

PROPHECIES AND PROPHETS.

WE HAVE already shown by indisputable facts that the gift of receiving beforehand more or less clear impressions of future events, is one with which human beings sometimes are endowed. It is a psychological phenomenon which has been so frequently observed that to doubt it is, to say the least, very unphilosophical.

A few more remarkable instances may be quoted, before we leave this part of our subject.

The Protestants themselves, although they deny the continuation of the prophetic gifts, have the following recorded in their *Apologia Confess. Augul*:

"Thirty years ago, there lived among us in the city of Eisenach, Thuringen, a Franciscan, John Hilten, who was incarcerated by his brotherhood because he had denounced some of their most glaring sins. We have seen some of his writings and can judge what his teachings were. Those that saw him describe him as a quiet old man, earnest but pleasant. This man has foretold many things, some of which have already been fulfilled, while others appear to be future. These we will not quote, that no one may receive the impression that we wish to be partial to anybody. But, finally, when he, as a consequence of old age or from foul prison air, became sick, he called the jailer in order to tell him of his condition. The jailer, however, was full of pharisaical hatred and abused the man on account of his teachings. This, then, forgot his sickness and told him, sighing, that he would forget all offenses for Christ's sake. He had not written or taught anything whereby the brotherhood could be injured; he had only found fault with some notorious errors. But, he said, there will come another in the year 1516, who will pronounce a full sentence against you, and you shall not be able to resist him."

Here is a clear prediction, giving the exact date of the beginning of the Reformation by Luther.

Jacob Cazotte's prediction of the French Revolution is one of the most clear prophecies to be found outside the pages of Holy Writ. It was published some time ago in the News, wherefore we only mention it at this time.

Cardinal Peter d'Ally who lived in the fifteenth century, predicted the same event in the following sentence:

"If the world stands to that time (1789), what God alone knows, then there will be great changes and revolutions, particularly with respect to the laws."

A prediction delivered by Hildegard, of Bingen, Germany, in the 12th century, quoted by several authors, is remarkable for its clearness and seems to be fulfilled in our own time. The lady describes the apostacy of the general church from truth and righteousness during seven

times or periods, commencing with the year 1100. This brings her to the beginning of our century, of which she says:

"Then shall also the true angels of men be near. Valiant and wise men shall stand up and gather all old and new sayings of the Bible, and all the words that have been published by the Holy Ghost, and the understanding of these they shall exhibit as an ornament with precious stones, and all the faithful shall see themselves therein as in a looking glass. Then shall also the Jews and the heretics (non-Catholics) rejoice and say that their glory is drawing near. Many Gentiles shall be baptized, confess Christ and honor Him. Unrighteousness, however, shall also lift her head but again be put down. Famine, wars and pests shall also rage and again be taken away."

This seems to be an unmistakably clear allusion to the glorious work now in progress for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God; the work for the inauguration of which the Latter-day Saints have been called together from the various quarters of the world; a work, for which some of the noblest men that ever dwelt on the earth lived and died.

The various passages of the prediction are worth while studying. Reference is made to the presence of angels; to the valor and wisdom of the chosen servants of God in this age; to the collection and right understanding of old and new sacred writings; to the acceptance of the Gospel by Jews and Gentiles; to the last efforts of the servants of unrighteousness, and to subsequent outpourings of divine judgments. There is, in one word, a clear and bold outline of what the world calls "Mormonism," drawn on the pages of the history of the 12th century.

[Hildegard died 1178. Her remarkable prediction has been quoted by H. Arnim in *Blicke auf Vergangenheit und Gegenwart Deutschlands*, Bremen 1847, and also by Johannes Kreyher, *Die mystischen Erscheinungen des Seelenlebens*, Stuttgart, 1880].

The fact being established that the human mind possesses the faculty of perceiving what is not actually present to the outward senses, although having an actual existence, it is easy to accept the prophecies with which revealed religion is so abundantly interwoven. True religion claims every good gift, every noble faculty of man. It claims his reasoning powers, whereby, it strengthened by the Spirit of God, he is enabled to perceive the connection between the different parts of his Father's work and penetrate even into the deep mysteries of the divine plan; it claims his feelings, his "heart," whereby he is enabled

to accept the infinite love of his Father, and reflect the same toward Him and towards the whole beautiful creation. It claims his speech, that he may proclaim the wonders of his God; his song, his every talent, every emotion. How strange would it be, if this one mysterious gift of man should have been discarded as useless in the divine worship? It cannot be. Has man to some extent this gift, as we have shown that he has, then it must be found in the service of God, exercised in behalf of true religion. In other words, divine predictions are as natural and necessary to God's religion as are the speeches whereby the Gospel is proclaimed, the songs and music whereby God is honored and His children edified, or the expositions of the scripture whereby the Father's will is made plain to mankind. All are necessary. Religion without one or any of these is defective.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that only good men, men of God, could possess the gift of pre-perception, if we may so call it. The Bible shows us instances proving the contrary. There is Baalam (Numb. 31; 16) who caused Israel to trespass against the Lord; there is that lying prophet who caused a man of God to turn from His counsel, but who nevertheless predicted the punishment that followed (1 Kings, 18; 11-22). And there are other similar characters. Every faculty of man can be used either in the service of Light or of Darkness. It can be influenced and guided either by a good spirit or by an evil spirit. Man can use his mental or physical powers either for or against the Kingdom of heaven. A man's reasoning powers and gifts of oratory for instance may be used in the defense of the truth or in the dissemination of falsehood; his hand may be used for the assistance of a brother, or for stabbing him in his heart. The faculties and powers are substantially the same, if we do not consider the difference of degree found in different individuals. The real difference is in the way in which they are used for good or for evil. So with this gift of pre-perception. It is found to some extent, probably, in every human being. In some it is found highly developed. A man who devotes this faculty, as well as others, to the service of God becomes, when the Spirit of God accepts his service and operates upon and through this faculty, laying open to the mind things, past, pres-