marry. In the fall of 1826 he wanted to go to Pennsylvania to be married; but being destitute of means, he now set his wits to work how he should raise money, and get recommendations, to procure the fair one of his choice. He went to Lawrence with the following story, as related to me by Lawrence himself. That he had discovered in Pennsylvania, on the bank of the Susquehanna River, a very rich mine of silver, and if he would go there with him, he might have a share in the profits; that it was near high-water mark, and that they could load it into boats and take it down the river to Philadelphia, to market. Lawrence then asked Joseph if he was not deceiving him; no, said he, for I have been there and seen it with mine own eyes, and if you do not find it so when we get there, I will bind myself to be your servant for three years. By these grave and fair promises Lawrence was induced to believe something in it, and agreed to go with him. L. soon found that Joseph was out of money, and had to bear his expenses on the way. When they got to Pennsylvania, Joseph wanted L. to recommend him to Miss H., which he did, although he was asked to do it; but could not well get rid of it as he was in his company. L. then wished to see the silver mine, and he and Joseph went to the river, and made search, but found nothing. Thus Lawrence had his trouble for his pains and returned home lighter than he went, while Joseph had got his expenses borne, and a recommendation to his girl.

Joseph's next move was to get married; the girl's parents being opposed to the match; as they happened to be from home, he took advantage of the opportunity, and went off with her and was married.

Now, being still destitute of money, he set his wits at work how he should get back to Manchester, his place of residence; he hit upon the following plan, which succeeded very well. He went to an honest old Dutchman, by the name of Stowel and told him that he had discovered on the bank of Black River, in the village of Watertown, Jefferson County, N. Y., a cave, in which he had found a bar of gold, as big as his leg, and about three or four feet long. That he could not get it

out alone, on account of its being fast at one end; and if he would move him to Manchester, N. Y., they would go together, and take a chisel and mallet and get it, and Stowel should share the prize with him. Stowel moved him.

A short time after their arrival, at Manchester, Stowel reminded Joseph of his promise; but he calmly replied that he would not go, because his wife was now among strangers, and would be very lonesome if he went away. Mr. Stowel was then obliged to return without any gold, and with less money than he came.

In the forepart of September, (I believe,) 1827, the prophet requested me to make him a chest, informing me that he designed to move back to Pennsylvania, and expecting soon to get his gold book, he wanted a chest to lock it up, giving me to understand, at the same time, that if I would make the chest he would give me a share in the book. I told him my business was such that I could not make it; but if he would bring the book to me, I would lock it up for him. He said that would not do, as he was commanded to keep it two years, without letting it come to the eye of any one but himself. This commandment, however, he did not keep; for in less than two years, twelve men said they had seen it. I told him to get it and convince me of its existence, and I would make him a chest; but he said, that would not do, as he must have a chest to lock the book in, as soon as he took it out of the ground. I saw him a few days after when he told me that I must make the chest. I told him plainly that I could not, upon which he told me that I could have no share in the book.

A few weeks after this conversation he came to my house, and related the following story: That on the 22d of September, he arose early in the morning and took a one-horse wagon, of some one that had staid over night at their house, without leave or license; and, together with his wife, repaired to the hill which contained the book. He left his wife in the wagon, by the road, and went alone to the hill, a distance of thirty or forty rods from the road; he said he then took the book out of the ground and hid it in a tree top, and returned home. He then went to the town of Macedon to work. After about ten days, it having been suggested that some one had got his book, his wife went after him; he hired a horse, and went home

in the afternoon, staid long enough to drink one cup of tea, and then went for his book, found it safe, took off his frock, wrapt it round it, put it under his arm and ran all the way home, a distance of about two miles. He said he should think it would weigh sixty pounds, and was sure it would weigh forty. On his return home, he said he was attacked by two men in the woods, and knocked them both down and made his escape, arrived safe and secured his treasure. He then observed that if it had not been for that stone, (which he acknowledged belonged to me,) he would not have obtained the book. A few days afterwards, he told one of my neighbors that he had not got any such book, nor never had such an one; but that he had told the story to deceive the d—d fool, (meaning me,) to get him to make a chest. His neighbors having become disgusted with his foolish stories, he determined to go back to Pennsylvania, to avoid what he called persecution. His wits were now put to the task to contrive how he should get money to bear his expenses. He met one day in the streets of Palmyra a rich man, whose name was Martin Harris, and addressed him thus: "I have a commandment from God to ask the first man I meet in the street to give me fifty dollars to assist me in doing the work of the Lord by translating the golden Bible." Martin being naturally a credulous man, hands Joseph the money. In the spring of 1829 Harris went to Pennsylvania, and on his return to Palmyra, reported that the prophet's wife, in the month of June following, would be delivered of a male child that would be able when two years old to translate the golden Bible. Then, said he, you will see Joseph Smith, Jr., walking through the streets of Palmyra with a gold Bible under his arm, and having a gold breast plate on, and a gold sword hanging by his side. This, however, by the by, proved false.

In April, 1830, I again asked Hiram for the stone which he had borrowed of me; he told me that I should not have it, for Joseph made use of it in translating his Bible. I reminded him of his promise and that he had pledged his honor to return it; but he gave me the lie, saying the stone was not mine nor never was. Harris at the same time flew in a rage, took me by the collar and said I was a liar, and he could prove it by twelve witnesses. After I had extricated myself from him, Hiram in a rage shook his fist at me and abused me in a most

scandalous manner. Thus I might proceed in describing the character of these high priests by relating one transaction after another, which would all tend to set them in the same light in which they were regarded by their neighbors; viz.: as a pest to society. I have regarded Joseph Smith, Jr., from the time I first became acquainted with him until he left this part of the country, as a man whose word could not be depended upon. Hiram's character was but very little better. What I have said respecting the character of these men, will apply to the whole family. What I have stated relative to the characters of these individuals, thus far, is wholly true. After they became thorough Mormons, their conduct was more disgraceful than before. They did not hesitate to abuse any man, no matter how fair his character, provided he did not embrace their creed. Their tongues were continually employed in spreading scandal and abuse. Although they left this part of the country without paying their just debts, yet their creditors were glad to have them do so, rather than to have them stay, disturbing the neighborhood.

WILLARD CHASE.

On the 11th December, 1833, the said Willard Chase appeared before me, and made oath that the foregoing statement to which he has subscribed his name, is true, according to his best recollection and belief.

FRED'K SMITH,

Justice of the Peace of Wayne County.

THE AFFIDAVIT OF WILLIAM STAFFORD.

MANCHESTER, Ontario County, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1833.

I, William Stafford, having been called upon to give a true statement of my knowledge, concerning the character and conduct of the family of Smiths, known to the world as the founders of the Mormon sect, do say, that I first became acquainted with Joseph, Sen., and his family, in the year 1820. They lived, at that time, in Palmyra, about one mile and a half from my residence. A great part of their time was devoted to digging for money: especially in the night time, when they said the money could be the most easily obtained. I have heard them tell marvellous tales, respecting the discoveries they had made in their peculiar occupation of money-digging. They would say, for instance, that in such a place, in such a hill, on a certain man's farm, there were deposited keys, barrels and hogsheads of coined

silver and gold—bars of gold, golden images, brass kettles filled with gold and silver, gold candlesticks, swords, &c. They would say, also, that nearly all the hills in this part of New York, were thrown up by human hands, and in them were large caves, which Joseph, Jr., could see, by placing a stone of singular appearance in his hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light; at which time they pretended he could see all things within and under the earth,—that he could see within the above-mentioned caves, large gold bars and silver plates,—that he could also discover the spirits in whose charge these treasures were, clothed in ancient dress. At certain times, these treasures could be obtained very easily; at others, the obtaining of them was difficult. The facility of approaching them, depended, in a great measure, on the state of the moon. New moon and good Friday, I believe, were regarded as the most favorable times for obtaining these treasures. These tales I regarded as visionary. However, being prompted by curiosity, I at length accepted of their invitations, to join them in their nocturnal excursions. I will now relate a few incidents attending these excursions.

Joseph Smith, Sen., came to me one night, and told me, that Joseph, Jr., had been looking in his glass, and had seen, not many rods from his house, two or three kegs of gold and silver, some feet under the surface of the earth; and that none others but the elder Joseph and myself could get them. I accordingly consented to go, and early in the evening repaired to the place of deposit. Joseph, Sen., first made a circle, twelve or fourteen feet in diameter. This circle, said he, contains the treasure. He then stuck in the ground a row of witch-hazel sticks, around the said circle, for the purpose of keeping off the evil spirits. Within this circle he made another, of about eight or ten feet in diameter. He walked around three times on the periphery of this last circle, muttering to himself something which I could not understand. He next stuck a steel rod in the center of the circles, and then enjoined profound silence upon us, lest we should arouse the evil spirit who had the charge of these treasures. After we had dug a trench about five feet in depth around the rod, the old man, by signs and motions, asked leave of absence, and went to the house to inquire of young Joseph the cause of our disappointment. He soon returned, and said, that Joseph had remained all this time in the house, looking in

his stone and watching the motions of the evil spirit—that he saw the spirit come up to the ring, and as soon as it beheld the cone which we had formed around the rod, it caused the money to sink. We then went into the house, and the old man observed, that we had made a mistake in the commencement of the operation; if it had not been for that, said he, we should have got the money.

At another time, they devised a scheme, by which they might satiate their hunger with the mutton of one of my sheep. They had seen in my flock of sheep, a large, fat, black wether. Old Joseph and one of the boys came to me one day, and said that Joseph, Jr., had discovered some very remarkable and valuable treasures, which could be procured only in one way. That way was as follows:—That a black sheep should be taken on to the ground where the treasures were concealed—that after cutting its throat, it should be led around a circle while bleeding. This being done, the wrath of the evil spirit would be appeased: the treasures could then be obtained, and my share of them was to be fourfold. To gratify my curiosity, I let them have a large fat sheep. They afterwards informed me that the sheep was killed pursuant to commandment; but as there was some mistake in the process, it did not have the desired effect. This, I believe, is the only time they ever made money-digging a profitable business. They, however, had around them constantly a worthless gang, whose employment it was to dig money nights, and who, day times, had more to do with mutton than money.

When they found that the people of this vicinity would no longer put any faith in their schemes for digging money, they then pretended to find a Gold Bible, of which, they said, the Book of Mormon was only an introduction. This latter book was at length fitted for the press. No means were taken by any individual to suppress its publication: no one apprehended any danger from a book, originating with individuals who had neither influence, honesty or honor. The two Josephs and Hiram, promised to show me the plates, after the Book of Mormon was translated. But, afterwards, they pretended to have received an express commandment, forbidding them to show the plates. Respecting the manner of receiving and translating the Book of Mormon, their statements were always discordant. The elder Joseph would say that he had seen the

plates, and that he knew them to be gold; at other times he would say that they looked like gold; and other times he would say that he had not seen the plates at all. I have thus briefly stated a few of the facts, in relation to the conduct and character of this family of Smiths; probably sufficient has been stated without my going into detail. WILLIAM STAFFORD.

STATE OF NEW YORK, }
Wayne County. } ss.

I certify, that on this 9th day of December, 1833, personally appeared before me William Stafford, to me known, and made oath to the truth of the above statement, and signed the same.

TH. P. BALDWIN,
Judge of Wayne County Court.

THE AFFIDAVIT OF ISAAC HALE.

HARMONY, Pa., March 20, 1834.

I first became acquainted with Joseph Smith, Jr., 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 closed over his face. In this way he pretended to discover minerals and hidden treasure. His appearance at his 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. This took place about the 17th of November, 1825; and one of the company gave me his note for \$12.68 for his board, which is still unpaid.

After these occurrences, young Smith made several visits at my house, and at length asked my consent to his marrying my daughter Emma. This I refused, and gave 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, N. Y., Emma wrote to me inquiring whether she could take her property, consisting of clothing, furniture, cows, &c. I replied that her property was safe and at her disposal. In a short time they returned, bringing with them a Peter Ingersoll, 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. He also made arrangements with my son Alva Hale, to go to Palmyra, and move his (Smith's) furniture, &c, to his place. He then returned to Palmyra, and soon after, Alva, agreeable to the arrangement, went up and returned with Smith and his family. 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 is said they were contained, which had, to all appearances, been used as a glass box of the common 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 inquired of Joseph Smith, Jr., who was to be the first who 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 that he had talked with Joseph about it—Joseph informed him that he could not or durst not show him the plates, but that he (Joseph) would go

into the woods where the Book of Plates was, and that after 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, Jr., lived, and where he and Harris were engaged in the translation of their 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 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 the orders, the thing would be taken from them."* I inquired whose words they were, and was informed by Joseph or Emma, (I rather think it was the former,) 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, 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, as I supposed and understood.

Joseph Smith, Jr., 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, which I do not deem it necessary to relate, that the whole 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 may live upon the spoils of those who swallow the deception.

ISAAC HALE.

Affirmed to and subscribed before me, March 20, 1834.

CHARLES DIMON, J. Peace.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, }
 Susquehanna County. } ss.

We, the subscribers, associate Judges of the Court of Common Pleas, in and for said county, do certify that we have been many years personally acquainted with Isaac Hale, of Harmony township in this county, who has attested the foregoing statement; and that he is a man of excellent moral character, and undoubted veracity. Witness our hands.

WILLIAM THOMPSON.
 DAVIS DIMOCK.

MARCH 21, 1834.

THE STATEMENT OF FIFTY-ONE CITIZENS OF PALMYRA,
 NEW YORK.

PALMYRA, December 4, 1833.

We, the undersigned, have been acquainted with the Smith family for a number of years, while they resided near this place, and we have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them destitute of that moral character, which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in digging for money which they pretended was hid in the earth; and to this day, large excavations may be seen in the earth, not far from their residence, where they used to spend their time in digging for hidden treasures. Joseph Smith, Senior, and his son Joseph, were in particular considered entirely destitute of *moral character and addicted to vicious habits.*

Martin Harris was a man who had acquired a handsome property, and in matters of business his word was considered good; but on moral and religious subjects, he was perfectly visionary,—sometimes advocating one sentiment, and sometimes another. And in reference to all with whom we were acquainted, that have embraced Mormonism from this neighborhood, we are compelled to say, were very visionary and most of them destitute of moral character, and without influence in this community; and this may account why they were permitted to go on with their impositions undisturbed. It was not supposed that any of them were possessed of sufficient character or influence to make any one believe their book or their senti-

ments, and we know not of a single individual in this vicinity that puts the least confidence in their pretended revelations.

(Signed by fifty-one citizens of Palmyra, New York.)

THE STATEMENT OF ELEVEN CITIZENS OF MANCHESTER,
NEW YORK.

MANCHESTER, November 3, 1833.

We, the undersigned, being personally acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen., with whom the celebrated Gold Bible, so-called, originated, state: that they were not only a lazy, indolent set of men, but also intemperate; and their word was not to be depended upon; and that we are truly glad to dispense with their society.

(Signed by eleven citizens of Manchester, New York.)

The foregoing affidavits and statements were first published in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled," of 1834,¹ and, subsequently, in Bennett's "Mormonism Exposed," of 1842, from which I have copied them. Yet, notwithstanding their damaging charges and the fact that they have been before the public for eighty years, the Mormons have never made a successful attempt to refute them. Indeed, so far as I am able to learn, but one effort at all has ever been made to clear the reputation of Joseph Smith from the charges made against him by his old neighbors, and this ended in ignominious failure.

In the year 1880, the Reorganized Mormon Church became active in Cadillac, Wexford County, Michigan, and added a number to their faith. To counteract their influence, one Rev. A. Marsh, through a brother minister, Rev. C. C. Thorne, of Manchester, New York, secured the statements of three of the old neighbors of the Smiths, Danford Booth, Orrin Reed and William Bryant, relative to their poor reputation, and published them in

¹ Howe's book was republished in 1840 under the title of "History of Mormonism."

the *Cadillac News* of April 6, 1880. These statements are as follows:

I knew Joe Smith, personally to some extent, saw him frequently, knew well his reputation, he was a lazy, drinking fellow, and loose in his habits in every way.—*Danford Booth*. Smith's reputation was bad. I was acquainted with Oliver Cowdery. He was a low pettifogger, the cat's-paw of the Smiths to do their dirty work.—*Orrin Reed*. I knew the Smiths, but did not associate with them, for they were too low to associate with. There was no truth in them. Their aim was to get in where they could get property. They broke up homes in that way. Smith had no regular business. He had frequent revelations.—*Wm. Bryant*.

This aroused the Mormons to action, and the following spring two of their elders went to New York, concealed their identity, interviewed the individuals mentioned, with others, and, returning, published the interviews in the issue of the *Saints' Herald*, of Plano, Illinois, for June 1, 1881. While these purported interviews do not entirely remove the traditional stigma from the character of Smith and his associates, it must be conceded that, if they were correct, these individuals stood somewhat higher in the moral and social scale than was before believed.

During the interview with Mr. Bryant, this gentleman is said to have denied being personally acquainted with the Smiths, but stated that they were considered a shiftless set and that Joseph had the reputation of being a liar. Mr. Booth is said to have stated that he knew nothing of the Smiths or their character, and to have denied that he ever had any interview with Rev. Mr. Thorne on the subject of Mormonism in which he made the statements as published in the *Cadillac News*, while Mr. Reed is also said to have stated that he did not know the Smiths and that he had not given a statement to Thorne for pub-

lication. These purported interviews have been repeatedly published as an answer to the affidavits and statements heretofore given.¹

But this effort to relieve the reputation of Smith from the stains that had been placed upon it, ended in bitter defeat. Within six weeks from the time of the publication of these purported interviews, two of the parties mentioned, Danford Booth and Orrin Reed, with another who was interviewed, J. H. Gilbert, came out with affidavits,² in which they affirmed that they had been grossly misrepresented. Their affidavits follow:

Danford Booth, of the town of Manchester and county of Ontario, N. Y., being duly affirmed, deposes: He has read the article in the *Cadillac Weekly News* of April 6th, 1880, respecting "Cowdery and the Smith family" over the signature of C. C. Thorne. The interview therein mentioned between deponent and Thorne did take place. The matters therein set forth, alleged to have been stated by the deponent to Thorne, were so stated by deponent to Thorne. He has read also in a paper called the *Saints' Herald*, of June 1st, 1881, an article purporting to give what was said in an interview between W. H. Kelley and another party and the deponent, in which it is stated that deponent informed said parties that deponent and Thorne never had an interview as alleged by Thorne. Deponent declares that he did not so inform said parties, and that he has no recollection of such a question being asked him by them.

(Signed) DANFORD BOOTH.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, July 1st, 1881.

(Signed) N. K. COLE, J.P.

Orrin Reed, of the township of Manchester, county of Ontario, N. Y., being duly affirmed, deposes: His age is 77. He was born in the town of Farmington, about four miles from

¹ They may be found in the "Braden-Kelley Debate," pp. 101-104, and "From Palmyra to Independence," pp. 341-378.

² The county clerk of Ontario County, New York, informs me that these affidavits, with an affidavit of Samantha Payne, an old neighbor of the Smiths, and a letter of Rev. Mr. Thorne, are now on file in the clerk's office at Canandaigua.

what is called "Mormon Hill." During the last forty-six years he has resided in the town of Manchester, and in the same school district in which Joseph Smith and family, of Mormon notoriety, resided, and three-fourths of a mile from "Mormon Hill." He has read an article published in the *Cadillac News* of April 6th, 1880, respecting "Cowdery and the Smith family," over the signature of C. C. Thorne. The matters therein set forth and alleged to have been stated by deponent to Thorne were so stated by deponent, at the time and in the manner stated in said published article.

(Signed) ORRIN REED.

Affirmed and subscribed before me, June 29th, 1881.

(Signed) N. K. COLE, J.P.

John H. Gilbert, of the town of Palmyra, Wayne county, N. Y., being duly sworn, deposes: That in the article published in the *Saints' Herald*, at Plano, Ill., June 1st, 1881, over the signature of W. H. Kelley, purporting to give an interview with the deponent on Mormonism, the deponent is grossly misrepresented in almost every particular. Words are put in the mouth of the deponent that he never uttered. The pretended answers to the questions that the deponent did answer, are totally at variance with the answers that the deponent really gave. The deponent believes that such misrepresentation was done designedly.

(Signed) JOHN H. GILBERT.

Sworn to and subscribed before me, July 12th, 1881.

(Signed) M. C. FINLEY, J.P.

The affidavits of Booth, Reed and Gilbert plainly refute the only attempt that Mormonism has ever made to secure from the old citizens of Palmyra and Manchester testimonies favorable to the Smiths and their followers, and so leave their reputation about where it was before.

CHAPTER III.

The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon—David Whitmer
—Martin Harris—Oliver Cowdery.

The three special witnesses to the Book of Mormon were David Whitmer, Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery. Whitmer was an ordinary farmer of Fayette, Seneca County, New York; Harris was a well-to-do farmer of Palmyra, and Cowdery was a wandering schoolmaster. Whitmer and Harris possessed inferior educations; Cowdery was probably above the ordinary in this respect and was a ready scribe, because of which he was chosen by Smith as his amanuensis and copied from his lips the entire Book of Mormon, as we now have it, with the possible exception of a few pages.

Before these witnesses were permitted to view the plates, the Lord spoke to them through Joseph, as follows:

Behold, I say unto you, that you must rely upon my word, which if you do, with full purpose of heart, you shall have a view of the plates, and also of the breastplate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim, which were given to the brother of Jared upon the mount, when he talked with the Lord face to face, and the miraculous directors which were given to Lehi while in the wilderness, on the borders of the Red Sea; and it is by your faith that you shall obtain a view of them, even by that faith which was had by the prophets of old.

And after that you have obtained faith, and have seen them with your eyes, you shall testify of them, by the power of God; and this you shall do that my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., may not be destroyed, that I may bring about my righteous purposes unto the children of men, in this work. And ye shall testify that you have seen them, even as my servant Joseph Smith, Jr.,

has seen them, for it is by my power that he has seen them, and it is because he had faith; and he has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true.—*Doctrine and Covenants*, Sec. 15.

Subsequent to this, these men published the testimony already given, in which they affirmed that an angel of God had shown them the plates and that the voice of God had declared that the translation was His gift and by His power.

In reference to this testimony, one of three things is true: they either actually saw the plates and what they described concerning them really occurred, or they were themselves deceived, or their testimony is part of a grand deception of which they were among the prime movers.

The last explanation of the part played by the three witnesses in the genesis of Mormonism I believe to be the true one, for, while Whitmer stubbornly maintained the truthfulness of his testimony up to the very time of his death, Harris, at the beginning of the Mormon movement, made certain assertions to his relatives and acquaintances which go to show that with him Mormonism was only a cold-blooded money proposition; while Cowdery, in 1839, published a full recantation and, in 1840 or 1841, became a member of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Ohio, serving it later in the capacity of clerk and Sunday-school superintendent.

DAVID WHITMER.

The first connection of David Whitmer with Mormonism was in June, 1829, when he went to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where Smith and Cowdery were at work upon the translation, and brought them back to the home of his father, Peter Whitmer, in Fayette, New York. Shortly after this, in the same month, he was baptized

by Joseph in Seneca Lake and was ordained an elder, and when the Mormon Church was organized at his father's house on April 6, 1830,¹ he became one of its charter members. In 1831, with the larger part of the church in New York, he removed to Kirtland and subsequently to Missouri, where he was cut off from the church April 13, 1838. After this he settled at Richmond, Missouri, where he lived until his death, January 25, 1888.

Whitmer, undoubtedly, adhered to his testimony up to the very last. In a statement issued March 19, 1881, he says:

Unto All Nations, Kindred, Tongues and People, unto Whom These Presents Shall Come:

It having been represented by one John Murphy, of Polo, Caldwell County, Mo., that I, in a conversation with him last summer, denied my testimony as one of the three witnesses to the "*Book of Mormon*."

To the end, therefore, that he may understand me now, if he did not then; and that the world may know the truth, I wish now, standing as it were, in the very sunset of life, and in the fear of God, once for all to make this public statement:

That I have never at any time denied that testimony or any part thereof, which has so long since been published with that Book, as one of the three witnesses. Those who know me best, well know that I have always adhered to that testimony. And that no man may be misled or doubt my present views in regard to the same, I do again affirm the truth of all of my statements, as then made and published.

"He that hath an ear to hear let him hear;" it was no delusion! What is written is written, and he that readeth let him understand.

And that no one may be deceived or misled by this state-

¹ Whitmer, in the later years of his life, denied that the church was founded on April 6, 1830. He says: "It is all a mistake about the church being organized on April 6, 1830, as I will show. We were as fully organized—spiritually—before April 6th as we were on that day."—*Address to All Believers in Christ*, p. 33.

ment, I wish here to state: that I do not endorse polygamy or spiritual wifeism. It is a great evil, shocking to the moral sense, and the more so, because practiced in the name of religion. It is of man and not of God, and is especially forbidden in the Book of Mormon itself.

I do not endorse the change of the name of the church, for as the wife takes the name of her husband so should the church of the Lamb of God take the name of its head, even Christ himself. It is the Church of Christ.

As to the High Priesthood, Jesus Christ himself is the last Great High Priest, this too after the order of Melchisedec, as I understand the Holy Scriptures.

Finally, I do not endorse any of the teachings of the so-called Mormons, of Latter Day Saints, which are in conflict with the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as taught in the Bible and Book of Mormon; for the same gospel is plainly taught in both of these books as I understand the word of God.

And if any man doubt should he not carefully and honestly read and understand the same, before presuming to sit in judgment and condemning the light which shineth in darkness, and showeth the way of eternal life as pointed out by the unerring hand of God.

In the spirit of Christ who hath said, "Follow thou me, for I am the life, the light and the way," I submit this statement to the world. God in whom I trust being my judge as to the sincerity of my motives and the faith and hope that is in me of eternal life.

My sincere desire is that the world may be benefitted by this plain and simple statement of the truth.

And all the honor be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

DAVID WHITMER.

RICHMOND, Mo., March 19, 1881.

To this statement is subjoined the following certificate:

We, the undersigned citizens of Richmond, Ray County, Mo., where David Whitmer has resided since the year A. D. 1838, certify that we have been long and intimately acquainted with him and know him to be a man of the highest integrity, and of

undoubted truth and veracity Given at Richmond, Mo., this March 19, A. D. 1881.

Gen. Alexander W. Doniphan. Hon. Geo. W. Dunn, Judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit. Thos. D. Woodson, President of Ray Co. Savings Bank. J. T. Child, editor of *Conservator*. H. C. Garner, Cashier of Ray Co. Savings Bank. L. C. Cantwell, Postmaster, Richmond. Geo. I. Wasson, Mayor. Jas. A. Davis, County Collector. C. J. Huges, Probate Judge and Presiding Justice of Ray County Court. Geo. W. Trigg, County Clerk. W. W. Mosby, M.D. W. A. Holman, County Treasurer. J. S. Hughes, Banker, Richmond. James Hughes, Banker, Richmond. D. P. Whitmer, Attorney-at-law. Hon. James W. Black, Attorney-at-law. Thos. McGinnis, ex-Sheriff Ray County. J. P. Quisenberry, Merchant. W. R. Holman, Furniture Merchant. Lewis Slaughter, Recorder of Deeds. Geo. W. Buchanan, M.D. A. K. Reyburn.

In view of the overwhelming evidences which clearly established that the Book of Mormon is a fraud, two explanations may be given of the adherence of David Whitmer to his original testimony up to the time of his death: first, he may himself have been the victim of deception and may have honestly believed that he saw the plates; or, being fully cognizant of the imposture, he may have preferred to die with the world believing that he was deceived rather than with it believing that he was a deceiver. In either case his story was, evidently, not accepted even by those who certified to his integrity and veracity, for but few, if any, of them were adherents of the Mormon faith.

MARTIN HARRIS.

The first that we hear of Martin Harris in connection with Mormonism, was in the fall of 1827, when he gave Joseph fifty dollars to enable him to remove from Manchester to the home of his wife's parents in Harmony, Pennsylvania. In the month of February, following, he

came to Harmony, obtained a transcript of the characters on the plates and took them to Professor Anthon, of New York City. He then returned home, arranged his business, and, going to Harmony, began to write for Joseph, April 12, 1828, continuing as his scribe until he lost the 116 pages of manuscript, when he was deposed. He was baptized in April, 1830, and removed with the church to Kirtland, Ohio, in 1831. In June of the same year, with Joseph Smith and other elders, he left Kirtland for Missouri, where he was present at the dedication of the Temple lot, at Independence, August 3, 1831. He was subsequently cut off, after which he lectured against Mormonism both in this country and in England,¹ but later became somewhat, though probably not entirely, reconciled to the church, and removed to Utah in August, 1870, where he died, at Smithfield, Cache County, in July, 1875.

It is claimed that Harris never denied his testimony, but adhered to it up to the time of his death. As proof of this, the following letters to H. B. Emerson, of New Richmond, Ohio, are submitted:

SMITHFIELD, Utah, Nov. 23, 1870.

Mr. Emerson,

SIR:—I received your favor. In reply I will say concerning the plates, I do say that the angel did show to me the plates containing the Book of Mormon. Further, the translation that I carried to Professor Anthon was copied from these same plates; also, that the professor did testify to it being a correct translation. I do firmly believe and do know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; for without, I know he could not have

¹ This is sometimes denied. The proof of Harris lecturing against Mormonism in this country is to be found in the charges to that effect published in the Mormon papers after his apostasy. While, as to his lecturing in England, the Josephite, Elder Charles Derry, says that he went there not to oppose Mormonism in general, but only the pretensions of Brigham Young ("Joseph the Seer," p. 106, and other works).

had that gift; neither could he have translated the same. I can give, if you require it, one hundred witnesses to the proof of the Book of Mormon. I defy any man to show me any passage of Scripture that I am not posted on or familiar with. I will answer any question you feel like asking to the best of my knowledge, if you can rely on my testimony of the same. In conclusion, I can say that I arrived in Utah safe, in good health and spirits, considering the long journey. I am quite well at present, and have been, generally speaking, since I arrived. With many respects, I remain your humble friend,

MARTIN HARRIS.

SMITHFIELD, Cache Co., Utah, January, 1871.

To H. Emerson,

DEAR SIR:—Your second letter, dated December, 1870, came duly to hand. I am truly glad to see a spirit of inquiry manifested therein. I reply by a borrowed hand, as my sight has failed me too much to write myself. Your questions:

Question 1. "Did you go to England to lecture against Mormonism?"

Answer. I answer emphatically, No, I did not. No man ever heard me in any way deny the truth of the Book of Mormon, the administration of the angel that showed me the plates; nor the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, under the administration of Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet whom the Lord raised up for that purpose in these latter days that He may show forth His power and glory. The Lord has shown me these things by His Spirit, by the administration of ho'y angels, and confirmed the same with signs following, step by step, as the work has progressed, for the space of fifty-three years.

