

MORMONISM, A DELUSION.

16

A LECTURE,

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BY THE

REV. E. BOTELER CHALMER, JUN., A.B.,

SENIOR CURATE OF TINTWISTLE,
MOTTRAM-IN-LONGDENDALE, CHESHIRE.

"BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS."

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PREFACE.

THIS Lecture was delivered in consequence of numerous attempts on the part of Mormonite preachers to spread their pernicious doctrines in the neighbourhood of Tintwistle, and is now put forth in the hope that it may be made instrumental in diffusing a slight knowledge of a system so iniquitous.

The Author is conscious of many defects in this composition, for which all who have any idea of the manifold engagements incident to his position in a manufacturing district will readily excuse him. Should the Lecture lead any one to desire a further acquaintance with the system, the Author strongly recommends the Rev. H. Caswall's "Prophet of the Nineteenth Century," to which he is much indebted.

Tintwistle Parsonage,
August 27th, 1852.

MORMONISM, A DELUSION.

WE live, my friends, in strange times. Novelties are starting up on every side of us. The advancement of every branch of knowledge, the spread of education, the rapidity of travel, the lightning swiftness with which intelligence is conveyed from shore to shore, remarkable discoveries in distant lands, and many other circumstances have combined to produce a new phase of life, to change the manners and customs of the world. How great the alteration since we ourselves were ushered into existence ! We jostle one another in the race of life: we tread our way surrounded by the incessant din of toil, the struggle after the world's wealth and pomp. The cries of party ring unceasingly upon our ears, and the clashing weapons of ambition. Mighty nations, in the persons of their sovereigns and their senators, appear in the arena and watch with jealous eye each other's slightest movements.

But amid the strife a new cry is heard. From the far west a voice arises claiming sovereignty; proclaiming the advent of a second Mahomet, the unsheathing of a sword as devastating as was his, backed by the same omnipotence; and calling upon all the nations of the world to give way before its might. That second Mahomet was Joseph Smith; that kingdom is the Mormon settlement.

In the religious world the same scenes are enacted. Church opposes Church, sect jostles sect. One separation is but the preliminary step to many more. The robe of Christ, which ought to be without seam, is rent into

a thousand shreds. Professing Christianity appears to have put on the dress of Harlequin, and to be engaged in constant squabbles about the colours.

But amid this Babel-like confusion of tongues that ought to be in unison, a strange voice is heard throughout the world. From the same distant shore it comes; not satisfied with taking a place amongst the multiplicity of sects, but denouncing all as untrue, impure, it vaunts itself as the only repository of the mind of God, and claims to rule the world. A second Rome, it boasts itself infallible, and unsparingly consigns all else to eternal damnation. A second Mahomet, it admits a God, and sets up a prophet. That prophet is Joseph Smith, that new religion is Mormonism.

Its missionaries have reached our shores, and even amid the boasted enlightenment of Protestant England in the nineteenth century, they have deluded thousands into embracing a system of so-called religion, at once blasphemous, iniquitous, and foul; a system whose founder was a profligate, whose doctrines cannot stand the test of truth, whose practices cannot endure the light of day.

I speak not more strongly than I feel; I feel not more strongly than I am justified in doing by the mass of absurdity, through which I have been compelled to wade. Time will not allow me now to bring the whole before you, but I trust that sufficient will be adduced to prove the charges just brought against Mormonism, and to preserve you from delusion.

The rise and rapid progress of the new religion, blasphemously styled "the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ," has been, and doubtless will be, appealed to by its followers as an evidence of its truth. We admit the fact of its extraordinary increase; but deny the conclusion which they would adduce from it. Before entering, therefore, upon the immediate con-

sideration of the system, it will be advisable for us to consider whether the Sacred Scriptures contain any intimation of the rise of Mormonism; and, moreover, whether the circumstances of the time and country will in any way account for its advent and its singular success.

Mormonism admits the truth of Scripture; it must therefore listen with reverence to its testimony, and abide by the verdict of that Word of God.

Scripture is not sparing, my friends, in prophecies regarding this dispensation, and more especially respecting these latter times. Permit me to call your special attention to a few of them, and to bear them in mind all through this lecture, that you may judge whether Mormonism be a fulfilment of them or not.

In Matthew xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24, we read: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man *deceive* you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. * * * And many *false prophets* shall rise, and shall deceive many. * * * For there shall arise *false Christs*, and *false prophets*, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Now, my friends, if this passage mean anything, (and the Mormonites rigidly insist upon the *literal* interpretation of Scripture,) it means that there shall be *false prophets*, who, *under the guise of Christianity*, and attended by many *apparently* great signs and wonders, shall deceive many.

Joseph Smith, jun., is not the first of these. Mahomet, John of Leyden, David George, Joanna Southcote, Brothers, Thoms, and others, have preceded him in the attempt to impose upon the world, and like him have numbered many followers.

Many other passages of the same character might be quoted; but let us now turn to 2 Peter ii. 1. We read: "But there were false prophets also among the

people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways."

We need no longer feel surprised at the success of any imposition, when damnable heresies shall be followed by admiring crowds.

We learn then from these passages that *astonishing success*, accompanied by *great signs and wonders*, are evidences of a lying imposition, rather than of Christian truth; and our impression when we hear the haughty claims, the arrogant assumptions of Mormonism, must be that Joseph Smith, jun., is another added to the list of "false prophets," and Mormonism an imposture.

Let us now glance briefly at the circumstances under which the system arose and flourished. We shall find it to be the natural offspring of a combination of circumstances singularly adapted for its production. Had Britain been the cradle of its early moments, it would have been stifled as soon as born, or would have dragged out a pining, miserable existence, like many of its predecessors. The religious institutions of our country would at once have opposed a barrier to its gaining ascendancy as a religious system; while the civil government would at once have denuded it of its military character.

America was the birthplace of Mormonism, the cradle of its infancy, the school-house of its youth, and America is now the abode of its manhood. Born in New York, it has travelled through many vicissitudes, and at present has settled near the Great Salt Lake, upon the plains of "Zion," whither its votaries are to proceed, that they may escape the impending destruction of the world and be eternally blessed.

The causes why America has contributed so largely to the rise and progress of Mormonism are as follow :—

1st. Western America has never possessed a Church or denomination of Christians of sufficient influence to control public opinion with any degree of strength. The people were left to choose their own teachers ; strange views and fanatical practices reigned triumphant ; and the first four years of this century gave to the world some of the most extraordinary *religious* exercises it has ever seen. Hence fanaticism was the second cause. To show how great was that fanaticism we may describe the more prominent religious exercises upon the testimony of an authority. The *convulsions* attending the great *revivals* mentioned were divided into “the rolling exercise,” the “jerks,” and the “barks.”

The first consisted in doubling the head and feet together, and rolling over like a hoop ; or in stretching the body horizontally, and rolling through mud and mire like swine.

The “jerks” consisted in violent twitches and contortions of the body in all its parts. When attacked by the jerks the victims of enthusiasm sometimes leaped like frogs, and exhibited every grotesque and hideous contortion of the face and limbs.

The “barks” consisted in getting down on all-fours, growling, snapping the teeth, and barking like dogs. Sometimes numbers of the people squatted down, and, looking in the face of the minister, continued demurely barking at him while he preached to them.

