

A FEW

INTERESTING FACTS

RESPECTING

THE RISE AND PROGRESS AND PRETENSIONS

of the

MORMONS.

BY WM. S. WEST.

“O! TRUTH, thou blessed offspring of the world above,
Be thou my bosom friend, the object of my love.”

1837.

THE object of this little work is to call upon the citizens of these United States, to arouse from your slumbers, for the enemy of truth is abroad in the land. Our beloved country is overrun with the propagators of the most mischievous delusion that has been recorded since the creation of man; and the consequence is that thousands are annually embracing it. This is evident, for it is but about seven years since they arose, and they assert that they now number at least forty thousand. And their, traveling elders are continually sending letters in Kirtland, from various parts of the United States, and the Canadas, giving accounts of their extensive travels, the numbers they have baptized, &c. For the truth of this, see Latter Day

Saints Messenger and Advocate, (which I shall hereafter notice as the Mormon Advocate.) Therefore, as friends is the present generations, and more especially to those which are to follow, it is our duty to arouse from our careless stupidity, and inform ourselves by ever means in our power: for knowledge is the best counsellor, and in the midst of counsellors there is safety. I am aware that a lengthy catalogue of shameful lies designed to injure this people, have been put in circulation by those from whom we might expect better things. These lies have strengthened the Mormons, because they knew them to be false, and blinded the world by giving erroneous ideas. The author of this work having ascertained that people in general were very ignorant of the movements of the Mormons, determined as publishing to the world some of the most important facts in his possession; but not being contented with his present store of information, he immediately repaired to Kirtland, where he spend a few days in viewing their growing village, and magnificent temple, their Egyptian mummies and records, asking questions, &c.

The lot on which the Temple is situated is in the best part of the village, and is forty rods long, and twelve wide. This lot is the personal property of Joseph Smith, Jr. For the truth of this see revelation given to Enoch, eighth paragraph, to be found in the Mormon Book of Doctrine and Covenants, page 243. And we learn from the sixth paragraph of said revelation, that other public buildings are to be erected on the same lot, all of which must of course be under Smith's control. The fact that the Mormons have been duped to give this valuable lot to their prophet Joseph Smith, and expend more than \$30,000 in building a Temple on it is a positive proof that they are dupes indeed. This Temple is built of stone, and the outside is finished with a hard cement, it is 80 feet long, and sixty wide. It is lighted with

32	Gothic	windows	each	75 panes;
3	Venetial	do	do	118
10	Dormer	do	do	24
2	Square gable	do	do	20
1	Circular	do	do	36
2	Half circle	over doors	do	7
4	Basement	do	do	18
Total multiplied and added				3156

In front, at the height of 45 feet from the ground is this inscription, in gilt letters:

HOUSE OF THE LORD
BUILT BY THE CHURCH OF THE
LATTER DAY SAINTS, A. D. 1834.

I paid twenty-five cents for going through the Temple, and seeing the mummies and records, which excited my curiosity so much that I went the next day and examined them again. Upon entering the first story the keeper took off his hat, I did the same and asked him if that was the rule, he said it was. Indeed, the sublime appearance of that apartment, when

the vails are unfurled, seem to enjoin sacred reverence. There is a pulpit in the west end for the Melchizedek priesthood, composed of four seats parallel with each other, those in the rear suitably elevated, and each seat calculated for three officers and accommodated with a suitable desk, which is ornamented with a cushion and fringe, and a curve for each occupant, on the front of which is the initials of his office, in gilt letters. The desk of the front seat consists of the leaves of the communion table, upon which are the initials of its occupants, in letters of stain. There is also a pulpit in the east end for the Aaronic priesthood, which is of the same construction.

The vails by which the house is divided into quarters, are of canvass, painted white, and are rolled up or drawn at pleasure, by means of cords which come down the pillars concealed, and are worked with cranks; also each official seat is completely veiled, both sides and front; these are also worked with cords which come in the seats concealed. The second story is not finished; but is to be of the same pattern, except the official seats which are not so much elevated. I have been particular in describing this apartment, because I have never seen any account of it before the world. For further accounts of the Temple see *Mormon Advocate* of July, 1835, also of Jun. 1837.

