

## EDITORIALS.

## THE "MORMON BIBLE."

AN article has been going the rounds of the papers about "the original Mormon Bible." It started in the *Detroit Post and Tribune*, a reporter of which interviewed Major J. H. Gilbert, of Palmyra, who claims to have set up in type nearly all the matter for the first edition of the Book of Mormon, and worked it off on a hand press. He has the unbound sheets as he took them from the press and exhibits them as a great curiosity.

There is a great deal of nonsense talked about this first edition. It is said to be a very rare book, and in many respects essentially different from the subsequent editions. There are quite a number of copies of the first edition of the book in this Territory, and its contents are substantially identical with all other editions of the work. The chief difference is in the printing and binding, which are better in the later editions than in the first.

The article to which we refer states that "nobody but Joe himself ever saw the golden tablets." It is evident that the writer of this statement is ignorant of the history of the book and of the facts in the case, and that he has never examined the work about which he talks so positively. The book is prefaced with the testimony of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris, who state with words of truth and soberness that an angel of God came down from heaven and showed them the plates and the engravings thereon, while the voice of God declared to them that the record was translated by the gift and power of God. And lest this testimony might be objected to, as partaking too much of the supernatural, the testimony of eight witnesses is appended who state that Joseph Smith had shown them the plates, which they handled with their hands. Thus eight persons saw the plates naturally, and three others in addition to Joseph Smith testify that they were exhibited to them by the power of God.

It has been represented that the three last named witnesses subsequently apostatized and denied their former statements. This is as grossly incorrect as the allegation that there were no witnesses. Those men, having been greatly favored, were tempted in a corresponding degree, and failing to endure were severed from the Church. But they never denied their statement concerning the plates and the heavenly manifestations in relation to them. On the contrary, they always maintained the truth of their testimony under every circumstance. Two of them—Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris—returned to the Church, and died within its fold, reiterating their first testimony to the last. The article in the *Post and Tribune* states that Martin Harris did not follow the "Mormons" eastward but "remained near his home where he died two years ago." This is also inaccurate. Martin Harris came to Utah asking forgiveness for his faults, was received into the Church and died in Cache Valley in this Territory, bearing testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon. David Whitmer has not yet returned to the fellowship of the Church but, like the other two witnesses, when questioned concerning the Book of Mormon repeats his former statement in the firmest manner, and, so far as we are aware, and we have conversed with many persons who have interrogated him, he has never denied his original testimony in the least degree.

There is one point connected with this argument about the expulsion from the Church of the three witnesses, which our opponents do not appear to perceive. If these persons were in league with Joseph Smith, to palm upon the world as a divine revelation a work written or adopted with intention to deceive, would the chief conspirator have had the temerity to excommunicate his chief associates in crime, on their infraction of the rules of his church? Does not the fact of his dealing with them as with ordinary members prove, if it proves anything, that the notion of a conspiracy between those four persons is a fallacy? And if they were not

conspirators and deceivers does it not follow that their testimony is true?

The article closes with a repetition of the Solomon Spaulding story, which has been so often refuted during the last thirty years or more that we will not waste space upon the matter further than this: The connection between the supposed Spaulding and his manuscript about the "lost ten tribes," and Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon is always made to be Sidney Rigdon. He is represented as a printer in the Pittsburgh office, where the manuscript was said to have been deposited, and to have cooked it up with Joseph Smith into the Book of Mormon. Passing by the fact that the Book of Mormon is not a history of the "lost ten tribes" and only mentions them once and that incidentally, it is well known that Sidney Rigdon never saw Joseph Smith nor had any connection with this Church until after the Book of Mormon had been printed for some time. Sidney Rigdon, a Campbellite preacher was converted to "Mormonism" by Parley P. Pratt, and the latter was not baptized until September, 1830, several months after the Book was published. Elder Pratt first saw the Prophet Joseph Smith at Manchester, New York and being sent by him on a mission to the Western States, on his way met Sidney Rigdon in Ohio, to whom he presented the Book of Mormon, and whom, with many other Campbellites he convinced of its truth. This is well established history.