I have been thus lengthy in stating the second cause that you may see to what lengths fanaticism, when uncontrolled, will go ; all these absurdities being attributed to *the direct influence of the Spirit of God*.

The next reason was the rise and rapid progress of Campbellism. A great reformer amongst the Baptists,

named Alexander Campbell, began in 1827 to preach new doctrines, similar in many points to those of Mormonism. Learned, bold, and wealthy, he possessed great influence, and the new religion spread with great rapidity. Subsequently it was made an integral portion of the Mormonite system.

Add to these the peculiar characteristics of the inhabitants of the west; their indifference to, if not contempt for ancient institutions, on the ground of antiquity; their restlessness and instability; and we must come to the conclusion that America, in the early part of the present century, was prepared for the advent of a system like that of Mormonism, and was the only country where it could have risen with any prospect of success.

In March, 1829, *fourteen months prior to the appearance of the Book of Mormon*, the following startling words were published by Southey, in the second volume of his "Colloquies:"—

"America is in more danger from religious fanaticism. The Government there not thinking it necessary to provide religious instruction for the people in any of the new states, the prevalence of superstition, and that perhaps *in some wild or terrible shape*, may be looked for as one likely consequence of this great and portentous omission. *An old man of the mountain* might find dupes and followers as readily as the Allfriend Jemima; and the next Aaron Burr, who seeks to carve a kingdom for himself out of the overgrown territories of the Union, may discover that FANATICISM IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPON WITH WHICH AMBITION CAN ARM ITSELF; that the way for both is prepared by that immorality which the want of religion naturally and necessarily induces, and that *camp meetings* may be very well directed to forward the designs of a MILITARY PROPHET. Were there

another Mohammed to arise, there is no part of the world where he would find more scope, or fairer opportunity, than in *that part* of the Anglo-American Union, into which the elder states continually discharge the restless part of their population, leaving laws and Gospel to overtake it if they can; for in the march of modern colonization both are left behind."

Fourteen months after these remarkable words were published their fulfilment came. The Book of Mormon appeared; Joseph Smith, jun., arose as *prophet, seer, and revelator; ambition armed itself with fanaticism,* and Joseph Smith became "A MILITARY PROPHET," a "SECOND MOHAMMED."

We have now seen, my friends, that Scripture, whose truth the Mormonites admit, induces us, even at a cursory glance, to condemn the system as an imposition; while the circumstances under which it rose sufficiently account for its appearance in the world without any supernatural assistance, circumstances so apparent that its advent was previously announced.

We are now prepared to enter more immediately upon a consideration of Mormonism as a system.

I intend to show—

- I. That the founder was a profligate and an impostor.
- II. That its doctrines are untrue.

Allow me now to say a few words of exhortation. I am an Englishman, you are Englishmen and Englishwomen. Let us endeavour to maintain the high and holy character which, as a nation, we have gained, for a love of honesty, justice, and truth. I am about to bring forth statements regarding deeds repulsive to the breasts of Englishmen, and words of blasphemy sufficient to make the hearts of Englishmen quail with horror; but I will tell no lie, I will not say one word which in my heart I do not believe. As a man I scorn

to gain a victory by falsehood, I scorn the attempt to poison any creed with the venom of a lying tongue. As a minister of Christ Jesus, I would encircle all within the heavenly fold, and bind them with the silken fetters of the truth of God.

Should there be any here who have allied themselves to this new scheme, believing in its truth, I would exhort, I would earnestly entreat them to consider well the step which they have taken. They have left the Apostolic Church for the novelty of the day, have forsaken the Word of God, and turned to fables.

Consider yourselves now as a jury; divest yourselves of all prejudice on either side, and give an honest verdict. I place Joseph Smith, jun., at the bar, accusing him, first, of profligacy; second, of imposture.

Joseph Smith, jun., was born on the 23rd of December, 1805. His father was probably a small farmer, of no particular religious opinions, and of very indifferent character. He had six brothers and three sisters. In 1815, the prophet being then ten years old, the whole family removed from Windsor County, where he was born, to Palmyra, and afterwards to Manchester, both in Wayne county, in the western part of the state of New York. In 1830, Smith, jun., appeared with the Book of Mormon at Fayette, proclaiming himself divinely appointed to set up the kingdom of God, and asserting that his book was a divine revelation.

Such is a brief outline of his career. Testimonies as to his character are not wanting. I will first adduce *his own*. It is found in "The Pearl of Great Price," and is as follows:—

"During the space of time which intervened between the time I had the vision and the year eighteen hundred and twenty-three, (having been forbidden to join any of the religious sects of the day, and being of

very tender years, and persecuted by those who ought to have been my friends, and to have treated me kindly, and if they supposed me to be deluded, to have endeavoured, in a proper and affectionate manner, to have reclaimed me;) I was left to all kinds of temptations, and mingling with all kinds of society, *I frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth, and the corruption of human nature*, which, I am sorry to say, led me into divers temptations, *to the gratification of many appetites offensive in the sight of God.*"

Compare this character of himself with the characters of "holy men of old." But Smith spoke the truth, knowing that there were hundreds who would speak it if he did not. Accordingly we have the witness of upwards of fifty respectable inhabitants of Palmyra:—

"We, the undersigned, having been acquainted with the Smith family for a number of years, while they resided near this place, 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. This is the reason why they were permitted to go on with their imposition 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 sentiments; and we know not a single individual in this vicinity who puts the least confidence in their pretended revelations."

Compare with this the testimonies of the persecuting

heathens regarding the character of Jesus and the early preachers of the Gospel. How widely different!

You will probably be curious to know something about this money-digging. We have the method pursued by Smith detailed by parties well acquainted with him. He pretended to have in his possession a wonderful stone, by means of which he could detect the presence of rich metal in the earth. He put the stone into his hat, with which he then covered his face, and pretended to lead his companions to the rich deposits. He duped many persons in this way.

On one of his money-digging expeditions he met with a girl named Emma Hale, whom he wished to marry, but the father, a respectable man, refused his consent. Upon this Smith was "obliged to take her to another place," that is, he ran away with her.

I now quote the testimony of Peter Ingersoll, *given upon oath*, before T. P. Baldwin, Judge of Wayne County Court:—

"In the month of August, 1827, I was hired by Joseph Smith, jun., 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 that he could not see in a stone, no, NOR NEVER COULD, and that his former pretensions in that respect were all false."

The whole history of Mormonism exhibits the "prophet" in the same light.

In 1842 the Rev. H. Caswall, M.A., Professor of

Divinity in Kemper College, Missouri, visited Nauvoo, at that time "the everlasting Zion." His testimony, collected on the spot, is as follows:—

"Before the Mormons settled in the vicinity no shop for the sale of spirituous liquors had been established in Montrose. After their arrival two of their preachers commenced a grog-shop in that place, which was principally supported by the "Latter-day Saints." In September, 1841, the prophet being in Montrose, *became intoxicated* at this shop. While in this condition he told the bystanders '*that he could drink them all drunk.*'

"While intoxicated at Montrose, at another time, he was heard by several persons saying to himself, 'I am a P.R.O.F.I.T.—I am a P.R.O.F.I.T.'—spelling (or rather mis-spelling) the word deliberately."

