

THE BOOK of MORMON DEFENDED by B.H. ROBERTS

Editor Tribune:—If any words of mine in the remarks made in the Tabernacle on the 8th of November could be construed into a "challenge" to a public discussion of the Book of Mormon—as the writers of headlines on some of the morning papers seem to think they could—when the challenge was accepted, the courtesy of debate would certainly require that the acceptance of the challenge should be otherwise than from ambush. I mean that I am entitled to know the name of my opponent, that I may judge somewhat of his character and standing. And why should the gentleman remain in the shadows? Is he ashamed to be known as engaging in such a discussion? Or is it a precaution he takes so that if his argument does not rise to the expectation of his friends, he may remain unknown behind the mystery of a single initial? If the first supposition be true, it is a difficulty he could easily have avoided; if the second suggestion be the true one, for his remaining unknown, he cannot be commended for his cunning. I need say nothing of his courage.

AS EXPECTED.

When on Saturday my attention was called to the editorial announcement that the alleged "challenge" had been accepted, and an article against the Book of Mormon would appear in the Tribune's Sunday issue, I remarked to a friend that I thought I could write an answer to the much-heralded article without seeing it; and when on Sunday I had not been over-confident in the assertion, so closely has he followed in the well-beaten, not to say worn, out, path of anti-Mormon argument. What a world of trouble Alexander Campbell would have saved many inferior flounders had he only stereotyped the objections he urged against the Book of Mormon in 1831! They then could have pointed to his utterances and said: "There's my argument." For from the days of Mr. Campbell until now, anti-Mormon geniuses have but rehearsed the great man's arguments, with a uniform decadence in their strength, in proportion to the distance from him which they are removed from him who first fashioned them. But now to the Unknown's "arguments."

THE TIME OF WRITING.

1. The Unknown states the fact that Nephi wrote between 600 and 500 B. C., and that the time of writing was a time of difficulty that I am to overcome. "How could a writer," he asks, "claiming to live at that time make repeated quotations from the writings of Christ's apostles who were born until 500 years after the time when Nephi wrote?" He then charges that Nephi quotes "passage after passage" from the writings of Christ's apostles, Matthew, John, Paul, Luke, Peter, etc., and that he does so in a manner which is "not only a plagiarism, but a plagiarism of the highest order." The gentleman very much overstates the difficulty he presents, by making it appear that the alleged quotations are very numerous, when the fact is that the two or three cases he cites virtually exhaust the alleged quoted passages so far as the New Testament is concerned. In order that your readers may see how the charge here made is, I set down the quotations in question. (a) Nephi describing his father's vision of the future coming of the Messiah says: "And he spoke also concerning the prophets who should come in the latter days, to prepare the way of the Lord; yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing, and he said that he called him that was to come, 'the Son of Man.' (John 1, 26, 27). 'In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea' (Matthew 3, 1). Of course, the story of the man who said he could prove that the Bible commanded every one to hang himself, may be commonplace; but it illustrates the methods of the Unknown in making out his case of plagiarism. The proof was supplied in this way: He quoted the passage, "and Judas went out and hanged himself." Then from another passage, from another book, he quoted the words, "Go thou and do likewise." It must be remembered that the Nephtes carried with them into the wilderness the Jewish Scriptures, and Lehi was doubtless familiar with the prediction of Isaiah concerning this same prophet that should go before our Lord to prepare the way before him, translated in our English version as follows: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert an highway for our God." (Isaiah xl, 3). Is it more remarkable that the Lord should reveal to Lehi what the voice in the wilderness should cry than that he should reveal it to Isaiah? (b) With reference to the Unknown's

charge that on the same page quoted above, Nephi makes "repeated quotations from the writings of Paul in the xi of Romans, about the 'olive tree,' and the 'branches broken off, with others grafted in,' etc., the gentleman, if acquainted with the prophecies of Isaiah, ought to know that this simile is not original with Paul; but that the ancient prophets used it in illustration of Israel and the judgments that should come upon the people. Moreover, in addition to our books of Jewish Scriptures the Nephtes had some of the writings of the other prophets of Israel, notably the book of Zechariah, in which was given at great length this simile of the tame olive tree and the branches being broken off and others grafted in, etc., from which book, unquestionably, Nephi obtained his ideas.

