MORMONISM:
ITS HISTORY, DOCTRINES, AND PRACTICES.

BY THE
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"From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism;
   Good Lord, deliver us."

A. M. PIGOTT,
ALDINE CHAMBERS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND
39, KENNINGTON GATE, LONDON.
1853.
Price Four Shillings and Sixpence per Dozen.
References to the sources from which my statements have been drawn, will generally be found in the foot notes, or in the body of the Lectures. I have been careful to make these references as exact as possible, not from any wish to parade before the reader the authorities which I have consulted, but in order to direct attention to more copious sources of information, as well as to free myself from responsibility as to the accuracy of the facts related. I am bound to acknowledge more particularly my obligations to the following works, from which, and from the authorized publications of the sect, the greater portion of my materials has been derived.

" " City of the Mormons. 16mo. London, 1843.
" " Mormonism and its Author. S.P.C.K. 1852.
Mr. Horace Mayhew's The Mormons, or Latter-day Saints; a contemporary History. Published anonymously. Illust. London Lib. 1851.
Captain Stansbury's Expedition to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake, &c. 8vo. Philadelphia, 1852.

Besides these larger works, I have also read and employed in these Lectures pamphlets upon the subject by the Rev. John Frere, M.A., the Religious Tract Society (Nos. 598, 599), Mr. R. Clarke; Dr. John Thomas, and Mr. Thomas Tyson, together with a brief but interesting article in the Churchman's Magazine for March, 1853.

It is my earnest wish and prayer that these my imperfect labours may be of service to the cause of the religion of our Lord and Saviour. To Him, as alone able to give success and to oppose a barrier to this most fatal delusion, I prayerfully commend them.

W. S. S.

Kennington, Surrey, July, 1853.

LECTURE I.

The rapid rise and progress of a new religion, first developed in the sister country of America, and quickly taking deep root in our own more highly favoured land, is a subject which cannot fail to engage our most serious attention. In investigating the history of Mormonism, we have not to look far back into other days, to clear away the mists of long past ages, to search with antiquarian diligence and critical acumen into the causes and the origin of its new belief; it is a contemporary history. Thirty years since, Mormonism was unknown; thirty years since, its founder for the first time conceived the first of those pretended revelations which have formed the basis of his fearful heresy. And now, though only thirty years have fled by, the followers of the false prophet of America are numbered not by tens, or by hundreds—three hundred thousand* are they who have gone astray, and perilled their eternal salvation, forsaken their homes, hazarded their temporal as well as their spiritual happiness, deluded by the specious promises and the presumptuous assertions of the successors of the impostor. What clearer proof can we require that the heart of man is desperately wicked, ready to follow the vain devices and evil imaginings of man, rather than the pure and holy will of God?

So has it been, even from the beginning: men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. The pages of ecclesiastical history are stained with the names of those who would fain have been wise above that which is written, and with the record of their various pernicious doctrines. Even in the days when Holy Scripture was written, heresies arose; for the Apostles tell us of the Judaisers, of Hymenæus and Philetus, of the Gnostic leader Simon Magnus, and of the Nicolaitans. Before the first century of the Christian dispensation had passed away—before the echo of the

* Mayhew, p. 16.
boldness c lying which runs through the whole career of Mormonism; for Professor Anthon published a letter at New York, dated February 17, 1834, in which he states that he considered the whole affair as simply a scheme to defraud the farmer of his money, and that he communicated his suspicions to Harris. The characters which Smith called reformed Egyptian, were copied (says the learned Professor) from a book containing various alphabets. Greek, Hebrew, and Mexican characters were mingled with Roman letters placed sideways or inverted, and with crosses and flourishes. From these pretended plates, when translated by Joseph Smith, the "Book of Mormon" was printed. A large edition was issued in 1830, and on the 6th of April in that year a body of converts was organized in the town of Fayette, Seneca County, State of New York. "In the year 1831 the Saints established a settlement in Lake County, State of Ohio; and 1,000 miles from this place, in Jackson County, State of Missouri, they also made another settlement."†

