

integral portion of all other substances, it follows that intelligence is diffused among the atoms composing the universe of matter. How could matter obey a law if it had not intelligence to comprehend it, and an inherent will with or by which to control itself? The facts that grasses grow, that leaves put forth, that winds blow, that waves roar, that worlds fly through space with inconceivable velocity, while all is strictest harmony and order, prove conclusively the universal diffusion through all space of a substance which is the source of power, intelligence and truth, self-existent, eternal, the power by which were all things made, and the substance of which they were composed, wholly or in part.

The spirit of man is his mind. The spirit has form, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; hence must be composed of atoms, hence is matter, hence mind is matter, having some property or properties in common with all other matter, and several that are peculiar to itself. True it is

a very refined, subtle kind of matter, but it is matter for all that, and when the Holy Ghost is diffused through a mind or spirit in a manner analogous to the way in which the human body may be charged or infused with electricity, greatly increased intelligence on the part of the mind thus acted upon is the result.

This fluid, spirit, substance, or Holy Ghost—in conjunction with the two personal beings, Jehovah or the Father, and Jesus or the Son—constitutes the grand governing, controlling, sustaining, creating, matchless council, by which and of which the universe was created, and by which it is sustained, these three being one only in the sense of unity of purpose and action; and man, by taking the same course which Jesus has taken, living a life equally free from error (sin), in short, becoming one with Him, will, in time, reach a position of equal power and exaltation to the one now occupied by Him, though man may never overtake Him.—*Banner of Light.*

REFLECTIONS ON READING THE BOOK OF MORMON.

BY ELDER JAMES A. LITTLE.

That the western as well as the eastern hemisphere should have an inspired history and a Gospel dispensation inaugurated by Christ himself, comes in contact with the limited conceptions and the self-assured wisdom of this nineteenth century. The Book of Mormon came into a world of antagonisms and found but little it could assimilate with. The course it directed mankind diverged from every other path they had been accustomed to travel. It has enlarged the field of human thought and action, and, to those who accept its doctrines, it opens up new sources of present enjoyment and brightens the future with the hope of happy realities.

Nearly fifty years have passed since the plates from which it was translated were taken from the hill Cumorah. During this period mankind seems to have been operated upon by unusual impulses. They have been

rapidly working out of the timeworn grooves of the past, and the world is rushing on to a future of which the uninspired mind forms no conception. It has been a period of great and varied departures from former religions, governmental policies and social ethics. The inspirations attending the Book of Mormon are disintegrating the fragmentary religions and exposing the debasing moralities of many generations, reorganizing the elements of future history, and purifying the fountains of the world's progress. The magnitude of the results of its introduction into the world entitle it to the calm, intelligent consideration of the scientific and curious, as well as the religionist. It develops the purpose of God concerning a hemisphere, and the conditions of its occupation by the human race. It solves the problem of the origin of the aboriginal Americans. It informs

us of the origin of those extensive remains of former civilizations, which evidence the existence of empires, with populations quite as numerous as those which now occupy American soil. Asiatic Israel, with its world renowned Egyptian exodus, with its long record of inspired Prophets and special providences, sinks into geographical insignificance compared with the empires of this western land of promise, whose founders traversed half the circuit of the globe to mould the destinies of a hemisphere to the purposes of Jehovah.

The history of the first people who occupied the country after the flood—the Jaredites—occupies about thirty-four pages of the Book of Mormon. Insignificant as this sketch is, compared with the evident magnitude of the subject, it is the only known history of the continent for 1,700 years, or until about 600 years before Christ. Two very important events took place about that time on this western hemisphere—the entire destruction of the Jaredites, and the landing of two colonies from the ancient city of Jerusalem. With the exception of the Book of Ether, the Book of Mormon is a history of these colonies, until 420 years after the advent of our Savior, a period of 1,020—a total of twenty-seven centuries. From this time until the discovery of the continent by Columbus in 1492, a period of 1,072 years, its history can only be conjectured from the recorded visions of the Nephite Prophets, from a few fragmentary and unreliable narratives saved from the ravages of the Spanish conquest, from the traditions of the natives still extant, and from what remains of the labors of extinct nationalities. A great variety of theories have been advanced concerning the origin of the aboriginal American. The future will probably be as prolific as the past in those theories, until the record of Mormon is accepted as a historical fact. These colonies were a mixture of the tribes of Ephraim, Judah and Manasseh, and were therefore more generally Israelitish than modern Jewish in type. In changing continents they experienced a great change in climatic and other conditions which create race distinctions,

and of necessity there must have been a wide divergence from the original Asiatic stock in the long period of 2,400 years.