Those who desire to devise or accept some plausible story of the origin of the Book of Mormon, should be shy of such silly inventions as the Spaulding nonsense. Yet it is copied from paper to paper, and standard Cyclopedias print it with the utmost gravity. When the story was started it was exploded and so entirely shattered that its inventors never touched it again. But of late years it has been picked up and patched together, as the only means by which the production of such a work as the Book of Mormon by an uneducated youth can be accounted for. All that any person need do to disprove the Spaulding story to his own entire satisfaction is, to hear it carefully and then read the Book of Mormon.

The testimony of the witnesses of that book cannot be gainsayed nor disproved. They could have no object in making it except to tell the truth. It was of no pecuniary benefit to them. They had no prospect of reaping any reward for it but persecution and contumely. And it stands to-day unproven and unshaken as a witness to this generation of the work commenced for the consummation of all things, and of the re-opening of the long lost communication of man with his Maker. The "Mormon Bible" is the same Bible that all Christian sects profess to believe. The Book of Mormon corroborates and supports the Jewish record, but does not supplant it, and both unite in bearing testimony to all nations, Jew and Gentile, that Jesus is the Christ and that the day of His everlasting dominion is near at hand.

## BE NOT DECEIVED.

The *Chicago Tribune* has been "sold" by its Cleveland correspondent. In a long letter dated the 22d inst., he gives an account of a visit to a relative of the "late E. D. Howe," in Lake county, and a search among the papers left by "the deceased," resulting in the discovery of two letters from John Spaulding and Henry Lake, which are transcribed in full and make about half the letter. The "late E. D. Howe" still lives in Lake county, and as the readers of the *Herald* have seen within a few days, is quite a lively corpse. The two letters copied with so much care by the *Tribune's* correspondent can be found on page 278-282 of Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled," published in 1834, which is spoken of by the correspondent as "a book called History of Mormonism."

The above is from the *Cleveland Herald*. There are a good many papers besides the *Chicago Tribune* which are too eager to accept anything which reflects on "Mormonism," and therefore expose themselves to deception, and open their columns to the most apparent falsehood and folly.

These "discoveries" of old letters— which have been published by thousands of copies, and of the "original Book of Mormon" which has been duplicated in stereotype and issued in several editions ought to be too transparent to delude experienced journalists.

When gentlemen of the press wish to obtain information on the subject of "Mormonism" and the "Mormons," would it not be better to seek for it in reliable sources, than to snap up anything that is presented so long as it is unfavorable to that system and people? The facts in relation to both can be ascertained from the works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, published at this office. And the current history of the people who attract so much attention in both hemispheres may be learned through the columns of this paper. There is no need for any editor in the country to remain in the gross ignorance on these matters which beclouds most of their minds, neither is there any excuse for their publication of so many absurd misrepresentations of our doctrines and practices, our past career and present designs. They might as well seek for an exposition of Turkish policy from the Russian invaders, or of Hayes' course with the South from a disappointed Northern office-seeker, as to expect facts in relation to "Mormonism" and the "Mormons" from prejudiced persons, or those interested in the success of antagonistic denominations. The particulars can be learned from the "Mormons" themselves, and the investigators can then frame their own arguments and form their own conclusions.

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

The population of Australia at the last census was 1,742,294. The population of its capital, Melbourne, is 210,000.

According to *Le Monde Russe*, the following captures have been made by Russia during the present war with Turkey. 704 cannon, 29 Pashas and 73,128 officers and men.

Sumner Howard, United States District Attorney for Utah, Methodist missionary, confession peddler, anti-Mormon crusader, fifth-rate lawyer and nimble fee-grabber has resigned his first named position. Amen.

The bullion shipments from Silver Reef in southern Utah from August 31st, 1877, to January 5th, 1878, amount to \$14,882,72. So we learn by telegraph to-day. This, in the winter season, is a pretty good showing for one mining district of Utah.