"About two years since, at a political convention held in Nauvoo, the prophet became intoxicated, and was led home by his brother Hyrum. On the following Sunday he acknowledged the fact in public. He said that he had been tempted, and had drunk too much; but that he had yielded to the temptation for the following reason: several of the elders had often got drunk, and had never made confession; but he had got drunk that they might see how bad it looked, and now confessed his sin in order to set the elders a good example."

"My host mentioned that he had lived five years *among heathen Indians*, and had never been robbed by them of the most trifling article. During the three years which have elapsed since the settlement of the Mormons at Montrose and Nauvoo *fourteen robberies*, to the amount of two thousand dollars, have been committed upon his property."

"Joseph Smith, alluding to these robberies in a sermon, said that 'he did not care how much was taken'

from the gentleman in question. He cited the example of Christ and his apostles, who, he said, when hungry, scrupled not to steal corn while walking in the fields. He added the following words,—‘The world owes me a good living; if I cannot get it otherwise, I will steal it, and catch me at it if you can.’”

Again, some English emigrants, being disappointed with the place on their arrival, grumbled about it. The prophet, *in a sermon* at Montrose, on the 9th of May, 1841, spoke of them in these words:—“If they choose to complain, they may; but I don’t want to be troubled with their complaints. If they are not satisfied here, I have only this to say to them,—don’t stay whining about me, but go back to England, and go to h—ll and be d——d.”

Now, my friends, I am ready to take your verdict upon this count of the indictment, wherein I charge Joseph Smith, jun., with being a profligate. I have adduced but a small portion of a mass of evidence, amply sufficient, however, to prove my charge. That evidence shows him to be destitute of moral character, indolent, a cheat, a liar, a drunkard, a profane swearer. Say, my friends, whether I have not proved my accusation.

I appeal now to your common sense. Is it probable that the God of heaven and earth, the God of truth, the God of *spotless holiness*, would choose *a profligate* for the great prophet, who should introduce a new religion, promulgate a new revelation, and frame a new Church, as exclusive as Judaism was, and as the Church of Rome is now? Was Abraham, was Moses, was Jesus, such an one as Joseph Smith, jun.? Oh no, my friends! Their Master’s character was the model which they strove to imitate. Jesus was himself divine and holy.

But the Mormonites tell us that Smith’s bad charac-

ter does not militate against his being a true prophet, and triumphantly point to David's fall as a proof of their assertion. A strange doctrine this!

If Smith be proved a liar, what dependance can be placed upon the stories of his visions? If he be proved a cheat, how can we be sure that he has not cheated in the matter of religion, especially when (as is the fact) his new religion *enriched and aggrandized himself*? David fell; but was David an *habitual* murderer, an *habitual* adulterer? Was his life a constant succession of swindling, lying, drunkenness, and blasphemy? When he fell, did he strive to palliate his crime,—did he strive to legalise it by introducing into *a system of religion wholesale fornication and adultery*? David was a true prophet, but he did not introduce an entirely new system of religion; he was not the first promulgator of Judaism, as Smith was of Mormonism.

Our blessed Saviour differed widely from these modern doctrines. Listen to the solemn warning that he gives you in Matt. vii. 16—20:—

“Beware of *false prophets*, which come to you in *sheep's clothing*, but *inwardly* they are ravening wolves. YE SHALL KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so *every good tree bringeth forth* GOOD FRUIT; but a CORRUPT *tree bringeth forth* EVIL FRUIT. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. * * WHEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.”

Why, my friends, according to our Saviour's declaration, a character for holiness is *the very touchstone* whereby a *true prophet* is distinguished. Apply this language to the case before us, and the only conclusion we can draw is thus deduced:—

A bad character is not a true prophet. Joseph

Smith, jun., was a bad character—therefore Joseph Smith, jun., was not a true prophet.

That is, he was a false prophet and deceiver.

This brings me to the second count of my indictment against Joseph Smith, jun. I accuse him of being an *impostor*. Listen to my proofs and weigh them well with all impartiality.

He has been already proved an impostor in worldly matters upon his own confession. I intend to prove him an impostor in religion.

In 1830, Smith published the “Book of Mormon,” as a revelation of the mind and will of God; containing, also, a history of the American Indians: in short, a second Bible.

We must, therefore, proceed to examine this book, and either acquiesce in its demands, or deny its pretensions altogether, according to the evidence adduced.

Let us first examine *its origin*.

The Mormonite account is briefly this:—

In 1820, Smith, being anxious about salvation, prayed for wisdom, that he might be guided aright in the choice of a religious community. Two angels appeared to him, and informed him that all the sects were wrong, and that he was not to join any of them; that the true doctrine, the fulness of the Gospel, should at some future time be made known to him. Three years elapsed before another vision was vouchsafed, during which period, according to his own testimony, he led a dissolute life.

In 1823, an angel appeared to him three times as he lay in bed one night, and came again the next morning; instructed him about many things, and told him where to find the gold plates whereon were engraved the records of which he had been informed, which records were ‘the fulness of the Gospel.’

Smith went to see these wonderful plates, and upon opening the box in which they were inclosed, he was surrounded by evil angels. The angel of the Lord was there, and drew his attention to the Prince of Darkness and his attendants, explaining why they were there. He also told him that he could not then have the plates. In four years from that date, namely, on the 22d of September, 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into his hands. The plates are thus described :—

“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 Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume as the leaves of a book, and fastened at one 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 the two rims of a bow. This was in use in ancient times, by persons called seers.”

Now mark, for all these things we have no testimony but *his own*. No eye saw the angels, no ear heard them giving him instructions. Moreover, all this time the self-styled *protégée* of heaven lived a life of sin, and gained a character among his neighbours far more notorious for vice than virtue. I ask you, as men of sense, is this testimony, unsupported as it is, of any value? It is not worth a rush.

With respect to the golden plates, I may here

remark, that a curious calculation has been made. Two hundred plates, answering the description above given, would form a book of the required thickness. But it would take a thousand plates to contain the whole "Book of Mormon" written in the characters described by Smith.

To show the value of Smith's testimony regarding the origin of the "Book of Mormon," I now quote from the statement of Peter Ingersoll, made on oath before the Judge. "One day he (J. S., jun.,) 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.'"

This is rather a dark cloud upon the brightness of Smith's testimony; but not the only one. The true account of the "Book of Mormon" is as follows :—

In 1761 Solomon Spaulding was born in Conneca

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ticut. He was educated at Dartmouth College and graduated, after which he was ordained a minister of the Congregational denomination. Three or four years afterwards he forsook the pulpit and entered into business, in which he was very unfortunate. At length, being disabled from active labours he reverted to literary pursuits, to which he was always partial. At that time an opinion was prevalent that the American Indians were the lost ten tribes, and among others Spaulding warmly espoused it. Being fond of history and antiquities the idea occurred to him of writing a pretended history of these ten tribes, how they migrated to America, and are now Indians. The story was entitled, "The Manuscript Found," and professed to be translated from records discovered in the earth. This story was read in portions, as he finished them, to all his neighbours, who were much interested in it, and often inquired about its progress. Among these neighbours was Spaulding's brother John, who was intimately acquainted with the work. Spaulding afterwards removed from Ohio to Pittsburg, where he entrusted the manuscript to a printer named Patterson, with a view to its being published. Obstacles coming in the way, it was laid on the shelves of the office, within reach of any one connected with the place. At that time Sidney Rigdon was connected with the office, and had ample opportunity of copying the story if he did not obtain possession of the manuscript. He afterwards became a leading Mormonite.

