

lives where they wavered, and what makes the matter more remarkable is that it can be said of most of them, as is elsewhere said of the three witnesses, they became offended with the Prophet Joseph, and a number of them openly rebelled against him; but they never retracted one word with regard to the genuineness of Mormon's inspired record. Whether they were friends or foes to Joseph, whether they regarded him as God's continued mouthpiece or as a fallen Prophet, they still persisted in their statements with regard to the book and the veracity of their earlier testimonies. How can we possibly with our knowledge of human nature make this undeviating, unchanging, unwavering course, continuing over fifty years consistent with a deliberate, premeditated and cunningly-devised and executed fraud!

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. DICKENSON'S SPECULATIONS.

WE next invite attention to one of the latest versions of the "Spaulding story." It appeared in *Scribner's Magazine* for August, 1880, and purports to be written by Mrs. Ellen E. Dickenson, a grand-niece of Mr. Spaulding. It is conspicuous for its inexactness, but is valuable as containing the affidavit of Mrs. M. S. McKinstry already considered.

Referring to the discovery by Mr. Spaulding of bows and other relics in a mound near his home at Conneaut, Mrs. Dickenson writes:

"This discovery suggested to him the subject for a new romance, which he called a translation from some *hieroglyphical writing* exhumed from the mound. This romance purported to be a history of the peopling of America by the *lost tribes of Israel*, the tribes and their leaders *having very singular names*, among them Mormon, Moroni, Lamanite, Nephi. The romance the author called 'Manuscript Found.' This all occurred in 1812, when to write a book was a distinction, and Mr. Spaulding read his manuscript from time to time to a circle of *admiring friends*. He determined finally to publish

it and for that purpose carried it to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, to a printer by the name of Patterson. After keeping it awhile, Mr. Patterson returned it, declining to print it. *There was at this time in this printing office a young man named Sidney Rigdon, who twenty years later figured as a preacher among the Saints.*"

In the above extract we have printed in italics those statements to which we wish to draw special attention.

Mrs. Dickenson says Mr. Spaulding called his romance "a translation from some hieroglyphical writing." This is an entirely new version of the old fiction. According to the original story it was written in Latin, but now after fifty years the writing is changed to hieroglyphics to make the theory agree better with the Book of Mormon which was translated from plates engraved in reformed Egyptian. We are told by earlier writers, before the matter was so entirely befogged as it is now by anti-"Mormon" speculations, assumptions and hypothesis, that the author's idea was to palm off his romance as a reality, and when he wrote it he expected the masses would believe it when published. Now it would be quite consistent for a graduate of Dartmouth College (as was Mr. Spaulding) to translate a Latin parchment—that would appear to be an every-day matter for a recognized clergyman of an orthodox sect, but to translate hieroglyphics would be entirely another thing; for it must not be forgotten that it was not until nearly thirty years after Mr. Spaulding wrote his "Manuscript Found" that the first dictionary and first grammar of Egyptian hieroglyphics were published.* Egyptology being now a science, Mrs. Dickenson has outraged all consistency by claiming that Mr. Spaulding pretended to translate from hieroglyphics of which none at that time had any definite understanding. Mr. Spaulding as an educated man who wished his work to receive credence would know better than to start off with an evident, tell-tale impossibility.

Mrs. Dickenson calls the names in the Book of Mormon "very singular." This is because she has not read the book. A large number of the names in Mormon's sacred record are also found in the Holy Bible; as examples: Jacob, Joseph, Aaron, Noah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ishmael, Lemuel, Timothy,

*—Those of M. Champolleon published between 1836 and 1844.

Shem, etc. Are these singular? Another large percentage finish with the Hebrew termination: *iah* (*Jah*) an abbreviation of *Jehovah*. One scribbler asserts that "the real author of the Book of Mormon was well acquainted with the classics; the names of most of his heroes have the Latin termination of *i*, such as *Nephi*, *Lehi*, *Moroni*." This ignoramus was evidently not himself acquainted with the classics or he would have known that the most frequent termination of the masculine singular in the Latin language is *us* not *i*; and of names ending in *us* there are but very few in the Book of Mormon, probably half a dozen. Mrs. Dickenson gives an example of some of these "singular names:" "*Mormon*, *Moroni*, *Lamanite* and *Nephi*." Surely neither *Laman* or *Moroni* are singular names. There are, at any rate, more than one river of this name in South America running through the region where, according to Book of Mormon history, the Nephite general, *Moroni*, carried on his campaigns and held military control. *Nephi* is an ancient Egyptian name, and a title of *Osiris*, one of the gods of that people; its meaning is "the benevolent one." That it was common among the Israelites of the age of *Nephi* (B. C. 600) is shown from the fact that the word *Nephites* in the original Hebrew plural form occurs twice in the Bible, in *Ezra* ii., 50, and *Nehemiah* vii., 52. *Lehi* is also a Bible proper name.