The Mormons have four mummies, and a quantity of records, written on papyrus, in Egyptian hieroglyphics, which were brought from the catacombs near Thebes, in Egypt. They say that the mummies were Egyptian, but the records are those of Abraham and Joseph, and contain important information respecting the creation, the fall of man, the deluge, the patriarchs, the book of Mormon, the lost tribe, the gathering, the end of the world, the judgment, &c. &c. This is as near as I can recollect; if there is an error I hope some of the Mormons will point it out, and I will recall it. These records were torn by being taken from the roll of embalming salve which contained them, and some parts entirely lost; but Smith is to translate the whole by divine inspiration, and that which is lost, like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, can be interpreted as well as that which is preserved; and a larger volume than the Bible will be required to contain them. For further account of these mummies and records, see *Mormon Advocate*, of December, 1835.

It is possible that a record written by Abraham, and another by Joseph, containing the most important revelation that God ever gave to man, should be entirely lost by the tenacious Israelites, and preserved by the unbelieving Egyptians, and by them embalmed and deposited in the catacombs with an Egyptian priest, there to lay in oblivion for many ages, and finally obtained by Antonio Lebolo and brought to Kirtland, Ohio, and bought by the Mormons, that Joseph Smith, the money-digger, might add them to his fictitious bible, and blasphemous revelations!! I venture to say no, it is not possible. It is more likely that the records are those of the Egyptians; and who is so slothful and vile as to sit in submissive silence while these wicked impostors are so active in filling the world with false bibles, false revelations, false pretensions, false doctrine and fanaticism. I answer no one, who is possessed of one grain of common sense, two grains of understanding, and three drops of philanthropic blood. Let it no longer be said, that the Mormons are incapable of doing any harm; let them alone and they will destroy themselves, &c., for a knowledge of their proceeding unfolds many cunning plans to accomplish deep designs. "A stitch in time saves nine." And had they been properly exposed when they commenced operations, they never

would have troubled the good people of Ohio: but the Smith family were so worthless, and so full of pretensions which had all come to naught, that they were beneath public notice, and no excitement prevailed: but it was not known that Sidney Rigdon was at the bottom of it, which evidently was the case. See *Mormonism Unveiled*, page 278, 290, inclusive.

When I was in Kirtland I saw a certain young man of good information, who gave me an explanation of certain fictitious names, which are found in the following pretended revelation, which is but one of ninety-nine that I now have before me: it is to be found in the *Mormon Book of Doctrine and Covenants*, page 240.

Revelation given to Enoch, concerning the order of the church for the benefit of the poor.

1 Verily I say unto you my friends, I give unto you counsel and a commandment, concerning all the properties which belong to the order, which I command to be organized and established, to be an united order, and an everlasting order for the benefit of the church, and for the salvation of men until I come, with promise immutable and unchangeable, inasmuch as those whom I commanded were faithful, they should be blessed with a multiplicity of blessings; but inasmuch as they were not faithful, they were nigh unto cursing. Therefore inasmuch as some of my servants have not kept the commandment, but have broken the covenant, by covetousness and with feigned words, I have cursed them with a very sore and grievous curse, for I the Lord have decreed in my heart, that inasmuch as any man, belonging to the order, shall be found a transgressor; or, in other words, shall break the covenant with which ye are bound, he shall be cursed in his life, and shall be trodden down by whom I will, for I the Lord am not to be mocked in these things: and all this that the innocent among you, may not be condemned with the unjust; and that the guilty among you may not escape, because I the Lord have promised unto you a crown of glory at my right hand. Therefore inasmuch as you are found transgressors, ye cannot escape my wrath in your lives: inasmuch as ye are cut off by transgression, ye cannot escape the buffetings of satan until the day of redemption:

2. And I now give unto you power from this very hour, that if any man among you, of the order, is found a transgressor, and repenteth not of the evil, that ye shall deliver him over unto the buffetings of satan; and he shall not have power to bring evil upon you. It is wisdom in me: therefore a commandment I give unto you, that ye shall organize yourselves, and appoint every man his stewardship, that every man may give an account unto me of the stewardship which is appointed unto him: for it is expedient that I the Lord should make every man accountable, as stewards over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures. I the Lord stretched out the heavens, and builded the earth as a very handy work; and all things therein are mine; and it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine; but it must needs be done in mine own way: and behold this is the way, that I the Lord have decreed to provide for my saints: that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich

are made low; for the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare, yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves. Therefore if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor, and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment.