The above account is abridged from the statement made and published by Mrs. Davidson, who was Spaulding's wife, she having survived him and married again. I now quote her very words:—

"After the Book of Mormon came out, a copy

of it was taken to New Salem, the place of Mr. Spaulding's former residence, and the very place where 'The Manuscript Found' was written. A woman preacher appointed a meeting there; and in the meeting read and repeated copious extracts from the 'Book of Mormon.' The historical part was immediately recognised 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 recognised 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."

Thus we see that Spaulding's fiction is the staple of the "Book of Mormon." It was written in an ancient style, and in language closely imitated Scripture. This story was enlarged by *very liberal, but not always well-selected* passages of Scripture: when we come to that portion of our subject we shall find absurdities enough.

Again: Smith being himself unable to provide funds for publishing the "Book of Mormon," duped Martin Harris, a man who apparently had "more money than wit." By means of pretended revelations he succeeded in inducing Harris to undertake the expense of publishing. Harris, however, was not quite so submissive a disciple as Joseph wished, and was exceedingly anxious to obtain a sight of the plates. He was, however, put off from time to time by *singular revelations*. And we may here remark how very anxious the Lord was that Joseph should have an *easy life, and be supplied with every comfort at the expense of other people.*

Harris's wife saw through the deception and stole 117 pages of the translation, knowing that, if Smith's story were true, and he possessed the big spectacles, by means of which he translated "*modern reformed Egyptian*" into bad English, he could translate them again. She intended, then, to compare the new translation with the old, and if they differed to expose the cheat. The never-failing *revelation*, however, got rid of the perplexity by ordering that these should not be re-translated, and so "the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" is deficient by upwards of 100 pages. The revelation is given in section xxxvi. of the "Book of Doctrines and Covenants."

One fact more, and I close this portion of my subject. Harris, continuing to trouble the "prophet" about the plates, was supplied by him with a piece of paper containing a copy of a portion of the engraving on the golden plates. This he took to a learned man, Professor Anthon, many of whose writings are well known and highly valued in this country, stating how he had obtained possession of it, and relating the story of the plates and spectacles. A false account of this interview being spread abroad, Anthon wrote a letter to Mr. E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio, in which he says—

"The whole story about my pronouncing the Mormonite inscription to be 'Reformed Egyptian Hieroglyphics' is *perfectly false*."

After narrating the particulars with which Harris had supplied him he goes on to describe the paper:—

"This paper in question was, in fact, a singular scroll. It consisted of all kinds of crooked characters, disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets, Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes; Roman letters inverted

or placed sideways, were arranged and placed 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."

Soon after, Harris visited the Professor again, wishing to leave a printed copy for his inspection ; but, notwithstanding the man's urgency, the Professor declined, told him of the roguery, and advised him to go before a magistrate. Harris, however, had invested his money in the affair, and seems now to acquiesce in the deception, as his name appears as one of the three witnesses at the end of the testimony prefixed to the "Book of Mormon."

Having thus examined *a portion* of the evidence respecting *the origin* of the "Book of Mormon," which, I think, goes far to prove it false ; let us now examine the additional *testimonies* by which it is supported. We will soon bring this to a satisfactory termination. It will be needful for me to occupy your time, my friends, rather tediously, perhaps, by reading the whole of these testimonies taken from an edition of the "Book of Mormon," printed by J. Tompkins, Liverpool, in 1841 ; and I will take this opportunity of thanking the Mormonites of this neighbourhood for their kindness in supplying me with several of the publications of the sect. I now read—"The Testimony of three Witnesses":

"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 behold and bear record that these things are true ; and it is marvellous 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 honour be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

“ OLIVER COWDERY.

“ DAVID WHITMER.

“ MARTIN HARRIS.”

“ And also the testimony of eight witnesses.”

“Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, jun., 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 has 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.

“ JACOB WHITMER.

“ PETER WHITMER, jun:

“ JOHN WHITMER.

“ HIRAM PAGE.

“ JOSEPH SMITH, sen.

“ HYRUM SMITH.

“ SAMUEL H. SMITH.”

These are the testimonies. We shall find that their value is very slight. Ten years elapsed between the angel's first visit and the appearance of the book. During this long period it would be no difficult matter to manufacture such plates as Smith described ; or he might really have found some old plates, as such have been found in Mexico. These parties, then, may have seen some plates in Smith's possession, but it does not follow that the book is true. To give their testimony weight, they should be able to declare that the Book of Mormon is a faithful translation of the plates in Smith's possession ; and that they witnessed the miraculous reception of these plates. This they could not do, for Joseph had the big spectacles, and some curious stories are told by persons who are neither liars, swearers, nor swindlers regarding the manner in which these persons saw the plates. I give the following on the authority of the Rev. H. Caswall:—

“ On one occasion a sensible and religious gentle-

man in Palmyra put the following question to Harris :—‘Did you see those plates?’ Harris replied that he did. ‘But did you see the plates and the engravings on them with your bodily eyes?’ Harris replied, ‘Yes, I saw them with my eyes,—they were shown unto me by the power of God and not of man.’ ‘But did you see them with your natural, your bodily eyes, just as you see this pencil-case in my hand? Now say *no* or *yes* to this.’ Harris replied, ‘I did not see them as I do that pencil-case, yet I saw them with the eye of faith ; I saw them just as distinctly as I see anything around me,—though *at the time they were covered over with a cloth.*’”

An acquaintance of the Rev. J. B. Lowe, of Liverpool, had a similar conversation with Harris, which ended in the same manner. Whitmer, another of the witnesses, reported that the angel who appeared was “*like a man in grey clothes having his throat cut.*” Oh ! ye poets and painters, who have so long portrayed angels as lovely beings, clothed in beautiful white garments and endowed with wings, listen to this description of an angel, “A man in grey clothes having his throat cut.” More like the ghost of a Tipperary boy, who had been hung for murder !

But in every court of justice, the character of a person bearing witness is taken into account and influences the value of his testimony. Let us examine the character of these witnesses. We have the following curious *revelation* concerning Oliver Cowdery, the first witness ; it is found in the “Book of Doctrines and Covenants,” section xxviii., § i., p. 167.

“Hearken unto me, saith the Lord your God, for my servant Oliver Cowdery’s sake. It is not wisdom in me that he should be entrusted with the commandments AND THE MONIES which he shall carry unto the

land of Zion, *except one go with him who will be true and faithful.*"

Truly the Lord seems to have a very poor opinion of His servant's honesty.

Hear now a portion of a long complaint made by Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, as quoted by Mr. Lowe:—

"Amongst those who treated me thus, I cannot help making particular mention of Syman Cowdery, who, *in connexion with his brother Oliver*, took from me a great many things; and to cap the climax of his iniquity, compelled my aged father, by threatening to bring a mob upon him, to deed over to him or his brother Oliver, about 160 acres of land, to pay a note, which he said I had given to Oliver for 165 dollars. Such a note I confess I was, and still am, entirely ignorant of; and, after mature consideration, I have to say that I believe it must be a forgery."