These colonies of Israelites carried with them to the west a history of their ancestors, and their descendants have never entirely lost sight of the fact that their fathers came across the "great waters." Antiquarian research on the American continent has so far tended to establish the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. No ancient record of the eastern hemisphere has reflected one ray of light on the obscure past of the western. Unless Providence has provided some way for the inhabitants of the latter to speak for themselves, reliable information of their past history seems hopeless. Whether or not the Book of Mormon is a history of these people, written by themselves, is now the question before the world.

If the American Indians are a portion of Abrahamic Israel, and heirs to the blessings, there is a comprehensive significance in the following queries—May not God yet favor a people whose season of oppression under the Caucasian race nearly equals that of ancient Israel in Egypt? Are there no promises to them in the archives of the past to gladden their future with hope? Is the assumption reasonable that the myriads of intelligences who have occupied that continent during its long isolation, have had no Divine inspiration, no holy Prophets, no temples where the sacrificial incense ascended to the Most High, no knowledge of an atoning Savior, no Apostles, no evangelists, no hope of deliverance from death through a glorious resurrection? Does it accord with the Christian idea of Divine justice and mercy, that only one-half of the world should have had knowledge of the Gospel of salvation? Although written on separate continents and in different languages, the Bible and Book of Mormon testify of each other, and the latter asserts that their joint testimony shall be for the confounding of false doctrine in the latter times; in fact, that one should be the complement of the other, and they, jointly, the embodiment of the Divine plan for man's redemption?

European nations at first appreciated the New World as opening new sources of trade, and as presenting excellent opportunities for the gratification of avarice by plunder; of political significance as affording vast areas of land only partially occupied, where new empires could easily be established by conquest and colonization; of religious importance as opening new fields for the operations of an intolerant spirit of propagandism, whose chief element of success had been the weakness of others. These incentives to conquest and colonization were the legitimate result of the avarice and religious bigotry of that age of American discovery and conquest. With few exceptions the foundations of American republics were laid in the blood and spoliation of the aboriginal American, the white race modifying and varying their oppressions to suit their wants and caprices, practically asserting that the Indian had no rights which it was bound to respect. Professedly the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, they have waged exterminating war, and when weary of the slaughter have forced corroding vice on defenceless savages to complete the work of death. Thus for nearly 400 years aggression on the one side has continued the work of extermination on the other. The Book of Mormon is a warrant deed, recorded in heaven and carrying the seal of Divine inspiration, to the Aboriginal American, of the lands occupied by his fathers.

The discovery of America brought into contact the customs, the traditional policies, the religions, the interests and energies of two hemispheres, and produced conditions of existence differing in many essentials from both originals. Conception fails to grasp the results of American discovery, of the consequent interming-

ling of races, their antagonisms and their reacting influences on each other.

European civilization, with its superior means of aggression and overshadowing influences, expected to mould the institutions of the new world in conformity with its own. For who could then have predicted from the usual revelations of cause and effect that the offshoots of despotism could grow into republics? It was a new epoch in the history of the world, a new development on a grand scale; but, as, now appears, a natural outgrowth from American soil. While republics represent the sovereignty of the people, they do not appear to have added anything to the stability of national institutions.

There can be no stability in the midst of cherished antagonisms, as now existing in a great diversity of religious creeds, in disintegrating views of the domestic and social relations, in overshadowing monopolies which oppress and therefore degrade honest labor, and in the maddening struggle for gain.

As the future unfolds to the comprehension of men, that divine inspiration is the only guide to permanent individual and national prosperity, the Book of Mormon will be appreciated as the exponent of a divine plan working out, through forty centuries, a chain of special providences in order to open up a higher destiny for man than is now contemplated by the soundest uninspired thinkers and most hopeful philanthropists. Simply as a history of ancient America, it would have produced no more change in the current of human affairs than would the intelligent elucidation of the tile records of ancient Nineveh, or of the mysteries of the catacombs of Egypt. Its potency lies in the fact that it represents a divine purpose yet to be consummated.—*Deseret News*.

Sophistry is unworthy the methods of any public teacher.

Joy wholly from without is false, precarious and short. From without it may be gathered, but, like gathered flowers, though fair and sweet for a season, it must soon wither and become offensive. Joy from within is like smelling the rose on the tree; it is more sweet and fair, it is lasting, and I must add, immortal.—*Young*.