QUOTATION FROM PETER.

The Unknown's charges that Nephi quoted from the words of Peter, which I give here, followed by the quotations from Nephi. Peter: "Whom the heavens must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. And what shall the Unknown is driven to make out his case.

One other thing the Unknown seems to have overlooked, viz., that the Book of Mormon is a translation of the ideas and prophecies of men, deriving their knowledge concerning the Messiah and things associated with His life either from the old Jewish Scriptures, which were in their possession, or from the revelation of God, which was given to them. The translator, Joseph Smith, being more or less familiar with New Testament and Old Testament expressions, in making the translation, at times used Bible phraseology in representing ideas akin to those found in Jewish Scriptures. See also my remarks under heading No. 2, where this defense is more fully stated.

SHAKESPEAREAN QUOTATION.

2. The Unknown fairly revels in the thought that he has Lehi quoting Shakespeare many generations before our great English poet was born, and indulges in the sarcasms which Campbell and more than a score of anti-Mormon writers have indulged in who have mimicked his phraseology. Now the fact is that there are two passages in Job which could easily have supplied both Shakespeare and Lehi with the idea of that "country from whose bourn no traveler returns." That this may appear I give the passages from Shakespeare, Job and Lehi. It should be remembered always that the Nephtes had the Jewish scriptures with them, including the book of Job; hence Lehi could have obtained his idea from the same source whence Shakespeare obtained his.

Shakespeare: "That undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns." Job: "Let me alone that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return; even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death." (Job 19, 20, 21). "When a few years (22) are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return" (Job 16; Lehi: "Hear the words of a parent whose limbs are in the cold and silent grave from whence no traveler can return."

It will be observed that the passage from the Book of Mormon follows Job more closely than it does Shakespeare both in thought and diction; and this for the reason, doubtless, that Lehi had been impressed with Job's idea of going to the land whence he would not return, and Joseph Smith being familiar with Job, and very likely not familiar with Shakespeare, when he came to Lehi's thought, expressed it nearly in Job's phraseology.

FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

3.—The Unknown asks me again how it is that Nephi, living in the sixth century B. C., can quote numerous passages about "200 from the New Testament alone, and whole chapters from our English version of the Bible, which did not come into existence for more than 2000 years after he wrote. When the Unknown says that there are 300 quotations from the New Testament alone in the writings of Nephi, if he meant that, he simply makes a colossal misrepresentation; for there is no such number of passages in Nephi from the New Testament alone, nor, in fact, in the whole Book of Mormon. But as I think he must have meant this assertion to apply to the whole Book of Mormon, I will take no advantage of his misstatement as to confining that number to Nephi, but will meet the larger question as to all these passages in the Book of Mormon which parallel passages in both the Old and New Testament. Because Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon by means of the

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II. NEPHI.

[CHAP. XXX.]

2. For behold, I say unto you, That as many of the Gentiles as will repent, are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent, shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none, save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel.

3. And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed.

4. And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem; and that they are descendants of the Jews.

5. And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

6. And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people.

7. And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered, also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ, shall also become a delightsome people.

8. And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.

9. And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked;

10. For the time speedily cometh, that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people; and the wicked will be destroyed; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.

PROPHETIC PAGE FROM THE BOOK OF MORMON.

We herewith present the predictions on page 122 of the Book of Mormon, which were the subject of Elder B. H. Roberts' remarks on Sunday, Nov. 8, and which he said no one could successfully account for, considering the direct fulfillment of part of them, the others being in process of fulfillment, on any other hypothesis than that the writer was inspired. This was construed into a "challenge" to the world for a general discussion of the Book of Mormon, and on which the gentleman signing himself "M" based his criticism.