A nice, honest transaction for Oliver to be connected with! In June, 1838, *Sidney Rigdon* drew up a paper, in which the following occurs:—

"*Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer* (the second witness), and another, were united with a gang of *counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs of the deepest dye, to deceive, cheat, and defraud the saints.*"

The natural conclusion is, that if they were not very scrupulous in *deceiving* and *cheating* the saints, they would not much object to *deceive and cheat the sinners* (Gentiles), if anything were to be gained by it.

Joseph's own testimony published in the "Elder's Journal" is—

"There are negroes who wear white skins, as well as black ones—Grames Parish, and others who acted as lackies, such as *Martin Harris, &c.*, but they are

so far beneath contempt that a notice of them would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make."

Poor Martin! you have been pretty well fleeced, and this is your reward.

With regard to the eight witnesses, you will observe that with the exception of Hiram Page, all are Whitmers and Smiths; in short, all are interested in the success of the scheme. But the testimonies are shown to be utterly worthless by the fact that out of the eleven witnesses, *only three* have died professing Mormonism, and *all the rest except the prophet's two brothers* have APOSTATIZED from the system and become its opponents.

This, my friends, completes our consideration of the external testimony for the Book of Mormon. The evidence adduced is sufficient to condemn it as an imposition, but we shall find the internal evidence such as to prove it one of the most bungling and absurd impostures ever attempted. We will now examine the book itself.

It is called the Book of *Mormon*. An explanation of the word being wanted, Joseph condescended to enlighten the world upon the point in a letter to a paper called the "Times and Seasons." After telling us that no one in the world could tell its derivation and meaning but himself, he proceeds to give us the following rather ludicrous explanation:—

"We say from the Saxon *good*; the Dane, *god*; the Goth, *goda*; the German, *gul*; the Dutch, *goed*; the Latin, *bonus*; the Greek, *kalos*; the Hebrew, *tob*; and the Egyptian, *mon*. Hence, with the addition of *more*, or the contraction *Mor*, we have the word Mormon, which means literally, *more good*.

"Yours, JOSEPH SMITH."

And I think few things are *more good* than this. He may well call it "*modern reformed Egyptian*."

It looks uncommonly like the language of a friend of mine when he attempts to talk with a Frenchman: he knows a few words of French, and those that he does not know, he supplies in English.

The book contains so many absurdities that time will only allow me to produce a very small portion of them. It professes to be a record of the Nephites, the Lamanites, and the Jaredites, and to be written as the events occurred. The Nephites, descendants of Joseph, left Asia and migrated to America about 600 years B.C., and therefore the record begins then. Mark this. I say, "mark this," because though professing to be written 600 B.C., it yet *contains whole passages taken almost word for word from our Bible, even from the New Testament*, a translation which was not made till 1,600 years after Christ, and some of these passages display *exactly the same critical errors* as our own Bible. Does not this stamp the book at once? I will give you some examples:—

"*Those who are not of the world*"—p. 13.

"*The land of promise.*"

"The Spirit saith, Behold the axe is laid at the root of the tree; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire; * * * even an unquenchable fire"—p. 252.

"All you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things"—p. 252.

At page 20 we find no small portion of Romans xi. incorporated with the book, containing these remarkable expressions, "*the natural branches of the olive tree,*" "*grafted in.*"

The prophecies regarding our Saviour's first advent are quite as clear as the narratives in our Gospel, detailing past transactions and events.

Such quotations as the above might be multiplied, but I forbear: it is too absurd. Listen now to this. I quote from page 584 of the Book of Mormon, according to Smith, a "Divine revelation." It is a portion of the Book of Ether:—

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

Here is a precious sample of Divine revelation. In whatever light we view it the conclusion that we must draw from it is that Mormonism is an imposition and

its book a lie. Either Joseph Smith, jun., is a knave and an impostor, or his god is an ignorant blockhead. Only fancy God giving orders to build boats, in which people were to sail for some time and be preserved, so air-tight that they must die, and then putting the climax to his folly and ignorance by ordering a hole to be cut in *both the top AND BOTTOM* of the boat. Why Jared's brother was a far better philosopher than his god. He was no fool. I ask, would you like to put to sea in a boat which had a hole in the bottom? I should not for one.

Thus, then, supposing Joseph Smith, jun., to be a true prophet, I ask you, would you worship such a god; a god inferior to yourselves in the common wisdom of every-day life? You would not, you could not; and so you could not be Mormonites. Or supposing that the ideas you now have as Christians of your God be true (as undoubtedly they are), can you believe that he should promulgate as a Divine revelation such absurd nonsense? You cannot: to do so would be to sink him to a depth below contempt. It follows, then, that Joseph Smith, jun., is an impostor, a liar, a false prophet; that the Book of Mormon is a lie.

It is needless to say "there is much good in that book, much of it is truth." If it be a Divine revelation it is *all* true; *if it be not all true it is not a Divine revelation.*

The Mormonites admit the truth of our Bible. It is a principle in logic, it is the dictate of common sense, that contradictories cannot both be true. If one man tells me that the sky is blue and another tells me at the same moment that it is scarlet, I know that one is speaking a falsehood. If then I can prove that the Book of Mormon and the Bible directly contradict one another, I prove that one of them is false. We are relieved from all anxiety on

this head because the Mormonites allow the Bible to be true, therefore, if there be any contradiction, the Book of Mormon must be false.

In Genesis i. 28 we find these words, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be *fruitful, and multiply*, and replenish the earth." Mark the time at which these words were spoken, it was directly after God had created *male and female* in his own image; it was *before the transgression*.

I now quote from the 2nd Book of Nephi, at page 65:—

"And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed, he would not have fallen;" (a singular piece of information!) "but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created, *must have remained in the same state which they were*, after they were created; and they must have remained for ever, and had no end. And *they would have had no children, wherefore, they would have remained in a state of innocence*, having no joy for they knew no misery: doing no good, for they knew no sin."

I say again, not in ridicule, but in strong indignation, what a fool does Mormonism make of God! God says, "Be fruitful, and multiply;" the Book of Mormon says, "They would have had no children; *wherefore*, they would have remained in a state of innocence." In other words, while Adam and Eve were innocent, God commanded what he did not mean them to fulfil: after they transgressed God commanded them to sin, for this is the import of the last sentence: "wherefore" signifies "for which reason;" let us make the change, and the passage reads thus: "And they would have had no children; *for which reason*, they would have remained in a state of innocence." That is to say, it is a sin to bring children into the world. Hear this, ye parents! Your God at once commands

you to be fruitful and multiply, and condemns you for it as being sin. Hear this, ye Mormon leaders, who have as many wives as you can get and keep! Hear this, Brigham Young, great head of the Mormon "Church," who (if report be true) drives through Deseret with a carriage-load of wives and infant sucklings! Hear this, young men and women, who think one day of being parents! To beget children is pronounced *a sin* by that very God who bade you be fruitful and multiply.

Away with such folly, blasphemy, and impiety! What think you, my friends, of a system of religion which makes your God a knave, a drivelling idiot, or a fool? Will you be Mormonites, and worship a God for whom you can feel nothing but contempt? Or will you continue to be Christians, and worship a God *all-wise, all-powerful, holy, just, and good*?