3 And now, verily I say unto you, concerning the properties of the order: let my servant Pelagoram have appointed unto him the place where he now resides, and the lot of Tahhanes, for his stewardship, for his support while he is laboring in my vineyard, even as I will when I shall command him; and let all things be done according to counsel of the order, and united consent, or voice of the order which dwell in the land of Shinehah. And this stewardship and blessing, I the Lord confer upon my servant Pelogoram, for a blessing upon him, and his seed after him; and I will multiply blessings upon him, inasmuch as he shall be humble before me.

4 And again, let my servant Mahemson have appointed unto him, for his stewardship, the lot of land which my servant Zombre obtained in exchange for his former inheritance, for him and his seed after him; and inasmuch as he is faithful I will multiply blessings upon him and his seed after him. And let my servant Mahemson devote his moneys for the proclaiming of my words, according as my servant Gazelam shall direct.

5 And again, let my servant Shederlaomach have the place upon which he now dwells. And let my servant Olihah have the lot which is set off joining the house which is to be for the Lene-shine-house, which is lot number one; and also the lot upon which his father resides. And let my servant Shederlaomach and Olihah have the Lane-shine-house and all things that pertain unto it; and this shall be their stewardship which shall be appointed unto them; and inasmuch as they are faithful behold I will bless, and multiply blessings upon them; and this is the beginning of the stewardship which I have appointed them, for them and their seed after them; and inasmuch as they are faithful, I will multiply blessings upon them and their seed after them; even a multiplicity of blessings.

6 And again, let my servant Zombre have the house in which he lives, and the inheritance, all save the ground which has been reserved for the building of my houses, which pertains to that inheritance; and those lots which have been named for my servant Olihah. And inasmuch as he is faithful, I will multiply blessings upon him. And it is my will that he should sell the lots that are laid off for the building up of the city of my saints, inasmuch as it shall be made known to him by the voice of the Spirit, and according to the counsel of the order; and by the voice of the order. And this is the beginning of the stewardship which I have appointed unto him, for a blessing unto him, and his seed after him; and inasmuch as he is faithful, I will multiply a multiplicity of

blessings upon him.

7 And again, let my servant Ahashdah have appointed unto him, the houses and lot where he now resides, and the lot and building on which the Ozondah stands, and also the lot which is on the corner south of the Ozondah; and also the lot on which the Shule is situated: And all this I have appointed unto my servant Ahashdah, for his stewardship, for a blessing upon him and his seed after him, for the benefit of the Ozondah of my order, which I have established for my sake in the land of Shinehah; yea, verily this is the stewardship which I have appointed unto my servant Ahashdah; even this whole Ozondah establishment, him and his agent, and his seed after him, and inasmuch as he is faithful in keeping my commandments, which I have given unto him, I will multiply blessings upon him, and his seed after him, even a multiplicity of blessings.

8 And again, let my servant Gazelam have appointed unto him, the lot which is laid off for the building of my house, which is forty rods long, and twelve wide, and also the inheritance upon which his father now resides; and this is the beginning of the stewardship which I have appointed unto him, for a blessing upon him, and upon his father, for behold, I have reserved an inheritance for his father, and his support: therefore he shall be reckoned in the house of my servant Gazelam, and inasmuch as he is faithful, even a multiplicity of blessings.

9 And now a commandment I give unto you concerning Zion, that you shall no longer be bound as an united order to your brethren of Zion, only on this wise: after you are organized you shall be called the united order of the stake of Zion, the city of Shinehah. And your brethren, after they are organized, shall be called the united order of the city of Zion; and they shall be organized in their own names, and in their own name; and they shall do their business in their own name, and in their own names: and you shall do your business in your own name, and in your own names. And this I have commended to be done for your salvation and also for their salvation in consequence of their being driven out and that which is to come. The covenants being broken through transgression, by covetousness and feigned words: therefore, you are desolved as a united order with your brethren, that you are not bound only up to this hour, unto them, only on this wise, as I said, by loan, as shall be agreed by this order, in council, as your circumstances will admit, and the voice of the council direct.