We can only take a very brief sketch of their subsequent movements. In Jackson County, the Saints, as they termed themselves, were commanded by divine revelation to build a temple. The cornerstone was laid; but notwithstanding the alleged revelation, an armed mob interfered and drove the builders away.‡ Until January, 1832, Joseph Smith preached in various parts of the United States, and made many converts; some of these, however, laid claim as well as himself to divine revelations—a course which was exceedingly offensive to the false prophet, because it tended to weaken his authority. He felt himself in consequence compelled to excommunicate some of his adherents: they, exasperated at his conduct, disclosed some of his secrets to the people, who were already much excited against him on account of his strange and pernicious doctrines; and on the 25th of January in the same year, he was attacked by an armed mob of riffraff, who took him from his bed at midnight and submitted him to the American process of tarring and feathering..§ This was but the first of a long series of cruel outrages; for so we cannot but regard them, even though many of them may have been acts of retributive justice. At this time, 1832, the number of Mormonites was between 2,000 and 3,000. In 1833 they were expelled from Missouri, partly on account of their own tumultuous conduct in a schism within their camp, partly on account of their own tenets and of their interference with the institutions of the country. During four years they remained in Clay County. There, of course, Joseph Smith had a revelation; wherein he was told that the Saints should return to their Zion in Jackson County. However, they have never yet returned. In 1834 their fanaticism and wicked mode of life, together with their claims to possess Missouri by divine revelation, caused their expulsion from the whole State of Missouri. Then, says one of their hymns,

"Missouri,
Like a whirlwind in its fury,
And without a judge or jury,
Drove the Saints, and spilled their blood."*

In 1838-9 the Mormons were driven to Illinois. This was the third persecution, if such it may be called, which they endured in Missouri; and Joseph, who had been cast into prison, escaped and joined them.†

And now we come to an important epoch in their history. In the course of a few months after their expulsion from Missouri, 15,000 Mormons established themselves at Illinois, where in 1840 they founded a city called Nauvoo—that is, the beautiful.‡

In 1841, on the 6th of April, the foundation stone of the temple at Nauvoo was laid by Joseph Smith, in pursuance of a pretended revelation. The Mormons, now for a short time in prosperity, soon began to rebel against the State authority, refusing to acknowledge its legal documents, unless countersigned by their leader. He had formed a well armed and well disciplined regiment, of which he constituted himself Lieutenant-General. An attempt was made to assassinate the Governor of

* Mayhew, p. 74.
† Ibid., p. 99.
‡ Gunnison, p. 167.
§ It was shortly previous to this that the sect became known in England. In 1837 two of their body, Elders Hyde and Kimball, formed the first mission, and baptised 2,000 persons, chiefly in Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, and South Wales. In 1843 the number in England increased to 10,000. (Mayhew, p. 169.)
Missouri; and shortly after, Joseph was put forth as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States.† In 1844 Joseph and his brother Hyrum were imprisoned at Carthage for high treason against the State of Illinois; and on the 27th of June in that year the prison was broken open by an armed band, and Joseph and Hyrum were shot by the infuriated people.‡ Their death was certainly murder; but a peaceful end “could hardly have been anticipated for one who had taught the lawfulness of murder, had systematically lied in the name of the Holy Ghost, and had committed the dreadful sin of sanctioning his own abominations by pretended revelations from heaven.”§

At the time of his death, his followers numbered no less than 100,000 souls. The Christian Reflector has some interesting remarks upon the subject:—“Born in the very lowest walks of life, reared in poverty, educated in vice, having no claims to even common intelligence, coarse and vulgar in deportment, the Prophet Smith succeeded in establishing a religious creed, the tenets of which have been taught throughout the length and breadth of America.”§ In Europe, Asia, Africa have the false doctrines been preached—even Egypt and the Holy Land have been entered by the emissaries of the sect; and one of the Mormon publications, called the “Voice of Joseph” (issued in 1852), reports that progress has been made in France, Denmark, Australia, and the East Indies, and that 3,000 converts have been made in the Islands of the Pacific (p. 18). “The acts of his life exhibit a character as incongruous as it is remarkable. If we can credit his own words and the testimony of eye-witnesses, he was at the same time the vicegerent of God, and a tavern-keeper—a prophet of Jehovah, and a base libertine—a minister of the religion of peace, and a lieutenant-general—a ruler of tens of thousands, and a slave to all his own unbridled passions—a preacher of righteousness, and a profane swearer—a worshipper of Bacchus, mayor of a city, and a miserable bar-room fiddler—a judge upon the judicial bench, and an invader of the civil, social, and moral relations of men; and, notwithstanding these inconsistencies


of character, there are not wanting thousands who are willing to stake their souls’ eternal salvation upon his veracity. For aught we know, time and distance will embellish his life with some new and rare virtues, which his most intimate friends failed to discover while living with him.”*

We have thus taken a hasty view of the history of Joseph Smith; let us now regard his character.