I am, very respectfully,

MARTIN HARRIS, Sen.

Without denying the genuineness of the foregoing letters, I now present to the reader the evidence which goes to prove that Martin Harris, while a resident of Palmyra, was of a greedy disposition, possessed an ungovernable temper, lived a questionable life and held extravagant religious views—the kind of character that

would not hesitate to sign a false statement, provided it might be to his pecuniary interests to do so. The following is a letter of his wife, Lucy Harris, which was first published in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled":

PALMYRA, November 29, 1833.

Being called upon to give a statement to the world of what I know respecting the Gold Bible speculation, and also of the conduct of Martin Harris, my husband, who is a leading character among the Mormons, I do it free from prejudice, realizing that I must give an account at the bar of God for what I say. Martin Harris was once industrious, attentive to his domestic concerns, and thought to be worth about ten thousand dollars. He is naturally quick in his temper, and in his mad-fits frequently abuses all who may dare to oppose him in his wishes. However strange it may seem, I have been a great sufferer by his unreasonable conduct. At different times while I lived with him, he has whipped, kicked and turned me out of the house. About a year previous to the report being raised that Smith had found gold plates, he became very intimate with the Smith family, and said he believed Joseph could see in his stone any thing he wished. After this he apparently became very sanguine in his belief, and frequently said he would have no one in his house that did not believe in Mormonism; and because I would not give credit to the report he made about the gold plates, he became more austere towards me. In one of his fits of rage he struck me with the butt-end of a whip, which I think had been used for driving oxen, and was about the size of my thumb, and three or four feet long. He beat me on the head four or five times, and the next day turned me out of doors twice, and beat me in a shameful manner. The next day I went to the town of Marion, and while there my flesh was black and blue in many places. His main complaint against me was, that I was always trying to hinder his making money.

When he found out that I was going to Mr. Putnam's, in Marion, he said he was going too, that they had sent for him to pay them a visit. On arriving at Mr. Putnam's, I asked them if they had sent for Mr. Harris; they replied, they knew nothing about it; he, however, came in the evening. Mrs. Putnam told him never to strike or abuse me any more; he then denied ever

striking me; she was however convinced that he lied, as the marks of his beating me were plain to be seen, and remained more than two weeks. Whether the Mormon religion be true or false, I leave the world to judge, for its effects upon Martin Harris have been to make him more cross, turbulent and abusive to me. His whole object was to make money by it. I will give one circumstance in proof of it. One day, while at Peter Harris's house, I told him he had better leave the company of the Smiths, as their religion was false; to which he replied: "If you would let me alone, I could make money by it."

It is in vain for the Mormons to deny these facts; for they are all well known to most of his former neighbors. The man has now become rather an object of pity; he has spent most of his property, and lost the confidence of his former friends. If he had labored as hard on his farm as he has to make Mormons, he might now be one of the wealthiest farmers in the country. He now spends his time in traveling through the country spreading the delusion of Mormonism, and has no regard whatever for his family.

With regard to Mr. Harris's being intimate with Mrs. Haggard, as has been reported, it is but justice to myself to state what facts have come within my own observation, to show whether I had any grounds for jealousy or not. Mr. Harris was very intimate with this family, for some time previous to their going to Ohio. They lived a while in a house which he had built for their accommodation, and here he spent the most of his leisure hours; and made her presents of articles from the store and house. He carried these presents in a private manner, and frequently when he went there, he would pretend to be going to some of the neighbors, on an errand, or to be going into the fields. After getting out of sight of the house, he would steer a straight course for Haggard's house, especially if Haggard was from home. At times when Haggard was from home, he would go there in the manner above described, and stay till twelve or one o'clock at night, and sometimes until daylight.

If his intentions were evil, the Lord will judge him accordingly, but if good, he did not mean to let his left hand know what his right hand did. The above statement of facts I affirm to be true.

LUCY HARRIS.

In a statement, published by Howe and dated at Palmyra, November 28, 1833, Mrs. Abigail Harris, sister-in-law of Martin, says:

In the second month following, Martin Harris and his wife were at my house. In conversation about Mormonites, she observed that she wished her husband would quit them, as she believed it was all false and a delusion. To which I heard Mr. Harris reply: "*What if it is a lie; if you will let me alone I will make money out of it!*" I was both an eye and ear witness of what has been stated above.

Henry Harris, brother of Martin, made oath to the following statement before Jonathan Lapham, justice of the peace:

Joseph Smith, Jr., Martin Harris and others, used to meet together in private, a while before the gold plates were found, and were familiarly known by the name of the "Gold Bible Company." They were regarded by the community in which they lived, as a lying and indolent set of men, and no confidence could be placed in them.

After Harris had apostatized, Smith denounced him in the *Elders' Journal*¹ of August, 1838—

as so far beneath contempt that a notice of him would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make. The church exerted some restraint on him, but now he has given loose to all kinds of abominations, lying, cheating, swindling, with all kinds of debauchery.

Such a man was Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. With such a character, who can doubt that he would scruple to sign a lie or to maintain its truthfulness up to the very hour of his death?

¹ Not having the *Elders' Journal* at hand, I have copied this from the "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 173.

OLIVER COWDERY.

Oliver Cowdery was born in the town of Wells, Rutland County, Vermont, October, 1805. When about twenty years of age, he removed to the State of New York, where he was employed as a clerk in a store until the winter of 1828-9, when he taught school in the town of Manchester.¹ Here he became acquainted with the Smiths, and through them learned of Joseph and the plates. In April, 1829, he went to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where he became the celebrated scribe of Mormonism. He was baptized by Joseph in May, 1829, and continued with the church up to the time of his expulsion, April 12, 1838. After this he removed to Tiffin, Ohio, where he practiced law, and, renouncing Mormonism, united with the Methodist Protestant Church. Later, he went to Elkhorn, Wisconsin, where he followed his profession and became a candidate for the Legislature, but was defeated because of his former connection with Mormonism.² The Mormons claim that in 1848 he was rebaptized into the church at Kaneshville, Iowa, by Apostle Orson Hyde, and that he contemplated moving to Salt Lake, but was cut off by death before this desire was realized. He died at Richmond, Missouri, in March, 1850, while visiting his brother-in-law, David Whitmer. Whitmer declares that on his death-bed Cowdery charged him to be true to his testimony to the Book of Mormon.³ However true this last statement may be, and I neither affirm nor deny it, we have positive proof that Oliver Cowdery did, in 1839, renounce Mormonism, and did,

¹ Lorenzo Saunders, whose letter is published in Chapter IX., says that he was in league with the Smiths as early as 1826.

² This information comes from a letter of Judge Gibson, of Tiffin, Ohio, to Th. Gregg, of Hamilton, Illinois, and dated August 3, 1882.

³ See "Whitmer's Address," p. 8.

later, become a member of the Methodist Protestant Church. The evidence in support of this is so clear and conclusive that it is sheer folly for the Mormons to deny it.

In 1839 the following "Defense in a Rehearsal of My Grounds for Separating Myself from the Latter Day Saints"¹ was published by Cowdery, the printing being done at Pressley's job-office, Norton, Ohio:

DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD:—I offer you a "Defense" which I am grieved to make, but my opposers have put me to the necessity, and so far as my memory serves, I pledge my veracity for the correctness of the account.

I deny that I have ever conspired with any, or ever exerted any influence to destroy the reputation of the First Elder, although evidence which is to be credited assures me that he has done everything he could to injure my standing, and his influence has been considerably exerted to destroy my reputation and, I fear, my life.

You will remember in the meantime, that those who seek to villify my character have been constantly encouraged by him. There was a time when I thought myself able to prove to the satisfaction of every man that the translator of the Book of Mormon was worthy of the appellation of a Seer and a Prophet of the Lord, and in which he held over me a mysterious power which even now I fail to fathom; but I fear I may have been deceived, and especially so fear since knowing that Satan has led his mind astray.

(1) When the Church of Christ was set up by revelation, he was called to be First Elder, and I was called to be Second Elder, and whatever he had of Priesthood (about which I am beginning to doubt) also had I.

(2) But I certainly followed him too far when accepting and reiterating, that none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the gospel, as I had then forgotten that John, the beloved disciple, was tarrying on earth and exempt from death.

¹ Cowdery's "Defense" may be obtained of R. B. Neal, Grayson, Ky., for ten cents per copy.

DEFENCE
IN A
Rehearsal of My Grounds
FOR
Separating Myself
FROM THE
LATTER DAY SAINTS
BY OLIVER COWDERY
Second Elder of The Church of Christ.

This Defence is not protected by a copyright, as I wish no man, to be confined alone to my permission in printing what is meant for the eyes and knowledge of the nations of the earth.

"God doth not walk in crooked paths;
Neither doth he turn to the right hand,
Nor the the left neither doth he vary
From that which he hath said."

Pressley's Job Office,
Norton, Ohio,
1839.

I am well aware that a rehearsal of these things at this day will be unpleasant reading to the First Elder; yet so it is, and it is wisdom that it should be so. Without rehearsing too many things that have caused me to lose my faith in Bro. Joseph's seership, I regard his frequent prediction that he himself shall tarry on the earth till Christ shall come in glory, and that neither the rage of devils nor the malice of men shall ever cause him to fall by the hand of his enemies until he has seen Christ in the flesh at his final coming, as little short of a piece of blasphemy; and it may be classed with that revelation that some among you will remember which sent Bro. Page and me so unwisely to (3) Toronto with a prediction from the Lord by Urim and Thummim that we would there find a man anxious to buy the First Elder's copyright. I well remember we did not find him, and had to return surprised and disappointed. But so great was my faith, that, in going to Toronto, nothing but calmness pervaded my soul, every doubt was banished, and I as much expected that Bro. Page and I would fulfill the revelation as that we should live. And you may believe without asking me to relate the particulars, that it would be no easy task to describe our desolation and grief.

Bro. Page and I did not think that God would have deceived us through "Urim and Thummim," exactly as came the Book of Mormon; and I well remember how hard I strove to drive away the foreboding which seized me, that the First Elder had made tools of us, where we thought, in the simplicity of our hearts, that we were divinely commanded.

And what served to render the reflection past expression in its bitterness to me, was, that from his hand I received baptism, by the direction of the Angel of God, whose voice, as it has since struck me, did most mysteriously resemble the voice of Elder Sidney Rigdon,¹ who, I am sure, had no part in the transactions of that day, as the Angel was John the Baptist, which I doubt not and deny not. When I afterward first heard Elder Rigdon, whose voice is so strikingly similar, I felt that this "dear" brother was to be in some sense, to me unknown, the herald of this church as the Great Baptist was of Christ.

(4) I never dreamed, however, that he would influence the

¹ This is a mild way of letting the cat out of the bag. I am strongly of the opinion that Rigdon was the "angel" of Mormonism.

Prophet, Seer and Revelator to the Church of Latter Day Saints, into the formation of a secret band at Far West, committed to depredations upon Gentiles and the actual assassination of apostates from the church, which was done in June last and was only one of many wrong steps.

These are facts which I am rehearsing, and if they shall be called in question, I am able to establish them by evidence which I can bring forward in abundance.

Still, although favored of God as a chosen witness to bear testimony to the divine authority of the Book of Mormon, and honored of the Lord in being permitted, without money and without price, to serve as scribe during the translation of the Book of Mormon, I have sometimes had seasons of skepticism, in which I did seriously wonder whether the prophet and I were men in our sober senses when we would be translating from plates through "the U-im and Thummim" and the plates not be in sight at all.

But I believed both in the Seer and in the "Seer Stone," and what the First Elder announced as revelation from God, I accepted as such, and committed to paper with a glad mind and happy heart and swift pen; for I believed him to be the soul of honor and truth, a young man who would die before he would lie.

Man may deceive his fellow man, deception may follow deception, and the children of the wicked one may seduce the unstable, untaught in the ways of righteousness and peace, for I felt a solemn awe about me, being deep in the faith, that the First Elder was a Seer and Prophet of God, giving the truth unsullied through "Urim and Thummim," dictated by the will of the Lord, and that he was persecuted for the sake of the truth which he loved. Could I have been deceived in him?

I could rehearse a number of things to show either that I was then deceived, or that he has since fallen from the lofty place in which fond affection had deemed him secure.

I remember his experience as he had related it to me, and lacking wisdom, I went to God in prayer. I said: "O Lord, how dark everything is! Let thy glory lighten it, and make bright the path for me. Show me my duty. Let me be led of thy Spirit."

Shall I relate what transpired? I had a message from the Most High, as from the midst of eternity; for the veil was

parted and the Redeemer Himself, clothed in glory, stood before me. And He said:

"After reproving the Latter Day Saints for their corruption and blindness in permitting their President, Joseph Smith, Jr., to lead them forth into errors, where I led him not, nor commanded him, and saying unto them, 'Thus saith the Lord,' when I said it not unto him, thou shalt withdraw thyself from among them."

And I testify that Jesus, whose words I have been rehearsing, hath even so commanded me in an open vision.

The Lord revealed to me that the First Elder is leading the Saints astray, and ordered me to quit them after delivering the message which this "Defense" delivers. I shall ever remember this expression of the Saviour's grace with thanksgiving, and look upon his amazing goodness to me with wonder.

When I had sufficiently recovered my self-possession to ask in regard to the errors into which Joseph Smith, Jr., was taking the Saints, the Redeemer instructed me plainly: "He hath given revelations from his own heart and from a defiled conscience as coming from my mouth and hath corrupted the covenant and altered words which I had spoken. He hath brought in high priests, apostles and other officers, which in these days, when the written word sufficeth, are not in my church, and some of his deeds have brought shame to my heritage by the shedding of blood. He walketh in the vain imaginations of his heart, and my Spirit is holy and does not dwell in an unholy temple, nor are angels sent to reveal the great work of God to hypocrites."

I bowed my face in shame and said: "Lord! I entreat thee, give me grace to bear thy message in print where I fear to take it by word of mouth."

And he said, "The grace is given thee," and he vanished out of my sight.

Prepare your hearts, O ye saints of the Most High, and come to understanding. The prophet hath erred and the people are gone astray through his error. God's word is open. We may read it. There is no "First Presidency" there, no "High Priesthood" save that of Christ himself, no Patriarch to the Church, and wonderful to tell, the "First Elder" hath departed from God in giving us these things, and in changing the name of the church.

Oh, the misery, distress and evil attendant upon giving heed

unto the "doctrines of men"! The gospel has been perverted and the Saints are wandering in darkness, while a full cup of suffering is poured upon them. A society has been organized among them to inflict death upon those who are deemed apostates, with the knowledge and sanction of the First Elder.

This, I confess, is a dark picture to spread before those whom I am to warn, but they will pardon my plainness when I assure them of the truth of what I have written.

Bearing this message to them is the hardest work of my life, although many have been the privations and fatigues which have fallen to my lot to endure for the Gospel's sake since April 5th, 1829.

It is disgraceful to be led by a man who does not scruple to follow his own vain imagination, announcing his own schemes as revelations from the Lord.

And I fear he is led by a groundless hope, no better than the idle wind or the spider's web. Having cleared my soul by delivering the message, I do not deem it necessary to write further on the subject now.

Jesus has saved men in all ages and saves them now, and not by our Priesthood either. The "First Elder" errs as to that. The Lord has said, long since, and his word remains steadfast as the eternal hills, that to him who knocks it shall be opened, and whosoever will, may come and partake of the waters of life freely; but a curse will surely fall upon those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him.

I no longer believe that all the other churches are wrong.

Get right, O ye people, get right with God, and may the Lord remove his judgments from you, preserve you in his kingdom from all evil, and crown you in Christ. Amen.

MARCH 3, 1839.

O. COWDERY.

After Cowdery had apostatized, his life, with that of Whitmer and others, was threatened by his former brethren and he was forced to flee from Missouri to Ohio. At this time, it was freely admitted by the Mormons that he had denied his testimony to the Book of Mormon, and the following poem was composed in reference to his renunciation:

"Amazed with wonder! I look round
To see most people of our day
Reject the glorious gospel sound
Because the simple turn away:
But does it prove there is no time,
Because some watches will not go?

"Or prove that Christ was not the Lord
Because that Peter cursed and swore,
Or Book of Mormon not his word
Because denied by Oliver?
Or prove that Joseph Smith is false
Because apostates say 'tis so?"

After severing his connection with the church, and his return to the state of Ohio, Cowdery settled at Tiffin, where he practiced law, and in 1840 or 1841 became a member of the Methodist Protestant Church. During the time that he practiced law in Tiffin, Cowdery's partner was Judge W. Lang. In the following letter, addressed to Thomas Gregg, of Hamilton, Illinois, author of "The Prophet of Palmyra," this gentleman says respecting the history of Cowdery at Tiffin:

TIFFIN, O., Nov. 5, 1881.

DEAR SIR:—Your note of the 1st inst. I found upon my desk when I returned home this evening and I hasten to answer. Once for all I desire to be strictly understood when I say to you that I cannot violate any confidence of a friend though he be dead. This I will say that Mr. Cowdery never spoke of his connection with the Mormons to anybody except to me. We were intimate friends. The plates were never translated and could not be, were never intended to be. What is claimed to be a translation is the "Manuscript Found" worked over by C. He was the best scholar amongst them. Rigdon got the original at the job printing office in Pittsburgh as I have stated. I often expressed my objection to the frequent repetition of "And it came to pass" to Mr. Cowdery and said that a true scholar ought to have avoided that, which only provoked a gentle smile from C. Without going into detail or disclosing a confided

word, I say to you that I do know, as well as can now be known, that C. revised the "Manuscript" and Smith and Rigdon approved of it before it became the "Book of Mormon." I have no knowledge of what became of the original. Never heard C. say as to that. Smith was killed while C. lived here. I well remember the effect upon his countenance when he read the news in my presence. He immediately took the paper over to his house to read to his wife. On his return to the office we had a long conversation on the subject, and I was surprised to hear him speak with so much kindness of a man that had so wronged him as Smith had. It elevated him greatly in my already high esteem, and proved to me more than ever the nobility of his nature. C. never gave me a full history of the troubles of the Mormons in Mo. and Ill., but I am sure that the doctrine of polygamy was advocated by Smith and *opposed by Cowdery*. Then when they became rivals for the leadership, Smith made use of this opposition by Cowdery to destroy his popularity and influence, and which finally culminated in the mob that demolished Cowdery's house the night when he fled. This Whitmer you speak of must be the brother-in-law of Cowdery whose wife was a Whitmer. It may be true that he has the original MS. Now as to whether C. ever openly denounced Mormonism let me say this to you: no man ever knew better than he how to keep one's own counsel. He would never allow any man to drag him into a conversation on the subject. Cowdery was a Democrat and a most powerful advocate of the principles of the party on the stump. For this he became the target of the Whig stumpers and press, who denounced him as a Mormon and made free use of C.'s certificate at the end of the Mormon Bible to crush his influence. He suffered great abuse for this while he lived here on that account. In the second year of his residence here he and his family attached themselves to the Methodist Protestant Church, where they held fellowship to the time they left for Elkhorn. I have now said about all that I feel at liberty to say on these points and hope it may aid you some in your researches. If Mrs. Cowdery is still living, I would be glad to learn her post office address so as to enable me to write to her. You have now the substance of all I remember on the subject and if it proves of any benefit to your enterprise (in which I wish you success), you are certainly welcome. I could

only answer your questions in the manner I did because some of them were not susceptible of a direct answer by me.

Resp. Yours,

W. LANG.

In a letter to Mr. Gregg, dated at Tiffin, Ohio, August 3, 1882, Judge W. H. Gibson, an old acquaintance and friend of Cowdery, says:

Referring, now, to yours of the 13th February, making inquiries as to Oliver Cowdery, I beg to reply, though perhaps too late for your purpose. I think that it is absolutely certain that Mr. C., after his separation from the Mormons, never conversed on the subject with his most intimate friends, and never by word or act, disclosed anything relating to the conception, development or progress of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." He was an able lawyer, a fine orator, a ready debater and led a blameless life, while residing in this city. He united with the Methodist Protestant Church, and was a consistent, active member.

Mrs. Adeline M. Bernard, adopted daughter of Oliver Cowdery, wrote as follows of Cowdery's connection with the Methodist Protestant Church:

JACKSON, Oct. 3, 1881.

MR. GREGG,

Sir:—Your letter of August 18 was received in due time, and the reason that I did not answer it sooner was on account of sickness. In the first place, you say that Whitmer states that Mr. Cowdery held the original Manuscripts of the Book of Mormon and when he came to die placed them in the hands of Mr. Whitmer. All he, O. C., had was the B. of M. and the M. hymn book. Joe Smith said that as fast as he translated from the golden plates the B. of M., the angel took them from them and nothing was left him but the B. of M. Second, I know that Mr. Cowdery joined the Protestant Methodist Church in 1841 and you can write to W. M. Lang, of Tiffin, Ohio, and he will search the Ch. records and send you a transcript of his, O. C.'s membership. I suppose that Maria Cowdery, or Mrs. Johnson as she is now, feels a delicacy in saying anything about her father's belief in M. I don't think that any of the family connection belong to the M. C. except David Whitmer, and he

was always a very visionary man, but he renounced M. when O. C. did. I do not know of anything more you want to know, but if there is tell me and I will try and inform you the best I can.

ADELINE M. BERNARD.¹

I now introduce the affidavit of G. J. Keen, a highly respected citizen of Tiffin, as proof that Cowdery renounced Mormonism and united with the Methodist Protestant Church:

STATE OF OHIO, }
County of Seneca. } ss.

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public within and for said county, G. J. Keen, a resident of said county, to me well known, and being sworn according to law makes oath and says:

I was well acquainted with Oliver Cowdery who formerly resided in this city, that sometime in the year 1840 Henry Cronise, Samuel Waggoner and myself, with other Democrats of this county, determined to establish a Democratic newspaper in this city to aid in the election of Martin Van Buren to the Presidency, and we authorized Henry Cronise, Esq., to go East and purchase a suitable press for that purpose. Mr. Cronise went East, purchased a press and engaged Oliver Cowdery to edit the paper. Mr. Cowdery arrived in Tiffin (O.) some time before the press arrived. Some time after Mr. Cowdery's arrival in Tiffin, we became acquainted with his (Cowdery's) connection with Mormonism.

We immediately called a meeting of our Democratic friends, and having the Book of Mormon with us, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Cowdery could not be permitted to edit said paper.

Mr. Cowdery opened a law office in Tiffin, and soon effected a partnership with Joel W. Wilson.

In a few years Mr. Cowdery expressed a desire to associate himself with a Methodist Protestant church of this city.

Rev. John Souder and myself were appointed a committee

¹ The letters of Lang, Gibson and Mrs. Bernard have been turned over to the American Anti-Mormon Association by the family of Th. Gregg, to whom they are addressed. I have made these copies directly from the originals.

to wait on Mr. Cowdery and confer with him respecting his connection with Mormonism and the Book of Mormon.

We accordingly waited on Mr. Cowdery at his residence in Tiffin, and there learned his connection, from him, with that order, and his full and final renunciation thereof.

We then inquired of him if he had any objection to making a public recantation.

He replied that he had objections; that, in the first place, it could do no good; that he had known several to do so and they always regretted it. And, in the second place, it would have a tendency to draw public attention, invite criticism, and bring him into contempt.

"But," said he, "nevertheless, if the church require it, I will submit to it, but I authorize and desire you and the church to publish and make known my recantation."

We did not demand it, but submitted his name to the church, and he was unanimously admitted a member thereof.

At that time he arose and addressed the audience present, admitted his error and implored forgiveness, and said he was sorry and ashamed of his connection with Mormonism.

He continued his membership while he resided in Tiffin, and became superintendent of the Sabbath-school, and led an exemplary life while he resided with us.

I have lived in this city upwards of fifty-three years, was auditor of this county, was elected to that office in 1840.

I am now in my eighty-third year, and well remember the facts above related.

(Signed) G. J. KEEN.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 14th day of April, A. D 1885.

FRANK L. EMICH,

Notary Public in Seneca, O.

Another very interesting proof of Cowdery's connection with the Methodist Protestant Church at Tiffin is to be found in the records of the business meetings of the male members of that church. The minutes of such a meeting, held January 18, 1844, are as follows:

Minutes of a meeting of the Male Members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio, held pursuant to adjournment.

The meeting came to order by appointing Rev. Thomas

Cushman Chairman, and Oliver Cowdery Secretary. On ascertaining and it appearing that more than two-thirds of the male members of said Society were present, it was on motion

Resolved, That we accept the Charter for the legal organization of said Society passed by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, January 19th, 1843, and that we become and now are organized under and in accordance with the provisions of the same.

On motion, it was further resolved that John Souder, Joseph Walker, William Campbell, John Shinefelt and Benjamin Nye be, and they are hereby appointed and chosen Trustees for said Society for and during the term of one year and until their successors are chosen and accept said office.

Resolved, That the annual meeting of the male members of this Society be held at this place one year from this date at half past 6 p. m. for the purpose of electing five Trustees for said Society, unless previously called by a vote of two-thirds of the male members of this Society to be held at another time.

Resolved, That the Trustees appointed by this meeting be authorized to call a special meeting of this Society for the purpose of adopting such By-laws as may be necessary for the well being of the same.

Resolved, That the first meeting of the Trustees of this Society, elected by this meeting, be held at the office of O. Cowdery on Tuesday, the 23rd inst., at half past 6 o'clock p. m.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the Chairman and Secretary.

On motion the meeting adjourned without delay.

THOS. B. CUSHMAN, Chairman.

OLIVER COWDERY, Secretary.

JAN. 18, 1844.

It is not at all likely that Oliver Cowdery would have been chosen secretary of "a meeting of the Male Members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Ohio," if he was not a member of that church; and it is not at all likely that he would have been a member of that church if he had not renounced Mormonism.

With these facts before us, it is sheer folly for Mor-

monism any longer to deny that Oliver Cowdery did at one time in his history renounce the faith and did connect himself with the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Ohio.

CHAPTER IV.

The Life of Solomon Spaulding—Spaulding's Roman Story—The Fairchild-Rice-Smith Correspondence—A Mormon Lie Nailed.

Solomon Spaulding was born at Ashford, Connecticut, in 1761; graduated from Dartmouth College in 1785, and completed his course in theology in 1787. After this he preached for a time, but finally became an infidel,¹ quit preaching and engaged in the mercantile business² in Cherry Valley, New York, where he failed financially in 1807. In 1809, with a business partner, Henry Lake, he built a forge at Conneaut, or New Salem, Ohio, where he again failed in 1812. The same year he removed to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, where he lived two years, removing, at the expiration of this time, to the town of Amity, in the same State, where he made his home up to the time of his death in 1816.

SPAULDING'S ROMAN STORY.

It was while living at Conneaut that Spaulding became interested in the aboriginal works of the country and began to write romances based upon them. The first of these, which is variously known as his "Manuscript No. 1," "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," "Honolulu Manuscript" and "Roman Story," he began in the year 1809.³ This manuscript gives an account of

¹ The proof of this is the fragment of a letter attached to his "Manuscript Story."

² Mrs. Dickenson says that Spaulding was principal of an academy at Cherry Valley, New York. ("New Light on Mormonism," p. 13.) His brother John says, however, that he went into the mercantile business in that place with his brother Josiah.

³ Some say in the year 1808.

a party of Romans who, in the time of Constantine, in a voyage to Britain, were driven from their course by contrary winds and were thrown upon our Atlantic coast. Making their way inland, they came in contact with two native tribes, the Sciotans and Kentucks, who are described as living, respectively, north and south of the Ohio River. This story is the purported history of these aboriginal tribes, giving an account of their customs, habits, manner of government and wars. Its author was a Roman by the name of Fabius, who is represented as writing it on twenty-eight rolls of parchment in the Latin language and afterward depositing it in an artificial cave near Conneaut, where Spaulding claims that he discovered it. It was never finished, for it ends abruptly. Spaulding gave as his reason for throwing it aside that he wished to go further back in his dates and write in the old Scriptural style, that his story might appear more ancient—a wish that was afterwards accomplished in his “Manuscript Found,” from which, it is claimed, the Book of Mormon has been revamped.

After Spaulding's death, his widow removed to the home of her brother, W. H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, New York. Among the things that she carried with her was an old, “hair-covered trunk” which contained the sermons, essays and a “*single manuscript*” of her deceased husband. In 1820, Mrs. Spaulding married a Mr. Davison, of Hartwick, New York, and took the trunk to that place with her. Her daughter, Matilda Spaulding, was married to Dr. A. McKinstry in 1828, and removed to Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, where her mother followed her soon afterwards and where she spent the remainder of her life. When Mrs. Davison removed from Hartwick, the trunk spoken of was left in the care of her cousin, Mr. Jerome Clark, of that place.

Leaving the Spauldings for the present, we return to Conneaut, Ohio. In 1832 or 1833, a "woman preacher" came to that place and read copious extracts from the Book of Mormon before a congregation composed, in part, of Spaulding's relatives and old acquaintances. The book was immediately recognized by Spaulding's brother and others as a plagiarism of the "Manuscript Found," and considerable indignation was manifested that it should have been put to so unholy a use as to be transformed into a new Bible. The excitement was so intense that a citizens' meeting was called, and Dr. Philastus Hurlburt, who had been a Mormon, but who had been cut off from the church, Mormons say, for immorality, was deputed to visit Mrs. Davison and secure, if possible, the "Manuscript Found," that it might be compared with the Book of Mormon and the fraud be exposed.

Hurlburt went, first, to Onondaga Valley, New York, where he secured the recommendation of Mr. Sabine, Mrs. Davison's brother, and from there to Monson, Massachusetts, where he met Mrs. Davison herself. At first this lady declined to give her consent to let the writings of her former husband pass out of her possession, but upon receiving Hurlburt's solemn promise that the manuscript he was seeking would be returned, she reluctantly acceded, and Hurlburt went to Hartwick and obtained from the old trunk in Mr. Clark's possession the "*single manuscript*" which it contained, and which at that time was supposed to be the "Manuscript Found."

Hurlburt then returned to Ohio and delivered the manuscript, with other matter which he had collected, to a Mr. E. D. Howe, editor of the Painesville *Telegraph*, who was then engaged in writing his book, "Mormonism Unveiled." But, when this gentleman examined the

manuscript, he discovered that it was not the "Manuscript Found" at all, but Spaulding's first story, entitled "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek." He also afterwards exhibited it to the old acquaintances of Spaulding, who immediately recognized it as his work, but who declared that it was not the "Manuscript Found," but another manuscript written earlier.

