

have seldom if ever left anything they were applied to unfinished, unsatisfactory or unprofitable.

AN IMPARTIAL PUBLICATION.

Progress is the appropriate name of a monthly magazine published in Chicago by the University Association in the interests of University and World's Congress extension. It is edited by Mr. Edmund Buckley, Ph. D. The issues of the magazine that have come to this office are devoted to religious subjects which are treated on interestingly and—which is seldom the case in other religious journals—with impartiality. We find articles on the life of Christ; the lives of the Apostles; biblical theology; Christianity compared with other religions; the history of the Jews; the Christian church, and so on. The July number is devoted to the Mormon church; the Mormon Church; the New Jerusalem church; the Presbyterian church; the Protestant Episcopal church; the Reformed church, and the Reorganized church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Each of these is furnished by some leading writer of the respective denominations, and the concise statements of the distinctive characteristics are therefore, of peculiar value to the student of comparative religion.

The article on the Mormon Church was furnished by President Franklin D. Richards, Historian of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at the request of the editor of Progress. It is well written and instructive. We reproduce it below, convinced that it will be of general interest to the readers of the "News."

THE MORMON CHURCH.

by

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the "Mormon" Church, was organized April 6th, 1830, at Fayette, Seneca county, New York, Joseph Smith Jun. being accepted as the first Elder and Oliver Cowdery as the second Elder of the Church. The members composing the body of the Church were believers in God the Father, in Jesus Christ His Son and in the Holy Ghost. They had repented of their sins and had been baptized by immersion in water for the remission of sins and were confirmed members of the Church by the laying on of the hands of the Elders, who sealed upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost, with the privilege of receiving and enjoying all the gifts and powers which came from the possession of that spirit in olden times. This was done by revelation and commandment of the Most High God, who, with Jesus Christ His Son, had appeared to Joseph Smith in heavenly vision. An angel of God had also appeared to the youthful Prophet and disclosed to him the spot where records of the original inhabitants of the American continent were hidden, which, after repeated visits and instructions from the angel, were delivered into his hands. They consisted of a number of metallic plates having the appearance of gold, on which were inscribed on both sides hieroglyphics narrating the history, travels, rise and fall of a colony brought upon this continent at the scattering of people from the tower of Babel, and of a later migration of Israelites from Jerusalem, when Zedekiah was king of Judea. The religion of those people was described and particulars were given of the establishment of the Church of Christ among them, by His appearance in person after

His resurrection and ascension. With the plates was the Urim and Thummim, by means of which and the gift and power of God, Joseph Smith translated a portion of the record which had been abridged and compiled by a Prophet among those ancient people named Mormon. The book thus translated is therefore called the Book of Mormon, and it has been published in several languages.

Previous to the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had been visited by John the Baptist, who conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood, with the authority to baptize for the remission of sins; and also at a later date by Peter, James and John, who ordained them Apostles of Jesus Christ, with authority to confer the Holy Ghost upon baptized, repentant believers, by the laying on of hands; also to organize and establish the Church of Christ in all its fullness preparatory to the second advent of the Savior. Guided by the spirit of revelation, the Prophet, Seer and Revelator, Joseph Smith, proceeded to fulfill his mission. The Gospel was preached, the Holy Ghost was poured out upon converts and was manifested in healings, miracles, tongues, interpretations, prophecy, visions, and all the gifts enjoyed in the primitive Christian Church. Men were called by revelation to fill the various offices of the Church, including Apostles, Seventies, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, Bishops, Evangelists, etc., and missionaries were sent out into the world to preach the Gospel without "purse or scrip." People who received their testimony that the Gospel and Church of Christ had been restored to earth, obtained a witness from God, personally, of the truth of these things, and, as the elect of God, gathered from all parts of the earth to the bosom of the Church in America.

