

# The Deseret Weekly.

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## "MORMON" STANDARDS.

WHEN discussing "Mormonism" its opponents frequently invent peculiar notions and advance them as part of the "Mormon" creed, and occasionally quote disjointed and garbled extracts from the writings of men connected with the "Mormon" Church, which are foisted upon the public as authorized expositions of its articles of faith. This is very unfair and misleading. There is in it more or less of a desire to deceive and to prejudice the public mind.

The proper way to oppose any principle or tenet alleged to be false, is to state it fairly and fully as it is entertained by those who advance it. And it is wrong to attribute to a society or organized body of any kind, ideas entertained by some individual which are not endorsed by the association of which he may be a member.

In assailing "Mormonism," either from the pulpit or the press, it is seldom if ever that its authorized articles of faith or recognized standards are cited, or if they are, that they are given as they stand, without interpolation and without mutilation. What is pretended to be "Mormonism" is not "Mormonism," and that which is ridiculed, or controverted, or held up for detestation, is simply something manufactured for the occasion or so great a burlesque, or exaggeration, or distortion of the truth as to be closely akin to wilful falsehood.

The published standards of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Articles of Faith. They are accepted and recognized by the body. Revelations received by the head of the Church on earth and accepted as such by the body, may be classed in the same category. But the opinions, theories, arguments, illustrations and contentions of men connected with the Church and not passed upon and endorsed by it, are not to be cited as author-

ized, particularly when out of harmony with its written standards.

There is no embargo placed upon the thoughts of men in this Church, nor upon the expression thereof. Many things have been published by men connected with the Church which the body would not approve if they were presented for its action. Wide circulation has been given to theories and opinions of men holding prominent places in the Church, which have been publicly declared by its President to be "no guide for the Latter-day Saints." Yet these are frequently cited as "Mormon" doctrine, and applied in a manner not intended even by their authors. When they are fairly quoted, however, while they are not to be held as expositions of the "Mormon" creed, blame cannot be justly cast upon those who cite them as such, as it may when they are misquoted and garbled and misapplied.

There is nothing in the recognized creed of the Latter-day Saints which infringes upon human liberty or is incompatible with a republican form of government. It does not attempt to suppress freedom of thought or of action, providing the latter does not pass the line of the liberty of others. It does not seek to subvert the force of Constitutional law or the authority of any recognized human government. It teaches that man should be obedient in all things to his Maker, but does not put any person in the place of Deity to be worshipped, adored or submitted to as God. When God reveals anything through the man appointed as His mouthpiece to the Church, the members may determine whether they will receive it as "the word of the Lord," and they have free agency to obey or disobey it and take the consequence of their own acts. There is no compulsion attending it, and if they believe and bow to it, their faith and obedience are in and to God and not to man. If Moses, or Isaiah, or Peter or John wrote "the word of the Lord," those who are led by it are not worshippers of either of those men but of God who spake by them. So with any modern revelation.

The Kingdom of God is to come, and the will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven; so the Latter-day Saints believe in their hearts, as many other people profess to believe with their lips. When Christ appears he will be the recognized Head of that Kingdom on the earth. "Until He comes whose right it is to reign," the

Saints are commanded by Divine revelation to "be subject to the powers that be;" that is, to the governments established wherever they reside. That is "Mormonism." So is this, in the Articles of Faith: "We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates, in honoring, obeying and sustaining the law." And so is this, in the Doctrine and Covenants: "It is not right that man should be in bondage one to another." Any theory, or hypothesis, or philosophical disquisition opposed to these is not "Mormonism," by whomsoever promulgated, and is not to be cited as "the Mormon creed."

We believe that true religion will influence a true believer in all the affairs of life. Also that members of the Church of Christ should be mutually helpful in everything that pertains to their well being in time and eternity. Also that they have the right, under the constitution and laws of this country, to combine and unite for self-defense and self-preservation, for good government and the prevention of bad government, in all things spiritually and temporally, so long as they do not violate law nor infringe upon the rights of other people.

Our enemies may twist and distort and misstate these propositions as they please. They may quote sentences culled from the writings of individual theorists and tack them together for the purpose of misrepresenting "the Mormon creed," but the facts remain as we have stated them, and the recognized standards of "Mormon" doctrine stand as the authorized exponents of our faith and discipline. They are our guide so far as books can be, and the spirit of the living God, which is the light and life of all things, is within the reach of those who seek for it in the appointed way. The revelations of heaven, and not the opinions and reasonings of men, are the standard of faith of the Latter-day Saints.

## A GOOD EXAMPLE.

"THE English Mormons, 132 in number, who arrived here on Wednesday from Liverpool, were quite as good-looking as the other immigrants who landed from the steamer Wisconsin. They did not look as proud as the English upper class or as solid as the English middle class, but looked like plain, hard-working people of the English lower class; and in the faces of some of them were the signs of that enthusiasm which stirred the Mormons of other times. They were all anxious to get to the 'headquarters of Zion' in