This romance was not returned to Mrs. Davison, as had been agreed upon, and was soon lost track of. Howe declared that it had been destroyed by fire, while the Spauldings accused Hurlburt of having sold it to the Mormons. But neither of these explanations of its disappearance proved true. In 1839-40, Howe sold his printing establishment to a Mr. L. L. Rice, who, with a partner, began publishing an antislavery newspaper. Rice subsequently sold out and removed to Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, where, in 1884, he accidentally discovered this manuscript in his possession, it having been inadvertently transferred to him by Howe, among other things, when he bought out his printing establishment.

Soon after its discovery, this manuscript was placed in the library of Oberlin College, Ohio, where it still remains. Both of the Mormon Churches have made copies of it, which they publish under the erroneous title, "Manuscript Found."

THE FAIRCHILD-RICE-SMITH CORRESPONDENCE.

With the finding of the Honolulu manuscript, interest in the question of the origin of the Book of Mormon was re-aroused, and papers and magazines throughout the country heralded the news of the new find and discussed its probable bearing upon the traditional theory, so long held, of the origin of the Book of Mormon in the Spaulding Romance. Pres. J. H. Fairchild, of Oberlin College,

having been in Honolulu at the time of the discovery of this manuscript, wrote a brief note in regard to the same for the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, which was widely copied by papers and magazines¹ throughout the country. This note, with three letters from the pen of Mr. L. L. Rice, the finder, appear in the preface to the Josephite edition of this manuscript. The note is as follows:

The theory of the origin of the Book of Mormon in the traditional manuscript of Solomon Spaulding, will probably have to be relinquished. That manuscript is doubtless now in the possession of Mr. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, formerly an anti-slavery editor in Ohio, and for many years State Printer at Columbus. During a recent visit to Honolulu, I suggested to Mr. Rice that he might have valuable anti-slavery documents in his possession, which he would be willing to contribute to the rich collection already in the Oberlin College Library. In pursuance of this suggestion, Mr. Rice began looking over his old pamphlets and papers, and at length came upon an old, worn and faded manuscript of about one hundred and seventy-five pages, small quarto, purporting to be a history of the migrations and conflicts of the ancient Indian Tribes, which occupied the territory now belonging to the States of New York, Ohio and Kentucky. On the last page of this manuscript is a certificate² and signature, giving the names of several persons known to the signer, who have assured him that to their personal knowledge the manuscript was the writing of Solomon Spaulding. Mr. Rice has no recollection how or when this manuscript came into his possession. It was enveloped in a coarse piece of wrapping paper, and endorsed in Mr. Rice's hand-writing, "A Manuscript Story."

There seems no reason to doubt that this is the long-lost story. Mr. Rice, myself and others compared it with the Book of Mormon; and could detect no resemblance between the two, in general or in detail. There seems to be no name or incident

¹ Grinnell (Iowa) *Herald*; *Western Watchman*, Eureka, California; *New York Observer*, *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine*, etc.

² "The Writings of Solomon Spaulding Proved by Aron Wright, Oliver Smith, John N. Miller & others. The testimonies of the above gentlemen are now in my possession. (Signed) D. P. HURLBURT."

common to the two. The solemn style of the Book of Mormon, in imitation of the English Scriptures, does not appear in the manuscript. The only resemblance is in the fact that both profess to set forth the history of lost tribes. Some other explanation of the origin of the Book of Mormon must be found, if any explanation is required.

(Signed) JAMES H. FAIRCHILD.

The three letters of Mr. Rice I now give, reserving my comments on the same, as I also shall on the note of President Fairchild, until their close:

HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands, March 28, 1885.

MR. JOSEPH SMITH:¹—The Spaulding Manuscript in my possession came into my hands in this wise. In 1839-40 my partner and myself bought of E. D. Howe the Painesville *Telegraph*, published at Painesville, Ohio. The transfer of the printing department, types, press, &c., was accompanied with a large collection of books, manuscripts, &c., this manuscript of Spaulding among the rest. So, you see, it has been in my possession over forty years. But I never examined it, or knew the character of it, until some six or eight months since. The wrapper was marked, "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek." The wonder is, that in some of my movements, I did not destroy or burn it with a large amount of rubbish that had accumulated from time to time.

It happened that Pres't Fairchild was here on a visit, at the time I discovered the contents of it, and it was examined by him and others with much curiosity. Since Pres't Fairchild published the fact of its existence in my possession, I have had applications for it from half a dozen sources, each applicant seeming to think that he or she was entitled to it. Mr. Howe says when he was getting up a book to expose Mormonism as a fraud at an early day, when the Mormons had their headquarters at Kirtland, he obtained it from some source, and it was inadvertently transferred with the other effects of his printing office. A. B. Deming, of Painesville, who is also getting up some kind of a book I believe on Mormonism, wants me to send it to him. Mrs. Dickinson, of Boston, claiming to

¹ President of the Reorganized Church.

be a relative of Spaulding, and who is getting up a book to show that he was the real author of the Book of Mormon, wants it. She thinks, at least, it should be sent to Spaulding's daughter, a Mrs Somebody—but she does not inform me where she lives. Deming says that Howe borrowed it when he was getting up his book, and did not return it, as he should have done, &c.

This Manuscript does not purport to be "a story of the Indians formerly occupying this continent;" but is a history of the wars between the Indians of Ohio and Kentucky, and their progress in civilization, &c. It is certain that this Manuscript is not the origin of the Mormon Bible, whatever some other manuscript may have been. The only similarity between them, is, in the manner in which each purports to have been found—one in a cave on Conneaut Creek—the other in a hill in Ontario County, New York. There is no identity of names, of persons, or places; and there is no similarity of style between them. As I told Mr. Deming, I should as soon think the Book of Revelation was written by the author of Don Quixote, as that the writer of this Manuscript was the author of the Book of Mormon. Deming says Spaulding made three copies of "Manuscript Found," one of which Sidney Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburg. You can probably tell better than I can, what ground there is for such an allegation.

As to this Manuscript, I can not see that it can be of any use to any body, except the Mormons, to show that IT is not the original of the Mormon Bible. But that would not settle the claim that some other manuscript of Spaulding was the original of it. I propose to hold it in my own hands for a while, to see if it can not be put to some good use. Deming and Howe inform me that its existence is exciting great interest in that region. I am under a tacit, but not a positive pledge to President Fairchild, to deposit it eventually in the Library of Oberlin College. I shall be free from that pledge, when I see an opportunity to put it to a better use. Yours, &c., L. L. RICE.

P. S.—Upon reflection, since writing the foregoing, I am of the opinion that no one who reads this Manuscript will give credit to the story that Solomon Spaulding was in any wise the author of the Book of Mormon. It is unlikely that any one who wrote so elaborate a work as the Mormon Bible, would spend his time in getting up so shallow a story as this, which at best

is but a feeble imitation of the other. Finally, I am more than half convinced that this is his only writing of the sort, and that any pretense that Spaulding was in any sense the author of the other, is a sheer fabrication. It was easy for any body who may have seen this, or heard anything of its contents, to get up the story that they were identical.

L. L. R.

HONOLULU, Sandwich Islands, May 14th, 1885.

MR. JOSEPH SMITH:

Dear Sir—I am greatly obliged to you for the information concerning Mormonism, in your letters of April 30th and May 2d. As I am in no sense a Mormonite, of course it is a matter of curiosity, mainly, that I am interested in the history of Mormonism.

Two things are true concerning this manuscript in my possession: First, it is a genuine writing of Solomon Spaulding; and second, it is *not* the original of the Book of Mormon.

My opinion is, from all I have seen and learned, that this is the *only* writing of Spaulding, and there is no foundation for the statement of Deming and others, that Spaulding made another story, more elaborate, of which several copies were written, one of which Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburgh, &c. Of course I can not be as certain of this, as of the other two points. One theory is, that Rigdon, or some one else, saw this manuscript, or heard it read, and from the hints it conveyed, got up the other and more elaborate writing on which the Book of Mormon was founded. Take that for what it is worth. It don't seem to me very likely.

You may be at rest as to my putting the manuscript into the possession of any one who will mutilate it, or use it for a bad purpose. I shall have it deposited in the Library of Oberlin College, in Ohio, to be at the disposal for reading of any one who may wish to peruse it; but not to be removed from that depository. My friend, President Fairchild, may be relied on as security for the safe keeping of it. It will be sent there in July, by a friend who is going there to "take to himself a wife." Meantime, I have made a literal copy of the entire document—errors of orthography, grammar, erasures, and all—which I shall keep in my possession, so that any attempt to mutilate it will be of easy detection and exposure. Oberlin is

a central place, in the vicinity of Conneaut, where the manuscript was written.

I have had an idea, sometimes, that it is due to the Mormons to have a copy of it, if they took interest in it enough to publish it. As it is only of interest as showing that it is not the original of the Book of Mormon, no one else is likely to wish it for publication.

Miss Dickinson, whom you call a granddaughter of Solomon Spaulding, represents herself to me as his grandniece: "My great uncle, Rev. Solomon Spaulding," she writes.

Rev. Dr. Hyde, President of the Institution, in this place, for training Native Missionaries for Micranesia, (a very prominent and successful institution,) has written an elaborate account of this manuscript, and of Mormonism, and sent it for publication in the *Congregationalist*, of Boston. I presume it will be published, and you will be interested in reading it.

Very respectfully yours,

L. L. RICE.

HONOLULU, H. I., June 12, 1885.

PRESIDENT J. H. FAIRCHILD:—Herewith I send to you the Solomon Spalding Manuscript, to be deposited in the Library of Oberlin College, for reference by any one who may be desirous of seeing or examining it. As a great deal of inquiry has been made about it since it became known that it was in my possession, I deem it proper that it be deposited for safe keeping, where any one interested in it, whether Mormon or Anti-Mormon, may examine it. It has been in my possession forty-six years—from 1839 to 1885—and for forty-four years of that time no one examined it, and I was not aware of the character of its contents. I send it to you enclosed in the same paper wrapper, and tied with the same string that must have enclosed it for near half a century—certainly during the forty-six years since it came into my possession. I have made and retain in my possession a correct literal copy of it, errors of orthography, of grammar, erasures and all. I may allow the Mormons of Utah to print it from this copy, which they are anxious to do; and a delegation is now in the Islands, awaiting my decision on this point. They claim that they are entitled to whatever benefit they may derive from its publication; and it seems to me there is some justice in that claim. Whether it will relieve them in any measure, from the imputation that Solomon Spaulding was

the author of the Book of Mormon, I do not attempt to decide. It devolves upon their opponents to show that there are or were other writings of Spalding—since it is evident that this writing is not the original of the Mormon Bible.

Truly yours, &c.,

L. L. RICE.

P. S.—The words "Solomon Spaulding's Writings" in ink on the wrapper were written by me, after I became aware of the contents. The words "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," in faint penciling, were as now when it came into my possession.

Having put before the reader the foregoing correspondence, I now invite his attention to a brief, critical examination of the same.

First, the manuscript described is not the "Manuscript Found," from which it is claimed the Book of Mormon was revamped, but an entirely different romance, entitled on the wrapper, "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek." Professor Fairchild says that this title appeared on the wrapper in Mr. Rice's handwriting, but Rice, himself, declares that it was there, "in faint penciling," when it first came into his possession. For a reason that will appear in the next chapter, I believe that it was on the wrapper long before it fell into the hands of Dr. Hurlburt.

Secondly, Professor Fairchild seems not to have fully understood, at this time, the Spaulding-manuscript theory. He speaks of this manuscript as "the long-lost story," wholly unmindful of the fact that, fifty years before, Howe, in his "Mormonism Unveiled," had given a paragraph outline of it and had declared that he had submitted it to the acquaintances of Spaulding, who had admitted that the latter was its author, but who had expressly denied that it was the "Manuscript Found." It is, therefore, not "the long-lost story" at all, but a totally different story, written earlier and bearing no more relation to the "Manuscript Found" than Long-

fellow's "Evangeline" bears to his "Hiawatha." The difference in style between this manuscript and the Book of Mormon is explained by the statement of Spaulding, when he threw it aside, that he intended to change the style and go further back in his dates that his story might appear more ancient.

Thirdly, Mr. Rice, in denying that the "Manuscript Story" was in any sense the basis of the Book of Mormon, admits the contention of nearly all learned anti-Mormon polemics, both before and since his time, that another manuscript of Spaulding's might have formed such a basis. He says:

It is certain that this Manuscript is not the origin of the Mormon Bible, *whatever some other manuscript may have been.*

And:

But that would not settle the claim that *some other manuscript* of Spaulding was the original of it.

Fourthly, Professor Fairchild, in October, 1900, so far changed his sentiments expressed sixteen years before, that he admitted the same contention. In the month mentioned, and shortly before his death, he signed the following statement in the presence of Rev. J. D. Nutting:

FAIRCHILD'S LAST STATEMENT.

With regard to the manuscript of Mr. Spaulding now in the Library of Oberlin College, I have never stated, and know of no one who can state, that it is the only manuscript which Spaulding wrote, or that it is certainly the one which has been supposed to be the original of the Book of Mormon. The discovery of this Ms. does not prove that there may not have been another, which became the basis of the Book of Mormon. The use which has been made of statements emanating from me as implying the contrary of the above is entirely unwarranted.

JAMES H. FAIRCHILD.

With this last statement, Professor Fairchild nullifies the wrong inferences which have been drawn from his first declaration, and swings into line with the position generally assumed by intelligent anti-Mormon polemics, that there was another manuscript, different from the one found in Honolulu, which became the basis of the Book of Mormon.

A MORMON LIE NAILED.

In the preface to the copy of the Honolulu manuscript, as published by the Reorganized Mormon Church, I find the following false and misleading statement:

Herewith we present to the reader the notorious "Manuscript Story" ("Manuscript Found"¹) of the late Rev. Solomon Spalding. What gives this document prominence is the fact that, for the past fifty years, it has been made to do duty by the opposers of the Book of Mormon and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as the source, the root, and the inspiration, by and from which Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon wrote said Book of Mormon and organized said Church. . . .

This seeming huge hindrance and insurmountable obstacle which is always thrown in the way of the investigator with all the skill and power that craft and cunning and malice and fear and blind zeal can invent and command, vanishes from the presence of this original witness in the case; for when it speaks it reveals the flimsiness and falsity of the claim that it was in any way or in any sense the origin of the Book of Mormon, or that there is the least likeness between the two. This newly found "missing link" completes the chain of evidence which proves that the "Manuscript Found" never was and never could be made the occasion, cause or germ of the Book of Mormon.

It would be difficult to find, among all that has been written upon this subject, a more false, misleading and

¹ Notice that the title, "Manuscript Found," appears in parentheses. It is not to be found on the manuscript anywhere, and it is wholly a gratuitous assumption to call the latter the "Manuscript Found."

incorrect statement than the foregoing. How an intelligent and honest writer could have penned these words, in the face of what Howe, Hurlburt, Bennett and Braden had written prior to this time to the contrary, is inexplicable. The "Manuscript Story" was never "made to do duty by the opposers of the Book of Mormon and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, as the source, the root, and the inspiration, by and from which Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon wrote said Book of Mormon and organized said Church." From 1834 it was expressly denied that this manuscript had anything to do with the Book of Mormon or that it was the "Manuscript Found."¹ A paragraph review of it was given in Howe's book in 1834, and the contents of it were well known and employed in public discussion² before the manuscript, itself, was found in 1884. The writer of the foregoing could not have been ignorant of these facts; they were to be found in the books widely known of and read among the members of his church.³

In 1834, Howe wrote as follows of the "Manuscript Story":

The trunk referred to by the widow was subsequently examined and found to contain only a single MS. book, in Spalding's handwriting, containing about one quire of paper. This is a romance, purporting to have been translated from the

¹ "Disbelievers in Joseph Smith's 'find' have never claimed that the Book of Mormon was a plagiarism of the Oberlin manuscript, and all the powder used by the Mormons on that subject is a wasted explosive." —Stanton's *"The Three Movements,"* p. 43.

² See the "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 91.

³ The Mormons well knew the contents of the "Manuscript Story" long before it was found in Honolulu, and Reynolds, in his "Myth of the Manuscript Found," p. 52 (1883), gives the outline of it. Then, in the face of the fact that Howe, Bennett and other anti-Mormons, following the Conneaut testimonies about to be given, claimed that the "Manuscript Found" was a Jewish romance, how could he honestly assert that they claimed that the Book of Mormon came from the former? There has been some pretty hard Mormon lying all along the line.

Latin, found on twenty-four rolls of parchment, in a cave, on the banks of Conneaut Creek, but written in modern style, and giving a fabulous account of a ship's being driven upon the American coast, while proceeding from Rome to Britain, a short time previous to the Christian era, this country then being inhabited by the Indians. This old MS. has been shown to several of the foregoing witnesses, who recognize it as Spalding's, he having told them that he had altered his first plan of writing, by going farther back with dates, and writing in the old Scripture style, in order that it might appear more ancient. They say that it bears no resemblance to the "Manuscript Found."

This is the first description ever given in print of this "Manuscript Story" which was afterwards found in the possession of Mr. Rice, of Honolulu. And Howe here disclaims that it was the "Manuscript Found," hence that it was the basis of the Book of Mormon. Yet, in the face of this fact, we are coolly told that this manuscript has been made to do service "as the source, the root, and the inspiration, by and from which Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon wrote said Book of Mormon and organized said Church"!

This same statement appeared again in the second edition of Howe's book of 1840, and in Bennett's "Mormonism Exposed" of 1842.

Howe, again, in 1881, disclaimed any connection or resemblance, whatever, between the "Manuscript Story" and the "Manuscript Found." In a letter, addressed to Elder T. W. Smith, an apostle of the Reorganized Church, he says:

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, July 26th, 1881.

SIR:—Your note of 21st is before me,—and I will answer your queries seriatim.

1st.—The manuscript you refer to was not marked on the outside or inside "Manuscript Found." It was a common-place story of some Indian wars along the borders of our Great Lakes,

between the Chicagoes and Eries, as I now recollect¹—not in Bible style—but purely modern.

2d.—It was not the original “Manuscript Found,” and I do not believe Hurlburt ever had it.

3d.—I never saw or heard read the “Manuscript Found,” but have seen five or six persons who had, and from their testimony, concluded it was very much like the Mormon Bible.

4th.—Never succeeded in finding out anything more than was detailed in my book of exposure published about fifty years ago.

5th.—The manuscript that came into my possession I suspect was destroyed by fire forty years ago.

I think there has been much mist thrown around the whole subject of the origin of the Mormon Bible and the “Manuscript Found,” by the several statements that have been made by those who have been endeavoring to solve the problem after sleeping quietly for half a century. Every effort was made to unravel the mystery at the time, when nearly all the parties were on earth, and the result published at the time, and I think it all folly to try to dig out anything more. Yours, etc.,

E. D. HOWE.

Dr. Hurlburt, also, bears testimony to the fact that the manuscript which he obtained from Mrs. Davison, and which is now in Oberlin College Library, is not the “Manuscript Found.” In a statement issued at Gibsonburg, Ohio, January 10, 1881, he says:

To all whom it may concern:

In the year eighteen hundred and thirty-four (1834), I went from Geauga county, Ohio, to Monson, Hampden county, Mass., where I found Mrs. Davison, late widow of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, late of Conneaut, Ashtabula county, Ohio. Of her I obtained a manuscript, supposing it to be the manuscript of the romance written by the said Solomon Spaulding, called the “Manuscript Found,” which was reported to be the foundation of the “Book of Mormon.” I did not examine the manuscript till I got home, when upon examination I found it to contain

¹ Notice Howe saying, “As I now recollect.” He is mistaken in regard to the tribes mentioned. They were not the Chicagoes and the Eries, but the Sciottans and Kentucks.

nothing of the kind, but being a manuscript upon an entirely different subject. This manuscript I left with E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Geauga county, Ohio, now Lake county, Ohio, with the understanding that when he had examined it he should return it to the widow. Said Howe says the manuscript was destroyed by fire, and further the deponent saith not.

(Signed) D. P. HURLBURT.

The manuscript, then, which Hurlburt obtained from Mrs. Davison, was not the "Manuscript Found," from which it is claimed the Book of Mormon was taken, but was "upon an entirely different subject." The same distinction between the manuscripts was also made by Clark Braden in the celebrated Braden-Kelley debate, held at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1884, a short time before the Honolulu manuscript came to light.¹

Reader, when the Mormon elder, who comes to your door with his literature, tells you that the "Manuscript Found," from which it is claimed the Book of Mormon was taken, was discovered in Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, in 1884, and that they now have it in printed form for twenty-five cents per copy, don't you believe it. The manuscript from Honolulu is not the "Manuscript Found," but the "Manuscript Story;" the former may be found, revamped, as the Book of Mormon, at the publishing-houses of the Brighamite and Josephite Mormon Churches.

¹ See "Braden-Kelley Debate" (first ed.), p. 75.

CHAPTER V.

Mrs. Davison's Boston *Recorder* letter—The Quincy *Whig* Reply—Mrs. McKinstry's Affidavit.

Immediately after the death of Solomon Spaulding, his widow removed to the home of her brother, William H. Sabine, a prominent lawyer of Onondaga Valley, New York, carrying with her the trunk which contained the writings of her deceased husband. In 1820, she was married to a Mr. Davison, of Hartwick, near Coopers-town, New York, and removed to that place, taking the trunk and its contents with her. And eight years later we find her at Monson, Massachusetts, living with her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, having left the trunk at Hartwick in the care of her cousin, Jerome Clark.

It has been the contention of some that Spaulding made several drafts of the "Manuscript Found," one of which was in the trunk while it remained at the house of Squire Sabine at Onondaga Valley, and that Joseph Smith, who worked as a teamster for Sabine, either stole or copied it. But I am convinced that this contention is not correct, for, if Smith worked for Sabine at this time, as alleged,¹ but which is doubtful, he was both too young and too illiterate to have taken much interest in such a romance, and the "*single manuscript*" which this trunk contained is now known to have been, not the "Manuscript Found," but the "Manuscript Story," while the testimony of Joseph Miller, a friend of Spaulding at Amity, Pennsylvania, reveals the fact that the "Manuscript Found," itself, was stolen from the Patter-

¹ "New Light on Mormonism," p. 27.

son printing-office before Spaulding's death, which occurred in 1816. The confusion upon this point largely arises from the letters of Mrs. Davison and her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, who seem to have retained but a vague recollection of what Spaulding wrote and to have paid but little attention to his writings after his death. In the letters of both, while a number of statements are undoubtedly correct, there is a distinct tendency to identify the "*single manuscript*" in the old hair trunk with the "Manuscript Found," which is disproved by that manuscript, itself, since its discovery in 1884.

MRS. DAVISON'S BOSTON "RECORDER" LETTER.

In 1838-39, the missionaries of the Mormon Church opened operations in the town of Holliston, Massachusetts. In that town there existed a Congregational church of which the Rev. John Storrs was the pastor. Some of the members of Dr. Storrs' church became proselytes to the Mormon faith, and this caused him to bestir himself to action,¹ and, through Prof. D. R. Austin, principal of the Monson (Massachusetts) Academy, he obtained a statement from Mrs. Davison which he published in May, 1839, in the Boston *Recorder*. This statement of Mrs. Davison is as follows:

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 is 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

¹ P. P. Pratt says: "If the public will be patient, they will doubtless find that the piece signed 'Matilda Davison' (Spaulding's widow) is a base fabrication by Priest Storrs, of Holliston, Massachusetts, in order to save his craft, after losing the deacon of his church, and several of its most pious and intelligent members, who left his society to embrace what they considered to be truth."—*Letter in New York Era*, 1839.

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 labors. 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 neighbors. 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 neighbors would come in from time to time to hear portions read, and a great interest in the work was excited among 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 neighbors 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 Pittsburg, in Pennsylvania. 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, became 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, etc., 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'Kens-try, 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 woman¹ preacher appointed a meeting there; and in

¹ Mormons claim that they never had a "woman preacher," and use this as one of the arguments in their attempt to discredit Mrs. Davison's testimony. But it does not say that it was a Mormon "woman preacher." It may have been a woman preacher of some other connection. The probability, however, is that it is a typographical error for "Mormon preacher." Or it may have been some lady convert to Mormonism, who,

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 so 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 deputed Dr. Philastrus Hurlburt, 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. Hurlburt 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 neighbors 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 composition, doubtless suggested the idea of converting it to the 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.

(Signed) MATILDA DAVISON.

This letter of Mrs. Davison, judging from the facts that we now possess, presents to us a strange conglom-

while not a preacher officially, was practically such by reading copious extracts from the Book of Mormon. Mormon women are not forbidden taking part in their social services, and I have heard them do as much as claimed here.

eration of truth and error. This confusion is, doubtless, due to the failure of memory during the lapse of time between the death of her husband and the date of her writing. She is certain that one of her husband's romances resembled the Book of Mormon and was written in imitation of the Old Testament style of speech. In this supposition she is doubtless correct. But she is also certain that this manuscript was copied by Rigdon while it lay in the Patterson printing-office, and that it was afterwards returned to her family and was by them carefully preserved until it was delivered to Dr. Hurlburt. In this she is doubtless incorrect. Everything goes to show that the "Manuscript Found" was not finally returned to the Spaulding family, but that it was *stolen*, not copied, by Sidney Rigdon, who, with the assistance of Smith and Cowdery, transformed it into the Book of Mormon. Mrs. Davison has made a mistake in supposing¹ that the manuscript which she preserved so long was the "Manuscript Found," whereas it was an entirely different manuscript upon an entirely different subject.

THE QUINCY "WHIG" REPLY.

Some months after the purported letter of Mrs. Davison appeared in the Boston *Recorder*, the following interview was published, in reply, in the *Whig* of Quincy, Illinois:

¹ At another time, Mrs. Davison was not so certain that the "Manuscript Found" was returned to her family or that it was the trunk manuscript. Howe says: "She states that Spaulding had a great variety of manuscripts, and recollects that one was entitled the 'Manuscript Found;' but of its contents she has now no distinct knowledge. While they lived in Pittsburgh, she thinks it was once taken to the printing-office of Patterson & Lambdin; but whether it was ever brought back to the house again, she is quite uncertain; if it was, however, it was then, with his other writings, in a trunk which she had left in Otsego County, New York."—Quoted in "*Mormonism Exposed*," p. 120.

A CUNNING DEVICE DETECTED.

It will be recollected that a few months since an article appeared in several of the papers, purporting to give an account of the origin of the Book of Mormon. How far the writer of that piece has effected his purposes, or what his purposes were in pursuing the course he has, I shall not attempt to say at this time, but shall call upon every candid man to judge in this matter for himself, and shall content myself by presenting before the public the other side of the question in the form of a letter, as follows:

Copy of a letter written by Mr. John Haven, of Holliston, Middlesex Co., Massachusetts, to his daughter, Elizabeth Haven, of Quincy, Adams Co., Illinois.

"Your brother Jesse passed through Monson, where he saw Mrs. Davison and her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, and also Dr. Ely, and spent several hours with them, during which time he asked them the following questions, viz.:

"Question—Did you, Mrs. Davison, write a letter to John Storrs, giving an account of the origin of the Book of Mormon?

"Answer—I did not.

"Q.—Did you sign your name to it?

"A.—I did not, neither did I ever see the letter until I saw it in the *Boston Recorder*, the letter was never brought to me to sign.

"Q.—What agency had you in having this letter sent to Mr. Storrs?

"A.—D. R. Austin came to my house and asked me some questions, took some minutes on paper, and from these minutes wrote that letter.

"Q.—Have you read the Book of Mormon?

"A.—I have read some of it.

"Q.—Does Mr. Spaulding's manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?

"A.—I think some few of the names are alike.

"Q.—Does the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?

"A.—An idolatrous people.

"Q.—Where is the manuscript?

"A.—D. P. Hurlburt came here and took it, said he would get it printed and let me have one half of the profits.

"Q.—Has D. P. Hurlburt got the manuscript printed?

"A.—I received a letter stating that it did not read as he expected, and he should not print it.

"Q.—How large is Mr. Spaulding's manuscript?

"A.—About one-third as large as the Book of Mormon.

"Q.—To Mrs. McKinstry: How old were you when your father wrote the manuscript?

"A.—About five years of age.

"Q.—Did you ever read the manuscript?

"A.—When I was about twelve years old I used to read it for diversion.

"Q.—Did the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?

"A.—An idolatrous people.

"Q.—Does the manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?

"A.—I think some of the names agree.

"Q.—Are you certain that some of the names agree?

"A.—I am not.

"Q.—Have you read any in the Book of Mormon?

"A.—I have not.

"Q.—Was your name attached to that letter, which was sent to Mr. John Storrs, by your order?

"A.—No, I never meant that my name should be there.

"You see by the above questions and answers, that Mr. Austin, in his great zeal to destroy the Latter-day Saints, has asked Mrs. Davison a few questions, then wrote a letter to Mr. Storrs in his own language. I do not say that the above questions and answers were given in the form that I have written them, but these questions were asked, and these answers given. Mrs. Davison is about seventy years of age, and somewhat broken."

This may certify that I am personally acquainted with Mr. Haven, his son and daughter, and am satisfied they are persons of truth. I have also read Mr. Haven's letter to his daughter, which has induced me to copy it for publication, and I further say, the above is a correct copy of Mr. Haven's letter.

A. BADLAM.¹

There are a few points in this "Cunning Device De-

¹ I have copied this letter from Reynolds' "Myth of the Manuscript Found," pp. 21, 22.

tected"¹ to which it will be well to call the reader's attention:

First, if the purported letter of Mrs. Davison, as published in the *Boston Recorder*, is not genuine, but is the production of Principal D. R. Austin, this may account for the errors which it contains, and which have been circulated as truths by the Mormons themselves. By this letter, the Mormons have zealously sought to establish the identity of the "Manuscript Found" with the "*single manuscript*" in the old hair trunk and which afterwards fell into the hands of Hurlburt.

Secondly, the charge is made that the "Cunning Device Detected," as I have given it and as it appears in present-day Mormon literature, has been maliciously garbled and an important admission of Mrs. Davison left out. A. T. Schroeder, in his excellent little pamphlet, "The Origin of the Book of Mormon Re-examined in Its Relation to the Spaulding's Manuscript Found," page 13, says:

On page 22 of the "Myth of the Manuscript Found" this interview appears with the statement that the *Boston Recorder* article was in the main true, carefully omitted.

Thomas Gregg, also, claims that the admission of Mrs. Davison, that the *Boston Recorder* article "was in the main true," was to be found in the Mormon paper, the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. I., p. 47.²

If this is true, why have the Mormons left this important admission out of their later publications of the Haven letter?³

Thirdly, Haven does just what Austin is accused of

¹ I have tried to locate the files of the Quincy *Whig*, containing this letter, but so far have been unsuccessful.

