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REPLY TO THE ATHENÆUM,

BEING AN EXPOSITION OF THE IGNORANCE AND FOLLY OF MEN WHO OPPOSE THE TRUTH.

In the *Edinburgh Intelligencer* of April 7th, there is an article taken from the *Athenæum* on the subject of the Book of Mormon and the Latter-Day Saints. This article fills several columns of fine print, being mostly taken up in extracts from the Book of Mormon, &c.

The writer, after copying the title-page of the book, observes, "Here is a pretended revelation so absurd, so puerile, that it would seem unlikely to impose on the most ignorant and uncivilised, which has found thousands of followers in England—has been adopted by a party sufficiently numerous and wealthy to support a periodical called the *Millennial Star*—and has so far advanced in organization as to possess synodical conferences, local councils, and a general assembly!

Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer cloud,
Without our special wonder?"

We answer, No. For Isaiah the prophet speaks of the Book of Mormon and the work connected with it as being "A MARVELLOUS WORK AND A WONDER." See Isa. 29. To this bear all the newspapers witness!

The writer next introduces several lengthy extracts from the said book,—compares it with Mahomed,—pronounces the whole a base forgery,—and brings in the imposter Matthias, who lately figured at Sing Sing, near New York, and would fain leave the impression that he (Matthias) was connected with the saints. A more false and wicked insinuation was never penned by man, or instigated by satan, the father of lies. Matthias had no more to do with the saints than he had to do with the *Athenæum*.

After many ignorant and unjust remarks, the writer proceeds to find fault with Mormon, for mentioning the compass of Nephi several hundred years before the discovery of the needle's polarity.

The ignoramus seems not to possess the knowledge of the fact that the compass is supposed by many learned men to have been invented in Egypt, and well known to the ancients; and that it is a matter of authentic history that it was used in early times to traverse the deserts of Arabia and Africa. [See Mr. Davenport's works on electro-magnetism, lately published in New York.]

But, be this as it may, it has no bearing upon the subject of the compass of Nephi, spoken of in the Book of Mormon: for the book tells us expressly that

the Lord prepared the said compass, and that it was not invented by man.

It would be presumption indeed to say that the Lord had no knowledge of the needle's polarity until some man discovered it and taught it to him.—Query. Who taught the Lord the art of ship building?—[See the plan of the Ark as given to Noah.]—Who taught the Lord to be a tailor?—[See the account in Genesis, where the Lord God made coats of skins for our first parents. From whom did the Lord derive his knowledge of architecture? [See his plan of the Tabernacle and also the Temple!!!]

From whom did he obtain education, for he wrote with his own finger?

Or who taught him the trade of stone-cutting, that he might hew out the two tables which Moses broke?

If man originated all these things, and then taught them to the Lord, then perhaps He is indebted to man for his knowledge and skill in preparing the compass of Nephi!

The *Athenæum* sets it down as a sure mark of forgery that the terms Christ—Jesus—Alpha—Omega, &c., should occur in a work translated from an ancient American record, seeing these are *Greek* terms. A more ignorant objection than this can scarcely be imagined. What! must a translator enter into the origin of words; or must he use them as they are in common use, without regard to their derivation? Must an English work of the nineteenth century avoid all terms except those which were originally English, all which, though now in English use, have been borrowed from the Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, German, Hebrew, Egyptian, Chaldeic, Arabic, and a hundred others?

Certainly a translator would find but a barren language indeed. English literature is almost entirely made up of words adopted from other languages. The ancient dialect of the English was a barbarian jargon, barely adapted to the use of the unpolished natives in the common concerns of life. It had no literature until the light of science,

civilisation, and Christianity, in its progress westward, dawned upon the remote island of Britain—dispelled the darkness, polished the rough manners of the natives, and enriched the language by degrees, by the introduction of an almost numberless variety of words borrowed from the languages of various nations, who had in turn stood foremost in the ranks of polished life.

Among the terms thus introduced were those of Christ, Jesus, Messiah, Alpha, Omega, Jehovah, God, Baptise, Sacrament, Bible, Testament, Confirm, Apostle, Disciple, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Deacon, &c. &c.,—none of which were originally English, although now in as common use, both in America and England, as any English words we have. Now, in translating the Book of Mormon from the Egyptian into modern English, all these, and a thousand other words and names, must be avoided, or it will be considered "*all a forgery*." In other words, a translation of Egyptian into English must be Egyptian still! and be entirely unintelligible to the millions for whom it is designed. The word compass, for instance, must be "*Liahona*," and the honey-bee must be called "*Deseret*."

All the Saints, and all the Methodists who have opposed them, are now set down as fools, because they have not discovered these "sure and certain marks of forgery," viz., that the Book of Mormon mentions the name of Christ in an English translation! Having made this denunciation, this giant in literature congratulates himself and us with the sure expectation that the work is effectually detected and overthrown!