Persecution raged against the Church from the beginning. All kinds of misrepresentation were resorted to by its enemies. The Saints were driven from their possessions in Missouri and afterwards in Illinois; many of them were slaughtered by mobs, their property was confiscated, and in 1844, on June 27th, the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were shot to death by mobocrats with blackened faces, at Carthage, Illinois. Subsequently the body of the Saints were driven from the city of Nauvoo, which they had built on the banks of the Mississippi, and under the leadership of Brigham Young, who was the President of the Twelve Apostles, the persecuted Saints made their way to Winter Quarters, on the banks of the Missouri river, near where Council Bluffs now stands. It was there that the Mormon Battalion of five hundred able-bodied men were enlisted, at the call of the President of the United States, to aid their country in the war with Mexico. They were the strength of the body of the Church, but were parted with in the true spirit of patriotism. They made an unparalleled march across the deserts to their destination, leaving their families to struggle for existence in that then unsettled region. In 1847 the famous journey from the Missouri river across the plains and mountains was accomplished by Brigham Young and the Pioneers, numbering one hundred and forty-three men, three women and two children. They reached the spot where Salt Lake City now stands, July 24th of that year. The great Temple, costing more than three million dollars, rears its towers on the spot where Brigham Young declared at that time, "Here we will build the Temple of our God."

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has now its branches in all the civilized nations and upon many

islands of the sea. It has sixteen hundred Elders in the mission field, laboring without pay. Its membership numbers about 300,000. It has four magnificent Temples, in which are administered ordinances for the living and the dead. It is presided over by Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, Apostles of Jesus Christ holding the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, with the binding and loosing power which Christ conferred upon Peter, James and John, and which they restored to earth. It has Twelve Apostles to open the door of the kingdom in all nations and set in order the affairs of the Church. It has all the orders of the Christian ministry and Priesthood which were in the Church during the first century of the Christian era. It administers the same ordinances and enjoys the same unity, power, spiritual gifts and divine communications as were then bestowed.

Mormonism affirms the personality of God and the universal diffusion of His Spirit as the life and light of all things. It teaches that the spirit of man is the offspring of God and existed as a living entity before the incorporation in a mortal body; that it will not only continue after death, but will be clothed upon with a resurrected body in such degree of glory and progress as it shall be fitted for by the deeds done in the flesh; that all mankind will be raised from the dead, and be judged according to their works; that in order to gain the celestial or highest degree of glory, men and women must be born of water, by baptism, and of the spirit, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, obtained through the laying on of hands, and must then "live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;" that punishment will be awarded to the wicked according to their demerits; that while God's punishment is eternal, because He is the eternal lawgiver, sinners receive of that punishment in degree and for the necessary time to bring them to repentance and reformation; that the Gospel preached to men in the flesh is and will be preached to those in the spirit who have departed from the body without the opportunity of receiving the pure truth as revealed from heaven; that the living Saints may officiate in sacred places in behalf of their dead ancestors and relatives in the ordinances necessary for salvation; that the coming of the Savior to reign as King of kings is near at hand, and that this Gospel of the kingdom is to be preached to all nations as a witness of His advent; that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of God and His Christ; that Satan will be bound, the earth be cleansed from corruption and the glory of God will cover it as the waters cover the deep; and that eventually all mankind, with the exception of the sons of perdition, who sin against the Holy Ghost after having received it, will be saved in some degree of happiness, usefulness and glory.

Marriage among the Latter-day Saints is a sacrament. It is solemnized for time and for all eternity. It is sealed on earth by one having divine authority, and is therefore sealed in heaven. Death may part the pair for a time, but the bond being eternal, cannot be sundered by death or by any power that is not divine. This union of the sexes is essential to perfect exaltation in the celestial world. The marriage does not take place in or after the resurrection, but in this life, where the parties are tested in their probation. Those persons who arrive at no higher condition than that of angels, are ministering spirits unto the sons and daughters of God, who obtain "a far more and eternal and exceeding weights of glory." The redeemed and