

an argument and then follow it up with an explanation that it is clear logic. We leave to the other side the benefit of the device adopted by the famous and ingenious painter of horses.

As to the use of the dictionary, Rev. Nutting's idea appears to be that the definition there given of the word God is enough to upset the theology of Mormonism. Our reply to that was that the dictionary is no authority on theological questions, and this is true. In the dictionary the words contained in a language are collected and their commonly accepted meanings given. As to the meaning the dictionary is authority. But when the question arises whether the commonly accepted meaning of a certain word is that in which it was employed, let us say by the authors of the Bible for instance, then the inquiry must be carried further. Words change meanings and even become obsolete; the definitions of the dictionaries change accordingly, but the revealed truths remain forever and ever.

Our opponent next tries his wit and becomes sarcastic. He endeavors to wrest from our quotations of Scripture a confession that the doctrine of a plurality of Gods originated with Satan. What a spectacle he makes of himself! If the reader will take the trouble of referring to our previous article he will find on this point the following:

"The serpent in tempting our first parents holds out as an inducement to them to eat of the fruit, that by so doing they should be as 'Gods' (Gen. 3:5), a statement that was not entirely false, since the God Jehovah later on said: 'Behold Adam is become as one of us.' (Gen. 3:22.)"

It is almost beyond belief that a Christian minister is willing to place himself on record as saying that the plurality of Gods here taught—and Mormonism knows of no other—is the doctrine of Satan. Moses expressly states: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as ONE OF US." (Gen. 3:22.) It is God's doctrine, not Satan's.

But our opponent proves himself an entertaining juggler, not only with Scripture texts but also with the contents of other Mormon standards of faith. He says "the early Mormon doctrine of God contradicts the present one." And now for the proof of this: The Book of Mormon teaches only one God; so does the Doctrine and Covenants up to section 121 and the Pearl of Great Price up to page 63. In other words, because the plurality of the Godhead is not (if Mr. Nutting's word be taken for it) revealed in the Book of Mormon, or on the earlier pages of the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, therefore those earlier portions of these writings contradict the later ones. We presume this is a specimen of that "clear logic" Mormonism dislikes so much. How does that argument strike a Bible reader who searches the Bible in vain for a text setting forth the Trinitarian doctrine; or the Old Testament for a clear revelation on the immortality of the soul? Must he not by virtue of that "clear logic" conclude that the Bible by silence contradicts Athanasius, and the Old Testament the New? Bible students know well that revelation is gradual. The truths and purposes of God are eternal, but the revelations of those truths have aptly been compared to the gradual rising of the sun, scattering the mists of the morning until every hill and valley is clothed in splendor. Because an early revelation does not convey all there is to be revealed, we cannot truthfully say that it contradicts later and more comprehensive revelations. It would be as reasonable, or as foolish, to grumble because the sun rises gradually over the

landscape instead of taking one leap from the horizon to zenith and remaining there stationary. Apply that reasoning to other literary compositions. Our opponent argues thus: Because on page 63 of the Pearl of Great Price, is recorded a doctrine not recorded on page 1, therefore page 1 contradicts page 63. An intelligent child would not be deceived by so glaring a fallacy.

The "Hebrew argument," we are told, is "ludicrous" to scholarship. In proof of this two great scholars, Gesenius and Davies, are quoted on the use in the Hebrew language of plural nouns to denote single objects. (The way in which Mr. Nutting quotes Gesenius is certainly ludicrous.) The sum of this, we are told, is that the plural Elohim does not mean the plurality but the excellency of the one God. By analogy of reasoning we suppose the word used to denote certain idols (Teraphim) is plural merely to give emphasis to the excellency of that idol. Teraphim, we suppose, does not admit the thought of many idols of the same kind but only one whose majesty and excellency were too much for a noun in singular form!

The explanation given by the scholars quoted, and by others, and which the author of this happens to be familiar with from early school days, is perhaps the very best that can be offered in support of orthodox theology on this point. We do not underestimate its value or importance. If the controversy turned on the word Elohim alone, the theory of the scholars might even be accepted, but there are other facts which cannot be overlooked. Such expressions as these: "Let US make man in OUR image," and: "Behold the man is become as ONE of US," do not admit any other explanation than a plurality in the Godhead. Plurals excellentiae does not cover the ground. A king, for instance, can properly speak of himself as "us" and "we." That is plural of excellence or majesty. In English as in Hebrew. But if he should say that one of his subjects has become as "one of us," that would mean that he had become as one of the several kings existing. It is the same when God says "one of us."