10 And again, a commandment I give unto you concerning your stewardship which I have appointed unto you: behold all these properties are mine, or else your faith is vain, and ye are found hypocrites, and the covenants which ye have made unto me are broken: and if the properties are mine then ye are stewards, otherwise ye are no stewards. But verily I say unto you, I have appointed unto you to be stewards over mine house, even stewards indeed: and for this purpose I have commanded you to organize yourselves, even to

shinelah my words, the fullness of my scriptures, the revelations which I have given unto you, and which I shall hereafter, from time to time, give unto you, for the purpose of building up my church and kingdom on the earth and to prepare my people for the time when I shall dwell with them, which is nigh at hand.

11 And ye shall prepare for yourselves a place for a treasury, and consecrate it unto my name; and ye shall appoint one among you to keep the treasury, and he shall be ordained unto this blessing: and there shall be a seal upon the treasury, and all the sacred things shall be delivered into the treasury, and no man among you shall call it his own, or any part of it, for it shall belong to you all with one accord: and I give it unto you from this very hour: and now see to it, that ye go to and make use of the stewardship which I have appointed unto you, exclusive of the sacred things, for the purpose of shinelane those sacred things, as I have said: and the avails of the sacred things shall be had in the treasury, and a seal shall be upon it, and it shall not be used or taken out of the treasury by any one, neither shall the seal be loosed which shall be placed upon it, only by the voice of the order; or by commandment. And thus shall ye preserve all the avails of the sacred things in the treasury, for sacred and holy purposes: and this shall be called the sacred treasury of the Lord: and a seal shall be kept upon it that it may be holy and consecrated unto the Lord.

12 And again, there shall be another treasury prepared and a treasurer appointed to keep the treasury, and a seal shall be placed upon it; and all moneys that you receive in your stewardships, by improving upon the properties which I have appointed unto you, in houses or in lands, or in cattle, or in all things save it be the holy and sacred writings, which I have reserved unto myself for holy and sacred purposes, shall be cast into the treasury as fast as you receive moneys by the hundreds or by fifties, or by twenties, or by tens, or by fives, or in other words, if any man among you obtain five talents let him cast them into the treasury; or if he obtain ten, or twenty, or fifty, or an hundred, let him do likewise; and let not any man among you say that it is his own, for it shall not be called his, nor any part of it; and there shall not any part of it be used, or taken out of the treasury, only by the voice and common consent of the order. And this shall be the voice and common consent of the order: that any man among you, say unto the treasurer, I have need of this to help me in my stewardship: if it be five talents, or if it be ten talents, or twenty, or fifty, or an hundred, the treasurer shall give unto him the sum which he requires, to help him in his stewardship, until he be found a transgressor, and it is manifest before the council of the order plainly, that he is an unfaithful, and an unwise steward; but so long as he is in full fellowship, and is faithful, and wise in his stewardship, this shall be his token unto the treasurer that the treasurer shall not withhold. But in case of transgression the treasurer shall be subject unto the council and voice of the order. And in case the treasurer is found an unfaithful, and an unwise steward, he shall be subject to the counsel and voice of the order, and shall be removed out of his place, and another shall

be appointed in his stead.

13 And again, verily I say unto you, concerning your debts; behold it is my will that you should pay all your debts; and it is my will that you should humble yourselves before me, and obtain this blessing by your diligence and humility, and the prayer of faith, and inasmuch as you are diligent and humble, and exercise the prayer of faith behold I will soften the hearts of those to whom you are in debt, until I shall send means unto you for your deliverance. Therefore write speedily unto Cainhannoch, and write according to that which shall be dictated by my spirit, and I will soften the hearts of those to whom you are in debt, that it shall be taken away out of their minds to bring affliction upon you. And inasmuch as ye are humble and faithful and call on my name, behold I will give you the victory: I give unto you a promise, that you shall be delivered this once, out of your bondage: inasmuch as you obtain a chance to loan money by hundreds, or thousands, even until you shall loan enough to deliver yourselves from bondage, it is your privilege, and pledge the properties which I have put into your hands, this once, by giving your names, by common consent, or otherwise, as it shall seem good unto you: I give unto you this privilege this once, and behold, if you proceed to do the things which I have laid before you, according to my commandments, all these things are mine, and ye are my stewards, and the master will not suffer his house to be broken up: even so. Amen.