L. A. Sawtelle who was at one time a member of the Salt Lake stock company is in Sanpete, on his way to this city. He expects to play at some of the settlements on the route. The drama is not very lively in the Territory just now.

The next astronomical item of more than ordinary interest is the transit of Mercury, which takes place on the 6th of next May. The French Government has made arrangements for a scientific observation of the transit, and will send an expedition to San Francisco, which will be the best point of view.

Apropos of the coming struggle, in which Germany is likely to take sides with Russia, a Berlin journal boasts that the German fleet, though less in number than the French or English navy, is superior in material and artillery, as well as in the skill of its officers and the completeness of its equipment.

Putting up stovepipes is an exasperating task for irritable people, generally. It is a comical proceeding, but in a recent instance resulted in a tragedy. A man named Cheney, with his father-in-law, Snyder, while fixing some intractable joints in Lancaster, Pa., quarrelled, fought and Cheney was killed. Piping times, those.

Ingratitude is a heinous crime. What do you think of the return for kindness made by a girl in Augusta, Ga., a short time since? She jumped from a bridge into a river; a man who saw the rash act rescued her, and, on her attempting to do it again restrained her. She turned round and had him arrested for assault.

Courtney, the American oarsman, has challenged Trickett, of Australia, to row with him for the championship of the world. Trickett picks up the glove. He will pull on any neutral water in the United States for a thousand pounds sterling. It is expected that the match will come off and will attract a world-wide interest.

According to the Army Register, the United States army consists of 20,000 men. This number includes 2,286 commissioned officers. Rather a big lot of officers for so small a number of privates—about one for every eight. The worst part of it is that the pay of the officers foots up a sum greater than the pay of the men.

On the 2nd inst., we received the first number of the Salt Lake *Independent*, but, have seen no more of the new-born infant. Does the child still live? If so its nurses had better be sending it round for inspection, and let the carrier mail it or bring it inside the office. It is too tender to be thrown on the ground this frosty weather.

Our latest dispatches indicate the triumph of the war spirit in England. If John Bull steps in between the Great Bear of the North and its prey in the south, there will be a rush of the other animals to either side, and all Europe will be involved in the struggle. The events of the next few days will be momentous. The signs are vivid for a general European conflict.

Nebraska boasts a volcano. It is in Dixon County, thirty-six miles from Sioux City, near the banks of the muddy Missouri. Steam and flames escape from a bluff about 160 feet high, sloping towards the river. Professor Aughey, however, considers the disturbances not strictly volcanic, but the result of chemical action, and thinks the bluff will furnish alum and other salts in commercial quantities.

The police of New York were puzzled for a long time to find out which expert sneak thief was relieving ladies of their pocket books in a certain district of the city. About \$2,000 had been stolen within ten days. A few days ago they caught the culprit in the act. It proved to be a bright, intelligent girl, nine years old, who had been observed playing in the neighborhood. For juvenile depravity New York beats the world—but Boston takes the lead in boy murderers.

A Minneapolis doctor, named Tanner, for the purpose of showing how long a man can live without food, announces that he has fasted for six weeks. He offers to repeat the experiment under the closest surveillance for \$5,000; \$1,000 to be subject to his order, and \$4,000 to be devoted to charitable purposes as a committee shall direct. He agrees to abstain from food, totally. If Tanner can do this, skeptics will have no cause for doubting the 40 days and nights' fasting recorded in Holy Scripture.

The *Transcript* claims that California is ahead of all the States of the Union in newspaper and periodical literature, and gives the following figures to prove it: "There are now published in San Francisco 16 dailies, 43 weeklies, 1 semi-weekly and 15 monthlies and semi-monthlies. In the State there are published 239 journals and periodicals, of which 47 are daily papers. The average circulation is 2,035. The number of copies printed each year to each inhabitant is 90, being the highest average of any State in the Union. The average for New York is 89 and for Massachusetts 79. The general average is 32.