² "Prophet of Palmyra," p. 421.

³ If this is true, it is not the first time that Mormonism has garbled testimony to further its ends.

having done. He declares that Mrs. Davison told his son, Jesse, that she did not write or sign the Boston *Recorder* letter, but that Professor Austin came to her home, asked some questions, took down some minutes and wrote the letter. And then Haven, himself, admits that the questions and answers in the "Cunning Device Detected" are not given in their original form. So, if there are just grounds for questioning the Boston *Recorder* letter, there are equally as just grounds for questioning the Quincy *Whig* reply. If Mrs. Davison did not write and sign the former, she certainly did not write and sign the latter, and, by his own admission, Haven took as much liberty with what Mrs. Davison told his son, Jesse, as Austin took with what Mrs. Davison told him. And, in favor of the Boston *Recorder* letter, we have the admission published in the Mormon paper, the *Times and Seasons*, that it was "in the main true."

Fourthly, this purported interview with Mrs. Davison and her daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, disagrees with the sworn statement of Mrs. McKinstry afterwards made. In her purported interview with Jesse Haven, we find the following questions and answers:

Q.—Does the manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?

A.—I think some of the names agree.

Q.—Are you certain that some of the names agree?

A.—I am not.

In her sworn statement, on this point, which we shall presently give, Mrs. McKinstry says:

Afterward he (Spaulding) read the manuscript which I had seen him writing, to the neighbors and to a clergyman, a friend of his, who came to see him. Some of the names that he mentioned, while reading to these people, I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me today as though I heard them yesterday. They were *Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi*.

In the Haven letter, Mrs. McKinstry is said to have been uncertain in regard to the identity of certain names in her father's manuscript with those in the Book of Mormon; in her affidavit, made in 1880, she says that the four Book of Mormon names given were as fresh to her then as though she had heard them only the day before. It seems very probable that Haven, who was evidently either a Mormon or a Mormon sympathizer, wrote down the answers of Mrs. McKinstry so as to make them appear as favorable as possible to the claims of the Book of Mormon—an art in which the Mormons are particularly accomplished.

MRS. M'KINSTRY'S AFFIDAVIT.

Mrs. Matilda Spaulding McKinstry has left us the following sworn statement in regard to the manuscripts of her father:

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 3rd, 1880.

So much has been published that is erroneous concerning the "Manuscript Found," written by my father, the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, and its supposed connection with the book, called the Mormon Bible, I have willingly consented to make the following statement regarding it, repeating all that I remember personally of this manuscript, and all that is of importance which my mother related to me in connection with it, at the same time affirming that I am in tolerable health and vigor, and that my memory, in common with elderly people, is clearer in regard to the events of my earlier years, rather than those of my maturer life.

During the war of 1812, I was residing with my parents in a little town in Ohio called Conneaut. I was then in my sixth year. My father was in business there, and I remember his iron foundry and the men he had at work, but that he remained at home most of the time and was reading and writing a great deal. He frequently wrote little stories, which he read to me. There were some round mounds of earth near our house which greatly interested him, and he said a tree on the top of one of

them was a thousand years old. He set some of his men to work digging into one of these mounds, and I vividly remember how excited he became when he heard that they had exhumed some human bones, portions of gigantic skeletons, and various relics. He talked with my mother of these discoveries in the mound, and was writing every day as the work progressed. Afterward he read the manuscript which I had seen him writing, to the neighbors and to a clergyman, a friend of his, who came to see him. Some of the names that he mentioned while reading to these people I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me today as though I heard them yesterday. They were *Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi*.

We removed from Conneaut to Pittsburg while I was still very young, but every circumstance of this removal is distinct in my memory. In that city my father had an intimate friend named Patterson, and I frequently visited Mr. Patterson's library with him, and heard my father talk about books with him. In 1816 my father died at Amity, Pennsylvania, and directly after his death my mother and myself went to visit at the residence of my mother's brother, William H. Sabine, at Onondaga Valley, Onondaga County, New York. Mr. Sabine was a lawyer of distinction and wealth, and greatly respected. We carried all our personal effects with us, and one of these was an old trunk, in which my mother had placed all my father's writings which had been preserved. I perfectly remember the appearance of this trunk, and of looking at its contents. There were sermons and other papers, and I saw a manuscript, about an inch thick, closely written, tied with some of the stories my father had written for me, one of which he called "The Frogs of Wyndham." On the outside of this wrapper were written the words, "Manuscript Found." I did not read it, but looked through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time.

After we had been at my uncle's for some time, my mother left me there and went to her father's house at Pomfret, Connecticut, but did not take her furniture nor the old trunk of manuscripts with her. In 1820 she married Mr. Davison, of Hartwicks, a village near Cooperstown, New York, and sent for the things she had left at Onondaga Valley, and I remember that

the old trunk, with its contents, reached her in safety. In 1828, I was married to Dr. A. McKinstry of Hampden County, Massachusetts, and went there to reside. Very soon after my mother joined me there, and was with me most of the time until her death in 1844. We heard, not long after she came to live with me—I do not remember just how long—something of Mormonism, and the report that it had been taken from my father's "Manuscript Found;" and then came to us direct an account of the Mormon meeting at Conneaut, Ohio, and that, on one occasion, when the Mormon Bible was read there in public, my father's brother, John Spaulding, Mr. Lake and many other persons who were present, at once recognized its similarity to the "Manuscript Found," which they had heard read years before by my father in the same town. There was a great deal of talk and a great deal published at this time about Mormonism all over the country. I believe it was in 1834 that a man named Hurlburt came to my house at Monson to see my mother, who told us that he had been sent by a committee to procure the "Manuscript Found" written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, so as to compare it with the Mormon Bible. He presented a letter to my mother from my uncle, Wm. H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, in which he requested her to loan this manuscript to Hurlburt, as he (my uncle) was desirous "to uproot (as he expressed it) this Mormon fraud." Hurlburt represented that he had been a convert to Mormonism, but had given it up, and through the "Manuscript Found," wished to expose its wickedness. My mother was careful to have me with her in all the conversations she had with Hurlburt, who spent a day at my house. She did not like his appearance and mistrusted his motives, but having great respect for her brother's wishes and opinions, she reluctantly consented to his request. The old trunk, containing the desired "Manuscript Found," she had placed in the care of Mr. Jerome Clark of Hartwicks, when she came to Monson, intending to send for it. On the repeated promise of Hurlburt to return the manuscript to us, she gave him a letter to Mr. Clark to open the trunk and deliver it to him. We afterwards heard that he had received it from Mr. Clark, at Hartwicks, but from that time we have never had it in our possession, and I have no present knowledge of its existence, Hurlburt never returning it or answering letters re-

questing him to do so. Two years ago, I heard he was still living in Ohio, and with my consent he was asked for the "Manuscript Found." He made no response although we have evidence that he received the letter containing the request. So far I have stated facts within my own knowledge. My mother mentioned many other circumstances to me in connection with this subject which are interesting, of my father's literary tastes, his fine education and peculiar temperament. She stated to me that she had heard the manuscript alluded to read by my father, was familiar with its contents, and she deeply regretted that her husband, as she believed, had innocently been the means of furnishing matter for a religious delusion. She said that my father loaned this "Manuscript Found" to Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburg, and that when he returned it to my father, he said: "Polish it up, finish it and you will make money out of it." My mother confirmed my remembrances of my father's fondness for history, and told me of his frequent conversations regarding a theory which he had of a prehistoric race which had inhabited this continent, etc., all showing that his mind dwelt on this subject. The "Manuscript Found," she said, was a romance written in Biblical style, and that while she heard it read, she had no special admiration for it more than other romances he wrote and read to her. We never, either of us, ever saw, or in any way communicated with the Mormons, save Hurlburt as above described; and while we have no personal knowledge that the Mormon Bible was taken from the "Manuscript Found," there were many evidences to us that it was and that Hurlburt and the others at the time thought so. A convincing proof to us of this belief was that my uncle, William H. Sabine, had undoubtedly read the manuscript while it was in his house, and his faith that its production would show to the world that the Mormon Bible had been taken from it, or was the same with slight alterations. I have frequently answered questions which have been asked by different persons regarding the "Manuscript Found," but until now have never made a statement at length for publication.

(Signed) M. S. MCKINSTRY.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 3rd day of April, A. D. 1880, at the city of Washington, D. C.

CHARLES WALTER, Notary Public.¹

¹ This affidavit was first published in *Scribner's Monthly* for August, 1880.

We call the attention of the reader to the following points which are brought out in the foregoing affidavit:

First, Mrs. McKinstry certifies that her mother told her that her father wrote a number of romances.

Secondly, she states further that one of these romances, called the "Manuscript Found," resembled the Book of Mormon in the use of such proper names as Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite and Nephi. This manuscript, then, could not have been the one that Hurlburt afterwards obtained from the old trunk, for that manuscript contains no such names as these.

Thirdly, she declares that her mother informed her that the "Manuscript Found" was written in Biblical style; another proof that it was not the manuscript now in the library of Oberlin College, which is not written in Biblical style.

Fourthly, she states that the manuscript in the old trunk was examined by her when eleven years of age and that it had the words "Manuscript Found" written on the wrapper. In this we know that she was mistaken, for no such title appears on the manuscript found in Honolulu. But the words, "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," do appear in "faint penciling." This is the title which Mrs. McKinstry undoubtedly saw when she was eleven years of age, and her mistake is probably due to the failure of memory during the great number of years that elapsed between the time when she last saw this manuscript and the date of her affidavit. This would seem to show that as early as 1817 the title, "Manuscript Story," in "faint penciling," was on the wrapper of the romance from Honolulu and that it was probably placed there by her father himself.

Fifthly, Mrs. McKinstry thinks that the trunk manuscript was the same as the one recognized by the old

citizens of Conneaut as the basis of the Book of Mormon. We shall see, presently, that in this she is mistaken.

Although the letters of both Mrs. Davison and Mrs. McKinstry contain a number of errors, these are easily detected by the facts that have been brought to light since 1884. So, culling these errors out, we have the invulnerable facts remaining that Solomon Spaulding wrote one manuscript in Biblical style and employed names that afterwards appeared in the Book of Mormon. This was his celebrated "Manuscript Found."

CHAPTER VI.

The Manuscript Found—Its Identity with the Book of Mormon Established—The Testimony of John Spaulding, Martha Spaulding, Henry Lake, John N. Miller, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Nahum Howard and Artemas Cunningham.

Having established the distinction between the manuscript discovered in Honolulu and the "Manuscript Found," I now pass to those evidences which go to identify the latter with the basis of the Book of Mormon. These evidences consist of the testimonies of eleven of the relatives and acquaintances of Solomon Spaulding, who heard him read his celebrated "Manuscript Found." They are met by the Mormons either with silence, with evasion or with a blustering denial.

The opinion of some of those, outside of Mormonism, who have made the matter the subject of special study, is that Solomon Spaulding made three copies, or drafts, of his "Manuscript Found,"¹ as follows:

1. *The Nephite copy.* This copy was written at Conneaut, and is thought to have contained only the outline of Nephite history as given in the Book of Mormon.

2. *The Zarahemlaite copy.* This copy is thought to have been begun at Conneaut and completed at Pittsburgh. It is supposed to have contained all that was in the former copy, with the account added of the colony which came to America under Mulek at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

3. *The Jaredite copy.* This copy is supposed to have been written at Pittsburgh, and to have contained all that

¹ See "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 75.

was in the preceding copies, with the Jaredite portion of the Book of Mormon added.

I must confess that this classification of the writings of Solomon Spaulding is ingenious, but it requires the following of altogether too slender lines of evidence to be very trustworthy. I shall, therefore, make no attempt to discriminate between the different copies, or drafts, of the "Manuscript Found," if such really existed, as some other authors have done, but to settle down to the easier task of showing that this manuscript, whether it originally existed in one or in three drafts, was identical with the Book of Mormon in proper names and general historical outline.¹

In order to accomplish this, I shall put before the reader, in this chapter and in the following chapter, the testimonies of the eleven witnesses referred to, who either at Conneaut or Amity heard the "Manuscript Found" read. The testimonies of the eight to be given in this chapter were first published in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled" of 1834,² and constitute, says A. T. Schroeder, "the most important single collection of original evidence ever made upon the subject."³

THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN SPAULDING.

Solomon Spaulding was born in Ashford, Conn., in 1761, and in early life contracted a taste for literary pursuits. After he left school, he entered Plainfield Academy, where he made great proficiency in study, and excelled most of his classmates.

¹ Personally, I very much doubt if Spaulding ever wrote more than one copy of his "Manuscript Found," though this may have been written in three installments, first the Nephite part, then the Zarahemlaite, and lastly the Jaredite. But that he did write one manuscript at least, which gave a history of the first two peoples, is beyond question.

² Not having Howe's book at hand, I have copied them from Bennett's "Mormonism Exposed," pp. 115-120.

³ "The Origin of the Book of Mormon, Re-examined in Its Relation to Spaulding's 'Manuscript Found,'" p. 40.

He next commenced the study of law, in Windham county, in which he made little progress, having in the meantime turned his attention to religious subjects. He soon after entered Dartmouth College, with the intention of qualifying himself for the ministry, where he obtained the degree of A.M., and was afterwards regularly ordained. After preaching three or four years, he gave it up, removed to Cherry Valley, N. Y., and commenced the mercantile business, in company with his brother Josiah. In a few years he failed in business, and in the year 1809 removed to Conneaut, in Ohio. The year following, I removed to Ohio, and found him engaged in building a forge. I made him a visit in about three years after, and found that he had failed, and was considerably involved in debt. He then told me he had been writing a book, which he intended to have printed, the avails of which he thought would enable him to pay all his debts. The book was entitled the "Manuscript Found," of which he read to me many passages. It was an historical romance of the first settlers of America, endeavoring to show that the American Indians are the descendants of the Jews, or the lost tribes. It gave a detailed account of their journey from Jerusalem, by land and sea, till they arrived in America, under the command of Nephi and Lehi. They afterwards had quarrels and contentions, and separated into two distinct nations, one of which he denominated Nephites, and the other Lamanites. Cruel and bloody wars ensued, in which great multitudes were slain. They buried their dead in large heaps, which caused the mounds so common in this country. Their arts, sciences and civilization were brought into view in order to account for all the curious antiquities found in various parts of North and South America. I have recently read the Book of Mormon, and to my great surprise I find it nearly the same historical matter, names, &c., as they were in my brother's writings. I well remember that he wrote in the old style, and commenced about every sentence with "And it came to pass," or "Now it came to pass," the same as in the Book of Mormon, and according to the best of my recollection and belief, it is the same as my brother Solomon wrote, with the exception of the religious matter. By what means it has fallen into the hands of Joseph Smith, Jr., I am unable to determine.

JOHN SPAULDING.

THE TESTIMONY OF MARTHA SPAULDING.

I was personally acquainted with Solomon Spaulding, about twenty years ago. I was at his house a short time before he left Conneaut; he was then writing an historical novel founded upon the first settlers of America. He represented them as an enlightened and warlike people. He had for many years contended that the aborigines of America were the descendants of some of the lost tribes of Israel, and this idea he carried out in the book in question. The lapse of time which has intervened, prevents my recollecting but few of the leading incidents of his writings; but the names of Nephi and Lehi are yet fresh in my memory, as being the principal heroes of his tale. They were officers of the company which first came off from Jerusalem. He gave a particular account of their journey by land and sea, till they arrived in America, after which disputes arose between the chiefs, which caused them to separate into different bands, one of which was called Lamanites, and the other Nephites. Between these were recounted tremendous battles, which frequently covered the ground with the slain; and their being buried in large heaps was the cause of the numerous mounds in the country. Some of these people he represented as being very large. I have read the Book of Mormon, which has brought fresh to my recollection the writings of Solomon Spaulding; and I have no manner of doubt that the historical part of it is the same that I read and heard read more than twenty years ago. The old, obsolete style, and the phrases of "and it came to pass," &c., are the same. MARTHA SPAULDING.

THE TESTIMONY OF HENRY LAKE.

CONNEAUT, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, Sept., 1833.

I left the State of New York, late in the year 1810, and arrived at this place, about the first of January following. Soon after my arrival, I formed a copartnership with Solomon Spaulding, for the purpose of rebuilding a forge which he had commenced a year or two before. He very frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing, which he entitled the "Manuscript Found," and which he represented as being found in this town. I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents. He

wished me to assist him in getting his production printed, alleging that a book of that kind would meet with a rapid sale. I designed doing so, but the forge not meeting our anticipations, we failed in business, when I declined having anything to do with the publication of the book. This book represented the American Indians as the descendants of the lost tribes, gave an account of their leaving Jerusalem, their contentions and wars, which were many and great. One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find, to my surprise, that it stands there just as he read it to me then. Some months ago, I borrowed the Golden Bible, put it into my pocket, carried it home, and thought no more of it. About a week after, my wife found the book in my coat pocket, as it hung up, and commenced reading it aloud as I lay upon the bed. She had not read twenty minutes, till I was astonished to find the same passages in it that Spaulding had read to me more than twenty years before, from his "Manuscript Found." Since that, I have more fully examined the said Golden Bible, and have no hesitation in saying that the historical part of it is principally, if not wholly, taken from the "Manuscript Found." I well recollect telling Mr. Spaulding that the so frequent use of the words "And it came to pass," "Now it came to pass," rendered it ridiculous. Spaulding left here in 1812, and I furnished him the means to carry him to Pittsburgh, where he said he would get the book printed and pay me. But I never heard any more from him or his writings, till I saw them in the Book of Mormon.

HENRY LAKE.

THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN N. MILLER.

SPRINGFIELD, Pa., September, 1833.

In the year 1811, I was in the employ of Henry Lake and Solomon Spaulding, at Conneaut, engaged in rebuilding a forge. While there, I boarded and lodged in the family of said Spaulding for several months. I was soon introduced to the manuscripts of Spaulding, and perused them as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention was one which he called the "Manuscript Found." From this

he would frequently read some humorous passages to the company present. It purported to be the history of the first settlement of America, before discovered by Columbus. He brought them off from Jerusalem, under their leaders; detailing their travels by land and water, their manners, customs, laws, wars, &c. He said that he designed it as an historical novel, and that in after years it would be believed by many people as much as the history of England. He soon after failed in business, and told me he would retire from the din of his creditors, finish his book and have it published, which would enable him to pay his debts and support his family. He soon after removed to Pittsburgh, as I understood.

I have recently examined the Book of Mormon, and find in it the writings of Solomon Spaulding, from beginning to end, but mixed up with Scripture and other religious matter, which I did not meet with in the "Manuscript Found." Many of the passages in the Mormon book are verbatim from Spaulding, and others in part. The names of Nephi, Lehi, Moroni, and in fact all the principal names, are brought fresh to my recollection by the Golden Bible. When Spaulding divested his history of its fabulous names, by a verbal explanation, he landed his people near the Straits of Darien, which I am very confident he called *Zarahemla*; they were marched about that country for a length of time, in which wars and great bloodshed ensued; he brought them across North America in a northeast direction.

JOHN N. MILLER.

THE TESTIMONY OF AARON WRIGHT.

CONNEAUT, August, 1833.

I first became acquainted with Solomon Spaulding in 1808 or '9, when he commenced building a forge on Conneaut Creek. When at his house, one day, he showed and read to me a history he was writing, of the lost tribes of Israel, purporting that they were the first settlers of America, and that the Indians were their descendants. Upon this subject we had frequent conversations. He traced their journey from Jerusalem to America, as it is given in the Book of Mormon, excepting the religious matter. The historical part of the Book of Mormon I know to be the same as I read and heard read from the writings of Spaulding, more than twenty years ago; the names, more espe-

cially, are the same without any alteration. He told me his object was to account for all the fortifications, &c., to be found in this country, and said that in time it would be fully believed by all, except learned men and historians. I once anticipated reading his writings in print, but little expected to see them in a new Bible. Spaulding had many other manuscripts, which I expect to see when Smith translates his other plate. In conclusion, I will observe, that the names of, and most of the historical part of the Book of Mormon, were as familiar to me before I read it, as most modern history. If it is not Spaulding's writing, it is the same as he wrote; and if Smith was inspired, I think it was by the same spirit that Spaulding was, which he confessed to be the love of money. AARON WRIGHT.

THE TESTIMONY OF OLIVER SMITH.

CONNEAUT, August, 1833.

When Solomon Spaulding first came to this place, he purchased a tract of land, surveyed it out, and commenced selling it. While engaged in this business, he boarded at my house, in all nearly six months. All his leisure hours were occupied in writing an historical novel, founded upon the first settlers of this country. He said he intended to trace their journey from Jerusalem, by land and sea, till their arrival in America; give an account of their arts, sciences, civilization, wars, and contentions. In this way, he would give a satisfactory account of all of the old mounds so common to this country. During the time he was at my house, I read and heard read one hundred pages or more. Nephi and Lehi were by him represented as leading characters, when they first started for America. Their main object was to escape the judgments which they supposed were coming upon the old world. But no religious matter was introduced as I now recollect. Just before he left this place, Spaulding sent for me to call on him, which I did. He then said that although he was in my debt, he intended to leave the country, and hoped I would not prevent him. For, says he, you know I have been writing the history of the first settlement of America, and I intend to go to Pittsburgh, and there live a retired life, till I have completed the work, and when it is printed, it will bring me a fine sum of money, which will enable me to return and pay off all my debts. The book, you know,

will sell, as every one is anxious to learn something upon that subject. This was the last I heard of Spaulding or his book, until the Book of Mormon came into the neighborhood. When I heard the historical part of it related, I at once said it was the writings of old Solomon Spaulding. Soon after, I obtained the book, and on reading it, found much of it the same as Spaulding had written, more than twenty years before.

OLIVER SMITH.

THE TESTIMONY OF NAHUM HOWARD.

CONNEAUT, August, 1833.

I first became acquainted with Solomon Spaulding, in December, 1810. After that time, I frequently saw him at his house, and also at my house. I once, in conversation with him, expressed a surprise at not having any account of the inhabitants once in this country, who erected the old forts, mounds, &c. He then told me that he was writing a history of that race of people; and afterwards frequently showed me his writings, which I read. I have lately read the Book of Mormon, and believe it to be the same as Spaulding wrote, except the religious part. He told me that he intended to get his writings published in Pittsburgh, and he thought that in one century from that time, it would be believed as much as any other history.

NAHUM HOWARD.

THE TESTIMONY OF ARTEMAS CUNNINGHAM.

In the month of October, 1811, I went from the township of Madison to Conneaut, for the purpose of securing a debt due me from Solomon Spaulding. I tarried with him nearly two days, for the purpose of accomplishing my object, which I was finally unable to do. I found him destitute of the means of paying his debts. His only hope of ever paying his debts appeared to be upon the sale of a book which he had been writing. He endeavored to convince me from the nature and character of the work, that it would meet with a ready sale. Before showing me his manuscripts, he went into a verbal relation of its outlines, saying that it was a fabulous or romantic history of the first settlement of this country, and as it purported to have been a record found buried in the earth, or in a cave, he had adopted the ancient or Scripture style of writing. He then presented his

manuscripts, when we sat down, and spent a good share of the night in reading them, and conversing upon them. I well remember the name of Nephi, which appeared to be the principal hero of the story. The frequent repetition of the phrase, "I Nephi," I recollect as distinctly as though it was but yesterday, although the general features of the story have passed from my memory, through the lapse of twenty-two years. He attempted to account for the numerous antiquities which are found upon this continent, and remarked that, after this generation had passed away, his account of the first inhabitants of America would be considered as authentic as any other history. The Mormon Bible I have partially examined, and am fully of the opinion that Solomon Spaulding had written its outlines before he left Conneaut.

This completes the original testimony on the "Manuscript Found" as given by E. D. Howe in 1834. By it the following points are established:

First, Solomon Spaulding wrote several manuscripts which he was fond of exhibiting to his acquaintances.

Secondly, one of these manuscripts, and the most important of them, bore the title of the "Manuscript Found."

Thirdly, this manuscript agreed with the Book of Mormon in its general historical outline and proper names, it containing such proper names as Lehi, Nephi, Nephites, Lamanites, Laban, Zarahemla and Moroni.

Fourthly, it was also written in Scripture style, and began nearly every paragraph with "And it came to pass" and "Now it came to pass." It could not, therefore, have been identical with the manuscript found in Honolulu, which does not contain these introductory expressions.

Fifthly, the "Manuscript Found" was devoid of the religious matter found in the Book of Mormon, hence this must have been added later, presumably by Rigdon.

Are these coincidences purely accidental?

CHAPTER VII.

The Testimony of Other Witnesses—Joseph Miller—Ruddick McKee—Abner Jackson—The Mormon Admissions of Genuineness—The Disclosures of J. C. Bennett.

Since 1834, other witnesses have borne testimony to the close resemblance of the "Manuscript Found" to the Book of Mormon, even as touching certain details.

THE TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH MILLER.

Joseph Miller was a resident of Amity, Pennsylvania, and a particular friend of Solomon Spaulding while he resided at that place. In a letter to Thomas Gregg,¹ he says:

TEN MILE, Washington Co., Pa., Jan. 20, 1882.

DEAR SIR:—In answer to yours, I would state that I was familiar with Solomon Spaulding. I worked in Amity, where he lived, and as the fashion was at that day, we all assembled at his house in the evenings (as he kept tavern), and he frequently would read from his manuscript. The work was very odd. The words "Moreover," "And it came to pass," occurred so often that the boys about the village called him "Old Came to Pass." He told me he lived in Ohio when he wrote his manuscript. He said he lost his health, and he commenced writing a history of the mounds near where he lived, or of the people who built them. He afterwards removed to Pittsburgh, and kept a little store to support his family, and while there he took his manuscript to Mr. Patterson, then engaged in a publishing house. Mr. Patterson told him if he would write a title page he would publish it. He left the copy and moved to Amity. He afterwards went back to have his MS. published, but it could not be found. He said there was a man named Sidney Rigdon about the office, and they thought he had stolen it. The passage you

¹ "Prophet of Palmyra," pp. 441, 442.

refer to, on page 148, as Cooper has it, is in reference to being marked with red in their foreheads.

"Nephites," I recollect distinctly, as occurring very often; as to "Lamanites" it is not so distinct,—and a great many other names that were very odd.

The MS. that I saw, would not, I think, make as large a book as the *Book of Mormon*.

Spaulding was a very poor man; during his stay at Amity, I was very familiar with him, bailed him for money at least twice; and by request of Spaulding, assisted his wife some in settling up his little business—made his coffin and helped lay him in his grave.

JOSEPH MILLER.

In the *Pittsburgh Telegraph* of February 6, 1879, we find the following from the pen of Mr. Miller:

Mr. Spaulding seemed to take great delight in reading from his manuscript written on foolscap. I heard him read most if not all of it; and had frequent conversations with him about it. Some time ago I heard most of the *Book of Mormon* read. On hearing read the account of the battle between the Amlicites and the Nephites (*Book of Alma*, chapter II.), in which the soldiers of one army placed a red mark on their foreheads, to distinguish them from their enemies, it seemed to reproduce in my mind not only the narrative, but the very words, as they had been imprinted on my mind by reading Spaulding's manuscript.¹

THE TESTIMONY OF RUDDICK M'KEE.

In the *Washington (Pennsylvania) Reporter* for April 21, 1879, Ruddick McKee, of Washington, District of Columbia, said in regard to Spaulding and his romance:

In the fall of 1814 I arrived in the village of "Good Will" and for eighteen or twenty months sold goods in the store previously occupied by Mr. Thos. Brice. It was on Main street, a few doors west of Spaulding's Tavern, where I was a boarder. With both Mr. Solomon Spaulding and his wife I was quite in-

¹ "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 42.

² Sometimes spelled Redick.

timately acquainted. I recollect quite well Mr. Spaulding spending much time in writing (on sheets of paper torn out of an old book) what purported to be a veritable history of the nations or tribes who inhabited Canaan. He called it "Lost History Found," "Lost Manuscript," or some such name, not disguising that it was wholly a work of the imagination, written to amuse himself and without any immediate view to publication. I was struck with the minuteness of his details and the apparent truthfulness and sincerity of the author. I have an indistinct recollection of the passage referred to by Mr. Miller about the Amlicites making a cross with red paint on their foreheads to distinguish them from enemies in the confusion of battle.¹

THE TESTIMONY OF ABNER JACKSON.

The evidence that I have already given is sufficient to establish the plagiarism, but I introduce one more testimony. The following statement of Rev. Abner Jackson, of Canton, Ohio, was communicated to the Washington County (Pennsylvania) Historical Society, December 20, 1880²:

It is a fact well established that the book called the *Book of Mormon*, had its origin from a romance that was written by Solomon Spaulding, in Conneaut, a small village in Ashtabula County, Ohio, about A. D. 1812. Spaulding was a highly educated man about six feet high, of rather slender build, with a dark complexion, black eyes, black hair, rather slow of speech, never trifling, pleasant in conversation, but seldom laughing aloud. His deportment was grave and dignified in society, and he was much respected by those of his acquaintance. He was a clergyman of the Presbyterian order, and for a time a settled pastor in the city of New York. So said his brother John Spaulding and others in the neighborhood, who heard him preach. It was said that failing health caused him to resign the pastorate. He then came to Richfield, Otsego County, New York, and started a store, near where my father lived, about the beginning of the present century.

¹ Schroeder, p. 46.

² "Prophet of Palmyra," pp. 444-450.

Spaulding contracted for large tracts of land along the shore of Lake Erie, on each side of the state line, in both Pennsylvania and Ohio. My father exchanged with him, the farm on which he lived in Otsego County, New York, for land in Erie County, Pa., where the town of Albion now stands, and moved on it A. D. 1805. It was then a dense forest. Shortly after my father moved, Spaulding sold his store in Richfield, and moved to Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio, and built a forge on Conneaut Creek, two miles from Conneaut Harbor, and two miles from the state line. In building this he failed, sold out, and about the beginning of the year 1812, commenced to write his famous romance called by him the *Manuscript Found*.

This romance, Mr. Spaulding brought with him on a visit to my father, a short time before he moved from Conneaut to Pittsburgh. At that time I was confined to the house with a lame knee, and so I was in company with them and heard the conversation that passed between them. Spaulding read much of his manuscript to my father, and in conversation with him, explained his views of the old fortifications in this country, and told his romance. A note in Morse's Geography suggested it as a possibility that our Indians were descendents of the lost tribes of Israel. Said Morse, they might have wandered through Asia up to Behring's Strait, and across the strait to this continent. Besides there were habits and ceremonies among them that resembled some habits and ceremonies among the Israelites of that day. Then the old fortifications and earth mounds, containing so many kinds of relics and human bones, and some of them so large, altogether convinced him that they were a larger race and more enlightened and civilized than are found among the Indians among us at this day. These facts and reflections prompted him to write his Romance, purporting to be a history of the lost tribes of Israel.

