

1. All the sects are wrong: That is, there is not one, that has preserved the entire truth without any error; all are wrong in some point or another.

2. All their creeds are an abomination in God's sight. Note that it does not affirm that everything in every creed is an abomination; nor was it ever so understood by exponents of Mormonism. On the contrary, Latter-day Saints are fully aware that there is much truth in every creed, even in those of the despised pagans; still the existence of numerous creeds at variance with one another is not the work of the Lord, whose Spirit leads to unity. The multiplicity of creeds, therefore, is an abomination in His sight.

3. "That those professors are all corrupt." This is qualified in the words that follow, thus: "They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof."

Now, having stated what the so-called basic revelation of Mormonism contains, we may confidently ask, Is it true or false? What is the testimony of the sacred Scriptures and of the members of the Christian churches, themselves?

For the pathetic truth of the first proposition, that all the sects are wrong in one direction or another, we fearlessly appeal to the consciousness of every enlightened evangelical Christian. Who is there among them that will say that his particular sect is free from doctrinal error? Do they not all admit that they have chosen their respective denominations, not because they are infallible on points of doctrine but because they can find nothing better? Is it not a fact that thousands of honest Christians believe that whatsoever amount of truth the Christian world possesses is distributed among all the sects, some having more and others less? And what is that but to admit that all are wrong in some particular?

From Mr. Nutting's own reasoning this conclusion is unavoidable. If the record shows that there is "essential" unity and "essential" scripturality of creed in all branches of the evangelical church, and no more, it follows that in all that is not essential there may be, or actually is, a deviation from the Scriptures. But to admit that the errors are only in non-essentials is to avoid Scylla only to perish in the whirlpool of Charybdis, unless indeed there is some divine authority to point out what is essential and what is not. But there is no such authority in the evangelical churches.

On the second proposition, "All their creeds are an abomination in God's sight," the testimony of the Scriptures is overwhelming. We have already stated that we conceive this to be not a condemnation of every doctrine defined in each particular creed. It is, for instance, not a condemnation of the belief in the existence of a Creator, a Savior or a sanctifying Spirit; nor of anything else that is true in any creed; it is an emphatic declaration of God's disapproval of the existence of a multitude of creeds, causing disunion among His children. This is in perfect accord with the Word of God.

In the prayer of Jesus before His departure, this petition is one ever to be remembered: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." (John 17:11.) The very object of the organization of the Church was "unity of the faith." (Eph. 4:4-13.) The divisions in the so-called Christian church cannot escape the censure bestowed by the Apostle Paul upon the Corinthians when he says: "For while one saith, I am of Paul

and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" 1 Cor. 3:4. Here the present disrupted condition of the Christian world is condemned in its incipency as "carnal." But from Rom. 8:7, we learn that a carnal mind is "enmity against God." The marvelous information to the young Prophet in his first vision is, therefore, in perfect accord with the teachings of the Bible. Had he been told on that memorable occasion that all the creeds are essentially scriptural, and therefore pleasing in God's sight, we, on our part, would not have been able to recognize in such a statement the Word of God. But the revelation carries with it the evidence of its authenticity. It is in full harmony with the Scriptures. The handwriting can be recognized by all familiar with the Word of God. As He anciently declared through Paul that the disposition to divide is an evidence of a carnal mind and enmity against God, so in this age He declared that it is an "abomination."

The Christian world furnishes further evidence for the truth of the statement that the existence of so many creeds is an "abomination," or at least an evil. The work of the Evangelical Alliance which seems to have resulted in a widely felt desire among church people to forget so-called minor differences and unite on some broad principles; the existence of large religious bodies which adhere to no creeds, and on that account gain numerous accessions, are seals on the revelation to the Prophet Joseph, stamping it as truth.

We may, however, venture one step further, and say that every creed that contains error is to that extent an abomination, inasmuch as error itself is abominable, and particularly if, as in this case, there is no excuse for it, unless man's natural propensity to that which is wrong be an excuse.

But Mr. Nutting takes special exception to the sweeping statement of the revelation concerning "those professors." It includes, he argues, all the truly Christian men and women and the noted saints of all earth's history. We have already shown that it does not, and that the construction put upon it is highly arbitrary; that primarily it is directed against the class whom the Son of God denounces as "thieves and robbers." His argument against this revelation is therefore directed with equal force against one of the sayings of the Son of God.

But let us for a moment suppose that the statement is applicable to a wider sphere. Is there, in that case, any reason for rejecting it as untrue? Fortunately, we have several portraits of human nature painted in bold outline by the Divine Master-hand in holy writ. In Gen. 6: 5 we are told that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Mark the "sweeping judgment" of this revelation. This was before the deluge. After that cataclysm we are told (Gen. 8: 21) that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Mark again the "sweeping judgment." About 1300 years later we find this: "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Psa. 14: 2, 3. What a "sweeping judgment!" Paul draws this picture of human nature in the flaming colors of the Old Testament: "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of

asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. 3: 10-18. That is surely the most "sweeping judgment" of all. Did Paul forget his grandparents or the host of truly honest men and women of his age? No, but his inspired pen painted a general outline of human nature. His purpose was to make man humble and to lead him on to penitence and faith by making him realize what he is apart from the divine, saving grace.

It was most fitting that at the beginning of this dispensation another picture of human nature should be drawn by the Divine hand. It was necessary in order to prepare the way for the Gospel that was to call upon mankind for repentance. Without this searchlight upon the innermost recesses of our nature, the Gospel itself would seem but a small gift, and it is self-evident that as the revelation given through Paul embraced in the word "all," Jews and Gentiles, so the revelation to Joseph, the Prophet, had special reference to "those professors" of various creeds. The revelation to which Mr. Nutting objects is a faithful counterpart of revelations in which he believes. The picture is identically the same with the exception that under the one is written in explanation of whose likeness it is: "Jews and Gentiles," and under the other; "Professors of Christian creeds." Christians accept the one because handed them by Paul; they refuse to accept the other because handed them by Joseph, although the paintings are easily recognized to be the works of the same divine Master. This seems to be the exact situation.

We have endeavored to prove that what has been called the basic revelation of Mormonism is seen to be true when tested by the teachings of the Bible. We will only add that if it is not a true foundation, the fact that it is supporting a structure such as the Mormon Church, is one of the greatest miracles on record.

NOTES.

Mormonism does not, properly speaking, appeal to the world as a new religion. It claims to be the Gospel restored.

The young Prophet Joseph did not, as intimated, disregard the Bible. On the contrary, it was his high regard for and faith in the Bible that led him to pray for light on a subject regarding which he was in darkness.

"Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" is not "misquoted" from Matthew. If it is a quotation at all, it is on the same principle as New Testament writers "misquote" those of the Old Testament. Theologians recognize the fact that inspired writers in quotations preserve rather the thoughts than the words of the original and where verbal variations occur, both have divine sanction and are intended to convey special lessons. We can refer to hundreds of quotations in the New Testament in proof of this. Scholars enumerate 263 quotations and 376 less direct references, in all 639. Are they all "misquotations?"

NEWS FROM MANILA.

The news yesterday of the death of Trooper W. H. Hudson of battery B, Utah Volunteers, struck with awe the friends of Lindsey Hudson, son of C. E. Hudson of this city, who, on the spur of the moment, thought it this young man that was killed. Lindsey, however, belongs to battery A, and is