The difficulty in this Lecture is not to bring together sufficient evidence to condemn the system as an imposition; but, on the contrary, to make *a selection* from the *vast mass* of testimony. My strength and your patience would be exhausted long before it could all be brought before you. I am now, however, perfectly willing that you should give your verdict upon this second count of my indictment. I charged Joseph Smith, jun., with being an impostor in religion: I have brought forward my proofs. Now give your verdict. Is he an impostor?

I promised to show,

II. That the doctrines of Mormonism are untrue.

I proceed to do so; but here again I must be much more brief than I could wish. Time will allow me to do but little more than name the most prominent and distinctive. The very facts already adduced, proving that Mormonism is an imposition, take away the very foundation of their doctrinal system, and reduce them

from their arrogant assumptions to the level of the false prophets and false systems which have preceded them, and sunk almost into oblivion.

Listen to their idea concerning God. It is taken from the sixth volume of the "Millennial Star," and is from the pen of the illustrious prophet :—

"What is God? He is a material, organized intelligence, possessing both body and parts. He is in the form of a man, and is, in fact, of the same species. * * This being cannot occupy two distinct places at once; therefore he cannot be everywhere present."

I am not going to waste your time and exhaust your patience with a long elaborate refutation of such blasphemy. Mormonites contend for the *literal* interpretation of the Bible; let them thus interpret the following passages :—"God is a *Spirit*." (John iv. 24.) "No man hath seen God at any time." (John i. 18.) "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out." (Job xxxvii. 23.) But Joseph Smith, jun., knew all about him! "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psalm cxxxix. 7—10.) "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jeremiah xxiii. 24.)

Their description of Jesus Christ is similar. Angels are declared to be "intelligences of the human species," I suppose of the Mormonite religion, as no others can be saved. Spirits are declared to be "intelligences waiting to come into the natural world, and take upon them flesh and bones;" and it is asserted, "Such was

Jesus Christ." The following question refers immediately to ourselves:—

"What are men? They are offsprings of God the Father. * * * They are capable of receiving intelligence and exaltation to such a degree, as to be raised from the dead, with a body like that of Jesus Christ, and to possess immortal flesh and bones, in which they will eat, drink, converse, reason, love, walk, sing, *play on musical instruments.*"

This looks very much as if Mr. Smith had been reading the Koran, and taken a leaf out of Mahomet's book. As Joseph knew so much about heaven and the resurrection, even to the fact of the saints *playing on musical instruments*, I think he might have told us what instruments will be wanted, that friends might supply them; as it is said that some of the Mormon emigrants have taken trousers, &c., for the use of their friends at the resurrection.

But the god of the Mormons is a created being, not as we teach, and as the Bible declares the Creator of all things. They hold that matter is eternal. I now read an extract from an essay entitled "The Great First Cause," written by Orson Pratt, as quoted by Rev. J. B. Lowe:—

"We do not consider it possible for the Almighty, (though we speak with all due deference to his superior and transcendent powers,) to create an intelligent power, or to impart it to materials, where it does not already exist."

Let us now briefly consider their doctrine of the priesthood. They pretend to possess two orders of priesthood, the order of Melchizedek and that of Aaron. In the "Book of Doctrines and Covenants," section iv., page 82, we find a "revelation" containing the following absurd stuff:—

“ And the sons of Moses, according to the holy priesthood, which he received under the hand of his father-in-law Jethro, and Jethro received it under the hand of Caleb, and Caleb received it under the hand of Elihu, and Elihu under the hand of Jeremy, and Jeremy under the hand of Gad, and Gad under the hand of Esaias, and Esaias received it under the hand of God. Esaias also lived in the days of Abraham, and was blessed of him, which Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, *who received it through the lineage of his fathers*, even till Noah; and from Noah till Enoch, through the lineage of their fathers, and from Enoch to Abel, who was slain by the conspiracy of his brother, who received the priesthood by the commandments of God, by the hand of his father Adam, who was the first man, which priesthood continueth in the Church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years.”

Such is their account of the order of Melchizedek. Can you believe this to be a “revelation?” Read the seventh chapter of Hebrews, and you will find undoubted (even by the Mormonites) inspiration, unquestioned *revelation*, declaring that there is *but one* priest after the order of Melchizedek, that *that priest is* JESUS CHRIST the Son of God who abideth ever, and it is blasphemy for any one to arrogate it to himself.

Again, you find in their account a genealogy assigned to Melchizedek: it says, “Abraham received the priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah.” The Apostle, in Heb. vii. 3, says, on the contrary, that Melchizedek was “without father, without mother, without descent”—that is, *without pedigree or genealogy*,—“having neither beginning of days nor end of life.” Now the Mormonites insist upon the *literal* interpretation of Scripture: let them have it here, and it

gives the lie direct to their pretended revelation. Again, contradictions cannot both be true. But if we consider the passage figuratively, we have the same result. So understood it affirms that Melchizedek was *without a genealogy in his priesthood*; whereas they declare his priesthood to have been handed down from Noah. Here are contradictories, and Joseph Smith is once more proved a liar and false prophet.

I now continue the quotation, which proceeds to treat of the Aaronic priesthood :—

“And the Lord confirmed a priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations— which priesthood also continueth and abideth for ever with the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God: and this greater priesthood administereth the Gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God; therefore in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest; and without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; for without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.”

It is hard to say whether this quotation or the former betrays the greater ignorance. You all know that the priesthood was confined to *one tribe*, and *one family* of that tribe, yet here we have Gentiles of every sort admitted to it. (See the “*Millennial Star*,” for July 31, 1852.) Again, how utterly ridiculous to make *the priesthood of Aaron a Christian priesthood*. Who among you does not know that Aaron’s priesthood, and their sacrifices, were but types of the Great High Priest, even Jesus Christ, who “*by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*;” that sacrificing priest and slaughtered victim were done away in Christ, so that there is “no more offering for

sin." St. Paul and Joseph Smith again at variance, or rather St. Paul's God, the God of truth, saying one thing, and Smith's God *revealing* the opposite! We know that God is TRUE, and the Devil is a LIAR, and as contradictories cannot both be true, we have much reason to fear that the Devil is Joseph Smith's god; in other words, that Mormonism is an imposition.

Their doctrine of "direct revelation" we may at once dismiss, as we have shown that twice it has proved to be false. I will, however, give a further proof.

It is a great object of the Mormonites to get to Zion, that is, some place in America, whither all who would escape the judgments coming upon the world are to flee. At present Zion is in the Great Salt Lake Valley; but it has not always been there. Poor Zion has more than once been fixed (*by revelation*) in everlasting habitations, but has been obliged to pick up her traps and walk off, on very much the same principle that a pickpocket is requested by a stern policeman to "move on." After much anxiety about the abode of Zion had been manifested, and some very commendable caution used in selecting a nice place, at length "a revelation" came. It is found in the "Book of Doctrines and Covenants," section xxvii., page 165.