He begins with their departure from Palestine, or Judea, then up through Asia,¹ points out their exposures, hardships and sufferings, also their disputes and quarrels, especially when they built their craft for passing over the straits. Then after their

¹ If Spaulding's "Manuscript Found" gave this migrational direction, the account was afterwards changed, because the Book of Mormon has them come across the Pacific Ocean to South America.

landing, he gave an account of their divisions and subdivisions under different leaders, but two parties controlled the balance. One of them was called the righteous, worshipers and servants of God. These organized with prophets, priests and teachers, for the education of their children, and settled down to cultivate the soil, and to a life of civilization. The others were idolaters. They contended for a life of idleness; in short, a wild, wicked, savage life.

They soon quarreled, and then commenced war anew, and continued to fight, except at very short intervals. Sometimes one party was successful and sometimes the other, until finally a terrible battle was fought, which was conclusive. All the righteous were slain, except one, and he was Chief Prophet and Recorder. He was notified of the defeat in time by Divine authority; told where, when and how to conceal the record, and He would take care that it should be preserved, and brought to light again at the proper time, for the benefit of mankind. So the Recorder professed to do, and then submitted to his fate. I do not remember what that fate was. He was left alone of his party. I do not remember that anything more was said of him.

Spaulding's romance professed to find the record where the Recorder concealed it, in one of those mounds, one of which was but a few rods from Spaulding's residence. Soon after this visit, Spaulding moved to Pittsburgh, and took his manuscript to the *Pittsburgh Gazette* office, intending to have it printed, but in this he failed. My brother, J. J. Jackson, was a recruiting officer in the U. S. Army, and stationed at Pittsburgh at that time. Being well acquainted with Spaulding and his lady, he soon found them, and in his letters home would inform us how they were getting along. The last account he gave us of them was that he was selling pictures and she was sewing up clothing for the soldiers. The next we heard of them was by report. Spaulding moved to Amity, Washington County, Pa., and soon after died and was buried there. His wife and daughter went to her brother, Lawyer Sabine, Onondaga Valley, Onondaga Co., N. Y. When I was returning from Clarksburg, W. Va., to my home in New Brighton, Beaver Co., Pa., A. D. 1840, I passed through Amity, hunted the grave of Spaulding and copied from the headstone the following inscription:

"IN MEMORY OF

Solomon Spaulding, who departed this life Oct. 20th, A. D., 1816.
Aged 55 years.

"Kind cherubs guard the sleeping clay,
Until the great decision day,
And saints complete in glory rise,
To share the triumph of the skies."

Spaulding frequently read his manuscript to the neighbors and amused them as he progressed with his work. He wrote it in Bible style. "And it came to pass" occurred so often that some called him "Old Come to Pass."

So much for Spaulding's romance; now for the *Book of Mormon*.

The first account of the *Book of Mormon* that I saw, was a notice in my father's newspaper, stating that Joseph Smith, Jr., professed having dreamed that an angel had appeared to him and told him to go and search in a place he named in Palmyra, N. Y., and he would find a gold-leaf Bible. Smith was incredulous and did not go until the second or third time he dreamed the same dream. Then he said he went, and, to his surprise, he found the golden Bible, according to his dreams. But it was written in a language so ancient that none could be found able either to read it or tell in what language it was written. Some time after, another statement appeared that an angel had consented to read and interpret it to Joseph Smith, and he should report it to a third person, who should write it in plain English, so that all might read the new Bible and understand its import. Some time after, in 1830, the book was published at Palmyra, N. Y., called a *New Revelation; the Book of Mormon*. This purports to be a history of the lost tribes of the Children of Israel. It begins with them just where the romance did, and it follows the romance very closely. It is true there are some verbal alterations and additions, enlarging the production somewhat, without changing its main features. The *Book of Mormon* follows the romance too closely to be a stranger. In both many persons appear having the same name; as, Maroni, Mormon, Nephites, Moroni, Lama, Lamanite, Nephe and others.

Here then we are presented with romance second, called the *Book of Mormon*, telling the same story of the same people, traveling from the same plain, in the same way, having the same

difficulties and destination, with the same wars, same battles and same results, with thousands upon thousands slain. Then see the Mormon account of the last battle at Cumorah, where all the righteous were slain. They were called the Nephites, the others were called Lamanites (see Moroni's account of the closing scene), "and now it came to pass that a great battle was fought at Cumorah. The Lamanites slew all the Nephites (except Moroni), and he said, I will write and hide up the Record in the earth, and whither I go, it mattereth not."—*Book of Mormon*, page 344, third American edition.¹ How much this resembles the closing scene in the *Manuscript Found*. The most singular part of the whole matter is, that it follows the romance so closely, with this difference: the first claims to be a romance; the second claims to be a revelation of God, a new Bible! When it was brought to Conneaut and read there in public, old Esq. Wright heard it, and exclaimed, "Old Come to Pass has come to life again." Here was the place where Spaulding wrote and read his manuscript to the neighbors for their amusement and 'Squire Wright had often heard him read his romance. This was in 1832, sixteen years after Spaulding's death. This 'Squire Wright lived on a farm just outside of the little village. I was acquainted with him for twenty-five years. I lived on his farm when I was a boy and attended school in the village. I am particular to notice these things to show that I had an opportunity of knowing what I am writing about.

After I commenced writing this article, I heard that an article in *Scribner's Monthly*, for August, 1880, on the *Book of Mormon*, contained a note and affidavit of Mrs. Matilda S. McKinstry, Solomon Spaulding's only child, stating that she remembered her father's romance. I sent at once for the *Monthly*, and on the 613, 614, 615 and 616 pages, found the article and her testimony. Her statement from the commencement, until they moved to Pittsburgh, in all *essential particulars* I know to be true. She relates those acts as they occurred to my own personal knowledge, though she was then a little girl. She is now about seventy-five years of age.

I stated before that I knew nothing of Spaulding after he moved to Pittsburgh, except by letters and newspapers. He soon moved to Amity, Washington County, Pa., and shortly

¹ This is not an exact quotation.

after this he died and his wife went to her brother's. His daughter's account of the deceitful method by which Hurlburt gained possession of and retained Spaulding's manuscript, is, I think, important and should not be lost sight of. She was no child then. I think she has done her part well in the vindication of the truth by her unvarnished statement of what she remembered of her father's romance. I have not seen her since she was a little girl, but I have seen both of these productions, heard Spaulding read much of his romance to my father and explain his views and reasons for writing it. I also have seen and read the *Book of Mormon*, and it follows Spaulding's romance too closely to be anything else than a borrowed production from the romance. I think that Mrs. McKinstry's statement fills a gap in my account from Spaulding's removal to Pittsburgh, to the death of his wife in 1844. I wish, if my statement is published that hers also be published with it, that the truth may be vindicated by the truth beyond any reasonable doubt.

(Signed) ABNER JACKSON.

CANTON, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1880.

THE MORMON ADMISSIONS OF GENUINENESS.

While the Mormons deny the *truthfulness* of the testimony in this and the preceding chapter, they concede its *genuineness*.¹ As proof of this, I submit the following extract from the pen of Elder Brigham H. Roberts, of the Utah Mormon Church, taken from the "Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations Manual" for 1905-1906, pages 465 and 466:

In the fall of 1833, a number of affidavits were taken from the former neighbors and friends of Solomon Spaulding, and one was given by his brother, John Spaulding, and one by the latter's wife, Martha Spaulding. They at the time were residing in Crawford, Pennsylvania, and both testified that they had "recently read the Book of Mormon," and recognized in it the general outlines of Solomon Spaulding's story, claimed especially

¹ By the genuineness of these testimonies, I mean that they were actually made and subscribed to by the parties to whom they are accredited.

to remember the names "Nephi and Lehi;" the words "Nephites and Lamanites;" as also the ancient scriptural style and the frequent use of the phrase "and it came to pass;" and that the American Indians are descendents of the Jews, or "lost tribes of Israel."

Mr. Henry Lake, an associate in business with Mr. Spaulding, living at Conneaut in the fall of 1833, in connection with others that will be named, living in the same neighborhood, testified that Solomon Spaulding read to him from the "Manuscript Found;" that it represented the American Indians as the descendants of the "lost tribes" of Israel, and that he suggested to Mr. Spaulding that the frequent use of the phrase "and it came to pass" rendered the book ridiculous.

John N. Miller testified substantially to the same things saying in addition that Spaulding's story landed his colony near the "Straits of Darien," which he was confident he called "Zarahemla."

Aaron Wright testified substantially to the same things as the foregoing. That the American Indians, according to Spaulding's story, were descendants of the "lost tribes" of Israel, and claims especially that the historical part of the Book of Mormon is substantially what he heard read from the "Manuscript Found" though he excepts out of the work, as not being Spaulding's, the religious matter.

Oliver Smith testified substantially to the same things, saying in effect that on reading the Book of Mormon he at once recognized it as the writings of Solomon Spaulding.

Nahum Howard testified that he had recently read the Book of Mormon and believed that all but the religious part of it was the same as that written by Spaulding.

Artemas Cunningham, living in Perry, Geauga county, Ohio, testified that in 1811 he waited upon Solomon Spaulding at his home in New Salem, to collect debts, and that the latter read to him on that occasion some parts of his manuscript story, after partially examining the Book of Mormon he became convinced that Spaulding had written its outlines before he left Conneaut.

It is upon the testimony of these parties that the Spaulding theory rests. Subsequently many others claimed to have information upon the subject, and gave affidavits and statements to newspapers almost ad infinitum, constantly varying the claims and

adding items that so burdened the theory with inconsistencies and contradictions that it breaks down, as we shall see, under the accumulation.

As further proof of the genuineness of the testimony already given, I submit the following admission from the pen of Joseph Smith, president of the Reorganized Church, as found in his pamphlet, "The Spaulding Story Re-examined," page 6:

The witnesses, with scarcely an exception, are of that class that gives secondary or hearsay evidence.¹ John Spaulding tells what his brother *told* him. Martha Spaulding states, that having read the Book of Mormon, she has no doubt it is the same historically that she read and heard read more than twenty years ago. Nahum Howard states only what he says Spaulding told him. Artemas Cunningham recollects an expression, "I Nephi," as occurring in the reading of a manuscript by Spaulding—but pleads the lapse of twenty-two years as accounting for a failure to remember more fully the general plot. After a partial examination, he believes that Spaulding wrote the outlines before leaving Conneaut.

Having established by the admissions of these gentlemen that the testimonies given were really borne by the individuals to whom they are ascribed, I now pass to prove that the latter were persons of excellent reputation for honesty and veracity. Of the eight whose testimonies are given in the preceding chapter, E. D. Howe says:

We might therefore introduce a great number of witnesses, all testifying to the same general facts; but we have not taken the trouble to procure the statements of but few, all of whom are the most respectable men, and highly esteemed for their moral worth, and their characters for truth and veracity are unimpeachable. In fact, the word of any one of them would have more weight in any respectable community, than the whole

¹ Compare this assertion carefully with the statements of these parties and see how wide of the truth it is.

family of Smiths and Whitmers, who have told about hearing the voice of an angel.

As throwing light upon the reputation of two of our witnesses, Aaron Wright and Henry Lake, I also offer the following affidavit of Mr. J. H. Britton, of Painesville, Ohio:

THE STATE OF OHIO, }
Lake County. } ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for said county, personally appeared J. H. Britton, who, being duly sworn, on his oath says:

That he is now a resident of Painesville in said county, and is now of the age of seventy-two years; was born in the town of Van Buren, Onondaga Co., N. Y., and he further says: I was living in my father's home in the township of Richmond, Ashtabula Co., O., from about 1836 until about 1848, and during that time I became and was acquainted with Aaron Wright and Henry Lake, two of the persons who have furnished statements as to the origin of the Book of Mormon; which statements are published in E. D. Howe's "History of Mormonism" or "Mormonism Unveiled," published at Painesville, O., in 1834; that I knew said Wright and Lake well, that they were men of good reputation for truth and veracity, and were in every way well esteemed and respected in the community where they lived. Mr. Wright then lived in the village of Conneaut, in said county, and was one of the pioneers of the vicinity, and a large owner of real-estate, and owned a flouring-mill which was reported to be the first mill of its kind built in that vicinity. Mr. Lake also lived near Mr. Wright, and was also one of the first settlers of the vicinity. And further affiant sayeth not.

J. H. BRITTON.

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this 22d day of June, 1905.

G. N. TUTTLE,

(Seal)

Notary public in and for said county.

In this chapter and the preceding, we have established three things:

First, that Spaulding's "Manuscript Found" resembled the Book of Mormon in general historical outline

and in such proper names as Lehi, Nephi, Laman, Nephites, Lamanites, Amlicites and Zarahemla.

Secondly, that the testimonies of the eleven individuals, who have certified to these facts, are genuine.

Thirdly, that the character of these individuals was considered the best and their reputation for honesty and veracity was unimpeachable.

THE DISCLOSURES OF JOHN C. BENNETT.

Dr. John C. Bennett, Quartermaster General of the state of Illinois, became a convert to Mormonism in the summer of 1840 and soon after removed to the city of Nauvoo. Here he rapidly grew in favor with the prophet Joseph Smith and the Mormon people until he was elevated to the position of "assistant president" of the Church during the illness of Sidney Rigdon. The intimacy between Smith and Bennett continued until the summer of 1842, when they quarreled and Bennett left Nauvoo. Later, he published an *expose* of the conditions in that city through the columns of the *Sangamo Journal*, of Springfield, Illinois, and his book, "Mormonism Exposed." On the origin of the Book of Mormon, he says:

I will remark here, in confirmation of the above, that the Book of Mormon was originally written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, A.M., as a romance, and entitled the "Manuscript Found," and placed by him in the printing-office of Patterson and Lambdin, in the city of Pittsburg, from whence it was taken by a conspicuous Mormon divine, and re-modeled, by adding the religious portion, placed by him in Smith's possession, and then published to the world as the testimony exemplifies. This I have from the Confederation, and of its perfect correctness there is not the shadow of a doubt. There never were any plates of the Book of Mormon, excepting what were seen

¹ See *Times and Seasons*, Vol. II., p. 387.

by the spiritual, and not the natural, eyes of the witnesses. The story of the plates is all chimerical.¹

The Mormons answer this and other disclosures of Bennett by saying that he had been cut off from the church, that he was therefore sore at the Prophet, and that his testimony is all a lie. But they can not deny that before his apostasy he was held in the very highest esteem,² or that he enjoyed the confidence of the other Mormon leaders as few men did. Therefore, as his story agrees perfectly with what others have testified to, I believe that it must be accepted as true. The "conspicuous Mormon divine" was none other than Sidney Rigdon, who was a warm friend of Bennett and who was on the verge of leaving the Mormons at this time himself.

¹ "Mormonism Exposed," pp. 123, 124. Bennett says further: "Shortly after I located in Nauvoo, Joe promised to me to go to New York and get some plates engraved, and bring them to him, so that he could exhibit them as the genuine plates of the Book of Mormon, which he pretended had been taken from him and 'hid up' by an angel, and which he would profess to have recovered. He calculated upon making considerable money by this trick, as there would of course be a great anxiety to see the plates, which he intended to exhibit at twenty-five cents a sight. I mentioned this proposition to Mrs. Sarah M. Pratt, on the day the Prophet made it, and requested her to keep it in memory, as it might be of much importance" (p. 175). Mrs. Pratt afterwards confirmed Bennett's statement. Dr. Wyl, "Mormon Portraits," p. 21, says: "When asked by me in the spring of 1885 about this statement of John C. Bennett, Mrs. Pratt confirmed it fully and stated also that Bennett had reported to her this conversation with Joseph on the very day when it happened." Was there ever a bigger grafter than Joseph Smith?

² Here is one of the many good things said about Bennett by the Mormon press before his apostasy: "We would say, that if untiring diligence to aid the afflicted and the oppressed, zeal for the promotion of literature and intelligence, and a virtuous and consistent conduct, are evidences of popularity, &c., we venture to say that no man deserves the appellations of 'popular and deserving' more than Gen. J. C. Bennett."—*Times and Seasons*, 2: 351.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rigdon's Connection with the Spaulding Romance—His Relations with J. Harrison Lambdin—Suspected of Stealing the Manuscript—Exhibits the Manuscript—Foretells the Coming Out of the Book of Mormon.

Sidney Rigdon was born at Piney Fork, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, February 19, 1793. The place of his birth is variously estimated at from six to twelve miles from Pittsburgh.¹ He lived on the farm with his parents up to the time of his father's death in 1810, and after that until his twenty-sixth year, or till 1819. He united with the Baptist Church at Piney Fork, May 31, 1817, and was licensed to preach in March, 1819. In the month of May following, he removed to Trumbull County, Ohio. The following year he was ordained a Baptist minister and was married to Phoebe Brooks, a sister of the wife of Adamson Bentley, who at that time was a minister in the Baptist Church, but who was afterwards prominently connected with the movement of the Campbells. In November, 1821, Rigdon received a call from the Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, and began his pastoral duties in February, 1822. On October 11, 1823, he was excluded for heresy, and, subsequently, with the assistance of Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott, organized a Disciple church of which he became the pastor. He continued to preach for the Disciples up to the time that he became a Mormon in November, 1830.

¹ Schroeder, p. 15.

² Some accounts say in December.

RIGDON'S RELATIONS WITH J. HARRISON LAMBDIN.

In the year 1812, Spaulding removed from Conneaut, Ohio, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in order to have his "Manuscript Found" published. At this time, Robert Patterson was in the printing business in that city in the firm of Patterson & Hopkins, which continued until January, 1818.¹ During the years 1812-16, in which the relations of Spaulding with Patterson existed, J. Harrison Lambdin was an employe at the printing-office. It has been claimed that Rigdon was also employed by Patterson at this time, but this claim lacks proof. However, the facts are established that he was a particular friend of Lambdin and that he spent considerable of his time lounging around the office. As establishing this point, I submit the testimony of Mrs. R. J. Eichbaum, given September 18, 1879:

My father, John Johnson, was postmaster at Pittsburg for about eighteen years, from 1804 to 1822. My husband, William Eichbaum, succeeded him, and was postmaster for about eleven years, from 1822 to 1833. I was born August 25, 1792, and when I became old enough, I assisted my father in attending to the postoffice, and became familiar with his duties. From 1811 to 1816, I was the regular clerk in the office, assorting, making up, dispatching, opening and distributing the mails. Pittsburg was then a small town, and I was well acquainted with all the stated visitors at the office who called regularly for their mails. So meager at that time were the mails that I could generally tell without looking whether or not there was anything for such persons, though I would usually look in order to satisfy them. I was married in 1815, and the next year my connection with the office ceased, except during the absences of my husband. I knew and distinctly remember Robert and Joseph Patterson, J. Harrison Lambdin, Silas Engles and Sidney Rigdon. I remember Rev. Mr. Spaulding, but simply as one who occasionally called to inquire for letters. I remember there was an evident

¹ Schroeder, p. 19.

intimacy between Lambdin and Rigdon. They very often came to the office together. I particularly remember that they would thus come during the hour on Sabbath afternoon when the office was required to be open, and I remember feeling sure that Rev. Mr. Patterson knew nothing of this, or he would have put a stop to it. I do not know what position, if any, Rigdon filled in Patterson's store or printing office, but am well assured he was frequently, if not constantly, there for a large part of the time when I was clerk in the postoffice. I recall Mr. Engles saying that "Rigdon was always hanging around the printing office." He was connected with the tannery before he became a preacher, though he may have continued the business whilst preaching.

The testimony of Mrs. Eichbaum nullifies the claim of certain Mormon writers that "Sidney Rigdon never was at Pittsburgh, or any other place, at the same time as Mr. Spaulding's manuscript was there, and therefore he could not have seen or read it."¹ While he may not have *lived*² at Pittsburgh until he assumed the pastorate of the Baptist Church of that city, it is very improbable, even if we lay aside the foregoing statement, that he was never there before that event, as his parents' farm was only between six and twelve miles distant and as he continued to reside with his mother until the year 1819. Spaulding's Romance was stolen from Patterson's establishment in 1815 or 1816, at which time Rigdon was twenty-three or twenty-four years of age. To contend, therefore, that a young man that old, in good health and mental vigor, would live but a few miles distant from the leading city and chief trading-point of that part of the country and never visit it, is so absurd that it is not

¹ Schroeder, p. 21.

² "Myth of the Manuscript Found," p. 23.

³ The testimonies that Mormons present (see "Myth, etc.," p. 25) to prove that Rigdon could not have stolen the manuscript simply prove that he did not *live* in Pittsburgh before 1822, and this we concede. But he did live only a few miles from there until 1819. This Mormons have to concede.



SIDNEY RIGDON.

worth consideration. The fact is, that while Rigdon *lived* at Piney Fork, he was frequently in Pittsburgh, and while there lounged around the printing-office, so he had ample opportunity to steal the manuscript as has been charged.

RIGDON SUSPECTED OF THE THEFT.

Rigdon not only had the opportunity to steal the manuscript, but he was also suspected of being the thief by Spaulding himself. On this point, Joseph Miller, whose testimony upon another occasion we have given, says:

My recollection is that Spaulding left a transcript of the manuscript with Patterson for publication. The publication was delayed until Spaulding could write a preface. In the meantime the manuscript was spirited away, and could not be found. Spaulding told me that Sidney Rigdon had taken it, or was suspected of taking it. I recollect distinctly that Rigdon's name was mentioned in connection with it.¹

This same gentleman, in a letter to Mrs. Ellen E. Dickinson and dated at Ten Mile, Pennsylvania, February 13, 1882, says again:

Patterson said he, Patterson, would publish it, if he, Spaulding, would write a title page. He told me he kept a little store in Pittsburg. He then moved to Amity, leaving a copy of the manuscript in Patterson's hands. After being at Amity some time, he went back to Pittsburg, took his title page; he called it the lost manuscript found. When he went to Pittsburg, the manuscript could not be found. He said there was, or had been, a man by the name of Sidney Rigdon (who) had stole it.²

The physician who attended Spaulding during his last illness was Dr. Cephas Dodd. With him Spaulding was very confidential, and confided to him his suspicions of the theft. After the death of Spaulding, Dr. Dodd pur-

¹ "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 44.

² "New Light on Mormonism," p. 240.

chased a copy of the Book of Mormon, and, after reading it, inscribed the following on one of the fly-leaves, June 6, 1831:

This work, I am convinced by facts related to me by my deceased patient, Solomon Spaulding, has been made from writings of Spaulding, probably by Sidney Rigdon, who was suspicioned by Spaulding with purloining his manuscript from the publishing-house to which he had taken it; and I am prepared to testify that Spaulding told me that his work was entitled, "The Manuscript Found in the Wilds of Mormon; or Unearthed Records of the Nephites." From his description of its contents, I fully believe that this Book of Mormon is mainly and wickedly copied from it.

CEPHAS DODD.

JUNE 6, 1831.

RIGDON EXHIBITS THE MANUSCRIPT.

The next step in the history of this manuscript is its exhibition by Rigdon. While he was pastor of the Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Rev. John Winter, M.D., was a member of his church and a schoolteacher of that city. Dr. Winter testifies as follows:

In 1822 or 3, Rigdon took out of his desk in his study a large MS. stating that it was a Bible romance purporting to be a history of the American Indians. That it was written by one, Spaulding, a Presbyterian preacher whose health had failed and who had taken it to the printers to see if it would pay to publish it. And that he (Rigdon) had borrowed it from the printer as a curiosity.¹

Dr. Winter died at Sharon, Pennsylvania, in the year 1878, but his testimony is vouched for by Rev. J. A. Bonsall, his son-in-law, Rev. A. G. Kirk and Mrs. Mary W. Irvine, Dr. Winter's daughter.

Under date of December 7, 1879, Mrs. Amos Dunlap, a niece of Mrs. Rigdon, wrote as follows from Warren, Ohio:

¹ "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 42.

When I was quite a child I visited Mr. Rigdon's family. He married my aunt. They at that time lived at Bainbridge, Ohio, (1826-27). During my visit, Mr. Rigdon went to his bedroom and took from a trunk which he kept locked, a certain manuscript. He came out into the other room and seated himself by the fireplace and commenced reading it. His wife at that moment came into the room and exclaimed: "What, you are studying that thing again?" or something to that effect. She then added: "I mean to burn that paper." He said: "No, indeed, you will not; this will be a great thing some day." Whenever he was reading this, he was so completely occupied that he seemed entirely unconscious of anything passing around him.¹

Since Rigdon, and no one else, has ever claimed that he himself wrote such a manuscript, we are warranted, in the light of the other evidences adduced, in believing that this was none other than the romance of Solomon Spaulding which he had exhibited to Dr. Winter three or four years before.

RIGDON FORETELLS THE COMING OUT OF THE BOOK OF
MORMON.

Rigdon did not stop with the exhibition of this manuscript; he foretold the coming out of a book describing the ancient inhabitants of America, at least three years before the Book of Mormon appeared. In the *Millennial Harbinger* for 1844, page 39, there appeared the following letter from Adamson Bentley, Rigdon's brother-in-law:

SOLON, January 22, 1841.

DEAR BROTHER SCOTT:—Your favor of the 7th December is received. I returned from Philadelphia, Pa., on the 10th, and the answer to your acceptable letter has been deferred. I was much gratified to hear from you and family, but would be much more so to see you once more in the flesh, and talk over our toils and anxieties in the cause of our blessed Redeemer.

¹ Schroeder, p. 24.

You request that I should give you all the information I am in possession of respecting Mormonism. I know that Sidney Rigdon told me there was a book coming out (the manuscript of which had been found engraved on gold plates) as much as two years before the Mormon book made its appearance in this country or had been heard of by me. The same I communicated to brother A. Campbell. The Mormon book has nothing of baptism for the remission of sins in it;¹ and of course at the time Rigdon got Solomon Spaulding's manuscript he did not understand the scriptures on that subject. I cannot say he learnt it from me, as he had been about a week with you in Nelson and Windham, before he came to my house. I, however, returned with him to Mentor. He stated to me that he did not feel himself capable of introducing the subject in Mentor, and would not return without me if he had to stay two weeks with us to induce me to go. This is about all I can say. I have no doubt but the account given in *Mormonism Unmasked* is about the truth. It was got up to deceive the people and obtain their property, and was a wicked contrivance with Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith, Jr. May God have mercy on the wicked men, and may they repent of this their wickedness!

May the Lord bless you, brother Scott, and family!

Yours most affectionately, ADAMSON BENTLEY.

In the same paper, Alexander Campbell, editor, corroborated the foregoing statement and commented upon Bennett's letter in the following note:

The conversation alluded to in Brother Bentley's letter of 1841, was in my presence as well as his, and my recollection of it led me, some two or three years ago, to interrogate Brother Bentley touching his recollection of it, which accorded with mine in every particular, except the year in which it occurred, he placing it in the summer of 1827, I in the summer of 1826, Rigdon at the same time observing that in the plates dug up in New York, there was an account, not only of the aborigines of this country, but also it was stated that the Christian religion had been preached in this country during the first century, just as we were preaching it in the Western Reserve.

¹ In this Bentley was mistaken, and Campbell corrected his mistake in the same issue.

Adamson Bentley and Alexander Campbell were pioneer preachers in the great Restoration movement, and their testimonies will not fail to carry weight. They establish beyond a doubt that Rigdon knew of the operations of Smith years before his pretended conversion to Mormonism.

As further confirmatory of the same contention, we have the testimony of Darwin Atwater, of Mantua Station, Ohio, communicated to A. S. Hayden April 26, 1873, in the form of a letter which is published in the latter's book, "History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve," pages 239, 240. Mr. Atwater says:

Soon after this, the great Mormon defection came on us (Disciples of Christ). Sidney Rigdon preached for us, and notwithstanding his extravagantly wild freaks, he was held in high repute by many. For a few months before his professed conversion to Mormonism, it was noticed that his wild, extravagant propensities had been more marked. That he knew before of the coming of the Book of Mormon is to me certain, from what he said the first of his visits at my father's, some years before. He gave a *wonderful description* of the *mounds* and other antiquities found in some parts of America, and said that they must have been made by the Aborigines. He said *there was a book to be published containing* an account of those things. He spoke of these in his *eloquent, enthusiastic* style, as being a thing *most extraordinary*.

Still another witness, to whom Rigdon expressed his expectations, was Dr. S. Rosa. This gentleman wrote from Painesville, Ohio, under date of June 3, 1841, as follows:

In the early part of the year 1830, when the Book of Mormon appeared, either in May or June, I was in company with Sidney Rigdon, and rode with him on horseback a few miles. Our conversation was principally upon the subject of religion, as he was at that time a very popular preacher of the denomination calling themselves "Disciples," or Campbellites. He re-

marked to me that it was time for a new religion to spring up; that mankind were all ripe and ready for it. I thought he alluded to the Campbellite doctrine. He said it would not be long before something would make its appearance; he also said that he thought of leaving Pennsylvania, and should be absent for some months. I asked him how long. He said it would depend upon circumstances. I began to think a little strange of his remarks, as he was a minister of the gospel. I left Ohio that fall and went to the state of New York to visit my friends who lived in Waterloo, not far from the mine of golden Bibles. In November I was informed that my old neighbor, E. Partridge, and the Rev. Sidney Rigdon were in Waterloo, and that they both had become the dupes of Joe Smith's necromancies. It then occurred to me that Rigdon's new religion had made its appearance, and when I became informed of the Spaulding manuscript, I was confirmed in the opinion that Rigdon was at least accessory, if not the principal, in getting up this farce.¹

Dr. Rosa supplies a number of links for the chain that connects Sidney Rigdon with the Mormon fraud. In the first place, the foregoing conversation occurred, according to Rosa, in May or June of 1830, which was about six months before Rigdon openly united with the Mormons. In the second place, Rigdon told him that a new religion was about to make its appearance, which shows that he had some anticipations along that line, hence that he must have kept informed of the movements of Smith. And, in the third, Rigdon declared that he thought of leaving Pennsylvania and of being gone some months, probably to confer with Smith in regard to the launching of the new ecclesiastical craft.

