DESERET EVENING NEWS.

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AN IMPARTIAL PUBLICATION.

Progress is the appropriate name of a geneeklly magazine published in Chicago by the University Association in the interests of University and World's Congress extension. It is edited by Mr. Edmund Buckler, Ph. D. The issues of the magazine that have come to this office are devoted to religious subjects which are treated an extraordinary 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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[Church Historian.]

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 acted 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, which Jehovah was King of Judea. The religion of these 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. This 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, interpretation, 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, obeyed the 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, and, during one of bands for the space of nearly two years, it was forced from its homes in Missouri and afterwards in Illinois; many of them were established by force, their property was confiscated, and, in 1844, on June 27th, the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum were shot to death by assassins while in the jail at Carthage, Illinois. Subsequently the bodies 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 200,000. 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 act 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 authority, power, spiritual gifts and divine communications as were then bestowed.

Mormonism is 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 unless these "live by every word that proceeds 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 that referable to the dead, the Gospel was preached to men in the flesh in order that they might live according to God, (John xii. 15.)

"And verily, verily, I say unto you, I say in the beginning with the Father and am the first-born, and all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same and are the children of the Father. I say I was in the beginning with the Father." (From Revelation to Joseph Smith, May 6th, 1833.)

"Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh who chastened us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? (Heb. xii. 9.)

"Second unto my Father, and unto your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John xx. 17.)

"And verily, verily, He bringeth in the first begotten into the world," etc. (Heb. i. 6.)

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself took part of the same." (Heb. ii. 14.) "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be merciful." (Heb. ii. 17.)

"Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall behold him as he is." (1 John iii. 2.)

"Have said then unto God the foundations of the earth, (Perhaps of Heaven understanding, * * * When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job xxxviii. 4-7.)

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." (Eccl. xii. 7.)

The resurrection of the body, extending to the resuscitation of all who have lived and died on earth, to be judged in the resurrected body for the deeds done in the natural body, is a Scriptural doctrine, as may be seen from these texts:

"There is a time between death and the resurrection of the dead, a period of the rest in happiness or in misery, for the spirit, and of the rest in the grave for the body, and both spirit and body are thus kept from the full enjoyment of their works. The spirit and body are judged according to their works. The spirit is judged when it goes from the body, and the body in the dust, and every hair of the head, and every member of the body, even a hair of the head shall not be lost, and all things shall be restored to their proper and perfect frame." (Book of Mormon, page 244.)

"Marvel not at this, for our hour is coming on in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John v. 28, 29.)

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. xx. 12.)

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. For one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.)

That baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost is essential, the following show:

"Except ye turn all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature, believing in the authority which I have given you, that ye are my servants, and believe that I will be with you, even unto the end of the world, and on this rock I will build my church; for the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. Behold, I have a work for you, all you who have received the priesthood, to do in my vineyard, even the last work, the work of preparing the way before me, for the coming of my servant, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, who publisheth peace, even those who are ready to publish the gospel of peace unto the ends of the earth, and to say unto Zion, behold, thy God reigneth! Behold, I say unto you, that your work is to go into your respective lands, and to the ends of your respective states, and to the ends of the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, saying unto them, that the hour of my judgment is nigh, that the great and terrible day is near, that the veil of the temple of my tabernacle is rent, that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God; that I am the light, the life, the hope of the world; that I am the Alpha and Omega, even the beginning and the end, the same who will come in the meridian of time, even the same who will come in the fullness of my glory, even the same who will come in my power to take vengeance upon the ungodly, even the same who will say to the wicked, depart ye cursed, even the same who will say to my faithful children, ye have been with me in my tribulations, ye have been hated by your wicked neighbors, even the same who will say to my faithful children, I will that you should live in your mortal bodies a season