We call attention to the prophecies in their order, and think it will be found difficult to cite a single page of Scripture no larger than this prophetic page or more important predictions. (1) It is decreed that many shall believe the Book of Mormon—for such the context proves the book referred to in the prediction to be—fulfilled; (2) those who believe the Book of Mormon will carry it to the Lamanites (Indians)—fulfilled. (See History of the Church, vol. i, pages 118, 120 and 182-5, also various missions to the Indian tribes in the west); (3) Lamanites to hear the Gospel and to know of their fathers—fulfilled as to many of them; ultimately to become a delightsome people—in process of fulfillment; (4) Jews to begin to believe in Christ and gather to the land of their forefathers—seen to be in progress of fulfillment in Zionite movement, and in the change of attitude among many Jews towards Jesus of Nazareth; (5) the work of God to begin among all nations in bringing to pass the restoration of his people—in process of fulfillment in binding together all the nations of the earth by means of instant communication and rapid means of travel both over land and sea; the highways are cast up and all things prepared for the return of God's covenant people scattered people, the redemption of Zion and the establishment of Jerusalem. Even a superficial consideration of this prophetic page will disclose how far away from the subject of Elder Roberts' remarks is the criticism of "M."

Inspiration of God and the aid of Urim and Thummim, it is generally supposed that this translation occasioned the Prophet no mental or spiritual effort, that it was purely mechanical; in fact, that the instrument did all and the Prophet nothing, than which a greater mistake could not be made. All the circumstances connected with the work of translation clearly prove that it caused the Prophet the utmost exertion, mental and spiritual, of which he was capable, and that while he obtained the facts and ideas from the Nephtes, he was left to express those ideas in such language as he was master of. This, it is conceded, was faulty, hence here and there verbal defects in the English translation; but the fact, that he was left to express those ideas in such language as he was master of, is the only explanation to all of that class of his objections.

WHAT GIVING AWAY.

4.—What the Unknown describes as Nephi giving himself away is based on my unknown friend's inability to comprehend a very simple fact. He says that in the 1st chapter of the second book of Nephi the writer, forgetting that he was pretending to write in the sixth century B. C., treats the baptism of Christ as actual history. That is, he holds, the writer changes from prophecy to narrative. The fact is that some time previous to this (see I Nephi, chapter 11) the baptism of Jesus had been shown in vision to Nephi, hence to him had become as an accomplished fact, after which, according to this chapter quoted by the Unknown, the voice of the Son of God (then a pre-existent Spirit) came unto Nephi, saying: "He (that is baptized) in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me (i. e., in vision) do." Now Nephi, with this in mind, points out to his brothers in the next verse how, by following their Lord and Savior down into the water, "according to his word" (i. e., given previously in Nephi's vision), they will be baptized, and thus receive the Holy Ghost. All of which considerations demonstrate that the gentleman has not understood the chapter.

quotations from the Talmud, while there has not been with the last two centuries an anti-Christian disputant, but who makes the same claims in behalf of the moral and spiritual teachings of Buddha; and not only do they claim that Christ's moral truths were borrowed from more ancient teachers, but that the principal events of His life also from His birth of a virgin to His resurrection as a God, were stolen from myths concerning old World heroes and teachers. When Messiah came to the New World, He had the same announcements to make concerning Himself and His relations to the world; the same ethical and spiritual doctrines to teach; and as He had been accustomed to state these doctrines in brief, apologetic sentences while in Judea, it is not strange that the same things were given to the Nephtes in their language, much in the same order, which Joseph Smith observed, and finding these truths substantially stated in our English Bible, adopted, where he could do so consistently, the language of that book. Still there are certain statements of moral and ethical ideas that the Unknown will find it difficult to parallel from the Bible, a few examples of which I here give: "The Lord giveth no counsel unto the children of men, save He shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them." "I give unto you weaknesses that they may be humble, and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me." Then let the gentleman take into consideration the exclusiveness of the Jews, and of the Christians also, for matter of that, and then contemplate the following passage which breathes such a spirit of universal charity and joins the hands of all the great moral teachers among all nations into one splendid brotherhood: "The Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own accord, in wisdom, all that they seek; that they should have; therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom, according to that which is just and true." Then let the Unknown parallel from the Bible the following great spiritual truth from the Book of Mormon: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are fallen, and the devil has been deceived. A sentence which tells, as it is told nowhere else, the purpose of man's existence. The limits of this article preclude the mention of historical and doctrinal truths which the Book of Mormon makes known to the world. Also consideration of the gentleman's effort to explain away the existence and force of the prophecies in the Book of Mormon to which I alluded in my Tabernacle discourse, and which may be found at page 122 of the current edition of the Book of Mormon. I esteem it to be of more importance that I should pass it with-out comment as its weakness and inaccuracy will be apparent to all who read it. Indeed at this point the gentleman makes it quite clear that he is not familiar with the book he attempts to criticize. In trying to make it appear that Nephi "jumbles up his own history and contradicts himself," the Unknown astonishes us with the statement that Nephi was a Jew, and learnedly tells us that his seed or the remnant of the Jews, and hence the prophecies concerning the Lamanites could not apply to the remnant of Nephi's seed. As a matter of fact, Lehi, and hence all of his sons, were of the tribe of Manasseh, and Nephi was speaking with reference to both his own and his brother Laman's descendants of whom the Indians are the remnant. When I reached this part of the gentleman's production I thought I was not only entitled to know who it was I was to meet in discussion, but also to have an opponent who at least was acquainted with the subject.