How it is that the *Athenæum*, the *Edinburgh Intelligencer*, and a Preston paper, and some others professing a high literary character, should have imposed upon themselves and their readers, and exposed their own ignorance and folly by giving publicity to a piece so fraught with weakness and inconsistency, it is difficult to imagine. But so it is; and this is but another proof that on religious subjects men have lost their reason, and gone mad; the firm and fixed traditions

of men having long since taken the place where reason and thought should preside without a rival.

After quoting largely from the Book of Mormon, and criticising its language, the *Athenæum* remarks as follows:—

“Enough has been said to show the nature and character of this extraordinary forgery. Had its success been confined to America we might have noticed its history briefly, as a strange example of the aberrations of the human mind; but it is making rapid progress in England, particularly in the manufacturing districts, and it is also spreading in Wales. Furthermore, its converts are not made from the lowest ranks; those sought for and obtained by the Mormonite apostles are mechanics and tradesmen who have saved a little money, and who are remarkable for their moral character, but who are exposed to delusion from having, as Archbishop Sharpe expresses it, ‘studied the Bible with an ill balanced mind.’ We feel it therefore a duty to expose the origin of the imposture, and give some particulars respecting its authors, which we trust will be of service in preventing the spread of the delusion.”

It then proceeds to give the usual catalogue of lies and fables which are connected with the old Spaulding story, and which have been published and replied to, and republished and replied to for several years, both in America and England, till at length they have ceased to be noticed, or to have any effect among friends or enemies. Indeed, most of those who embrace the doctrine of the Saints have read the old Spaulding story and all the other concerns about money digging, before they joined the society. If our enemies wish to oppose us they must bring something besides these old fables, for they have been sufficiently tried, and found unsuccessful.

However, each succeeding edition of these “old wives fables” has something fresh added to it, which the lovers of falsehood suppose will answer their purpose better and better still.

For instance, the *Athenæum* has given

us an edition with this addition, viz., that Spaulding’s Romance “was lent to S. Rigdon.” The former editions, we believe, only venture a presumption that S. Rigdon might have seen Spaulding’s Romance. So that, upon the whole, we would recommend this *Athenæum* edition, as the best calculated to answer the purpose of all who wish to stop the truth, by the circulation of falsehood, of any we have ever seen. There is also another lie which is well worth the attention of all lovers of slander and falsehood, viz., that the Saints are commanded in the Book of Mormon to have a community of goods. There is no such commandment in the Book of Mormon, but only an historical allusion to the fact that they did some times have a community of goods in ancient times; but it is well known, both at home and abroad, that the Latter-day Saints have no community of goods.

The words “total immersion” are also used by this learned critic. We are so unlearned that we hardly understand his meaning, or where total immersion differs from the baptism which is practised by that sect to which the editor belongs: perhaps they may immerse the thumb, the arm, or the big toe, and then inform their flock that they have been “buried with Christ in baptism.” Romans 6th.

We are next informed that the Saints have a book called the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which is kept secret from all but such of the members as can be depended on. This is another ignorant blunder. The book referred to was published to wicked and righteous, as far as it would go, till it was out of print, so that at this time it is impossible to supply even our own elders and Church officers with a copy, until reprinted.

He says, “In this work the demand for money meets us everywhere,” and then proceeds to give a few garbled and misquoted extracts, touching our temporal affairs as a colony, and seems to wonder that the Saints should use money in purchasing lands, printing the Word of God, building houses, &c., as though

a prophet or apostle never mentioned money in the whole Bible. Indeed we suppose he never read the prophet Isaiah, which says that they shall come with their silver and gold to Zion. Moses and the prophets, and Jesus and his apostles, speak more about money and property than about any other subject whatever. But this editor seems to think it strange for God to give a revelation on the subject of money!

We are next informed that in 1831 the Saints commenced a settlement in Missouri; that about two years after, the other inhabitants of the state took up arms against them, and a sanguinary civil war raged for nearly five years, after which (the *Athenæum* says) **TRUE BILLS FOR MURDER** were found against some of their apostles and leaders, particularly Parley P. Pratt, the editor of the *Millennial Star*, and that the Saints were **EXPELLED FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI**, and have finally settled in the state of Illinois, and founded three towns.

A strange ignorance of the rights of man, as guaranteed by the American institutions, is here betrayed by the writer.

First, he informs us that the other inhabitants of Missouri made war upon the Saints for five years. This is as much as to say they became **MURDERERS, ROBBERS, PLUNDERERS, &c.**, of the Saints, and next informs us that these same murderers, who made war upon the Saints, sat in judgment upon P. P. Pratt and others who defended their wives, children, houses, and homes, in this "war," and found bills against the said patriots for **MURDER!!** Next, he says, these same Saints were expelled from Missouri. Now, as the editor of the *Athenæum* is a literary character, who professes great intelligence, as also is the *Edinburgh Intelligencer*, will they be so kind as to tell us by what law part of the citizens of an American state make "war" upon other citizens of the same state? Secondly, by what law self-defence is construed into murder? Third, by what

law the citizens of one state are **EXPELLED** to another?