Regarding the circle of "admiring friends" who heard the "Manuscript Found" read by its author, is it not a little singular that they so loudly praised it when the Book of Mormon, which is said to have been copied from it "word for word," is berated as uninteresting, dull, dry, stupid and everything else that is not commended or admired in literary productions? Neither is the style of the Book of Mormon that of a man educated in modern English; it is incomprehensible that a student in the literature of this age would express himself in the phraseology and style of this record. And again it is not written in the language of either *Joseph Smith* or *Sidney Rigdon*. If we compare the revelations given through *Joseph Smith* at the time the plates were being translated, we find an altogether different diction; or let us compare it with the *Lectures on Faith* in the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* and

then with the acknowledged writings of Sidney Rigdon, and we shall find there is nothing common in any of these with the peculiarities of grammatical construction and verbal idiosyncracies of the Book of Mormon. Judging then by the usual and accepted methods of criticism on which some rely so strongly, and throwing out the direct evidence as to its origin, this book could not be the creation of either Solomon Spaulding, Sidney Rigdon or Joseph Smith. Again, how is it that when the manuscript of the Book of Mormon was presented to the printer (see Mr. Gilbert's statement) it was misspelled and without punctuation. Did neither the graduate of Dartmouth College nor the minister of a flourishing religious congregation, who, by the way, according to some accounts, had formerly worked in a printing office, know anything of punctuation? This is the extreme of folly. But if they did, what conceivable reason could there be for leaving the punctuation out of the copy taken to the printer. Mr. Gilbert's statement of the great care shown by Hyrum Smith to have the book printed exactly as written, his extreme solicitude regarding the manuscript, his ignorance of the use of commas, colons, etc., and his one unwavering and unchanging testimony regarding the discovery and translation of the plates are all strong corroborative evidence that no educated man had anything to do with the production of the book; and how inconsistent with the stories of Joseph Smith's confirmed laziness is the idea that he would go to the trouble of copying out a manuscript which makes more than six hundred pages of closely printed matter! The promoters of the "Spaulding story" are terribly inconsistent in the various parts of their theory.

The statement that Mr. Spaulding took his romance to Mr. Patterson may be true or it may not, individually we do not believe it, but the assertion that Sidney Rigdon worked in that gentleman's printing office we have elsewhere shown to be utterly false. We will let Mr. Howe, who purchased Hurlburt's manuscript, give his version of this affair; simply reminding our readers that his book, "Mormonism Unveiled," was published in 1834, when the exact facts would be much fresher in the memory of the participants than in 1880. Speaking of the "Manuscript Found," he writes:

"It was inferred at once that some light might be shed upon this subject and the mystery revealed by applying to Patterson and Lambdin, in Pittsburg. But here again death had interposed a barrier. That establishment was dissolved and broken up many years since, and Lambdin died about eight years ago. Mr. Patterson says he has no recollection of any such manuscript being brought there for publication, neither would he have been likely to have seen it, as the business of printing was conducted wholly by Lambdin at that time. He says, however, that many manuscript books and pamphlets were brought to the office about that time, which remained upon the shelves for years without being printed or even examined."

Mark how strangely this statement disagrees with the assertions of the ladies of the Spaulding family with regard to Mr. Patterson's friendship and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Spaulding, and the latter's admiration of the "Manuscript Found."

Now notice the insincerity and actual dishonesty of the next passages, in view of the fact that Hurlburt had received the "Manuscript Found" from the Spaulding family, and according to his account had given the document that he had received to Howe, the publisher of the work from which we are quoting:

"Now as Spaulding's book can no where be found, or anything heard of it after being carried to this establishment, there is the strongest presumption that it remained there in seclusion till about the year 1823 or 1824, at which time Sidney Rigdon located himself in that city. We have been credibly informed that he was on terms of intimacy with Lambdin, being seen frequently at his shop."

Here is a desperate attempt to connect Rigdon with the affair. Lambdin was dead so he could not contradict any statement about his intimacy with Rigdon; but the whole hypothesis amounts to nothing in view of the positive statements of the Spaulding family that the "Manuscript Found" was in their undisturbed possession, hundreds of miles from Pittsburg, from 1814 to 1834. One thing, however, it shows that in those days Sidney Rigdon's life was too well known for Howe to write other than the truth regarding the time he first visited Pittsburg, for when Mrs. Dickenson wildly imagines and falsely asserts he was working in the office of Patterson

and Lambdin, all trustworthy authorities, including his mother, assert that he was laboring upon his father's farm at St. Clair, Alleghany Co., Pennsylvania, which he did not leave until he was in his twenty-sixth year, when he went to Ohio and afterwards to Pittsburg.

