High-priority on list

A

PORTRAITURE OF MORMONISM,

OR ANIMADVERSIONS ON THE

DOCTRINES AND PRETENSIONS

OF THE

LATTER-DAY SAINTS;

A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY AND

Contents of the Book of Mormon;

AND

A SKETCH OF THE CAREER OF JOSEPH SMITH,

AND VARIOUS OTHER

NOTORIOUS FANATICS AND IMPOSTORS;

BEING LECTURES DELIVERED BY

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HONORARY MEMBER OF VARIOUS SCIENTIFIC, MEDICAL, AND LITERARY SOCIETIES, BRITISH AND CONTINENTAL, ETC.

Καί πολλοί ψευδο προφῆται ἐγερθήσονται,
καί πλανήσουσι πολλους.—JESUS CHRIST.

LONDON:

W. STRANGE, 21, PATERNOSTER ROW.

AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1849.

1849

Mentions Anabaptist polygamy but not LDS.

reject the whole or receive them all. But, as we have evidence of the truth of the Christian Scriptures, which cannot be brought for either Alkoran or the Shaster, we receive the one and reject the other two. Thus wisely God has acted in giving us evidence, and intellects to judge of it, instead of leaving us in the dark to grope our way without the possibility of knowing whether we were right or wrong. So then, if the Book of Mormon comes from God, either in the place of the Bible or in addition to it, we expect it will bring with it an amount of evidence which its greatest opponents shall not be able to gainsay, otherwise it will be of little use for it to come at all.

The followers of Joseph Smith should remember that they are not the only people who have laid claim to divine inspiration—that their founder is not the only man who has pretended to receive communications from the God of heaven—and that the Book of Mormon is not the only book that has been given us under the pretence of its being an appendix to the sacred oracles of divine and unerring truth. Both ancient and modern history abound with instances of a similar kind. Amongst the Mahometans many have pretended to have been inspired by the spirit of the great Arabian impostor; and, in pagan nations, by the spirits of their wooden idols. Since the origin of the grand and glorious doctrines of Christianity, we have had hundreds of individuals on every hand pretending to the gifts of prophecy, miracle working, and divine inspiration; and in many cases they have carried their fanaticism to such an extent as to declare themselves Sons of God, Messiahs, &c. I will just give a brief sketch of a few of them.

In Germany, in the year 1525, one of those individuals made his appearance, named Thomas Munzer. He declared himself to be an inspired prophet, and the instrument chosen by Christ to bring about His millenial reign on the earth. He professed to have direct intercourse with the Deity, and placed himself on a level with the prophets and apostles of old. His followers at one time became very numerous and at last their fanaticism led them to believe that, they being the peculiar favourites of heaven, ought to hold the reins of government; they,

therefore, organized themselves into an army, for the express purpose of overturning all the governing powers in existence — uprooting the institutions depending thereon—nullifying the laws of the land—and making a complete revolution in the country. However, an army coming against them, they were soon overcome, several thousands being slain and the rest put to flight.

About five or six years after this two other individuals arose, making nearly the same pretensions, one, a tailor, named Boccoldt, a native of Leyden, and, therefore, called John of Leyden, and the other, a baker, of Haerlem, named John Matthias. They began to spread their doctrines in Munster, the capital of Westphalia, where they soon gained a number of followers. They declared themselves to be chosen of God, to establish a spiritual kingdom, which should hold in subjection to its authority all the kingdoms of the earth. But, spiritual as this kingdom was represented to be, Matthias and Boccoldt considered temporal powers the best, and the wielding of a temporal sceptre, the most successful for their purpose, so they organized an army, and attacked the city of Munster. Their army being rather powerful, they deposed the magistrates and took the city, which they named Mount Zion, and John Matthias was now proclaimed its king. While holding the regal power, he declared himself to be Enoch the second, high priest of God, and made various other idle and wicked pretensions, all of which tended to the enriching of himself. Shortly after this, however, in an encounter, this *soi disant* monarch was slain, and his coadjutor, John Boccoldt, became his successor to the royal dignity, under whose guidance the people were led to wilder excesses in fanaticism than they had been by Matthias. He held that the custom of polygamy was lawful, and to show his own favourable opinion of it at one time he married nearly a dozen wives. He and his followers frequently ran naked through the city, crying wo! wo! wo! and when requested by some of their friends, and others, to dress themselves, they refused, saying, as an excuse, "we are the naked truth." It was communicated to John of Leyden, in one of his visions, that several other cities were given to him, and consequently he sent some of his