"*Thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence, is the centre place, and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court-house: wherefore it is wisdom that the land should be purchased by the saints; and also every tract lying westward, even unto the line running directly between Jew and Gentile. And also every tract bordering by the prairies, inasmuch as my disciples are enabled to buy lands. Be-*

hold, *this is wisdom*, that they may obtain it for *an everlasting inheritance.*"

We may say "alas! for poor human expectations." They are often disappointed, but we do expect something more certain and stable from *divine revelation*. Scarcely had two years elapsed when Zion was *expelled* from Independence, and the *everlasting* habitations were broken up. Revelation now commanded them to buy up lands in Jackson county and the adjacent counties of Missouri, and to organize an armed force to withstand the *Gentiles*.

The prophet then determined upon collecting a very great army, and becoming a MILITARY PROPHET. A troop called the Danite band was organized, in its constitution and doings very much after the fashion of an Irish Ribbon Lodge; and its members were called "Destroying Angels."

Zion, however, must be established, and accordingly we have a new revelation.

The village of Commerce is fixed upon, and called Nauvoo. In January, 1841, Smith had a revelation about the place: it is found in "Doctrines and Covenants," section ciii., page 302, and from it I extract the following:—

"And now I say unto you, as pertaining to my boarding-house which I commanded you to build for the boarding of strangers, let it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it, and *let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein from generation to generation.* * * * Therefore let my servant Joseph, and his seed after him have place in that house *from generation to generation, for ever and ever*, saith the Lord, and let the name of that house be called the *Nauvoo House.*"

Here we see that Joseph and his seed were to live

at Nauvoo "*for ever and ever.*" If this revelation be a true one, then eternity does not last quite as long as we suppose, for Zion was once more sent adrift. After a few years of transient prosperity, the Mormons were compelled to evacuate Nauvoo. They are now in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, which they call Deseret.

Whatever we may think of the cause of their expulsions, the revelations are falsified, and Mormonism is shown thereby to be an imposition. We may cry out against their rapacious dishonesty, their insolence, and haughty assumptions of power, to which they had no right; we may admire the fortitude with which they endured the persecutions which they had brought upon themselves by their dishonesty; we may pity their sufferings or blame their persecutors, but yet the inevitable conclusion from these *stubborn facts* is, either that their god is ignorant and powerless, or that Joseph Smith, jun., is a liar, and Mormonism an imposture. Thus much for the doctrine of direct revelation when applied to the *head of the Church*.

The Mormonites also lay claim to the gift of tongues; but laying claim to it and possessing it are two different things. Accordingly, with not a little inconsistency, we find the apostles and elders bearing witness against themselves. In a pamphlet, called "One Year in Scandinavia," &c., by Erastus Snow, *one of the twelve apostles*, occurs the following:—

"We have not been able as yet *either to preach* in Danish, *or write* for the press; and we have thought it wisdom not to create much excitement until we are fully organized, *and can speak the language better.*"

What a different gift this must be from that which enabled the apostles to preach extemporaneously in every language. What would you think if I should tell you that I have the gift of tongues, and when you asked me to preach in Hebrew, I should reply, "Oh!

but I must first learn the alphabet and grammar of the Hebrew language, I must be able to read it, and then I'll show you whether I have the gift of tongues or not." You would rightly set me down as an ignorant blockhead.

The Rev. H. Caswall tells a strangely curious story illustrative of Joseph Smith's powers in this line. When going to Nauvoo, in 1842, he provided himself with an old manuscript book, on purpose that he might test the prophet's powers. He had an interview with the prophet, which he thus details:—

"I handed the book to the Prophet, and begged him to explain its contents. He asked me if I had any idea of its meaning. I replied, that I believed it to be a Greek psalter, but that I should like to hear his opinion. "No," he said, "it ain't Greek at all, except, perhaps, a few words. What ain't Greek is Egyptian, and what ain't Egyptian is Greek. This book is very valuable; *it is a dictionary of Egyptian hieroglyphics.*" Pointing to the capital letters at the commencement of each verse, he said, "*Them* figures is Egyptian hieroglyphics, and *them* which follows is the interpretation of the hieroglyphics, written in the reformed Egyptian. Them characters is like the letters that was engraved on the golden plates."—*City of Mormon*, p. 36.

Only fancy the compositions of the good old King David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, pronounced to be "a dictionary of Egyptian hieroglyphics," by a man claiming the gift of tongues. And we are seriously told to believe such trash, and charitably sent to everlasting damnation if we dare to refuse assent.

I now come to the power of working miracles, which also they claim. With regard to this, they act very much in the same manner as the Romanists. If we ask for one, they refer us to something miles

away. If they have the power, let them work a miracle on the spot; there are parties near on whom to operate. I can produce a blind man, who will be delighted to receive his sight; a deaf man, who will rejoice to hear; a lame man, who wishes to be made whole. Let them open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, heal the sick, and make the lame man whole. Let them come with me to the bier whereon the corpse is laid, and call it back to life. Let them stand beside the tomb, and bid the dead come forth. They *cannot* do it; if they could, they would do it at once, as they would then gain multitudes of converts; if they will not do it, it is because they cannot. Urge this upon them: when they preach, require a miracle; when they enter your houses, demand a miracle. They will answer you in the words of Christ, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." But they have no right to quote this, till they can show that they have done as Jesus did. Thousands and tens of thousands saw his miracles,—thousands were the subjects of them. The vast majority of His miracles were such, that *they could not possibly be assigned to natural causes*. They were done on the spot where he preached and promulged the Gospel—they were performed by Him and his apostles in attestation of the truth of their Divine mission, and that, too, wherever they preached. I say, that if any man promulges a *new Gospel, a new revelation*, we have a right to ask for miracles; and if he lay claim to a power of working them, he dare not refuse. Tell them, then, when they strive to undermine your faith, that Moses, the prophets, special messengers of heaven, wrought *undoubted* miracles. Say, that Jesus proved His divinity by undoubted miracles, that the apostles proved their mission, and gathered multitudes into the

Christian Church, by means of *undoubted* miracles,—demand *an undoubted miracle* from them. They will say that *you cannot have a miracle, because you have not faith*. How utterly absurd! Is it not ridiculous in its very first aspect? What they say amounts to just this: “You must believe first, then a miracle shall be performed *in order that you may believe.*” That is, you must believe before you can believe. Is that common sense?

They do sometimes attempt a miracle, and a very bungling job they make of it. I will give two instances of miracles wrought in Liverpool.

At a Lecture delivered by the Rev. J. B. Lowe, in Liverpool, a gentleman, named French, who had been a Mormonite for six years, related the following:—

Elder Gitton had lost one eye when at his work. “The following scene took place when Elder Gitton went before ‘the Council’ to have his eye restored. The President, after hearing his story, said, in a broad Yankee dialect, ‘Well, Elder Gitton, what did your employer tell you to do?’ ‘He told me, Sir, to go to Dr. Neill.’ ‘Well, brother Gitton, go to Dr. Neill, and what he does for you God will bless and we’ll bless.’” A pretty miracle, indeed.

Hear now Mr. Lowe’s account of a miracle wrought in Liverpool:—

“A respectable man, whom I know, was seized with a bad pain in his chest, and went to one of the elders, who had the gift of healing, to be cured. The elder gave him a little bottle of oil to drink, and poured some oil upon his head, after that laying his hands upon him for healing. My friend felt a glow all through his frame as the elder’s hands were laid on him, and as soon as he got home he went to bed. That night he got into a profuse perspiration, and next

morning, wonderful to say, he was quite well! He hastened to the elder to inform him of his recovery. 'Well, brother,' asked the elder, 'did you perspire much last night?' 'Oh, yes, profusely.' 'That is the way,' replied the elder, 'that the Holy Ghost always acts; he opens the pores of the skin, and the disease comes out.'"

