

ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY.

TODAY, December 23rd, is the anniversary of the birth of Joseph Smith, the founder, under God, of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The development of the religious community he was instrumental in establishing has been phenomenal, and their history constitutes one of the marvels of the age. The Prophet Joseph was a great character, for even aside from religious considerations, no man of ordinary calibre could wield an influence so potent as he has done. It is exhibited not only in leading so many thousands of people to adopt the views and principles he enunciated, but in the opposition which the mention of his name usually arouses everywhere outside of those who believe in the divine character of his mission. It is equal to the antagonism that was awakened by allusion to the nature and mission of Christ in the early ages, during the first century of the spread of Christianity.

Was he really a prophet with a divine mission? This is an important question, affecting the hosts of men everywhere. To our view, no man ever entitled to be so designated has ever given greater proofs of the genuine character of his claim in that regard. The evidences exist everywhere and assume every conceivable shape. Even scientists are unwittingly testifying to the valid character of his prophetic power. This, for instance, has been strikingly exemplified by Professor Jos. Rhodes Buchanan, of Boston, a noted scientist, who claims to be able to predict future occurrences of great moment by a scientific process, known as periodicity. The manner in which he sustains the claim to inspiration put forth by Joseph Smith is that the Professor in almost every instance does no more than parallel with his predictions the prophetic utterances of the founder of the "Mormon" Church, made over a half a century previous, in relation to occurrences that were to take place before the generation in which they were uttered had entirely died off.

This parallelism is exhibited in an article, heretofore alluded to in the *News*, written by Professor Buchanan in May, 1890, and published in a leading magazine, the *Arena*, in August last. He predicts that the United States is approaching a climax in affairs that will throw all events in the history

of the nation into the shade. It will be in the character of an internecine war of surpassing horror, which will virtually cause the struggle of the Rebellion to go into forgetfulness. He draws attention to its causes—the anger of the masses against the combinations of capital for purposes connected with the rapid accumulation of wealth, and the resisting power of labor organized into counter-combines, the extremes of wealth and poverty, which the people will not tolerate. He also cites the condition of the farmers through large sections of the country and the wrath betrayed by their incendiary language; he does not omit to speak of the discordant condition of religious elements, and the probability of a race conflict forming a portion of the approaching struggle. Finally the professor says:

"It will be a labor and capital war intermingled with a religious element of discord and with a mixture of the race question, from the presence of a powerful negro element confronting Caucasian negrophobia."

Joseph Smith not only predicted such a situation over half a century ago, as among the situations that would exist within the limits of the generation living while he uttered the prophetic words, but pointed out the same causes as those to which the scientific predictor points, without being aided by their existence. Those causes themselves were a part of what was foretold by the Prophet. The following, delivered in 1831, has reference to the combinations that would be formed as introductory to a social cataclysm:

Doctrine and Covenants, page 174.—"And behold it shall come to pass that my servants shall be sent forth to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south. And even now let him that goeth to the east teach them that shall be converted to flee to the west, and this in consequence of that which is coming upon the earth, and of secret combinations."

Again, the Prophet Nephi, in the Book of Mormon, page 122, says, regarding our times:

"For the time speedily cometh, that the Lord shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked shall He destroy."

The same work—the record of the ancient inhabitants of this continent—speaking through the Prophet Moroni, regarding the people in this land in our day, tells of the terrible consequences of the organization and operations of "combinations to obtain power and gain." They are described on page 588, and are denounced as destructive of the liberty of all people among whom they exist. Also

emphatic warning is uttered respecting them, and the people to whom the words refer are admonished to beware when they see such combinations, "which shall be among you." Thus what the scientific prophet points to as indicative of the approach of a great civil strife in this country, was clearly portrayed as future conditions, through the great religious prophet of the nineteenth century. Not only did the latter foretell the approaching struggle as within the limits of the present generation, when "every man's hand should be against his neighbor," but that the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, when the fate of the nation should seem to hang by a thread, would lift the standard of freedom and, with the aid of the upright and patriotic citizens of the land, re-establish the country on a constitutional basis, and bring order out of social chaos.

One thing is clear—if the learned Boston scientist is a correct predictor of future events by a scientific process, then Joseph Smith is a true prophet from a religious standpoint. In this regard, taking the Book of Mormon predictions, science is over 1400 years behind revelation, while those directly enunciated by Joseph Smith make the relative distance between from 50 to 70 years.

There are other predictions by the distinguished professor that are still more striking as parallels to the prophecies of Joseph Smith than that which refers to what he claims shall be one of the greatest and most sanguinary social struggles in the history of the world, and if they be taken as correct, they all, in their line, bear witness that a great prophet was raised up in this nation, who sealed his testimony with his blood. He was born eighty-five years ago today, and was martyred in cold blood at Carthage, Illinois, on June 27th, 1844.

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