Or, to suppose a plain case—suppose the inhabitants of Edinburgh were the owners of the lands and houses of the town and vicinity; that all the estates were theirs by an undisputed title, obtained from the highest authorities of England by fair purchase; suppose these people were all Methodists and their neighbours were Roman Catholics. These Catholics drive the Methodists out of Edinburgh, and finally out of Scotland into England—rob them of millions—take forcible possession of their lands—burn part of their houses, and occupy the remainder—and finally kill some scores of them, and imprison others, on pretence that they had aided in the defence of their firesides, wives, and children; and that this defence should be called *murder*. Such would be the true state of the case as it transpired in *Missouri*, and as published in the American papers in all parts of the republic. If the English editors are ignorant of this, they are wilfully so, for almost every paper in America has given details of that horrible persecution, which has called forth the sympathy of all parties, both political and religious. Even public meetings have been held, both in New York and several other large places, on behalf of the suffering, persecuted, and exiled Saints.

These meetings were composed of editors, clergymen, statesmen, governors, merchants, lawyers, &c., nearly all of whom were unconnected with our society. The proceedings of these meetings have been extensively published in the political papers.

Besides all this, the whole matter has been two several times before the American Congress, with an overwhelming degree of testimony, and this memorial and its accompanying documents printed at the expense of government, by order of the last session of *Congress*. Indeed, the said Parley P. Pratt, whom the *Athenæum* accuses of **MURDER** and of an underhanded escape from justice, has since his escape from prison

stood before the Senate and House of Representatives at Washington, and before his Excellency the President of the Federal Government, with an application for the whole Missouri affair to be investigated, and the wrongs redressed according to LAW. These are public facts well known to the world, being not only published in the newspapers, but several different authors have published each a history of this persecution. One of these, a work of 216 pages, is now extensively published in England, and may be had at the book stores in Manchester; it is entitled "A History of the late persecution of the Latter-Day Saints in Missouri," &c.

Now with all this information before the public, it is downright wickedness or unpardonable stupidity and ignorance that causes editors in this country to speak of this awful affair in a point of light so unjust, so disgraceful to humanity. No doubt if such men had the power they would burn men to the stake, in order to compel their thoughts to run in the channel which popularity may happen to dictate.

These men have now to learn that they have men to deal with who never yet feared the face of mortal since they were put into possession of the knowledge of the truth; and who will expose their folly and absurdity whenever they attempt to oppose the truth with such foolish imaginations and wicked lies. But to return to our review. This literary hero next observes that we have a town in Illinois which we call Nauvoo, and which we "have the hardihood to assert is derived from the Hebrew."

What does he mean by hardihood in this sentence? If he is so ignorant as to think Nauvoo is not Hebrew we pledge ourselves to prove the fact by quoting the original, chapter and verse.*

As he has been so kind as to inform us that the Saints in England deposit their stocks in the treasury of the sect, will he inform us who the treasurer is!!

* כָּאָרֶר "They were beautiful, adorned."

225th page of Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey's Hebrew and English Dictionary, published by George Wightman. London, 1839.

We had like to have forgotten to notice the story of Mr. Smith being a money-digger. What! a clergyman dig money! "Can such things be without our special wonder?" Very few of them would dig either money or potatoes. No, indeed, not they. Some poor man must dig all the money and potatoes for them. But Mr. Smith, it would seem, is an honourable exception—a pattern of industry. Would to God that others would follow his example, and dig for a livelihood. The widow, the orphan, and the labouring poor would then have less cause of complaint.

We are next told that 44 persons have emigrated from Preston to our colony in the last three weeks. Astonishing! What! forty-four? We would inform the gentleman that near one thousand persons have emigrated within the last few months, and that thousands more will go soon.

Next follows some remarks on the hymns of the Latter-Day Saints. These are said "to be destitute of grammar, sense, or rhyme;" but we would only say that our hymn book is becoming extensively known, and the hymns will speak for themselves. A mere glance at our hymns will show the above remark to be entirely unfounded.

We must now close by informing the public that we have a quantity of the tracts on hand entitled "A reply to Mr. Bush," which will entirely refute the statements of the *Athenæum* and other papers, in relation to the origin of the Book of Mormon and the rise of this Church. We will therefore (to use the style of the Chinese) caution the public that if they remain in darkness, and continue to believe a lie, IT IS THEIR OWN FAULT.

QUERY TO EDITORS.—Gentlemen, will any of you venture to give your readers both sides of the question, by publishing the foregoing reply? We fear you will not.—ED.

IMPOSITION.

From a small tract which we have just perused, purporting to be printed and published at Nottingham, by one T. Kirk, we learn that there is a monthly