Now, if any Mormon elder will come forward and undertake to work a miracle, he shall have every chance. I will be present; so would you, I dare say. I will *thoroughly investigate* the whole affair, and will publish the result to the world, whether it establish or annihilate the claim they make.

Mormon elders! I challenge you one and all to work in this place, before competent and impartial witnesses, *a clear, undoubted miracle—a miracle which cannot possibly be accounted for in any other way than by supernatural powers.* I dare you to it. I have a right to demand it. I am a priest or Presbyter of the Church of England—I am one of the accredited ambassadors of Christ in this place—I am lawfully called and ordained by the hands of an apostolic bishop to the ministry of the only Gospel which God has revealed, declaring that if an angel from heaven—and much more, a profligate on earth—should preach another, he should be accursed;—this is the vineyard into which my Master has sent me to labour, this the fold in which I am an under shepherd. Show me by what right you dare intrude to gather fruits in the vineyard, and steal away sheep from the flock. Produce your credentials. You say that miracles are your credentials. Work one for me, and establish your claim. If you do not, you brand Mormonism as an imposture, and declare yourselves ministers of a lying system.

My dear hearers, I beseech you, as you love your souls, to "beware of false prophets;" be cautious how

you listen to their seductive statements ; and may God give them grace to come to a better mind.

One point more remains to be noticed, and I shall have finished for the present with this system of iniquity. Do you think that I am harsh in thus calling it? Listen to the accusation I now bring against it. I charge it with being a system of wholesale adultery. I will prove my charge.

One of the doctrines of Mormonism is known as "*the spiritual-wife doctrine.*" I dare not reveal the full abomination of this doctrine in a mixed assembly like the present. Modesty, even the common decency of life, forbids my making such an exposure. I will, however, bring forward sufficient evidence to prove the existence of such a system of iniquity.

I quote now, on the authority of Mr. Lowe, from "The Report of the Judges of Utah Territory, addressed to the President of the United States," regarding the Mormons :—

"We deem it our duty to state in this *official communication*, that polygamy, or *plurality of wives*, is openly avowed and practised in the territory, under the sanction and in obedience to the direct commands of the Church. So universal is this practice, that very few, if any, leading men in that community can be found who have not more than one wife each, which creates a monopoly, and which was peculiarly hard upon the officers sent to reside there. The prominent men in the Church, whose example in all things it is the ambition of the more humble to imitate, have each many wives,—some of them, we are credibly informed and believe, as many as twenty or thirty ; and Brigham Young, the governor, even a greater number. *Only a few days before we left the territory, the governor was seen riding the streets of the city in an omnibus, with a large company of his wives, more than two-thirds of*

whom had infants in their arms—a sure sign that the evil is increasing. It is not uncommon to find two or more sisters married to the same man; and in one instance, at least, A MOTHER AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS *are among the wives of* A LEADING MEMBER OF THE CHURCH. This practice, regarded and punished as a high and revolting crime in all civilized countries, would of course never be made a statutory offence by a Mormon Legislature; and if a crime at common law, the Court would be powerless to correct the evil with Mormon juries.”

Such is an “official statement.” I now read a confirmation of it from the testimony of a traveller, William Kelly, Esq., who visited the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. After stating that he was “perfectly enraptured with the Mormon ladies and Mormon hospitality,” he proceeds:—

“I was not aware before that polygamy was sanctioned by their creed beyond a species of ethereal Platonism, which accords to its especial saints chosen partners, called ‘spiritual wives,’ but I now found that these, contrary to one’s ordinary notions of spiritualism, give birth to cherubs and unfledged angels. When our party arrived, we were introduced to a staid, matronly-looking lady, as Mrs. —, and, as we proceeded up the room, to a blooming young creature, a fitting mother to a celestial progeny, as *the other* Mrs. —, without any worldly or spiritual distinction whatsoever. At first I thought it a misconception, but inquiry confirmed the fact of their being two mistresses in the same establishment, both with terrestrial habits and duties to perform,—which I found afterwards to be the case in other instances, where the parties could lay no claim to any particular saintliness.”—*Across the Rocky Mountains*, p. 160.

Accordingly he mentions another instance:—

“ Our camp this evening was eighteen miles from the city, on the grounds of a man whom I recognised as a visitor when encamped there. He was particularly attentive, placing everything on his premises at our disposal. He had a snug and well-furnished cottage, and seemed to enjoy the greatest domestic beatitude *in the society of his wives, spiritual and temporal, never, as he told me, coming in for any squalls, as the ladies expended all their foul words on each other.*”—*Ibid*, p. 169.

I now quote from a letter received by the Rev. J. B. Lowe. It was addressed to him by a man who had been a Mormonite, but who was converted by means of a lecture which Mr. Lowe delivered on Mormonism. He says: “ *The spiritual-wife doctrine, by which a plurality of wives is allowed, was, they say, revealed to Joseph Smith, for the purpose of begetting bodies with greater facility, for the numberless spirits which are waiting in heaven for the same. But the privilege is chiefly confined to the priesthood.* Hence it is said that the present head of their Church has as many as *ninety wives*, and the other officials in proportion to the rank which they hold in the Church. This doctrine is not commonly taught, apart from their gathering-place, in America; but, when inquired about, is almost invariably denied. However, I have been told it in the greatest confidence by an elder who was in ‘the Church,’ and was strictly cautioned not to tell it to my wife, as he said *the wives would not stand it.*”

I should think they would not, and I should think that you will not stand Mormonism. Will you believe that such a system springs from a Divine source? No, you will not. Adulteries spring from hell, and so does Mormonism. “BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.”

One more remark, and I have done. At the con-

clusion of Mr. Lowe's lecture on Mormonism, delivered in the Music Hall, Bold-street, Liverpool, two gentlemen came forward and exposed the iniquities of the system, before a large audience. One (Mr. French) had been a Mormonite for six years; the other (Mr. Roberts) had been one for eight. I now quote from a notice of the lecture in the "Liverpool Standard:"—

"Mr. French, a resident in Liverpool, though under the threat of an action for slander if he divulged anything respecting the creed of Mormonism, said he had been an elder for three years, and described it as *a most vicious and profligate system*. Mr. Roberts, another elder, who had also left the Mormonites, exposed their disgusting creed of '*spiritual wives*,' of *adultery*, of *fornication*, of *theft*, and *murder*. The narration of these offensive details, *even though hinted at in the most guarded terms*, caused many respectable females to leave the auditory, and the great majority of the men present took every possible means to express their indignation of the pernicious system by repeated marks of disapprobation and disgust."

My friends, I have done. I have attempted to prove Mormonism an imposition. I can multiply my evidence manifold, but I forbear. My subject is very far from being exhausted, but I fear your patience is already wearied out. I ask you in conclusion, "Have I proved my point?" If I have been the means of leading one deluded votary to see his error, or of preserving one from falling into this soul-destroying snare, to God be all the praise.