The evidence which I have presented in this chapter seems to establish conclusively that Sidney Rigdon was an intimate friend of J. Harrison Lambdin, an employe in the Patterson printing-office, and that he, living not more than twelve miles distant from Pittsburgh, was

¹ Schroeder, p. 25.

frequently in that city and lounged around the office; that at this time the "Manuscript Found" of Spaulding, which had been placed in Patterson's hands for publication, came up missing and that Rigdon was suspected of the theft; that Rigdon, after Spaulding's death, exhibited such a manuscript, which, upon one occasion, he declared had been written by Spaulding, and that at least three years before the Book of Mormon came out and the Mormon Church was organized, he made disclosures to certain individuals which go to show that at this time he was perfectly familiar with the movements and plans of Joseph Smith.¹

¹ The "Doctrine and Covenants" (34: 2) throws out a hint of Rigdon's former connection with Mormonism in these words: "Behold, verily, verily I say unto my servant Sidney, I have looked upon thee and thy works. I have heard thy prayers and prepared thee for a greater work. Thou art blessed, for thou shalt do great things. Behold, thou wast sent forth even as John, to prepare the way before me, and before Elijah which should come, and thou knew it not." Nearly all Gentiles will agree with the Mormons that Sidney prepared the way before the Mormon delusion, but when it comes to the statement that he knew it not, it is quite another thing.

CHAPTER IX.

Rigdon's Connection with Smith—The Pretended Conversion of Rigdon—Rigdon's Previous Visits to Smith—The Mormon Alibi—Katherine Salisbury's Affidavit.

It is the conviction of nearly all of the opponents of Mormonism, who have paid particular attention to the history of its origin, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not an emanation from the mind of Joseph Smith, but that it was first conceived of by Sidney Rigdon,¹ and that Smith was merely his tool in giving the movement publicity while he played his part behind the scenes until his pretended conversion in the year 1830. And it is a further conviction that Rigdon and his puppet, Smith, were not the only members of the conspiracy, but that associated with them were Hyrum Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Martin Harris and probably others, who came in to play their particular roles and to receive in return the honors and pecuniary benefits of the Mormon kingdom.²

The part that Rigdon played in the genesis of Mormonism was most secret, but the evidences of it, though meager, are conclusive. It is certain that he made a

¹ Strange as it may seem upon any other hypothesis, the very doctrines that Rigdon preached before 1830 became a most vital part of the Mormon system after that date.

² Personally, I am satisfied that the "Gold Bible Company" was composed of a larger number of individuals than the ordinary reader has ever dreamed of, and that each had his part to play in springing the system upon the world. Rigdon was the theologian, Smith the prophet, Cowdery the scribe, Harris the financier, Parley P. Pratt the dreamer and Orson Pratt the logician. The underlying motives were two: first, to make money out of the fraud, and, secondly, to gratify lust. These motives come to the surface, here and there, all the way through the history of Mormonism.



PARLEY PARKER PRATT.

number of clandestine visits to Palmyra before 1830, and was known in that vicinity as the "mysterious stranger," while it is also believed that he communicated with Smith through their confederates, Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt. Cowdery first appeared publicly upon the Mormon stage in the year 1829, although we have every reason to believe that he was secretly playing an important part before; but Pratt withheld his *debut* until August, 1830, when he was suddenly and miraculously converted while on a visit to New York and began at once his work as a missionary. From this time on, he was a prominent actor in the Mormon drama until he fell a victim of his own lust at the hands of an enraged husband, Hector McLean, in 1857, whose wife he had seduced and whose home he had broken up.¹

THE PRETENDED CONVERSION OF RIGDON.

In October, 1830, a revelation was received directing Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson to leave New York and go on a mission among the Indians.² As soon as this revelation was received, the "sisters" of the church set themselves to the task of providing the requisite clothing, and, about the 15th of the month, the four men designated "started on their mission, preaching and baptizing on their way, wherever an opportunity offered."³

¹ Mrs. McLean, who lived in Arkansas, had been converted to Mormonism by Pratt, and, later, had left her husband and children and gone to Salt Lake City, where she became his polygamous wife. After this, she and Pratt returned and attempted to abduct the children, but failed. The enraged father threatened Pratt's life, and the latter fled on horseback. When McLean heard of his flight, he gave chase, and, overtaking him, killed him with his bowie-knife, twelve miles north of Van Buren, Arkansas.

² "Doctrine and Covenants," Sec. 31.

³ "Joseph Smith and His Progenitors," p. 205.

Sidney Rigdon, at this time, lived at Mentor, two miles from Kirtland, Ohio, and had given up preaching and gone to farming, declaring that "he had been mistaken all his lifetime."¹ He was evidently cleaning and garnishing his house for its early reception of Mormonism.

Sometime in November, the Mormon missionaries reached Mentor, and Pratt, being acquainted with Rigdon, called upon him and presented him with a copy of the Book of Mormon. Pratt says:

We called on Elder S. Rigdon, and then for the first time his eyes beheld the Book of Mormon, I, myself, had the happiness to present it to him in person. He was much surprised, and it was with much persuasion and argument² that he was prevailed on to read it, and after he had read it, he had a great struggle of mind, before he fully believed and embraced it; and when finally convinced of its truth, he called together a large congregation of his friends, neighbors and brethren, and then addressed them very affectionately for nearly two hours during most of which time, both himself and nearly all the congregation were melted into tears. He asked forgiveness of everybody who might have had occasion to be offended with any part of his former life; he forgave all who had persecuted or injured him in any manner, and the next morning himself and wife were baptized by Elder O. Cowdery. I was present, it was a solemn scene, most of the people were great affected, they came out of the water overwhelmed in tears.³

The date of Rigdon's baptism, according to the "Diary" of Lyman Wight, who was baptized at the same time, was November 14, 1830. This is said to have been

¹ Testimony of Reuben P. Harmon in the "Braden-Kelley Debate."

² Pratt did not always tell the same story in regard to the manner in which Rigdon received the Book of Mormon. At another time, he said: "He was much interested, and promised a thorough perusal of the book." —*Journal of History*, January, 1910, p. 15. The two diverse accounts by the same person are probably inadvertencies due to neither being the truth.

³ "Myth of the Manuscript Found," p. 33.

about a fortnight¹ after the Book of Mormon was first presented to him. But Howe declares that Rigdon was baptized the second day after Pratt's arrival,² while H. H. Clapp, a resident of Rigdon's vicinity, more specifically puts the baptism within thirty-six hours.³ In any of these cases, Rigdon's conversion was altogether too sudden and romantic for a truly candid, careful and conscientious investigator, especially when we consider the startling claims of Mormonism, and we are strongly impressed that it was only part of a prearranged plan and that his pretended emotions were invented for the occasion to swing his neighbors to that imposture which he had, covertly, been one of the means of foisting upon the world.

RIGDON'S PREVIOUS VISITS TO SMITH.

In the month of December following his conversion, Sidney Rigdon went to Waterloo, New York, accompanied by Edward Partridge, for the purpose of meeting Joseph Smith, and immediately took up the work of openly promulgating the Mormon faith. In the latter part of January, Joseph and his family left New York, and started for Kirtland, the home of Rigdon, where they arrived about the first of February.⁴

Mormons declare that prior to this visit of Rigdon to the Smiths in New York, he had no acquaintance with them and never visited them, and, hence, that he could not have been in collusion with Joseph in springing Mormonism upon the world. As an answer to this claim, I now submit the testimonies of a number of the neighbors

¹ "Church History," Vol. I., p. 141.

² "Mormonism Unveiled," p. 104.

³ H. H. Clapp, in a letter to James T. Cobb, of Utah.

⁴ "Church History," Vol. I., p. 169.

of the Smiths in New York, who declare that Rigdon did know of Joseph and that he personally visited him before the year 1830.

Mrs. Horace Eaton, wife of Dr. Horace Eaton, who, for thirty-two years, had been a resident of Palmyra and who had heard of the doings of the Smith family from the lips of their acquaintances, says, in a paper read before the Union Home Missionary Meeting held at Buffalo, New York, May 27, 1881:

Early in the summer of 1827, a "mysterious stranger" seeks admittance to Joe Smith's cabin. The conferences of the two are most private. This person, whose coming immediately preceded a new departure in the faith, was Sidney Rigdon, a backsliding clergyman, at this time a Campbellite preacher in Mentor, Ohio.¹

Pomeroy Tucker, a neighbor of the Smiths and one of the proof-readers of the Book of Mormon, says:

A mysterious stranger now appears at Smith's and holds intercourse with the famed money-digger. For a considerable time no intimation of the name or purpose of this stranger transpired to the public, not even to Smith's nearest neighbors. It was observed by some that his visits were frequently repeated. The sequel of the intimacies of this stranger and the money-digger will sufficiently appear hereafter. There was great consternation when the 118 pages of manuscript were stolen from Harris, for it seems to have been impossible, for some unaccountable reason, to retranslate the stolen portion. The reappearance of this mysterious stranger at Smith's at this juncture was again the subject of inquiry and conjecture by observers, from whom was withheld all explanations of his identity and purpose. When the Book of Mormon appeared, Rigdon was an early convert. Up to this time, he had played his part in the background, and his occasional visits to Smith's had been observed by the inhabitants as those of the mysterious stranger. It had been his policy to remain in concealment until all things were in readiness for blowing the trumpet of the new gospel.

¹ "Hand-book on Mormonism," p. 3.

He now came to the front as the first regular preacher in Palmyra.¹

On May 2, 1879, Abel D. Chase, another neighbor of the Smiths, signed the following statement, relative to the visits of Sidney Rigdon to Palmyra before 1830:

PALMYRA, Wayne Co., N. Y., May 2, 1879.

I, Abel D. Chase, now living in Palmyra, Wayne Co., N. Y., make the following statement regarding my early acquaintance with Joseph Smith and incidents about the production of the so-called Mormon Bible. I was well acquainted with the Smith family, frequently visiting the Smith boys and they me. I was a youth at the time from twelve to thirteen years old, having been born Jan. 19, 1814, at Palmyra, N. Y. During some of my visits at the Smiths, I saw a stranger there who they said was Mr. Rigdon. He was at Smith's several times, and it was in the year of 1827 when I first saw him there, as near as I can recollect. Some time after that tales were circulated that young Joe had found or dug from the earth a book of plates which the Smiths called the Golden Bible. I don't think Smith had any such plates. He was mysterious in his actions. The peepstone, in which he was accustomed to look, he got of my elder brother Willard while at work for us digging a well. It was a singular-looking stone and young Joe pretended he could discover hidden things in it.

My brother Willard Chase died at Palmyra, N. Y., March 10, 1871. His affidavit, published in Howe's "History of Mormonism," is genuine. Peter Ingersoll, whose affidavit was published in the same book, is also dead. He moved West years ago and died about two years ago. Ingersoll had the reputation of being a man of his word, and I have no doubt his sworn statement regarding the Smiths and the Mormon Bible is genuine. I was also well acquainted with Thomas P. Baldwin, a lawyer and Notary Public, and Frederick Smith, a lawyer and magistrate, before whom Chase's and Ingersoll's depositions were made, and who were residents of this village at the time and for several years after.

ABEL D. CHASE.

Abel D. Chase signed the above statement in our presence,

¹ "Braden-Kelley Debate," p. 46.

and he is known to us and the entire community here as a man whose word is always the exact truth and above any possible suspicion.

PLINY T. SEXTON.

J. H. GILBERT.¹

I now have the pleasure of presenting to the reader two letters touching upon this point that have never been published before. The first of these was written by Mr. Thomas Gregg, of Hamilton, Illinois, the author of "The Prophet of Palmyra;" the second is the reply to the same, written by Mr. Lorenzo Saunders, of Reading, Hillsdale County, Michigan, who was an intimate acquaintance of the Smiths. Mr. Gregg died before he had the opportunity of publishing Mr. Saunders' letter, and later the correspondence was turned over to Mr. R. B. Neal, of Grayson, Kentucky, secretary of the American Anti-Mormon Association, who has kindly loaned these documents to me to publish in this book. The letters have been carefully copied from their originals and appear just as they were formerly written, except that in that of Saunders a number of errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation have been corrected. Saunders was an aged man, and this, coupled with his poor educational advantages as a boy, accounts for the errors which appear. I regard his letter as one of the most important documents which we have bearing on the present question.

The letter of Mr. Gregg is as follows:

HAMILTON, Hancock Co., Ill., January 19, 1885.

MR. LORENZO SAUNDERS,

Dear Sir:—Permit me, a stranger, to "interview" you by letter. Mr. J. H. Gilbert, of Palmyra, N. Y., introduces us. He names you among the very few left, who know something about

¹ "Mormon Portraits," p. 230.

the origin of Mormonism, and the life and career of Joe Smith, the pretended Prophet. I am engaged on a work—mainly a History of the Mormon Era in Illinois—but with which I wish to incorporate the Rise and Progress of the miserable fraud in and about Palmyra. A main point I wish to investigate is as to how the *Spaulding Manuscript* got into Smith's hands previous to 1829 when the B. of M. was first printed. Some think Cowdery was the medium—some that it was Rigdon. Of course, it is hard to remember after a period of 50 or 60 years, little occurrences unimportant at the time; but I am induced to apply to you, as a neighbor of the Smiths, hoping you may be able to recall events that may help me out. What can you recall of *Cowdery's* career? His first appearance among you—what he was doing—where he came from—and what seemed to have brought him into closer relationship with Smith? Also, of *Rigdon*—Gilbert says it is thought you saw him once at Smith's. Can you be sure of that? and whether it was *before* the B. of M. was printed? Did you know the 12 signers, certifying to the Divine origin of the B. of M.—the Whitmers—Harris—Hiram Page—and all the Smiths—and were they ignorant or sensible—learned or unlearned—and did they, or any of them, seem to adhere to Smith while he was digging for treasure, &c.?

You see I can *chalk out* a great variety of subjects or points on which I want information; but I might cut it short by asking, in general, for such information as you can give that will enlighten the public on the Origin of Mormonism—and more especially its connection with the Rev. Spaulding's book. Of course you are an aged man—I know what it is to be an old man, myself; but these cold winter days, we can do little else than sit in the house and read and write—and perhaps you will be able to find time to reply to this, and thus oblige very much,

Your friend and obt. Ser.,

TH. GREGG.

P. S.—More questions: Did you ever see, or try to see, the pretended plates, or how Smith acted in regard to them? Or did you ever see the *hole in the ground*, on Cumorah Hill, in which the plates were found—or was there ever such a hole? *Please answer on, and return this sheet*, and if not enough of paper, add to it—I will pay postage.

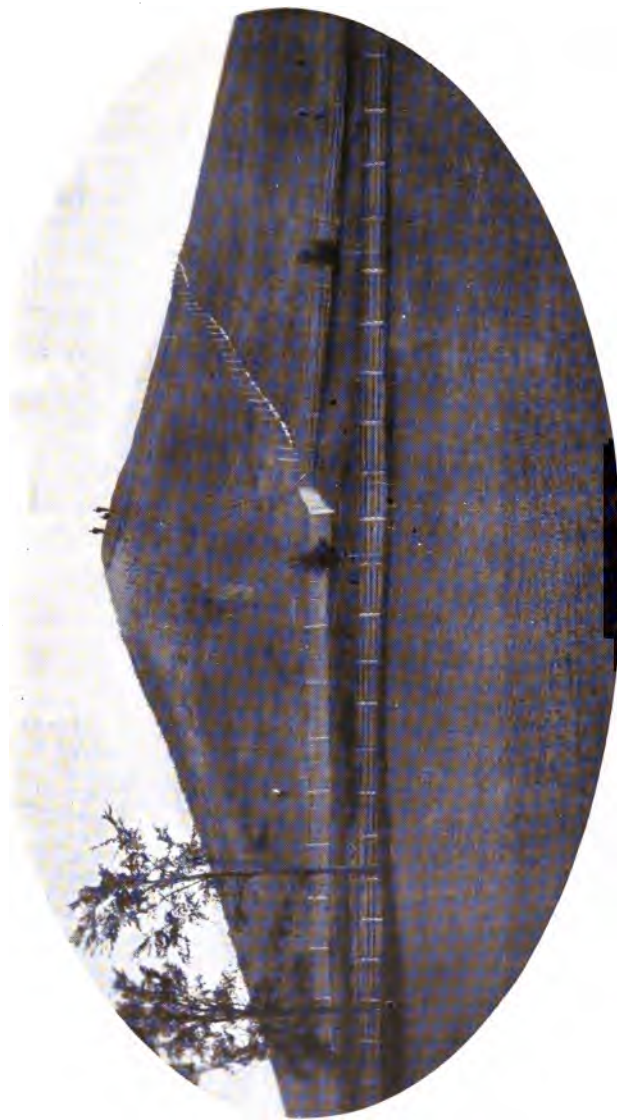
In reply to Mr. Gregg's letter, Mr. Saunders wrote from Reading, Michigan, as follows:

READING, January 28, 1885.

MISTER GREGG,

Dear Sir. I received your note ready at hand and will try (to) answer the best I can and give all the information I can as respecting Mormonism and the first origin. As respecting Oliver Cowdery, he came from Kirtland in the summer of 1826 and was about there until fall and took a school in the district where the Smiths lived and the next summer he was missing and I didn't see him until fall and he came back and took our school in the district where we lived and taught about a week and went to the schoolboard and wanted the board to let him off and they did and he went to Smith and went to writing the Book of Mormon and wrote all winter. The Mormons say it was written there but I say it was because I was there. I saw Sidney Rigdon in the Spring of 1827, about the middle of March. I went to Smiths to eat maple sugar, and I saw five or six men standing in a group and there was one among them better dressed than the rest and I asked Harrison Smith who he was (and) he said his name was Sidney Rigdon, a friend of Joseph's from Pennsylvania. I saw him in the Fall of 1827 on the road between where I lived and Palmyra, with Joseph. I was with a man by the name of Jugegsah (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.). They talked together and when he went on I asked Jugegsah (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) who he was and he said it was Rigdon. Then in the summer of 1828 I saw him at Samuel Lawrence's just before harvest. I was cutting¹ corn for Lawrence and went to dinner and he took dinner with us and when dinner was over they went into another room and I didn't see him again till he came to Palmyra to preach. You want to know how Smith acted about it. The next morning after he claimed to have got (the) plates he came to our house and said he had got the plates and what a struggle he had in getting home with them. Two men tackled him and he fought and knocked them both down and made his escape and secured the plates and had them safe and secure. He showed his thumb where he bruised it in fighting those men. After (he) went from the house, my mother says, "What a liar Joseph Smith is; he lies every word he says; I know he lies because he looks so

¹ He probably means plowing corn, as this was too early in the season for the other.



"HILL CUMORAH."

guilty; he can't see out of his eyes; how dare (he) tell such a lie as that." The time he claimed to have taken the plates from the hill was on the 22 day of September, in 1827, and I went on the next Sunday following with five or six other ones and we hunted the side hill by course and could not find no place where the ground had been broke. There was a large hole where the money diggers had dug a year or two before, but no fresh dirt. There never was such a hole; there never was any plates taken out of that hill nor any other hill in that county, was in Wayne county. It is all a lie. No, sir, I never saw the plates nor no one else. He had an old glass box with a tile (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) in it, about 7x8 inches, and that was the gold plates and Martin Harris didn't know a gold plate from a brick at this time. Smith and Rigdon had an intimacy but it was very secret and still and there was a mediator between them and that was Cowdery. The Manuscripts was stolen by Rigdon and modelled over by him and then handed over to Cowdery and he copied them and Smith sat behind the curtain and handed them out to Cowdery and as fast as Cowdery copied them, they was handed over to Martin Harris and he took them to Egbert Granden, the one who printed them, and Gilbert set the type. I never knew any of the twelve that claimed to have seen the plates except Martin Harris and the Smiths. I knew all of the Smiths, they had not much learning, they was poor scholars. The older ones did adhere (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) to Joseph Smith. He had a peep stone he pretended to see in. He could see all the hidden treasures in the ground and all the stolen property. But that was all a lie, he couldn't see nothing. He was an impostor. I now will close. I don't know as you can read this. If you can, please excuse my bad spelling and mistakes.

Yours With Respect,

From LORENZO SAUNDERS.¹

¹ STATE OF NEBRASKA, }
County of Dawson. } ss.

Charles A. Shook, being duly sworn according to law, deposeth and saith that the foregoing letters of Thomas Gregg and Lorenzo Saunders are verbatim copies (excepting spelling, punctuation and capitalization) of the originals now in the possession of the American Anti-Mormon Association.

CHARLES A. SHOOK.

Subscribed to in my presence and sworn to before me, at Eddyville, Nebraska, this 13th day of February, 1913.

B. R. HEDGLIN, Notary Public.

The following deductions from Mr. Saunders' letter should be noted by the reader:

First, Oliver Cowdery first came to Palmyra in the summer of 1826 instead of in the winter of 1828-9, as the Mormons claim.

Secondly, he came from Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio. Rigdon had removed to the same county the spring before, and Cowdery may have been sent by him to New York for a purpose.

Thirdly, part of the Book of Mormon was written at the home of the Smiths near Palmyra, instead of all of it being written at Harmony, Pennsylvania, and Fayette, New York.

Fourthly, according to Saunders' positive knowledge, Rigdon made at least three visits to Palmyra before 1830: in March, 1827; in the fall of 1827, and in the summer of 1828. We shall, presently, make good use of these dates.

THE MORMON ALIBI.

In their attempt to refute the testimony just given, the Mormons claim that the distance between Mentor, Ohio, where Rigdon resided, and Palmyra, New York, where Smith lived, was so great that, in those days of slow locomotion, it would have been impossible for Rigdon, who was so burdened with the arduous duties of an active minister, to have visited and conferred with Smith as charged. On this point, Elder Heman C. Smith, historian of the Reorganized Church, says:

The life of Sidney Rigdon was that of an active minister, and his whereabouts can be determined by public records so frequently as to make it impossible that he could have made the long and tedious journeys to New York (which this story makes necessary) for the purpose of conspiring with Joseph Smith in those days of slow transportation.—*Church History*, Vol. 1, p. 145.

But this position is wholly untenable. Sidney Rigdon was an itinerant preacher and did just what Elder Smith says it was impossible for him to do; he made "long and tedious journeys." And the fact that he made such long and tedious journeys is to be found largely in the literature of the Mormon Church itself. In May, 1819, we find him moving from near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Trumbull County, Ohio, and later back again.¹ Next, we find him on a mission to Kentucky with his brother-in-law, Adamson Bentley.² In the spring of 1826, he removed to Geauga County, Ohio, and located at Bainbridge.³ After this, we hear of him at Mentor, Perry, Austintown, Shalersville, New Lisbon and Warren, Ohio, and in May or June, 1830, in Pennsylvania.⁴ All of these movements occurred before he became a Mormon.

After his pretended conversion, we find him going straight to Waterloo, New York, to confer with Smith and to return with him two months later. In company with Joseph Smith and Freeman Nickerson, in the fall of 1833, he went on a mission to Canada, where he labored one month. In the summer and fall of 1836, we find him in the Eastern States with Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and Oliver Cowdery. And last, but not least, we are told that between the years 1831 and 1838, he made four trips to Missouri, a distance of not less than eight hundred miles.⁵ As Palmyra, New York, is only 252 miles from Mentor, Ohio, over the L. S. & M. S. and N. Y. C. & H. R. Railroads, and as Rigdon was accustomed to long and frequent moves, the distance would not have

¹ "Church History," Vol. I., p. 130.

² "History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve," p. 19.

³ "History of the Disciples," p. 191.

⁴ See testimony of Dr. Rosa.

⁵ "Journal of History," July, 1910, pp. 279-286.

made it impossible for him to have conferred with Smith before 1830.

But, says the Mormon objector, even if what you say is true, it would have required *time* for Rigdon to have made such visits, and we have his whereabouts determined by public records so frequently that this element is wanting and thus the impossibility still remains. Very well, then, let us examine the alibi.

The following list of events and dates has been compiled by Elder E. L. Kelley, of the Reorganized Church, from court records and historical and personal sources, and arranged as I give it, by Elder Heman C. Smith, of the same church, and published in the Josephite "Journal of History," Vol. III., No. 1, pages 16-20. This list is said to cover the movements of Rigdon from November 2, 1826, to November 14, 1830, so thoroughly and fully that no opening is left to slip in spaces of time sufficiently lengthy for him to visit Palmyra, New York, before his conversion in 1830.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between John G. Smith and Julia Giles, on the second of November, 1826, agreeable to license obtained from court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded the 13th of Dec., 1826.

January, 1827. Elder Rigdon held public meetings in Mantua, Ohio. (Hayden's History of the Disciples of the Western Reserve.)

February, 1827. Preached funeral discourse of Hannah Tanner, Chester, Ohio. (Authenticated by Henry Tanner.)

March and April, 1827. Held protracted meetings at Mentor,

Ohio; baptizing Nancy M. Sanford, William Dunson and wife, and others. (Evidence by Nancy M. Sanford, Mantua, Ohio.)

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that on the fifth day of June, 1827, in the village of Painesville, I solemnized the marriage contract between Theron Freeman and Elizabeth Waterman, agreeable to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded June 7, 1827.

June 15, 1827. Baptized Thomas Clapp, and others, Mentor, Ohio. Personal testimony of Henry H. Clapp, Mentor, Ohio.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between James Gray and Mary Kerr, in township of Mentor, on the 3d of July, 1827.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded July 12, 1827.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that on the 19th of July, 1827, I solemnized the marriage contract in the township of Kirtland, between Alden Snow and Ruth Parker, agreeable to license obtained from clerk of the court of the said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded August 10, 1827.

August 23, 1827. Elder Rigdon met with the Ministerial Association of the Western Reserve at New Lisbon, Ohio.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract on the 9th of October, 1827, in the township of Mentor, between

Stephen Sherman and Wealthy Mathews, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded October 27, 1827.

October 20, 1827. A member of the ministerial council at Warren, Ohio.

November, 1827. Held a series of meetings at New Lisbon, Ohio.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Alvin Wait and Sophia Gunn, on the 6th of Dec., 1827, in the township of Kirtland, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded December 12, 1827.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Roswell D. Cottrell and Matilda Olds, in the township of Concord, on the 13th day of December, 1827, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded January 8, 1828.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Otis Harrington and Lyma Corning, in the township of Mentor, on the 14th of February, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

EDWARD PAINE, Jun., Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded March 31, 1828.

March, 1828. Instructor of a class in theology at Mentor, Ohio; and also held a series of meetings at Mentor and Warren, Ohio. Zebulon Rudolph, afterwards an elder in the Disciples Church, was a member of this class in theology, with others. He became a man of note in the Western Reserve.

April, 1828. Elder Rigdon conducted a great religious revival at Kirtland, Ohio.

May, 1828. He meets with Alexander Campbell at Shaler-ville, Ohio, and held a protracted meeting at that place.

June, 1828. Elder Rigdon baptized Henry H. Clapp at Mentor, Ohio.

August, 1828. Attended great yearly association at Warren, Ohio.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Luther Dille and Clarissa Kent, in the township of Mentor, on the 7th day of September, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded October 13, 1828.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Nachor Corning and Phebe E. Wilson, in the township of Mentor, on the 18th day of September, 1828, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk Com. Pleas.

Recorded October 13, 1828.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Albert Churchill and Anna Fosdick on the 1st of January, 1829, in the township of Concord, agreeably to a license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded February 12, 1829.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Erastus Root and Rebecca Tuttle on the 1st day of February, 1829, in the township of Mentor, agreeably to a license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded February 12, 1829.

March, 1829. Protracted meeting, Mentor, Ohio.

April 12, 1829. Protracted meeting at Kirtland, Ohio.

Lyman Wight, in his private journal, says: "I resided in this place. (Warrensville, Ohio) till 1829, about the month of May, when I heard Sidney Rigdon preach what was then called Rigdonite doctrine. After hearing him go through the principle of baptism for the remission of sins, I went forward and was baptized by his hands.

July 1, 1829. Organized church at Perry, Ohio.

In the journal of Lyman Wight, he writes August (same year): "My wife was baptized together with John Murdock and many others by Sidney Rigdon."

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between John Strong and Ann Eliza More, on the 13th of August, 1829, in the township of Kirtland, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded September 14, 1829.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Darwin Atwater and Harriett Clapp, on the 14th day of September, 1829, in the township of Mentor, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded October 7, 1829.

September, 1829. Series of meetings at Mentor, Ohio, baptizing J. J. Moss, who was afterwards Disciple minister of some note.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Geauga County. } ss.

This is to certify that I solemnized the marriage contract between Joel Roberts and Relief Bates, on the 1st of October, 1829, in the township of Perry, agreeably to license obtained from clerk of court of said county.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded October 7, 1829.

October, 1829. At Perry, Ohio.

November, 1829. Held meetings at Wait Hill, Ohio; baptizing Alvin Wait.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Cuyahoga County. } ss.

This certifies that I solemnized the marriage contract between David Chandler and Polly Johnson in the township of

Chagrin on the 31st day of December, one thousand, eight hundred and twenty-nine, agreeably to license obtained from the clerk of the court of said county. SIDNEY RIGDON,

Pastor Baptist Church in Mentor, Geauga Co., Ohio.

Filed and Recorded January 12, 1830.

March, 1830. At Mentor, Ohio.

June 1 to 30. At Mentor, Ohio.

July, 1830. Protracted meeting at Pleasant Valley, Ohio; baptized forty-five.

August, 1830. With Alexander Campbell at Austintown, Ohio.

STATE OF OHIO, }
Gauga County. } ss.

This certifies that I married Lewis B. Wood to Laura Cleaveland in Kirtland Township, on the 4th of November, 1830.

SIDNEY RIGDON.

D. D. AIKEN, Clerk of Com. Pleas.

Recorded November 11, 1830.

Lyman Wight states that "my Family and myself were baptized on November 14, 1830." And his widow states that she distinctly remembers that Rigdon was baptized on the same day.

This is the alibi by which our Mormon friends seek so zealously to combat and overthrow the testimonies of Smith's neighbors. But, giving them every date, and this includes the dates of the recording of the various marriage certificates which probably would not have required the personal presence of Rigdon either at court or at any other particular place, and we have them "beaten to a frazzle." Their alibi is so full of great gaps (and these occur right at the very times when our witnesses

declare that Rigdon was in Palmyra) that it is not only worthless as evidence to the Mormons, but is of positive value to their opponents. I now submit the list of dates and events arranged in simpler form and with the wide gaps of time indicated, so that the reader can readily discover the weakness of this alibi as evidence to those who seek by it to prove that Sidney Rigdon could not have been in New York between the years 1826 and 1830.