<i>Names.</i>	<i>Explained.</i>
Pelagoram	Sidney Rigdon.
Tahhanes	Tannery.
Shinehah	Kirtland.
Mahemson	Martin Harris.
Zombre	John Johnson.
Gazelam	Joseph Smith, Jr.
Shederlaomach	Dr. F. G. Williams.
Olihah	Oliver Cowdery.
Lane-shine-house	Printing office.
Ahashdah	N. K. Whitney.
Ozondah	Storehouse.
Shule	Ashery.
Cainhannoch	supposed to be New York or Buffalo.

While in Kirtland this revelation afforded me much amusement. I frequently asked for an explanation of it, and the meaning of those names. Some said it was a revelation given to Enoch, the third from Adam, concerning the order of the church that was established in his day, and the names were those of persons and places that then existed. This is according to the purport of the revelation; but others told me that they were the Latin names of certain

persons that lived in Kirtland, and acknowledged that Pelagoram was Sidney Rigdon. I conversed with two men in particular, who were very free to instruct me in the way of their belief, so I asked them the meaning of these names: one of the began to tell me that they were the names of certain persons who lived in the days of Enoch: I asked him if Pelagoram did not mean Sidney Rigdon, upon which the other advised me to learn things of less importance before I sought into such deep matters, said he was in haste, and they both left me.

Ebenezer Barr, of whom I requested an explanation of this revelation, read it in full, and then handed me the book, saying there it is.

I told him that I wanted to know the meaning of those words.

“O! said he that is another thing.”

Can't you tell me what they mean?

“I shall not.”

Are they the names of men who live in Kirtland, or did they live in the days of Enoch?

“They are names of certain persons who live in Kirtland.”

Who are they?

“I shall not tell you.”

Why?

“Because if I should you would sound it to the four winds: it is not to be made known to the world.”

This caps the climax. Mormons' God must be an inferior being, to give a revelation to his children veiling them in fictitious names, that they may escape the scrutiny of the world. And shall he be compared with Israel's God? God forbid!

When I was in Kirtland, I ascertained from a variety of sources, too numerous to mention, that the Mormons had been in serious difficulty, many had been dissatisfied with their leaders, and wanted a new prophet, but the majority adhered to Smith. One day, when I went to the Temple, I saw a number of men about it, busy in conversation, Smith was among them, and the topics of discussion were the bank, money, the steam saw mill, etc.; the prophet was kept very busy, but at last he started toward the bank, when a man said to him, “brother Joseph, I want to speak with you a minute,” upon which he exclaimed, “my God, I wish I was translated!” He did not stop to speak with him, but went on grumbling that every one wanted to speak with him a minute, etc. This prophet says that slavery was instituted by God, and is right. See Mormon Advocate of April 1836. The Mormons pretend to have wrought many notable miracles, but I defy the whole fraternity to mention one that has been wrought through their instrumentality, and in case they will give reasonable proof that they have wrought one, I will pledge myself to say nothing more in opposition to their wishes.