The very analogy of the word Teraphim, house-idols, suggests the same thought. The word is of obscure origin, but that much is clear that it denotes a class of images, or idols, of which the one mentioned in I Sam., 19: 3-16 was one.

But Mormonism is challenged to name a single scholar who agrees with it that the word Elohim stands for a plurality of Gods. We accept Dr. Joseph Angus in his admirable Bible Hand-Book, page 124, gives the verdict of Christian scholarship in these words:

"In the beginning, for example, God taught the unity of His nature; while the truth that there is a plurality in the Godhead was taught but indistinctly. Several expressions in the earliest books imply it, and are evidently calculated to suggest it, such expressions, for example, as Let US make man in our image (See Gen. 1: 26; 3: 22); and the use of the plural noun, to indicate the true God, with a singular verb, Gen. 1: 1; Ps., 58; Prov. 9: 10, and several hundred times.

Hear another testimony. Rev. A. H. Sayce in "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments," says:

"The word Elohim takes us back again to the pre-Israelitish age of Canaan. Elohim is a plural noun, and its employment in the Old Testament as a singular has given rise to a large amount of learned discussion, and it must also be added, of a learned want of common sense. If the Hebrew word Elohim had not once signified the plural 'gods,' it would never have been given a plural form, and the best proof of this is the fact that in several pas-

sages of the Old Testament the word is still used in a plural sense." (Quoted by the author of *Renascent Christianity*, page 261.)

The trouble with Mr. Nutting is that he wants to fasten the charge of pagan polytheism on Mormonism. But he has signally failed to do so. The plurality of the Godhead taught in the Mormon standards of faith is the doctrine more or less directly taught in the Bible, and no other. Is our opponent ignorant of the fact that Judaism to this day charges the Christians with polytheism? This is probably just as well founded as Mr. Nutting's charge.

The reply to our statement that the authors of the Bible had the conception of a female element in the Godhead is characteristic. We pointed out that Ruach, the Spirit of God, is a feminine noun. Our opponent quotes Gesenius as follows: "Inanimate objects properly of neuter gender, and abstract ideas are regarded in Hebrew as either masculine or feminine, particularly the latter." Now, what has this rule of grammar to do with the question? Are we to infer that the Spirit of God, which moved upon the waters in the morning of the creation was an "inanimate object" or an "abstract idea?" Just fancy the idea of an "inanimate object" or an "abstract idea" moving upon the waters for the purpose of bringing life and order out of chaos! The "Spirit of God," Ruach Elohim, must have some reference to God, notwithstanding the assertion to the contrary. If it is true that the idea of gender in grammar was first suggested by the difference between male and female, it follows that feminine words were employed to denote persons or objects conceived to partake of feminine characteristics. In the earliest known languages a number of words in daily use ending with a certain vowel, came to be regarded as masculine on account of their meaning, and others with a different ending as feminine, for the same reason. Then words less frequently used were for convenience sake classified as masculine or feminine on account of their characteristic endings, regardless of their meaning. In this way inanimate objects and abstract ideas are either masculine or feminine in Hebrew, as in other languages, but that does not explain why a person, and especially a Divine person is represented by a feminine noun. There is some other reason for that.

And this reason is plainly indicated—we do not say fully revealed—in the narrative of the creation of man. We read: "In the image of God created He him [i. e. Man, the homo or Mensch]; male and female created He them." (Gen. 1: 27.) Both, male and female, we conclude, were needed for the completion of the Divine image.

But we are told that the "image" or "likeness" of man to God is not an "image" or a "likeness" but simply a resemblance to God in His essential nature. That is, as we read it, the Scriptures are alleged to teach that we resemble our Heavenly Father, in nothing but in His moral qualities. We submit the question whether this statement can be proved except by a most flagrant violation of all accepted rules of interpretation. The word image is used several times by the Bible authors. We read that Adam begat a son "in his own likeness, after his image." (Gen. 5: 3.) Does that mean simply a resemblance to the Father in moral qualities, and no more? The Lord commanded Israel as follows: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above." (Ex. 20: 4.) What