YEAR	MONTH	DAY	EVENT
1826	Nov.	2	Marriage of Smith and Giles.
1826	Dec.	13	Above marriage recorded.
1827	Jan.	..	Held meeting at Mantua, O.
1827	Feb.	..	Funeral of Hannah Tanner, Chester, O. (Gap of about one month.)
1827	Mar.	..	Held meeting at Mentor, O.
1827	Apr.	..	Held meeting at Mentor, O. (Gap of possibly month and a half.)
1827	June	5	Marriage of Freeman and Waterman.
1827	June	7	Above marriage recorded.
1827	June	15	Baptized Thomas Clapp at Mentor, O.
1827	July	3	Marriage of Gray and Kerr.
1827	July	12	Above marriage recorded.
1827	July	19	Marriage of Snow and Parker.
1827	Aug.	10	Above marriage recorded.
1827	Aug.	23	Met with Ministerial Asso., New Lisbon, O. (Gap of one month and seventeen days.)
1827	Oct.	9	Marriage of Sherman and Mathews.
1827	Oct.	20	At Ministerial Council, Warren, O.
1827	Oct.	27	Marriage of Sherman and Mathews recorded.
1827	Nov.	..	Held meeting at New Lisbon, O.
1827	Dec.	6	Marriage of Wait and Gunn.
1827	Dec.	12	Above marriage recorded.
1827	Dec.	13	Marriage of Cottrell and Olds.
1828	Jan.	8	Above marriage recorded.
1828	Feb.	14	Marriage of Herrington and Corning.
1828	Mar.	31	Above marriage recorded.
1828	Mar.	..	Instructed theological class, Mentor, O.

YEAR	MONTH	DAY	EVENT
1828	Apr.	..	Conducted revival at Kirtland, O.
1828	May	..	Met Campbell at Shalersville.
1828	June	..	Baptized H. H. Clapp, Mentor, O. (Gap of possibly two months.)
1828	Aug.	..	At Association, Warren, O.
1828	Sept.	7	Marriage of Dille and Kent.
1828	Sept.	18	Marriage of Corning and Wilson.
1828	Oct.	13	Above marriages recorded. (Gap of two months and a half.)
1829	Jan.	1	Marriage of Churchill and Fosdick.
1829	Feb.	1	Marriage of Root and Tuttle.
1829	Feb.	12	Above marriages recorded.
1829	Mar.	..	Meeting at Mentor, O.
1829	Apr.	12	Meeting at Kirtland, O.
1829	May	..	Baptized Lyman Wight. (Gap of possibly one month and a half.)
1829	July	1	Organized church at Perry, O.
1829	Aug.	..	Baptized Mrs. Lyman Wight.
1829	Aug.	13	Marriage of Strong and More.
1829	Sept.	14	Above marriage recorded.
1829	Sept.	14	Marriage of Atwater and Clapp.
1829	Sept.	..	Held meeting at Mentor, Ohio.
1829	Oct.	1	Marriage of Roberts and Bates.
1829	Oct.	7	The last two marriages recorded.
1829	Oct.	..	At Perry, O.
1829	Nov.	..	Held meeting at Wait Hill, O.
1829	Dec.	31	Marriage of Chandler and Johnson.
1830	Jan.	12	Above marriage recorded. (Gap of possibly two months.)
1830	Mar.	..	At Mentor, O. (Gap of two months.)
1830	June	..	At Mentor, O.
1830	July	..	Held meeting at Pleasant Valley, O.
1830	Aug.	..	Met Campbell at Austintown, O. (Gap of easily two and a half months.)
1830	Nov.	4	Marriage of Wood and Cleaveland.
1830	Nov.	11	Above marriage recorded.
1830	Nov.	14	Rigdon baptized by Cowdery.

In this alibi, we have nine wide gaps, of over a month in each, in which the whereabouts of Rigdon is not accounted for, and some of them occurring at the very times when the old citizens of Palmyra say that he was in New York conferring with Smith. Three of these gaps occur in the year 1827, two in 1828, one in 1829 and three in 1830.

As Rigdon lived only 252 miles from Palmyra, if he traveled at the rate of fifty miles a day, which was less than the ordinary distance traveled by stage in those days,¹ it would have required five days to go and five days to return, so in all our calculations concerning Rigdon's visits to New York, we must make an allowance of ten days for time spent on the road.

Again, it is not to be supposed that it would have been necessary for his visits to have been of extraordinary lengths, for, according to the generally accepted theory, the "Manuscript Found" had been thoroughly worked over and was ready for transcription before it passed out of Rigdon's hands. This would make his presence necessary only as an adviser, and this would require him being there only a few days at most. So, the time it took to go to Palmyra and to return, with sufficient time for a reasonable visit, could be easily included within one month. Rigdon could, therefore, have been in Palmyra, New York, a dozen times between the years 1826 and 1830 and still the list of dates and events as given by Elders Kelley and Smith remain intact.

¹ An ex-stage-driver here in Nebraska tells me that he used to make seventy-five miles a day, but the roads were probably better than in New York and Ohio. However, fifty miles a day was easily made. When Rigdon left Kirtland in January, 1838, he went at the rate of sixty miles in ten hours ("Church History," 2: 136), and David Whitmer, at the time that he went to Harmony, Pennsylvania, for Smith, in 1829, took just two days to make the distance of 135 miles ("Mother Lucy," p. 162).

The date when Rigdon first met Smith is not known and never will be definitely known, but a statement in Mother Lucy's "Joseph Smith and His Progenitors" (ed. 1908), page 101, raises a strong suspicion that it was late in 1824 or early in 1825. She says:

Shortly after the death of Alvin, a man commenced laboring in the neighborhood, to effect a union of the different churches, in order that all might be agreed, and thus worship God with one heart and with one mind.

Alvin died in November, 1824. Rigdon had left the Baptist Church in August preceding, according to his own account, and had become identified with Campbell in preaching the doctrine, which might, in the colloquial of the common people, be defined as "a union of the different churches, in order that all might be agreed, and thus worship God with one heart and one mind." Relatively speaking, there were but few ministers preaching this doctrine at that time, and it should not surprise us if Rigdon were the "man" who came to the Smith neighborhood soon after Alvin's death, and that this event marked his first contact with his "prophet," Joseph Smith.

But, permitting the reader to accept this inference for what it is worth, we pass on to surer ground. Lorenzo Saunders declares that he saw Rigdon at Palmyra three times before 1830: in the middle of March, 1827; in the fall of 1827, and in the summer of 1828. On the last visit, Pomeroy Tucker agrees with Saunders, while Zebulon Rudolph, father-in-law of President Garfield, supplies us with information which would seem to establish a later visit, during the early part of the year 1830. Let us now consider the circumstances which might have required the presence of Rigdon at Palmyra at the different times specified.

In the present consideration, we shall move upon the

theory that Sidney Rigdon was the "angel" that appeared to Joseph Smith. Angels, in Mormon theology, are simply exalted men,¹ and, according to Oliver Cowdery, the voice of the "angel of God," who spoke to himself and Smith at the time of their baptism, did "most mysteriously resemble the voice of Elder Sidney Rigdon." Therefore, I believe that if we put the appearance of Sidney Rigdon at those points in Mormon history wherever "angels" appear, we will have established a number of historical facts.

Saunders says that he first saw Rigdon at the Smiths in the middle of March, 1827. He tells us that he was there to eat maple sugar, and saw a group of five or six men (probably the "Gold Bible Company"), and that Harrison Smith told him that one of them, better dressed than the rest, was Sidney Rigdon, a friend of Joseph's from Pennsylvania. In the month of February of that year, Rigdon preached the funeral sermon of Hannah Tanner, of Chester, Ohio, and in the following month of March commenced a series of meetings at Mentor. After the funeral of the Tanner woman, he could easily have found time to go to Palmyra, play the "angel stunt" and then return in time for the Mentor meeting. And, strange to say, according to Mother Lucy's account,² the "angel" did appear to Joseph about this time. In January, 1827, Joseph had returned with his wife from Pennsylvania, "in good health and fine spirits." Some time after this, his father had occasion, one morning, to send him to Manchester. Joseph did not return until nearly six o'clock in the evening, and when his father asked the reason, he replied that he had taken the worst

¹ "Gods, angels and men are all of one species, one race, one great family."—*Key to Theology*, p. 33.

² "Joseph Smith and His Progenitors," p. 112.

chastisement that he had ever received in his life. Smith, senior, supposing that the chastisement had been given at the hands of some of the neighbors, was very angry, but Joseph quieted him and said that "it was the angel of the Lord: as I passed by the Hill Cumorah, where the plates are, the angel met me, and said that I had not been engaged enough in the work of the Lord; that the time had come for the record to be brought forth; and that I must be up and doing, and set myself about the things which God had commanded me to do." Sure, Joseph had not been paying enough attention to business, but, instead, he had been down to Harmony, Pennsylvania, stealing a wife and, because of the opposition of her people, had some notion of throwing up his prophetic office and working for a living, and "angel" Rigdon, after he had preached Hannah Tanner's funeral sermon, had just quietly slipped over into New York to see about it and give him a chastisement. Joseph said further: "But, father, give yourself no uneasiness concerning the reprimand that I have received, for I know the course that I am to pursue, so all will be well." The course that he was to pursue was to continue to do as he had been doing in deceiving the people by getting them ready for the springing of the great "Latter-day Swindle."

The second time that Saunders saw Rigdon at Palmyra was in the fall of 1827. What occurred in the fall of 1827? On the 22d of September of that year, Joseph Smith claimed to receive the plates, and it was necessary again for "angel" Rigdon, *alias* Moroni, to be present. And the Mormon alibi is deficient at this point, for, between August 23 and October 9, 1827, we have a gap of one month and seventeen days in which it does not account for Rigdon's whereabouts.

The third visit of Rigdon to Palmyra, that Saunders

mentions, was in the summer of 1828, just before harvest. Tucker seems, also, to have known something about this visit, as he speaks of Rigdon being at the Smiths soon after the 116 pages of manuscript were destroyed by Mrs. Harris. This occurred in the month of June, and again we have the alibi coinciding with the testimony of Saunders and also with the testimony of Pomeroy Tucker. Between the months of June and August, 1828, there are weeks in which no light is thrown upon the movements of Rigdon by the Mormon alibi.

Lastly, we have every reason to believe that Rigdon and Smith were together during the winter preceding the publication of the Book of Mormon. Zebulon Rudolph says:

During the winter previous to the appearance of the Book of Mormon, Rigdon was in the habit of spending weeks away from home, going no one knew whither. He often appeared preoccupied and he would indulge in dreamy, visionary talks, which puzzled those who listened. When the Book of Mormon appeared and Rigdon joined in the advocacy of the new religion the suspicion was at once aroused that he was one of the framers of the new doctrine, and that probably he was not ignorant of the authorship of the Book of Mormon.

Between December 31, 1829, and the month of March, 1830, the alibi does not give us a single clue as to the movements of Rigdon except mentioning the fact that on January 12, 1830, the certificate of the marriage between David Chandler and Polly Johnson was recorded.

By the facts that I have just given, I believe that it is positively proved that Sidney Rigdon was in Palmyra, New York, at least four times before he openly became a Mormon: in March, 1827; in September, 1827; in June, 1828, and in the winter of 1830.¹

¹ On May 15, 1829, "John the Baptist," whose voice, Cowdery says, "did most mysteriously resemble the voice of Elder Sidney Rigdon," appeared.

(11)

THE AFFIDAVIT OF KATHERINE SALISBURY.

Katherine Salisbury was a sister of Joseph Smith. In the year 1881, she made the following sworn statement, in which she certifies that Sidney Rigdon never was, to her knowledge, in the home of her parents until after his conversion to Mormonism in November, 1830.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }
Kendall County. } ss.

I, Katherine Salisbury, being duly sworn, depose and say, that I am a resident of the state of Illinois, and have been for forty years last past; that I will be sixty-eight years of age, July 28th, 1881.

That I am a daughter of Joseph Smith, Senior, and sister to Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of the Book of Mormon. That at the time the said book was published, I was seventeen years of age; that at the time of the publication of said book, my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., lived in the family of my father, in the town of Manchester, Ontario county, New York, and that he had all of his life to this time made his home with the family.

That at the time, and for years prior thereto, I lived in and was a member of such family, and personally knowing to the things transacted in said family, and those who visited at my father's house, and the friends of the family, and the friends and acquaintances of my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., who visited at or came to my father's house.

That prior to the latter part of the year A. D. 1830, there was no person who visited with, or was an acquaintance of, or called upon the said family, or any member thereof to my knowledge, by the name of Sidney Rigdon; nor was such person known to the family, or any member thereof, to my knowledge, until the last part of the year A. D. 1830, or the first part of the year 1831, and some time after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, by Joseph Smith, Jr., and several months after the publication of the Book of Mormon.

That I remember the time when Sidney Rigdon came to my

peared to Smith and Cowdery at Harmony, Pennsylvania, and conferred upon them the Aaronic priesthood. Notice that part of May and all of June of that year are not accounted for in the alibi.

father's place, and that it was after the removal of my father from Waterloo, N. Y., to Kirtland, Ohio. That this was in the year 1831, and some months after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and fully one year after the Church was organized, as before stated herein.

That I made this statement, not on account of fear, favor, or hope of reward of any kind; but simply that the truth may be known with reference to said matter, and that the foregoing statements made by me are true, as I verily believe.

KATHERINE SALISBURY.

Sworn before me, and subscribed in my presence, by the said Katherine Salisbury, this 15th day of April, A. D. 1881.

J. H. JENKS, Notary Public.

It would be supposed that a member of the Smith family, and one who was seventeen years of age in 1830, would, from personal knowledge, be able to give the public information upon the point at issue that would be both valuable and accurate. But such is not the case in the present instance. The affidavit of Mrs. Salisbury is so full of glaring errors that it is wholly valueless as evidence, and the investigator is impressed that it was either made with the design of concealing events that really did happen or else that the affiant was lamentably ignorant of her own family history.

In the first place, Mrs. Salisbury says:

At the time of the publication of said book, my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., lived in the family of my father, in the town of Manchester, Ontario county, New York, and that *he had, all of his life to this time, made his home with the family.*

The very contrary of this last statement is true. Instead of living all of his life, up to the publication of the Book of Mormon, with his parents in Manchester, New York, Joseph went, some time after he was married, to the home of his wife's people, the Hales, in Harmony, Pennsylvania, where he resided from December, 1827, up to June, 1829, when he removed to the home of the

Whitmers in Seneca County. Mother Lucy, in writing of Mrs. Harris, says:

When she returned home, being about two weeks after her arrival in Harmony, the place where Joseph *resided*, she endeavored to dissuade her husband from taking any further part in the publication of the record.—*Joseph Smith and His Progenitors* (ed. 1908), p. 135.

The second error that Mrs. Salisbury makes is in regard to the time of the first public visit of Rigdon to the Smiths. She says:

I remember the time when Sidney Rigdon came to my father's place, and that it was after the removal of my father from Waterloo, N. Y., to Kirtland, Ohio. That this was in the year 1831, and some months after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and fully one year after the Church was organized, as before stated herein.

Here Mrs. Salisbury has Rigdon visiting her father's family, for the first time, after they had removed to Kirtland, Ohio, in the year 1831 and "fully one year after the Church was organized." In refutation of this, I cite the following from Lucy Smith (p. 205):

In December of the same year (1830), Joseph appointed a meeting at our house. While he was preaching, Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge came in, and seated themselves in the congregation.

This was in Waterloo, New York, before 1831, and only about nine months after the Church was organized. If Mrs. Salisbury failed to remember this most important visit of Sidney Rigdon to her father's family in Waterloo, New York, in 1830, when she was seventeen years of age, is it unlikely that she failed to remember the other visits of this gentleman made secretly and when she was still younger?

CHAPTER X.

Internal Proofs from Spaulding's First Manuscript that He Was the Author of the Book of Mormon—Both Found under a Stone—A Great Storm at Sea—The Great Spirit—The Revolution of the Earth—The Use of the Horse—The Manufacture of Iron—High Priests—The Seer-stone.

On the authorship of the "Manuscript Story," now on deposit in the library of Oberlin College, there is a unanimity of opinion. Mormons and Gentiles, alike, are agreed that it was written by Solomon Spaulding. The difference exists between the two parties on the grounds of its identification with the "Manuscript Found;" the Mormons claiming that it is one and the same with that manuscript, the Gentiles claiming that it is another manuscript entirely.

While I am forced by the logic of the evidence to take the latter view, I believe that Solomon Spaulding incorporated in his "Manuscript Found" some of the features which first appeared in his "Manuscript Story," and that these, notwithstanding the undoubted thorough revision of Sidney Rigdon, have come down to us and appear in the Book of Mormon.

It is my purpose in the present chapter to point out these points of resemblance and to weave them into my fabric as cumulative evidence to support the general position that I have taken that the author of the "Manuscript Story" was the author of the basis of the Book of Mormon.

Before making my quotations from the "Manuscript Story," it will be necessary for me to explain the peculiar

markings that occur. As the original manuscript stands, it is full of erasures and mistakes of various kinds.¹ In order to represent these, so that the reader can have the work in print just as it appears in manuscript, it was found necessary by the publishers to invent a system of marking. In this system, those words and sentences which are underlined are stricken out in the original, while those places marked thus — — — — are illegible. With this explanation, I shall give my quotations from this manuscript just as they appear in the copy of the original as published by the Reorganized Church. My quotations from the Book of Mormon will also be taken from their reprint of the third American edition of that book.

BOTH FOUND UNDER A STONE.

Both the "Manuscript Story" and the Book of Mormon are said to have been found under a stone, which stone was raised with a lever in the hands of the finder. Spaulding gives the following account of the reputed finding of the first:

Near the west Bank of the Coneaught River there are the remains of an ancient fort. As I was walking and forming various conjectures respecting the character situation & numbers of those people who far exceeded the preesent Indians in works of art and inginuity, I hapned to tread on a flat stone. This was at a small distance from the fort, & it lay on the top of a great small mound of Earth exactly horizontal. The face of it had a singular appearance. I discovered a number of characters, which appeared to me to be letters, but so much effaced by the ravages of time, that I could not read the inscription. With the assistance of a leaver I raised the stone. But you may easily

¹ These are sometimes held up to prove that Spaulding was not as learned a man as he is supposed to have been, but a careful study of his "Manuscript Story" will show that they are due to pure carelessness. In some instances, he spells a word correctly and in others incorrectly. This was, probably, his first draft, which he never expected any one to see.

conjecture my astonishment when I discovered that its ends and sides rested on stones & that it was designed as a cover to an artificial Cave. I found by examining that its sides were lined with stones built in a conical form with — — — — — down, & that it was about eight feet deep.—*M. S.*, p. 11.

After giving a description of this cave, Spaulding continues:

Observing one side (of the cave, C. A. S.) to be perpendicular nearly three feet from the bottom, I began to inspect that part with accuracy. Here I noticed a big flat stone fixed in the form of a door. I immediately tore it down and Lo, a cavity within the wall presented itself it being about three feet in diameter from side to side and about two feet high. Within this cavity I found an earthen Box with a cover which shut it perfectly tight. The Box was two feet in length one & half in breadth & one & three inches in diameter. My mind filled with awful sensations which crowded fast upon me would hardly permit my hands to remove this venerable deposit, but curiosity soon gained the ascendancy & the box was taken & raised to open it. When I had removed the Cover I found that it contained twenty-eight rolls of parchment — & — that when — — — appeared to be manuscripts written in elegant hand with Roman Letters & in the Latin Language.—*M. S.*, p. 12.

This is Spaulding's fictitious account of the finding of the "Manuscript Story." Now let us read Joseph Smith's description of the finding of the Mormon plates:

Convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario County, New York, stands a hill of considerable size, and the most elevated of any in the neighborhood. On the west side of this hill, not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates deposited in a stone box. This stone was thick and rounding in the middle on the upper side, and thinner toward the edges, so that the middle part of it was visible above the ground, but the edge all around was covered with earth. Having removed the earth and obtained a lever which I got fixed under the edge of the stone and with a little exertion raised it up, I looked in and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the Breastplate, as stated by the mes-

senger. The box in which they lay was formed by laying stones together in some kind of cement; in the bottom of the box, were laid two stones crossways of the box, and on these stones lay the plates and the other things with them.—*Church History*, Vol. I., p. 16.

Spaulding claimed to find his manuscripts under a flat stone, which he raised with a lever, and in an earthen box. Smith claimed to find his plates under a stone, which was thick in the middle, but thin at the edges, and which he raised with a lever, and in a stone box. Spaulding represents himself as accidentally discovering his records; Smith declares that the depository of his was revealed to him by the angel Moroni.

A GREAT STORM AT SEA.

The "Manuscript Story" and the Book of Mormon both agree in describing a great storm at sea during the voyage which brought the people they describe from the Old World to the New. The former says:

One day he (Constantine, C. A. S.) says to me Fabius you must go to Brittain & carry aⁿ important — — — — to the general of our army there — — — — sail in a vessel & return when she returns. Preparation was made instantly and we sailed — — — The vessel laden with provisions for the army — — — Cloath-knives and other implements for their use had now arived near the coasts of Britain when a tremendous storm arose & drove us into the midst of the boundless Ocean. Soon the whole crew became lost & bewildered. They knew not the direction for to the rising Sun or polar Star, for the heavens were covered with clouds; & darkness had spread her sable mantle over the face of the raging deep. Their minds were filled with consternation and despair. & unanimously agreed that What could we do? How be extrecated from the insatiable jaws of a watry tomb. Then it was that we felt our absolute dependence on that Almighty & gracious Being who holds the winds & floods in — — — hands. From him alone could we expect deliverance. To him our most fervent desires assended. Prostrate & on bended nees we poured forth incessant Suppli-

cation & even Old Ocean appeared to sympathize in our distress by returning the echo of our vociferous Cries & lamentations. After being driven five days with incridable velocity before the furious wind the storm abated in its violence.—*M. S.*, p. 15.

The Book of Mormon account of a similar storm is as follows:

And it came to pass that after they (Laman and Lemuel, C. A. S.) had bound me (Nephi, C. A. S.), 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, insomuch, that there arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest; and we were driven back upon the waters for the space of three days; and they began to be frightened exceedingly, lest they should be drowned in the sea: nevertheless they did not loose me. And on the fourth day which we had been driven back, the tempest began to be exceeding sore.

And it came to pass that we were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea. And after we had been driven back upon the waters for the space of four days, my brethren began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish, save that they should repent of their iniquities; wherefore, they came unto me and loosed the bands which were upon my wrists, and behold, they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much smollen, and great was the soreness thereof.

And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed, the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm.—*B. of M.*, pp. 42, 43.

In both accounts, the storm which occurred ceased in answer to prayer.

THE GREAT SPIRIT.

Both records declare that the ancient Americans believed in the Great Spirit. Spaulding gives the following address of an ancient American chieftain:

The Speaker then extended his hands & spoke. Hail, ye favorite children of the great and good Spirit, who resides in the Sun who is the father of all living creatures & whose arms encircle us all around.—*M. S.*, p. 23.

In the Book of Mormon, I find King Lamoni saying this:

Behold, is not this the Great Spirit who doth send such great punishments upon this people, because of their murders? —*B. of M.*, p. 253.

And Ammon is represented as asking King Lamoni:

Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said, This is God.—*B. of M.*, p. 255.

This appellation stamps both books as a fraud, for it is now conceded by all of the leading students of the ancient American religions that the American Indian knew nothing whatever of the "Great Spirit" until he heard of him through the white missionary. The native terms for God do not express the idea of personality, but simply of the supernatural in general, the mysterious, the incomprehensible, the unknown.¹

Maj. J. W. Powell, former chief of the Smithsonian Institution, says:

Nations with civilized institutions, art with palaces, monotheism as the worship of the Great Spirit, all vanish from the priscan condition of North America in the light of anthropologic research. Tribes with the social institutions of kinship, art with its highest architectural development exhibited in the structure of communal dwellings, and polytheism in the worship of mythic animals and nature-gods remain.—*First Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, p. 69.

Mr. F. S. Dellenbaugh, a prominent archæologist, also says:

They had no understanding of a single "Great Spirit" till

¹ See Chapter VIII. of my "Cumorah Revisited."

the Europeans, often unconsciously, informed them of their own belief.—*North Americans of Yesterday*, p. 375.

THE REVOLUTION OF THE EARTH.

Fabius, after reaching our shores, reasoned as follows on the revolution of the earth:

Whereas, if according to the platonic system, the earth is a globe & the sun is stationary, then the earth by a moderate velocity — — — perform her revolutions.—*M. S.*, p. 29.

In the Book of Mormon, Helaman says:

Yea, and if he say unto the earth, Move, it is moved; yea, if he say unto the earth, Thou shalt go back, that it lengthen out the day for many hours, it is done: and thus according to his word, the earth goeth back, and it appeareth unto man that the sun standeth still: yea, and behold, this is so; for sure it is the earth that moveth, and not the sun.—*B. of M.*, p. 410.

THE USE OF THE HORSE.

Both the "Manuscript Story" and the Book of Mormon inform us that the ancient Americans made use of the horse. In the first mentioned, I find the following:

The ground was plowed by horses & generally made very mellow for the reception of the seed.—*M. S.*, p. 35.

There are a number of references in the Book of Mormon to the use of the horse, but the following will suffice:

And it came to pass that the people of Nephi did till the land, and raise all manner of grain, and of fruit, and flocks of herds, and flocks of all manner of cattle, of every kind, and goats, and wild goats, and also many horses.—*B. of M.*, p. 133.

It is now agreed that, while the horse was an inhabitant of America in the earlier geologic epochs, he ceased to exist long before man had attained to any considerable degree of culture as represented in the Book of Mormon. Dr. D. G. Brinton says:

There is no doubt but that the horse existed on the continent contemporaneously with postglacial man; and some palæontologists are of the opinion that the European and Asian horses were descendants of the American species; but for some mysterious reason the genus became extinct in the New World many generations before its discovery.—*The American Race*, p. 50.

THE MANUFACTURE OF IRON.

On the manufacture of iron tools and implements, the "Manuscript Story" says:

The manufacturing of lead Iron & lead was understood, but was not carried on to that extent & perfection as in Europe. A small quantity of Iron in proportion to the number of Inhabitants served to supply them with all the impliments which custom had made necessary for their use. By hammering & hardening their Iron they would convert it nearly into the consistence of Steel & fit it for the purpose of edged tools.—*M. S.*, p. 36.

In the Book of Mormon, Nephi says:

And I did teach my people to build buildings: and to work in all manner of wood, and of iron, and of copper, and of brass, and of steel, and of gold, and of silver, and of precious ores, which were in great abundance.—*B. of M.*, p. 64.

No fact is better established than that the American race did not use manufactured iron and steel tools before the discovery. Says Prof. Cyrus Thomas, of the Smithsonian Institution:

The use of iron as a metal was unknown in America previous to the discovery by Columbus.—*American Archaeology*, p. 11.

HIGH PRIESTS.

On this point, the "Manuscript Story" says:

Labamack accepted the office of Emperor & his four counselors were appointed. Lambon was ordained high Priest & his four assistants chosen.—*M. S.*, p. 63.

On the appointment of the Nephite Alma to such an office, the Book of Mormon says:

And it came to pass that Alma was appointed to be the first chief judge; he being also the high priest; his father having conferred the office upon him, and had given him the charge concerning all the affairs of the church.—*B. of M.*, p. 204.

THE SEER-STONE.

We now come to an identity between the "Manuscript Story" and the claims of Mormonism which is most conclusive in proving that the Mormon fraud had its inception in the brain of Solomon Spaulding, the dreamer of Conneaut. In the "Manuscript Story" we find one of the characters employing a stone exactly as Joseph Smith is said afterward to have employed the Urim and Thummim or the seer-stone. Of Hamack, a character in his first novel, Spaulding says:

Hamack then arose & in his hand he held a stone which he pronounced transparent. Thro' this he could view things present & things to come. could behold the dark intrigues & cabals of foreign courts, & behold discover hidden treasures, secluded from the eyes of other mortals. He could behold the galant and his mistress in their bedchamber, & count all their moles warts & pimples. Such was the clearness of his sight, when this transparent stone was placed before his eyes. He looked firmly & steadfastly on the stone & raised his prophetic voice.—*M. S.*, p. 98.

The following is a description of the manner in which Joseph Smith is said to have employed the Urim and Thummim, from the pen of David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses, and published in the *Chicago Times* of August 7, 1875. Let the reader carefully compare this description with the foregoing account from the "Manuscript Story," and then decide for himself whether or not there are good grounds for believing that this feature of

the Mormon fraud was first conceived in the mind of the dreamer of Conneaut. Whitmer says:

And (I) was an eye-witness to the method of procedure. The plates were not before Joseph while he translated. . . . The method pursued was common-place, but nevertheless effective. Having placed the Urim and Thummim in his hat, Joseph placed the hat over his face, and with prophetic eyes read the invisible symbols, syllable by syllable and word by word, while Cowdery or Harris acted as recorders. . . . So illiterate was Joseph at that time, that he didn't even know that Jerusalem was a walled city, and he was utterly unable to pronounce many of the names which the magic power of the Urim and Thummim revealed, and therefore spelled them out in syllables, and the more erudite scribe put them together. The stone was the same used by the Jaredites at (from?) Babel. I have frequently placed it to my eyes, but could see nothing through it. I have seen Joseph, however, place it to his eyes and instantly read signs one hundred and sixty miles distant, and tell exactly what was transpiring there. When I went to Harmony after him, he told me the name of every hotel at which I had stopped on the road, read the signs, and described various scenes without having ever received any information from me.—*Quoted in "Joseph the Seer,"* p. 72.

Hamack could view things present and things to come, dark intrigues and cabals, hidden treasures, amorous practices, and even moles and warts and pimples, through his stone. Joseph could read signs one hundred and sixty miles distant, the names on the hotels, and behold various scenes through which Whitmer passed, through his. Reader, is not this coincidence suspicious, to say the least?¹

I close this chapter with the following verses from the pen of A. O. Hooten, of Bridge, Oregon, in which are summed up the points of identity between the "Manuscript Story" and the Book of Mormon:

¹ See also "Mosiah" 5: 10 for a similar stone in use by a Nephite seer.

Solomon and Joseph, they each found a "record,"
And each of the "records," was very, *very* old.
Solomon's was in "Latin," and written on "parchment,
Joseph's "Reformed Egyptian," "engraved" on "plates" of
"gold."

'Twas just under a "stone," which he raised by a "lever,"
That each found his "record," each dry, safe and sound.
Solomon's in a "box," in a cave "artificial,"

Joseph's in a "box," near the surface of the ground.

Of each of the "records," only part was "translated,"
Each one gave his reasons, why a part was reserved.
Solomon's was a novel, while Joseph's was "more bible,"
For many centuries, hidden, miraculously preserved.

The "records" each tell us, while parties crossed the ocean
Tremenduous storms arose, surging billows everywhere,
Yet all were safely landed, and not one life was lost,
They were saved from destruction in answer to prayer.

Each "record" mentions horses, that were found upon the land,
"Burnt offerings" people offered, to cleanse them from all
sin,

Judges were appointed, that justice might be done,
And different peoples, three, this land were dwelling in.