They also pretend that the authenticity of their new bible is proven by numerous passages of Scripture, one of which is the 11th verse of the 85th Psalm, where the Psalmist says, “truth shall spring up out of the earth.” But the Psalmist could not have had reference to the Book of Mormon, for there is an abundance of proof that the Book of Mormon is false. In support of this assertion I will state, in the first place, that there is sufficient testimony that

the historical part of the Book of Mormon was written at Conneaut, Ashtabula county, Ohio, about the year 1811, by one Solomon Spalding, who called it the Manuscript found, and intended it for a romance; that he went to Pittsburgh for the purpose of getting it printed, left it at the office of Patterson & Lamdin, and soon after died; that Rigdon became an intimate in this office about the year 1825, that the printing copartnership was soon after dissolved, and that Lamdin died: see *Mormonism Unveiled*, pages 278 and 290 inclusive. Now if this manuscript did not fall into the hands of Sidney Rigdon where is it? Any person who knows where it is, or has ever seen it, or heard of it, is called upon to communicate the information to Wm. S. West, of Braceville, Trumbull county, Ohio. Also any other information respecting this deception, that can come well authenticated, will be thankfully received; for I am confident that a knowledge of the truth respecting Mormonism, will place it on a par with Mahometanism. All business communications must be post paid.

In the second place, I will notice that the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon saw the plates only in their imagination: see Booth's third letter. This proves that they saw no plates at all, and there never were any to be seen. Who will have to answer for the many lies told about those plates under the solemn circumstances of God called to witness? O the height of presumption.

In the third place, we are told by the Book of Mormon that the people of Jared were brought to America by a combination of miracles, at the time of the dispersion from Babel. This was 101 years after the flood, and 2247 years before Christ. This people became very numerous, and flourished until 600 years before Christ, when, by their wars they became extinct, and were succeeded by Nephi and his party, from which the American Indian have descended. This alone is sufficient to justify my assertion for there are found throughout the whole continent murderous traits of many ancient nations, differing materially from the present race of Indians, and also from each other: see *American Antiquities*. The celebrated traveler Mr. Ash, states that hundreds of mummies, in all probability of Egyptian origin, were found in Kentucky in the year 1775; see *American Antiquities*, page 110. These mummies must have been embalmed before the Christian era. It is the opinion of many celebrated antiquarians that for many centuries after the flood the Island Atlantis afforded an easy passage from Europe to America: see *American Antiquities*. "There is a strong resemblance between the northern and independent Tartars and the tribes of North American Indians, but not the South American. Besides this reason, there are others for believing our aborigines of North America, were descended from the ancient Scythians, and came to this country from the eastern part of Asia," Josiah priest: see *American Antiquities*, third edition revised, page 55. Therefore it is a reasonable conclusion that America was settled soon after the flood, and has ever since been subject to the rise and fall of nations.

Background on the Author.

The identity of William S. West remains obscure. According to his booklet, he was living in Braceville, Trumbull Co., Ohio. Being a resident of that area, it is possible that West was a member of the Disciples' Church (the Campbellites.) The Baptist congregation in Braceville was, no doubt, visited by Rev. Sidney Rigdon, shortly after its founding in 1820. The congregation turned to Campbellite tenets in 1828 and it is likely that Rigdon again held meetings with the members during the next two years. However, perhaps due to the counter efforts of people like William S. West, the early Mormons were unable to establish an LDS branch in the town.

On page 16 of his pamphlet, West mentions Thomas Ashe's 1808 *Travels in America*, which was reprinted in Pittsburgh in 1809. The book contains numerous first-hand references to American antiquities and was probably known to writers like Ethan Smith and Solomon Spalding. West also makes mention of Josiah Priest's 1833 *American Antiquities*, but neglects taking about Priest's earlier book, *The Wonders of Nature...*, in which the author reprinted several pages from Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. Given West's very early interest in these kinds of writers, it is unfortunate that he does not elucidate their views on American Indian origins, etc. more fully.

West had read Eber D. Howe's 1834 *Mormonism Unveiled* and from that volume he draws provocative allegations relating to the claim for a Solomon Spalding authorship of the Book of Mormon. On page 15 of his pamphlet West even takes the trouble to solicit information regarding Spalding's "Manuscript Found," though there is no indication that he ever uncovered any additional particulars on this elusive historical romance. At least West is not known to have subsequently published anything further on the Spalding matter. He lived practically within walking distance of most of the eight "Conneaut witnesses" whose statements were printed in Howe's book, and which West obviously read. Perhaps the fact that he quoted nothing directly from these near neighbors of his indicates that by 1837 those witnesses' active interest in the Spalding claims had faded somewhat.

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