AS TO THAT "SORROW."

A word as to the "sorrow" which the gentleman experiences when he sees a man of my "ability" (shades of flattery, leave us!) "fooling away his time and

TRANSPORTING CANNON UP A MOUNTAIN SIDE.

Herewith is shown a method in vogue in mountainous countries of moving cannon over ground inaccessible to horses or mules. As may be imagined,



even the large number of men engaged in transporting the gun shown in the illustration find their task no easy one, for skillful handling is required to prevent it from overturning.

A PROBLEM FOR SCIENCE.

The accompanying illustration shows the skull of a rabbit which was shot by a marksman on the estate of a well known millionaire. It differs from the ordinary rabbit skull by reason of the peculiar tusklie formation of its teeth, and herein will be found a pretty problem for science to solve. Did the teeth



take this formation owing to this individual rabbit's peculiar environment or are they a survival of a period when all rabbits had tusks? Those interested in the doctrines of evolution will find the problem exceedingly interesting.

HEAVY POSTAL BUSINESS.

The total transactions of the United States post office for the fiscal year amounted to more than \$1,026,731,493. This is the first time that it has passed the billion dollar mark.

FAIR APOSTLE OF OCCULT.



Miss Giessman, who merely poses as interpreter to the famous Thibetan Mahatma, to whose occult family she belongs, is already deeply read in the occult herself and is believed to be reaching for the place left vacant by Mme. Blavatsky. It is even asserted by some that she is a reincarnation of the famous Russian theosophist.

BE A REAL WOMAN.

No. 805 Pease Avenue, Houston, Texas, May 14, 1903

I was barren during the six years of married life, suffering with painful menstruation and a dozen other aches and pains. I was a poor excuse for a wife as I was not able to be up more than about half the time and daily grew weaker and weaker.

Strong, ready and willing to assume the burdens and duties of married life and to enjoy its pleasures. I am very grateful to you for my good health and am today blessed with a baby who is the pride of our home and this is all due to your medicine. You will not wonder then that I am grateful to you.

Mrs. Charles Mason
VICE-PRESIDENT, HOUSTON MOTHERS' CLUB

WINE of CARDUI

Wine of Cardui brings health to sick women. Wine of Cardui brings children to barren homes. Wine of Cardui transforms sick wives into real women—women who glow with health and are full of life.

Mrs. Mason was an invalid, a type of the thoroughly discouraged woman. By taking Wine of Cardui she has secured perfect health. She has become a happy mother and now rejoices in the life which was once such a burden and a sorrow to her. A man can be almost an invalid and keep about but the troubles which generally afflict women are so vital that as Mrs. Mason said of herself "I was a poor excuse for a wife."

No woman should allow herself to remain in this condition. How can any refuse the health Mrs. Mason has? Wine of Cardui is freely offered to all. Any woman may secure exactly the same relief if she will take Wine of Cardui. Wine of Cardui is not a strong medicine but it is a certain cure for menstrual irregularities. It will not do impossibilities but it does cure bearing down pains, makes motherhood possible for barren wives and relieves the pains at the monthly period. Secure a bottle of Wine of Cardui today.

All druggists sell \$1.00 bottles of Wine of Cardui.