Boston's latest boy murderer who shot a little fellow because he insulted him, obtained his inflated notions of "wounded honor," and his fascination for pistol practice from reading dime novels, the heroes of which he admired so much that he burned to imitate their exploits. Now, parents, let your boys and girls read the miserable trash till their minds are poisoned and their senses are perverted, and then, when they plunge into mischief and crime and infamy, wonder where on earth they learned such wickedness and how they inherited such a disposition.

If the *Pall Mall Gazette* is to be credited, Russia is not only opposed to Turkish rule, but to the Turkish habit of temperance. The revenues of the Czar are largely made up of taxes on liquors. The tax being raised exorbitantly, a large num-

ber of imbibers "swore off" drinking and swore against paying the tax. Those who took the pledge were prosecuted and punished, and in some cases the officers of the law forced liquor down the offenders' throats. Russia will have a fine field for such Christianizing efforts among the Mohammedan abstainers, unless the march to Constantinople is arrested by some of the Great Powers.

## QUARTERLY CONFERENCE.

The Quarterly Conference of the Priesthood of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion commenced, pursuant to adjournment, in the Fourteenth Ward Assembly Rooms, on Saturday, Jan. 5th, 1878, at 10 a.m.

Present on the stand, in the course of the proceedings:

Of the Twelve Apostles, President John Taylor, and Elders Wilford Woodruff, Orson Hyde, Orson Pratt, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith.

Patriarch John Smith. Of the Presiding Bishopric, Edward Hunter.

Of the Presidency of the Stake Angus M. Cannon, David O. Calder and Joseph E. Taylor.

A large representation of the Priesthood from all the Wards in the Stake were present.

Remarks were made in the morning by Elder Wilford Woodruff on the benefits likely to flow from the more perfect organization of the Priesthood, the encouraging progress being made in the building of Temples, and the responsibility devolving upon the Saints generally, and more especially the Priesthood.

Elder Orson Hyde gave an encouraging and instructive address on the duties of the Saints. Instead of repining for the errors of our past lives and desiring to live them over, we should begin and live them over now, thus proving our sincerity by our works.

The clerk then read the Statistical Report of the Stake for the past quarter.

President Angus M. Cannon hoped the Bishops would settle the tithing at the beginning of the year that the people may feel the necessity of being prompt. In other Stakes the Bishops report their tithing business to the President of the Stake, but having the Presiding Bishop here the bishops of this Stake are required to make such reports to him. He was gratified with the spirit manifested by those interested in Sunday schools, the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, the Relief Societies and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations, all of which are organized in almost every Ward in the Stake, and are great levers for good in the midst of the Saints. Commended the efforts of the County Court in organizing companies for the purpose of taking out canals, thus furnishing labor for many who could not otherwise obtain it and giving all a chance to procure land on easy terms. The brethren should exercise a spirit of generosity, and so far as possible place it in the power of their poorer brethren to obtain land, and then instruct them how to properly cultivate it. It was the duty of the Bishop to look after his Ward as a father; he should endeavor to find something for his people to do, for it is his calling to look after the temporal as well as the spiritual interests of his flock.

The reports from the Home Missionaries were encouraging, and there seemed to be a disposition among them to discountenance everything that tends to sin, and to urge the Saints to a faithful performance of the duties of to-day.

Upwards of forty quorums of the Priesthood had been organized since our last Conference, most of which are deacons' quorums, the offices of priest and teacher being but poorly represented.

He trusted the Bishops would seek to make the meetings of the quorums interesting, so that there would be more inducement to the young men to attend them than places of amusement or vice.

Adjourned till 2 p.m.

After the usual opening exercises the general authorities of the Church and the local authorities of the Salt Lake Stake of Zion were presented by President Joseph E. Taylor and unanimously sustained, as previously published in the *DESERET NEWS*, with the following additions and changes.

A. W. Winburg was sustained president of the Scandinaviania