The Rev. Henry Caswall, M.A., formerly Professor of Divinity in Kemper College, Missouri, and now vicar of Figheldean, Wilts, has published several important books upon Mormonism. In one of them, a tract called “Mormonism and its Author,” printed for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, he clearly proves that Joseph Smith was a profane swearer and a covetous man, a drunkard and a thief, an adulterer, and probably a murderer (pp. 7-10). In his “Prophet of the Nineteenth Century,” he shows that Smith and Rigdon were, in 1836, unable to pay debts which they had contracted with some merchants to the amount of 100,000 dollars (£22,000). To meet this exigency they commenced, in 1837, a bank without a charter, and paid their debts with money obtained by issuing their own notes; but after some months the bank failed, involving numbers in its ruin. Smith was compelled to decamp, but did not omit to fulminate threats against those “Saints” who complained of the fraud, comparing them to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (pp. 126-128).

In another of his works, “The City of the Mormons,” Mr. Caswall relates some particulars relative to his visit to the city of Nauvoo. He informs us that the false prophet was accustomed to drink to excess, and that on one occasion he said that it was necessary for him to become intoxicated, lest, since he was a prophet of the Lord, people should worship him as a god. At another time he said, that several of the elders had often got drunk, and had never made confession; but that he became intoxicated that they might see how bad it looked, and now confessed his sin in order to set the elders a good example (pp. 50-51).

The same clergyman, during his visit to Nauvoo, inquired of the Mormons whether they believed in the Holy Trinity. The reply was so fearful in its blasphemy, that I should not
A heavenly treasure, a book full of merit,
It speaks from the dust by the power of the Spirit—
A voice from the Saviour that Saints can rely on,
To watch for the day when he brings again Zion.

Of Joseph Smith it is written (Hymn cclxxiv. 8):—

Come to me: here's the future, the present, and past;
Here is Alpha, Omega, the first and the last;
Here's the "Fountain," the "River of Life," and the "Tree";
Here's your prophet and seer, Joseph Smith: come to me.

Of baptism for the dead, Hymn clii. 4, 6 speaks thus:—

Then for this cause our body bends
Beneath the liquid wave,
In favour of our kindred friends
Who slumber in the grave.

Thus, then, the dead we do baptize.

I must not, however, detain you longer upon this volume, or I could refer you to many other equally singular and dangerous compositions. Suffice it to mention two others: the one to be sung to the song tune, "The sea, the sea, the open sea," commencing—

The seer, the seer, Joseph the seer (Hymn cclxxxi),

and the other to be sung to the tune of the song "I'm afloat," commencing—

I'm a Saint, I'm a Saint, on the rough world wide.*

This last composition is not included in the Hymn Book, but was publicly recited at a Mormon meeting in London, in the early part of 1831, by a young girl dressed in white.

These three works, then, the "Book of Mormon," the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants," and the Hymn Book, are the three authoritative books of the sect. The "Book of Mormon" is translated into Italian, Danish, Welsh, German, and French; and the "Book of Doctrine and Covenants" into Welsh. Besides these, the Mormons have an authorized periodical, called the *Millennial Star*, "edited and published by Franklin D. Richards, one of the twelve apostles." It is published fortnightly, and its circulation is stated in the prospectus to be 23,500 copies. It is issued from their head quarters in England, Liverpool. Besides these works, the Mormons have published many smaller treatises, and many thousand copies of pamphlets and replies to objectors,* in America and Great Britain. "During the residence of the Saints in Ohio and Missouri, they issued two periodicals, called the Messenger and Advocate, and Evening and Morning Star. In Illinois they had two other periodicals, called the Times and Seasons, and Nauvoo Neighbour. In the cities of New York and Philadelphia, where large and influential Churches were established, they published two others, called The Prophet, and Gospel Reflector. In Wales they have established a publication called Zion's Trumpet. On the western frontier of the United States there is a large newspaper published, called the Frontier Guardian. Periodicals are also issued at Copenhagen, Paris, Hamburg, and in Utah territory."* A weekly paper, called The Wasp, was edited at Nauvoo by William Smith.† And in this very year a new serial has been commenced in England, called The Seer, edited by Orson Pratt; and another in Paris, called Le Réflecteur. In addition to these, there are many pamphlets printed by Mormon apostles and elders.