Possibly doubting the Spaulding story herself Mrs. Dickenson suggests another solution, yet still more ridiculous. She writes: "Smith, however, could easily have possessed himself of the manuscript if he had fancied it suitable to his purpose, for it is understood that he was a servant on the farm, or teamster for Mr. Sabine (Mrs. Spaulding's brother) in whose house the package of manuscript lay exposed in an unlocked trunk for several years."

Prodigious! Let us examine this wonderful suggestion. According to Mrs. McKinstry's affidavit the "Manuscript Found" was at Mr. Sabine's from 1816 to 1820. Joseph Smith was born in the latter part of December 1805, consequently he was not fifteen years old when the manuscript was removed from Mr. Sabine's. A boy of his age would make a rather youthful teamster or farm-hand. And then how preposterous the thought that an illiterate boy of eleven, twelve, or thirteen should conceive the idea of converting that old romance into something very like the Bible, and of founding a religious society on its principles! Then again calculate how much spare time a hired man or boy had on a farm in western New York fifty years ago; from sun up to sun down he was kept at work, often with chores to do after dark. How long would it take an ignorant boy under these circumstances, and lazy in the bargain, to transcribe a book that makes more than 600 pages of printed matter and contains, at a rough estimate, more than 300,000 words? Oh consistency! whither art thou fled?

But unfortunately for Mrs. Dickenson's very original theory, the testimony of all, friends and enemies alike, is positive that during this time Joseph was living with his father's family at Palmyra and other places. It is during this period of his life that the foes of divine revelation falsely charge him with confirmed idleness, vagabond habits, etc., and on this charge base their arguments that such a youth would never have been chosen by the Almighty as His servant. But should there be any doubt

on this matter we extract a few lines from the already quoted affidavit of his sister, Mrs. Katherine Salisbury. When speaking of the publication of the Book of Mormon, she avers: "At the time the said book was published, I was seventeen years of age; that at the time of the publication of said book, my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., lived in the family of my father, in the town of Manchester, Ontario county, New York, and that he had, all his life to this time made his home with the family." To which we may add during the latter years of this period occasionally hiring out for short intervals, but never at the early age and for the lengthened period necessary to give consistency to Mrs. Dickenson's suppositions. We shall pass by several other outrageous misstatements of this lady, and simply refer to one which purports to be from the veteran journalist, Thurlow Weed, simply to show how utterly unreliable many persons memories become where "Mormonism" is concerned.

Mr. Weed states that Joseph Smith called on him in 1825, desiring to get his manuscript printed, and spoke of finding the plates (Joseph did not obtain the plates until September, 1827, and the translation was not finished until June or July, 1829). That in a few days he brought Martin Harris (Harris was not associated with Joseph until after the plates were found). Seemed about thirty years of age (Joseph was not twenty until December 23rd of that year). Was about 5 feet 8 inches high (Joseph was fully 6 feet). Thus it appears in every detail Mr. Weed's memory was at fault; dates, age, height, etc., are all wrong, very wrong, and his statement is untrustworthy from beginning to end.

In passing we draw attention to the difference between the size of the "Manuscript Found" and the Book of Mormon. The former, according to Mrs. McKinstry, was about one inch thick of *written*, not printed, matter. According to Hurlburt, the manuscript which he obtained from Mrs. Davison's chest, which she states was the "Manuscript Found," contained *about one quire of paper*. And this was the only manuscript book in the trunk. Mrs. Davison stated in her interview with Mr. Haven that the manuscript was about *one third* the size of the Book of Mormon; while Mr. Jackson said the romance was a

very small work. All agree that it was much smaller than the Book of Mormon, while Hurlburt had evidently a motive in making out that it was less than it really was. He desired to make it appear that there must have been some other writings than the one he obtained. In any case it is a consistent question, who manufactured all the rest of the Book of Mormon?

CHAPTER V.

WHAT THE BOOK OF MORMON REALLY IS.

THE Book of Mormon is the record of God's dealings with the people of ancient America from the era of the building of the Tower of Babel to four hundred and twenty-one years after the birth of Christ. It is the stick of Ephraim spoken of by Ezekiel—the Bible of the western continent. Not that it supersedes, or in any way interferes with the Bible, any more than the history of Mexico supersedes or interferes with the history of Rome; but on the other hand, in many places it confirms Bible history, demonstrates Bible truths, sustains Bible doctrine, and fulfils Bible prophecy.

The Book of Mormon contains the history of two distinct races. The first came from the Tower of Babel and was destroyed a little less than six hundred years before Christ. The story of their national life is given very briefly, but sufficient is said to prove that they were one of the mightiest nations of antiquity, and in the days of their righteousness a people highly blessed of the Lord. Their fall and final destruction were the result of their gross wickedness and rejection of God's prophets. These people were called the Jaredites, their history in the Book of Mormon is contained in "the Book of Ether." Ether was one of their last prophets who wrote his account on twenty-four plates of gold. Moroni, the last prophet of the Nephites, abridged Ether's history and it is his