Each "translator" must have "planets" that move in regular form.
And "Oracles" their words received, as coming from above.
"Sacred" writings kept separate, and "characters" used for words,
The wicked punished for a while, then saved by redeeming
love.

Each builds his forts of "earth" thrown up with timbers placed
on top,

Has property held in "common," and counsellors four or two,
Has a man whose words, accepted, as coming from above,
Just so he calls it "revelation," that's enough to them 'tis true.

But the thing that was dearest, to each "translator's" heart,
Was the magical "interpreters" or "transparent stone" so clear;
With *them* nothing could be hidden, *all* things came to view,
Moles and pimples, warts and wrinkles, all things far and near.

There's no "likeness" shows the "nigger" 'neath the "woodpile"
of the saints,

This "missing link" of "evidence" at last completes the
"chain."¹

Yet Spaulding wrote his "manuscript," before Smith found his
"book,"

And there's nineteen points of identity. Will Mormons please
explain?

¹ The preface to the "Manuscript Story" by the Reorganized Church speaks of it as "this hobgoblin of the pulpit, this 'nigger-in-the-woodpile' of the press and the forum," and this "newly found 'missing link' " which "completes the chain of evidence."

CHAPTER XI.

Mormon Objections Answered—Size of the Book of Mormon—Style of the Book of Mormon—Character of the Book of Mormon—Smith's Inability to Produce the Book of Mormon—The Challenge to Produce the Original Manuscript—The Character of Hurlburt and Howe—Supposed Contradictions in the "Manuscript Found" to the Book of Mormon—Recapitulation.

Various objections have, from time to time, been raised against the theory that the Book of Mormon originated in the celebrated "Manuscript Found" of Solomon Spaulding. It is objected that the Book of Mormon is too elaborate a work to have come from such a small manuscript as Spaulding wrote; that the style of the book is too common for a scholar so learned as Spaulding is represented to have been, and that it differs widely from the style of his "Manuscript Story;" that its doctrinal teachings are radically different from those that one would expect from the pen of a Presbyterian clergyman; that Smith was wholly unable, independent of divine help, to perform the task assigned him; that the Mormon demand to produce Spaulding's purported Jewish manuscript has never been complied with, hence that this manuscript never existed; that the character of Hurlburt and Howe was so low and detestable that their testimony and work is discredited thereby, and that certain contradictions must have appeared in Spaulding's second manuscript, if that manuscript ever existed, to the historical and doctrinal teachings of the Book of Mormon. These are the most important objections that have been raised against the theory which finds the original

of the Book of Mormon in the "Manuscript Found."

While these objections possess but little force to those who are familiar with the evidences adduced and the positions taken by the advocates of the Spaulding theory, they are so plausible on the face of them and are so ingeniously presented as often to deceive the superficial and those who have little or no information on the grounds that are really occupied by those who hold to this view. It is for the purpose of supplying this information, therefore, that this chapter is written.

The Mormons have ever taken full advantage of the confusion that arises over the forced identification of the "Manuscript Found" with the "Manuscript Story," and in some instances they have applied the descriptions of the one to the other, and *vice versa*, and by so doing have produced a mass of apparent contradictions, inconsistencies and absurdities that is both ludicrous and disgusting. It is only when the distinction between the two manuscripts is clearly fixed in the mind that the investigator is able to work himself out of the fog of Mormon sophistry and misrepresentation and into the sunlight of truth.

The true theory of the revamping of the Book of Mormon from the "Manuscript Found" is this: About the year 1809, Solomon Spaulding began an historical novel, based upon the antiquities of America, in which he described the first colonists as coming to our shores from Jerusalem under the leadership of Lehi and Nephi. This novel, which he called the "Manuscript Found," he placed in the printing establishment of Robert Patterson, of Pittsburgh, from which it was stolen by Sidney Rigdon in 1815 or 1816. Rigdon afterwards rewrote this manuscript, retaining only the historical outline, proper names and certain Scriptural expressions, but adding a large

amount of religious matter and clothing the whole in his own style and manner of expression, after which he put it in the hands of Joseph Smith, a young "money-digger" of western New York, about the year 1827, who, in turn, read it off from behind a sheet to another accomplice, Oliver Cowdery, who wrote it down as it fell from his lips and got it in shape for the printer. I believe this to be the theory of the revamping of the Spaulding story as it would be stated by the majority, at least, of those who advocate it. No one claims that the historical part of the Book of Mormon is just as Spaulding wrote it, word for word. The whole thing was rewritten by Rigdon, who retained from the original only the outline, the proper names and certain Scriptural expressions.

With this explanation, let us now take up the objections that have been offered, and give them a fair, candid and careful examination.

THE SIZE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

It is objected that the "Manuscript Found" could not have been the basis of the Book of Mormon, for the reason that it was too meager a thing to make a book the size of the latter. Elder E. L. Kelley says:

The manuscript Spaulding is said to have written was too meager a thing to in any sense compare with a manuscript that would make a book the size of the Book of Mormon.—*Braden and Kelley Debate* (first ed.), p. 80.

Further on he adds:

Taking up the first reason, it will at once be clear to you that a manuscript written in the English language, as they concede Spaulding's was, to contain the amount of matter that is included in the strictly historical part of the Book of Mormon, would cover at least fifteen hundred pages of foolscap paper. Was the "Manuscript Found" such? The statements of those who claim they saw the "Manuscript Found," place it beyond

doubt that it was no such. Mrs. McKinstry, the daughter of Solomon Spaulding, in her evidence, says, that she, "Read the manuscript frequently when she was about twelve years of age, and that it was about one inch in thickness." She read it *frequently*, so it could not have been very large. Then their other trumped up witnesses all, or nearly all, say they heard it read. Henry Lake heard it read. John N. Miller heard it read from beginning to end. Aaron Wright heard Spaulding read it, etc. Mrs. Matilda Spaulding, wife of Solomon Spaulding, states in her testimony published in the Illinois Quincy *Whig*, that it was about a third as large as the Book of Mormon and that her daughter (Mrs. McKinstry) read it frequently. Hurlburt who was commissioned by Henry Lake, John Miller, Aaron Wright, *et al.* (Braden's witnesses), to go and get the Spaulding writing, went and got it he says, and the only one in Spaulding's handwriting which the widow had. That he delivered it to E. D. Howe of Painesville, who was writing the book to break down the Mormons, and Howe says, page 288, of his book in describing it, that, "The trunk referred to by the widow was subsequently examined and found to contain only a single manuscript book in Spaulding's handwriting, containing about one quire of paper."

Then according to the description of the manuscript itself by those who actually saw it, it must have been a very small affair indeed in comparison to the historical portion of the Book of Mormon. In fact there was no comparison of the one, to the other, whatever.

The above is confusion confounded. It is an instance of flagrantly jumbling the two manuscripts together in order to produce an effect of absurdity and inconsistency. The manuscript which Mesdames Davison and McKinstry describe could not have been the "Manuscript Found" at all, but was the "Manuscript Story." The former was never in the "old hair trunk" after Spaulding's death, for the reason that it was in the hands of Rigdon. These ladies, as we have already shown, were mistaken, for the manuscript they describe has been traced from the old trunk to Hurlburt, from Hurlburt to Howe, from Howe to Rice and from Rice to the Oberlin College Library, and

the only title that it bears is "Manuscript Story—Conneaut Creek," and this "in faint penciling," while it is profoundly different from the "Manuscript Found" as this is described by John Spaulding, Henry Lake and the others.

Again, what if the original "Manuscript Found" was a much shorter work than the Book of Mormon? How does this prove that it could not have been the basis of the latter? Mr. Kelley's statement that the historical part of the Book of Mormon alone "would cover at least fifteen hundred pages of foolscap paper," is away wide of the mark. By a test which I have made, I have found that the whole Book of Mormon, historical part and all, can be easily written upon twelve hundred pages. Another fact is that about three-fourths of the book is religious matter, and we contend that this was the work of Rigdon. This would leave, by a fair estimate, about three hundred pages for the historical part, written just as it is, and if this were reduced to a consistent size by the omission of redundant and superfluous language, repetitions, etc., Rigdon's overdress, it would fill a space in print at most one-eighth the size of the Book of Mormon. So the statements of Lake, Miller and Wright, concerning the size of Spaulding's "Manuscript Found," may be correct after all.

THE STYLE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

1. It is claimed that the historical and doctrinal parts of the Book of Mormon are so closely interwoven that they could not have been the work of two independent writers. Elder J. R. Lambert says:

The historical and doctrinal parts are so closely blended and interwoven, throughout the book, that it is evident that whoever wrote all or any part of the history contained in the book,

also wrote the doctrine presented with it.—*Objections to the Book of Mormon Answered and Refuted*, p. 76.

But Mr. Lambert proceeds to reason upon the grounds, which we have already denied, that his opponents hold to the view that the historical part of the Book of Mormon is *verbally* the work of Spaulding. I feel sure that no anti-Mormon writer, who has given the matter due consideration, holds to any such theory. All that we claim is that Rigdon took the historical outline, proper names and certain Scriptural expressions from the "Manuscript Found," and clothed them in his own particular literary style, and presented them to the world as the Book of Mormon. This would not have been an impossible feat, for it is done every day in our public schools, the scholars reproducing in their own language the thoughts of another. This is what we claim Rigdon did.

2. Again, it is objected that the style of the Book of Mormon is altogether too common for a man of the education and literary ability of Solomon Spaulding.¹ Elder W. W. Blair writes:

That any one of judgment, on reading the book, could for one moment think that Rev. Mr. Spaulding, commonly reputed to be a man of poetic nature, romantic tastes and high scholastic attainments, ever wrote the book, or even one page of it, is more than we can believe. Had he, or any man of finished education, written the book, their scholarly attainments would have been manifest in the style, language and arrangement of the book.—*Joseph the Seer*, p. 174.

¹ When it is to the advantage of the Mormons, Spaulding's ability is run up, and when not to their advantage to run it up, it is run down. Right in this same connection, Blair says: "Whoever will read the 'Manuscript Story' written by Rev. Spaulding, will perceive that he had neither the religion, the morals, the information, nor the intellectual ability, to write the Book of Mormon, nor anything to compare with it" (p. 175). In the first quotation, the Book of Mormon, as a literary production, is below Spaulding; in this quotation, it is above him.

But here, again, Mr. Blair proceeds to argue along the same line as Mr. Lambert, and assumes that his opponents hold that the Book of Mormon, or at least the historical part of it, is just as it came from Spaulding's pen without being worked over. I say that no such theory would, for a moment, be held by any anti-Mormon polemic who would give the subject the consideration that it deserves. While the outline, proper names and a few Scriptural expressions, as "And it came to pass," etc., are undoubtedly Spaulding's, the dress, with its frills and flounces of verbosity, redundancy and repetition, comes from the dressmaking establishment of Sidney Rigdon.

3. It is further objected that the Book of Mormon is not written either in the style of Rigdon or that of Smith, hence that it must have come from a higher source and must be divine. On this point, Elder George Reynolds says:

It is not written in the language of either Joseph Smith or Sidney Rigdon. If we compare the revelations given through Joseph Smith at the time the plates were being translated, we find an altogether different diction; or let us compare it with the Lectures on Faith in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants and then with the acknowledged writings of Sidney Rigdon, and we shall find there is nothing common in any of these with the peculiarities of grammatical construction and verbal idiosyncrasies of the Book of Mormon.—*Myth of the Manuscript Found*, pp. 38, 39.

But I am not so sure of this. In some respects the style of the Book of Mormon may differ from the style of Smith's revelations, the difference being due to the respective character of each, one being mainly historic, the other mainly prophetic. But, how about Rigdon? His style is described to have been "eloquent" and "enthusiastic," just such a style as would abound in verbosity

and redundancy of speech.¹ Besides being a backwoods preacher of those times when revival excitement ran high, he undoubtedly employed the hackneyed expressions of the backwoods revivalist. Such Book of Mormon expressions, therefore, as "everlastingly too late," "did sing redeeming love," "experienced a change of heart" and "lay down the weapons of your rebellion," strongly impress us as Rigdonisms, and confine the production of the Book of Mormon to that period in the world's history when such expressions were in common use.

THE CHARACTER OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The doctrinal character of the Book of Mormon is made a further objection to its Spaulding authorship, it being claimed that it smacks more of "Campbellism" than it does of Presbyterianism.

The doctrinal portions of the Book of Mormon are not those that one would expect from a retired clergyman of the Presbyterian school. They begin with the history and are intimately interwoven with it from first to last; and some of the cardinal features of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith are discarded. A Baptist writer, Professor Whitsitt, in a lecture delivered before a Baptist Pastors' Conference, and published in the *Western Recorder*, takes the ground that the Book of Mormon was written in the direct interest of the Campbellites, and in support of their confession of faith, that "Jesus is the Christ."—*Joseph Smith, in "The Spaulding Story Re-examined,"* p. 13.

If Mr. Spaulding, a Congregational (or Presbyterian) minister, wrote the book, he would have filled it with his doctrine instead of advocating in it such doctrines as are found in the book, many of which are in no sense Congregational, but rather un-Congregational.—*W. W. Blair, in "Joseph the Seer,"* p. 174.

But it has never been claimed that Spaulding's ro-

¹ Hayden says of Rigdon: "His action was graceful, his language copious, fluent in utterance, with articulation clear and musical."—*History of the Disciples*, p. 192.

mance was a religious romance. It was purely an historical account of a fictitious people, and to this all of his relatives and acquaintances agree. The religious part was added by Sidney Rigdon, who, from 1824 to 1830, was a colaborer with Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott and Adamson Bentley, in the great Restoration movement, hence the points of "Campbellism," so-called, which appear. Another thing to be taken into consideration is that Solomon Spaulding, at this time, was neither a Presbyterian nor a "Campbellite," but a skeptic, and so if he had any religious views at all, they must have been antagonistic to Christianity. All that the religious character of the Book of Mormon proves is that it was revamped from the "Manuscript Found" after Rigdon had become familiar with the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins and other points of theology as held by the Campbells.

SMITH'S INABILITY TO PRODUCE THE BOOK OF MORMON.

It is denied that Joseph Smith could, in any way, have produced the Book of Mormon, and, as it was above his ability, it is claimed that it must have come from God. Mr. Blair says:

That Joseph Smith, without the inspiration of God, could write that book, abounding as it does in the most accurate items of history, declaring improbable historical facts, facts which have since been fully attested by the antiquarian and the geologist; disseminating a system of morals and religion that challenges the criticism, and that is worthy of the admiration of the race and publishing a series of prophecies the most important and startling, many of which are being fulfilled under our own observation—that he could do such a work, under such conditions, it would be far more difficult to believe, than to believe what he claims, viz., the guidance and inspiration of God.—*Joseph the Seer*, p. 175.

Let us, to start with, take a look at the remarkable
(13)

things which Mr. Blair refers to as proof that Smith was under the guidance and inspiration of God.

In the first place, it is claimed that he produced a book which abounds in the most accurate items of history, many of which have since been fully attested by the antiquarian and the geologist. This statement is sufficient to raise a smile. Is a book which says that Christ was to be "born at Jerusalem" (Alma 5: 2) historically accurate? And is a book which stands in open conflict with the great facts pertaining to the ancient inhabitants of America, as revealed by archæological research, to be trusted as coming from God? I have proved conclusively a score or more of confictions between the Book of Mormon and archæological science,¹ and yet we repeatedly hear, in spite of these proofs to the contrary, that the claims of the Book of Mormon have been fully confirmed "by the antiquarian and the geologist"!

As for the morality of the Book of Mormon, it proves nothing as to its inspiration. Thousands of books teach good morals without being inspired. Such books as "Pilgrim's Progress," by Bunyan; "In His Steps," by Sheldon, and "What a Young Man Ought to Know," by Stall, are morally uplifting to a greater degree than the Book of Mormon, and yet their authors would hoot at the suggestion that they were inspired to write them. The moral light which shines from the pages of the Book of Mormon is reflected from the Bible. It has not given the world a single moral truth that it did not have in the Christian Scriptures before it appeared.

Lastly, Smith's prophecies or revelations are decidedly weak in proving that he was under the guidance and inspiration of God. The honest and virtuous mind can

¹ See my "Cumorah Revisited."

have but little confidence in a prophet whose guiding spirit speaks of an individual as "my servant John C. Bennett," and promises to accept his work if he continues (Doc. and Cov., 107:6), when, at the same time, he was "a very mean man" and a wife deserter, having "a wife and two or three children in McConnelsville, Morgan County, Ohio" (Church History, Vol. II., p. 585). Either the Mormon god connived at wife desertion in defiance of Matt. 19:5, or else he was ignorant in 1841 of what Bennett did in 1838.

So, whether you take up the Book of Mormon as a history or a code of morals, or consider the prophecies of Joseph Smith, you will find nothing so remarkable that it would be above the ability of the "Gold Bible Company."

But, turning now to the real part which Smith played in the imposture, we find that it would not require more than a young man of his age and education, and of that time, was able to perform. His sole work was, first, to play the prophet, and, secondly, to read off to Cowdery, from behind the sheet, "syllable by syllable and word by word," what Rigdon had already written down. And this he did, according to Whitmer, in a most bungling manner, having to spell some of the words out, letter by letter. To claim that he had to be inspired for such a procedure, is an insult to common sense.

THE CHALLENGE TO PRODUCE THE MANUSCRIPT.

But perhaps the flimsiest objection that has ever been raised against this theory is that the opponents of the Book of Mormon have never been able to produce the manuscript which they claim was its original, hence that this manuscript never existed. As early as 1839, Parley P. Pratt, through the *New York Era*, tauntingly said:

Now if there is such a manuscript in existence, let it come forward at once and not be kept in the dark.

In throwing out this challenge, Pratt knew perfectly well that he was safe, and every Mormon knows the same in issuing the same challenge to-day, for the "Gold Bible Company" would have had a smaller degree of common sense than we give them credit for if, after this manuscript had served its purpose, they had carelessly let it lie around to fall into Gentile hands and thus expose their fraud.

It is not strange that Mormons would take advantage of such an objection, and grasp at it as a drowning man would at a straw, in order to save their failing cause, but the incomprehensible thing is that some anti-Mormon writers, who have rejected the Spaulding theory, have also thrown out this challenge to the members of their own party, and at the inability of the latter to produce the manuscript have derisively declared that "the entire theory connecting Sidney Rigdon and the Spaulding romance with Joseph Smith in originating the Book of Mormon must be abandoned." Rev. D. H. Bays, who for twenty-seven years was an elder in the Reorganized Church, and who, after his apostasy, wrote his "Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism," in a rather caustic letter to A. T. Schroeder,¹ then of Salt Lake City, Utah, and dated at Battle Creek, Michigan, September 7, 1899, demands:

If "three manuscripts" ever existed, why not produce the evidence to prove it? Why not induce that library of "over one thousand books and pamphlets" to yield up some of its hidden treasures of knowledge upon this point, and settle this mooted question once for all? Mormonism for more than half a century

¹ Mr. Schroeder, later, ably refuted the contentions of Mr. Bays in his "The Origin of the Book of Mormon Re-examined," etc.

has been demanding the production of the "Manuscript Found," that it might be compared with the Book of Mormon.—*Josephite Journal of History*, January, 1909, p. 93.

He then sums up his arguments against the Spaulding theory in the following astounding propositions:

1. The existence of a second manuscript is assumed, not proved.

2. If such manuscript really existed, no proof is offered to show the "absolute identity" of the names with those in the Book of Mormon.

It is surprising to me now, after once having sided with Mr. Bays in his theory of the Cowdery-Smith origin of the Book of Mormon, that a gentleman, so familiar with the history and evidence of the present controversy, as he claims to have been, should take his stand upon two such baseless propositions as these.

First, the existence of Spaulding's "second manuscript" is not assumed, but *proved*—proved by the testimony of eleven witnesses, the *genuineness* of which testimony is admitted both by the Brighamite, Roberts, and the Josephite, Smith. As these gentlemen, and no others, have ever shown that our eleven witnesses lied in the testimonies which it is admitted they gave, these testimonies stand as *proving* that the "second manuscript" of Spaulding really existed. And yet Bays overlooked this fact!

Secondly, how Mr. Bays could say that no proofs have ever been offered to show the "absolute identity" of the names in this "second manuscript" with those in the Book of Mormon, when eight of these admittedly genuine testimonies had been before the world for sixty-six years certifying to this very fact, is also beyond the limits of human understanding.

Mr. Bays' whole argument, then, falls in the face of

the eleven testimonies which we have already given in Chapters VI. and VII.

The demand to produce Spaulding's second manuscript suggests the following illustration: Jones steals a hog from Brown. Eleven of Brown's friends see the hog in Jones' pen and identify it as belonging to Brown. Jones takes the hog to White and they kill and eat it. After the hog is all devoured, Brown has Jones arrested for the crime and introduces his eleven witnesses to prove his guilt. But the justice decides that, as the hog can not be produced, Jones is innocent.

Now for the application: Rigdon steals a manuscript from Spaulding and, with Smith's assistance, revamps it into the Book of Mormon, after which he destroys it, as no doubt he did. Eleven witnesses testify to the identity, in historical outline and proper names, of Spaulding's manuscript with the Book of Mormon, but Rev. D. H. Bays and the Mormons demand that, as the Spaulding manuscript can not be produced, the case against Rigdon be dismissed and he be adjudged not guilty!

THE CHARACTERS OF HURLBURT AND HOWE.

It is charged that the characters of Hurlburt and Howe, who secured the testimonies of eight of the eleven witnesses which we have given, were so corrupt that these testimonies are discredited thereby. Elder E. L. Kelley says:

Do you blame me, then, ladies and gentlemen, for stating before you I cannot take as evidence anything that has passed through such hands as Mr. Hurlburt and Howe, unless I have the original statement to compare, or it can be proven outside in some way that these statements that he has been referring to—but never reading in full to you—are unaltered and genuine? Here is where he gets his John Spaulding, Martha Spaulding, Henry Lake, John Miller, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith and

Nahum Howard. Do you want me to swallow their contradictory, self-accusing, wholly improbable, malicious falsehoods, rather than accept the truth of God? Could anything pure and immaculate have passed through that sewer of filth and come out worthy of the palate of decent men and women?—*Braden and Kelley Debate* (first ed.), pp. 115, 116.

The charge that is made against Hurlburt is that he was cut off from the church for immorality, and against Howe, that he was jealous because his wife and sister united with the Mormons.

But, suppose that both of these charges are true, how does that affect the testimonies of John Spaulding and the rest, since it is *admitted* by the highest Mormon authority that these testimonies are genuine? Hurlburt and Howe may have possessed characters as black as midnight, but if the statements they secured were actually made and signed as represented, how has their own individual corruption affected them? With the admissions of genuineness which their own leading men have made, it appears very inconsistent for the Mormon churches to attempt to discredit the Conneaut testimonies by the poor characters of men who never made them.

Mr. Kelley did with these testimonies just what all Mormons do and have to do: he issued a blustering denial and brought out no proof to support the same, simply calling them "contradictory, self-accusing, wholly improbable, malicious falsehoods." Let the reader compare this charge with the statements themselves, and he will see how far it is from the truth.

As for the accusations against Hurlburt and Howe, they may have been guilty of the things charged and they may not. The policy of Mormonism has always been to attempt to blacken the character of every man who has ever openly and successfully opposed it. Howe's

book is, probably, the most important book ever written against Mormonism, as it was the first and contains so much original testimony that stands as a huge mountain in the way of the onward advance of Mormonism. Unable to meet and overthrow this testimony, the Mormons turn and vent their spleen on the devoted heads of its compilers. Other men, also, besides Hurlburt, were guilty of seduction in the Mormon Church, and among them Smith himself, but they were never excommunicated.

SUPPOSED CONTRADICTIONS IN THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND"
TO THE BOOK OF MORMON.

It is claimed, further, that in the descriptions of the purported "Manuscript Found" which exist, certain contradictions to the Book of Mormon appear.

1. It is said that the "Manuscript Found" is declared to have described an idolatrous people instead of a people who worshiped God and obeyed his laws as the Book of Mormon describes. This objection is based upon a question and its answer found in the Haven-Davison interview as published in the *Quincy Whig* of 1839.

Q. Does the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?

A. An idolatrous people.

But here, again, we have the same old play on Mrs. Davison's mistake of confounding the trunk manuscript with the "Manuscript Found." The former does describe an idolatrous people, the aborigines, but it also describes a Christian colony which came from Rome. The latter described a company of Jews that came from Jerusalem, and, while only incidentally religious, probably represented them as worshipers of their Jehovah.

2. It is objected, further, that, according to the Conneaut testimonies, the "Manuscript Found" described the

Jewish colony as the lost tribes of Israel, while the Book of Mormon makes them out to be only of the tribe of Joseph. After giving, on page 46 of his "Myth of the Manuscript Found," the claim that Spaulding's "Manuscript Found" gave an account of the immigration of the lost tribes to America, Reynolds says on page 47:

It is well to remark that the Book of Mormon makes but very few references to the ten tribes, and in those few, it directly, plainly and unequivocally states that the American Indians are not the descendants of the ten tribes, and further, that the ten tribes never were in America, or any part of it, during any portion of their existence as a nation. On the other hand, the Book of Mormon as directly informs us from whom the aborigines, or natives of this continent, are descended. This being the case, how is it possible for the two works to be identical?

To this objection I reply as follows: The theory of the Book of Mormon is so closely akin to the theory of the origin of the American Indians in the lost tribes, as advocated before and about 1830 by such writers as Adair, Boudinot, Smith and Priest, that it would be very easy for the witnesses, who had not heard the "Manuscript Found" read for twenty years, to confound one with the other. Even to-day we hear intelligent people, some of whom have read the Book of Mormon, unthoughtedly speak of it as a history of the lost tribes.¹ The important thing is that the writers of both romances have the ancient inhabitants (Israelites) coming from the city of Jerusalem and under the leadership of Lehi and Nephi.

¹ As an example of this common mistake, see "North Americans of Yesterday," p. 403, by Frederick S. Dellenbaugh, an employe of our National Museum and an accomplished archaeologist, where he says: "Certain resemblances between the myths of the Amerinds and those of the Israelites increased the belief that the American race is the Lost Tribes. The Mormons specially hold to this opinion. But there is positively no ground for the belief."

3. The Rev. Abner Jackson, in his testimony, says that Spaulding begins "their [Nephites'] departure from Palestine, or Judea, then, up through Asia, points out their exposures, hardships and sufferings, also their disputes and quarrels, especially when they built their craft for passing over the straits." This is objected to as being entirely different from the migrational account in the Book of Mormon, which has the Nephites crossing over the Pacific Ocean and landing upon the coast of South America. This objection may be met in several ways: First, it may have been according to the original plot of the "Manuscript Found," as heard read by Jackson, to have the Nephites enter America via Behring Strait, and this feature may have been afterwards changed by Spaulding himself; or it may have been changed by Rigdon still later; or, what seems more probable, Jackson, who was a very aged man at the time that he made his statement, may have confused the migrational account in the "Manuscript Found" with the theory, so widely held when he was a boy, that the lost tribes entered America by way of Alaska. The latter was the theory of many investigators at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

RECAPITULATION.

In conclusion, I wish to sum up the points which I have endeavored to establish in the preceding pages:

I. THE "MANUSCRIPT STORY."

1. About 1809, Solomon Spaulding, a retired Congregational or Presbyterian preacher, living at Conneaut, Ohio, wrote a small manuscript which he claimed to have found written in the Latin language on twenty-eight rolls of parchment in an artificial cave on Conneaut Creek, and which purported to be the historical account of a

party of Romans who were thrown upon our shores in the time of Constantine the Great.

2. This manuscript he abandoned and placed in an "old hair trunk," which at his death in 1816 was taken to the home of his wife's brother, W. H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, New York.

3. In 1820, this trunk, with the manuscript, was removed to Hartwick, New York, where it was later placed in the care of Jerome Clark, a cousin of Mrs. Spaulding, now Mrs. Davison.

4. The manuscript remained in the "old hair trunk" until 1834, when Dr. Hurlburt, from Ohio, with the permission of Mrs. Spaulding-Davison, took it to Painesville, of that State, and turned it over to E. D. Howe, author of "Mormonism Unveiled."

5. It was in the possession of E. D. Howe until 1839 or 1840, when it was inadvertently transferred to L. L. Rice, who bought Howe's printing establishment. Rice took it to Columbus, Ohio, where for years he was the State printer.

6. After this, Rice removed to Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands, and, though unaware of it, carried this manuscript with him. In 1884 it was accidentally discovered by him, and later placed in the Oberlin College Library, Oberlin, Ohio.

7. The Mormons have published copies of it, which they erroneously entitle "Manuscript Found."

II. THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND."

1. In 1809, after he had thrown aside his "Manuscript Story," Spaulding began a new romance in the Scriptural style, which he entitled "Manuscript Found." This romance, which he often read to his neighbors, purported to be the history of a Jewish colony that came to

our shores in early times under the leadership of Lehi and Nephi.

2. In 1812, Spaulding removed to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the purpose of having this manuscript printed, and placed it in the printing establishment of Robert Patterson.

3. In 1814, Spaulding left Pittsburgh and went to Amity, Pennsylvania, where he died in October, 1816.

4. While Spaulding's relations with Patterson existed, the latter had in his employ a young man by the name of J. Harrison Lambdin, who, in turn, had a friend by the name of Sidney Rigdon, who lived a few miles in the country on his mother's farm, but who frequently lounged around the printing-office.

5. Before Spaulding's death, his manuscript came up missing, and he told two intimate acquaintances, Joseph Miller and Dr. Cephas Dodd, that he suspected Rigdon of the theft.

6. In 1822 or 1823, and again in 1826 or 1827, Rigdon exhibited such a manuscript to Dr. John Winter and Mrs. Amos Dunlap, his wife's niece, which he told the former had been written by a man by the name of Spaulding.

7. Between the years 1826 and 1830 he told Adamson Bentley, Alexander Campbell, Darwin Atwater and Dr. Rosa a number of startling things, among them that a golden book had been dug up in New York which gave an account of the ancient inhabitants of this continent and stated that the Christian religion had been preached here in early times just as it was then being preached by Campbell and his coadjutors.

8. During this time, Rigdon was seen at Palmyra, New York, or vicinity, at three different times: in March, 1827; in the fall of 1827, and again in the summer of 1828.

9. In the late fall of 1830, Rigdon was converted to Mormonism, after only a few days' investigation, and later became one of its most prominent leaders.

These, I believe, are the links in that chain of evidence which, when followed from the Book of Mormon, leads us directly to Spaulding's "Manuscript Found."

THE END.

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