So much then for the literary history of Mormonism.

It remains for me to bring before your notice some of the more remarkable Mormon doctrines and practices.

One of the most remarkable of their doctrines, and one which has caused their expulsion from several American States, is the spiritual wife system. Gross and revolting as it is, I am bound to bring it before you, so as to exhibit Mormonism in all its impurity. The doctrine is, that a married woman is under no obligation to her husband, but may take as a spiritual husband any Mormon elder.‡ Now in Illinois they most vehemently denied the holding of this opinion; but Captain Stansbury relates, "I heard it proclaimed from the stand by the president of the Church himself, that he had the right to take a thousand wives if he thought proper." "I have never known," he proceeds, "any member of the community to aver that he himself had more than one, although that such was the fact was as well known and understood as any fact could be;" and "that polygamy does actually exist among

them cannot be concealed from anyone of the most ordinary observation who has spent even a short time in this community” (p. 186).

“It is the doctrine of the Church that no woman can attain to celestial glory without the husband; nor can he arrive at full perfection in the next world without at least one wife: and the greater the number he is able to take with him, the higher will be his seat in the celestial paradise” (p. 187).

The first number of The Seer contains a long revelation on “celestial marriage,” “given to Joseph Smith, the seer, in Nauvoo, July 12th, 1843.” The following appears to be the scope of the “revelation.” The person speaking is represented to be God. “If a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word . . . their marriage is not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world . . . therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.” These angels “remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition to all eternity, and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God for ever and ever” (sec. 4). But if a man marry a wife by God’s word, “and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood,” and if he commit no murder, “then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them; then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them” (secs. 6, 7). The reasons here given certainly reach the furthest limits of absurdity. Then follows a commandment “unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith” (the wife of Joseph Smith, with whom, by the way, the “prophet” eloped, having failed to obtain the consent of her father, Isaac Hale, to their marriage), that she should “receive all those that have been given unto my servant Joseph, and who are virtuous and pure before me” (sec. 20); and she is commanded to for-

give “Joseph his trespasses, and then shall she be forgiven her trespasses” (sec. 21). In the 24th section we have the doctrine explicitly stated—“If any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery, for they are given unto him . . . and if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him.” Nor can this union be said to be only a spiritual union; for it is added, “they are given unto him to multiply, and replenish the earth, &c.” However, the whole system is not yet revealed, for we find at the conclusion of the document the following sentence: “Verily verily I say unto you, I will reveal more unto you hereafter; therefore let this suffice for the present.”

This “revelation” exhibits the same utter disregard of grammar. Let these examples suffice: “By this law are the continuation of the works of my Father” (sec. 12). “This is eternal life, to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent” (sec. 8). We have also the following specimen of dogmatic teaching: the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is defined to be the committing of murder after having received the new covenant (sec. 10).

I will not dwell longer on this subject.

Baptism for the dead is another of their strange tenets. They hold that it is essential to baptism that it be administered by an inspired administrator. Without baptism none can be saved; and there are no inspired administrators out of the Mormon sect. And, further, no true Church existed for 1800 years previously to 1826; consequently all who have died since the Apostles’ time, up to the period when Joseph Smith promulgated his doctrines, are lost. The question naturally arises, What must be done for these? The reply is, they have never been baptized, and therefore cannot be saved; but if some living Mormon will consent to be baptized for them, then they may be saved. In the Nauvoo temple was a large font, which was used expressly for the purpose of baptizing Mormons on behalf of the dead.† The same person may be baptized any number of times, each time saving the soul of some person who would otherwise be lost.

* Captain Stansbury, p. 135. † Dr. Thomas, p. 26.