

alon of the Book of Mormon in this age.

When the wonderful record first was brought to light, the question was often asked: "Is there any need of such an additional testimony?" The truth of the books of the Bible was generally accepted, at least throughout the professedly Christian world. Except for a few advanced scholars and their rather uncritical followers, the evidences for the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred records were accepted as satisfactory. It was therefore claimed that the additional testimony of the inspired writers on this continent was superfluous and consequently not to be credited, since the Almighty cannot be supposed to do what is not necessary for the salvation of His children. Many refused to investigate the book solely on this ground.

Lately a wonderful change has taken place in the Christian world with regard to the Bible. The attitude is now such that a candid student of sacred literature will be forced to admit that the mission of the Book of Mormon is not a superfluous one. Indeed, it seems to have to come to this, that unless some such testimony as that which this volume offers be supplied, the Bible plan of salvation will be a "fiction" and a myth to a great part of mankind. The rationalistic schools that commenced by attacking the New Testament—its history, its miracles, its ethics—seem to have changed tactics and with greater success than formerly. They have turned their attention to the Old Testament, employing all the modern weapons, with the result that an old-fashioned believer in God's word is becoming almost a curiosity in the world.

Consider one moment what modern critics claim for the Old Testament. Moses, they say, did not write the books that bear his name. The ten commandments in their original form are lost, and the copy preserved in Exodus is only a spurious version of them, while the account of the giving of the law on the mount is an invention of somebody to give impressiveness to the Decalogue. The Pentateuch, they say, is chiefly a collection of laws, and its history is mostly fable. And these laws are not as given to the people originally, but as existing after a long process of evolution, about 400 years before Christ. They may have been framed by the priests after the return from Babylon and the name of Moses forged to them, just to give them authority. The Deuteronomy, they say, is a literary invention of the fifth century before Christ. To a somewhat earlier period belong the alleged documents of which the history of the creation and subsequent events is composed. There were, they think, an Elohists and a Jehovists story-book in Palestine, and an editor, or several editors, undertook to reconstruct these and put Moses' name to the literary production. In the same way the writings of the Prophets are subject to vivisection by the critics. There is hardly one of them that is admitted to be genuine. The history of the Bible is pronounced worthless and its prophetic declarations composed after the events they predict. All is fiction, poetry, parable.

This attack effects clearly the whole Bible. For if the Old Testament is admitted to be a mere human production, the New Testament must fail, too, and with it the plan of salvation as known through the revelations recorded in these sacred books. Its direct messages from the Almighty are fiction, and the lessons taught by its history are worthless in proportion as that history itself is unreliable.

That this lamentable error in regard to the word of God is assuming vast proportions among professed Christians cannot be denied. Rev. J. F. Behrends, in a recent sermon in Brooklyn stated that of seventy-three theological professors in Germany, connected with the universities of Berlin, Bonn, Breslau, Greifswald, Halle, Königsberg, Leipzig and Tübingen, no less than thirty advocate this view. In this country it is represented at Boston, Yale, Harvard, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Union, Chicago university and Andover. It is therefore clear that while the new school cannot claim superiority in the number of scholars and learned institutions arrayed in battles in its behalf, yet it can claim rapid progress, and that at present the lines are very closely drawn between error and truth.

If the situation be rightly understood, it will be admitted that just some such testimony for the truth of the Bible as that supplied by the Book of Mormon is the need of the present age. And has it not been given in order that the people of God in this time of important events shall not be drawn into the whirlpool of infidelity that threatens the world with destruction? The Latter-day Saints have accepted this record as from God. Let them consider what its peculiar mission is and what the acceptance of that mission involves. It is through the faithfulness of the people that the testimony shall fulfill the purposes for which it has been given.

#### THIS WEEK'S STORM.

The great storm of this week will be memorable in the weather records of this part of the world. There has been nothing of the kind known for twenty years or more on the slope and plains east of the Rocky Mountains, and far away to the valley of the Mississippi. The center of the storm was in the Dakotas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas and eastern Colorado, but it stretched out in milder form in all directions. The valleys on the western slope of the Rockies got through very lightly, the most noticeable effect being a decided fall in the temperature. But while Utah was almost free from actual storm, the State did not escape altogether; for southern Utah had a sharp visitation on Monday, when the storm was inaugurated generally. Hon. David H. Cannon, who got here from St. George Wednesday, passed through the storm on his way from Cedar City to Minersville, and says it was the most severe he ever has experienced; the driving snow was terrific, and icicles several inches long hung from the horses' noses. All of his party and others got through safely, however,

and there was no loss of life so far as known.

But the southern Utah storm of Monday was a gentle zephyr compared with the blizzard which struck that part lying east of the crest of the Rockies. For more than a whole day, railway trains were tied up, even newspapers failed to issue, and business came to a standstill; houses were almost buried in snowdrifts, and roofs were crushed with the weight of snow; while the cold was intense for this season of the year; and in connection with the general storm was the fatal cyclone that swept through part of Oklahoma, and the disastrous break in the levees of the lower Mississippi consequent upon the heavy rainfall and strong wind—the whole situation being unprecedented in the United States. The awful voice of the tempest resounds in the land as never before in its later history.

What the material damages to the country will be none can tell at this time; they are known to be very heavy. The loss of life by the Mississippi valley floods has not been as severe as was feared might be the case; but it has been sufficiently appalling; and the loss in property, swept away and in crop prospects for this year is stupendous. On the great plains the list of the cyclone's victims is comparatively large, while the severe general storm will claim an immense amount in the destruction of cattle, sheep, etc., and probably in crops also. So that taken altogether the storm has been a decidedly calamitous visitation. We of the mountain valleys north and south have felt little of it, and are gratified in the comparatively bright outlook for a bounteous yield of the soil, both of mineral and vegetable riches; but because of this prospect here, it is not safe to assume that the whole country will enjoy a like experience. The indications are decidedly otherwise for very large districts and for some of the countries on the other side of the globe.

#### MAYOR'S CONTINGENT FUND.

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah,  
April 1, 1897.

To the Editor: As there is considerable talk about the failure of the Mayor to report with vouchers on the expenditure of the contingent fund, and there are probably many more of your subscribers who are not posted on the amount appropriated to that fund, and what it is for, will you oblige by answering the following questions:

First—How much money has Mayor Glendinning drawn from the contingent fund since he went into office?

Second—What is that contingent fund supposed to be for?

Third—How much money did Mayor Baskin draw from the contingent fund during the same time when he was in office?

Fourth—Was it supposed to be used for the same purpose?

Fifth—In your opinion has the city received the same results from the same amount of money expended by each administration?

Sixth—If not, under which administration were the best results obtained for the amount expended? TAXPAYER.

1. During the first eight months of his administration, from January to August, 1896, Mayor Glendinning