

crucifixion of the Savior this continent was the scene of terrible natural convulsions, which resulted in a great change in the face of nature and an immense loss of human life. Shortly after these days of terror the Redeemer appeared to the surviving remnants, taught them His gospel and organized His Church. A lengthened period of blessed peace followed in which all men served the Lord. Gradually, however, the old evils again crept in, many returned to the sins of their forefathers, the spirit of darkness and bloodshed again held sway, and finally the whole Nephite race was overpowered and destroyed (A. D. 384) by the other faction who had assumed the old name of Lamamites. The descendants of these Lamanites are found in the American Indians, not of the United States alone, but as the aborigines of the whole continent from Patagonia to the Arctic ocean.

The records of this people, engraved on various plates were hid by the last of the Nephite prophets, Mormon, and his son Moroni. A portion thereof has, by God's grace, been restored to the knowledge of mankind in this age, and translated into many languages, that the truths contained therein, whether they be history, doctrine, or prophecy, may be known by all men.

CHAPTER VI.

UTTER DISAGREEMENT OF THE TWO HISTORIES.

IT is our purpose in this chapter to demonstrate, from the Book of Mormon itself, the absurdity of the "Spaulding Story," and the utter impossibility of the Prophet Joseph Smith ever having used Mr. Spaulding's reputed romance, the "Manuscript Found," as the groundwork for that divine record.

At different times since the publication of the Book of Mormon various writers have undertaken to explain the plot

and contents of the "Manuscript Found," and to show how remarkable is the resemblance between it and the Book of Mormon.

We are told by one clerical author that when the Book of Mormon was read to Solomon Spaulding's widow, brother and six other persons, all well acquainted with Mr. Spaulding's writings, they immediately recognized in the Book of Mormon the same historical matter and names as composed the romance, although this reading took place some years after they had read the latter work. The writer further states that they affirmed that the Book of Mormon was with the exception of the religious matter, copied almost *word for word* from Spaulding's manuscript.

Another writer affirms that the romance of Spaulding was *similar in all its leading features* to the historical portions of the Book of Mormon. A third writer maintains that the historical part of the Book of Mormon was immediately recognized by all the older inhabitants of New Salem, Ohio, as *the identical work* of Mr. Spaulding, in which they had been so interested twenty years before.

Those who claim to have been acquainted with the writings of Mr. Spaulding, differ materially as to the incidents and plot of the "Manuscript Found." According to their widely different statements, his romance was based upon one of two theories. The first on the idea of the landing of a Roman colony on the Atlantic seaboard shortly before the Christian era. The second (now the most generally known and accepted) on the supposition that the present American Indians are the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, who were led away captive out of their own land into Media, where historically the world loses sight of them, but where Mr. Spaulding's romance finds them and transports them to America. It is upon this idea of the transportation of this great and numerous people from the land of their captivity to the western world that this gentleman's novel is generally said to have been founded.

We will examine this statement first, and strive to discover how nearly it agrees with the historical narrative of the Book of Mormon, which we are told was immediately recog-

nized as being *identical* and *copied almost word for word* from the pages of the "Manuscript Found."

In the first place, it is well to remark that the Book of Mormon makes but very few references to the ten tribes, and in those few, it directly, plainly and unequivocally states that the American Indians are not the descendants of the ten tribes, and further, that the ten tribes never were in America, or any part of it, during any portion of their existence as a nation.* On the other hand, the Book of Mormon as directly informs us from whom the aborigines, or natives, of this continent are descended. This being the case, how is it possible for the two works to be identical?

But admitting, for the sake of argument, that Joseph Smith might have changed the statement of the author of the "Manuscript Found" in this one particular, we will proceed to show that such a supposition is utterly impossible; for to have retained the unities of the work and the consistencies of the story (for the story of the Book of Mormon is consistent with itself), he must have altered not only the leading features but also the minor details of the whole historical narrative. He must have altered the place of departure, the circumstances of the journey, the route taken by the emigrants, the time of the emigration and every other particular connected with such a great movement. We must recollect that the Book of Mormon gives the account of a small colony (perhaps of about thirty

*—Our crucified Redeemer, in His teachings to the Nephites, thus refers to the ten tribes of the house of Israel:

"And behold this is the land of your inheritance, and the Father hath given it unto you. And not at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell it unto your brethren at Jerusalem; neither at any time hath the Father given me commandment, that I should tell unto them concerning the other tribes of the house of Israel, whom the Father hath led away out of the land" (*III. Nephi, xv. 13-15*).

"That they" (the Jews) "may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes whom they know not of" (*III. Nephi, xvi. 4*).

"The other tribes hath the Father separated from them" (*III. Nephi, xv. 20*).

"But now I go unto the Father, and also to show myself unto the lost tribes of Israel, for they are not lost unto the Father, for He knoweth whither He hath taken them" (*III. Nephi, xvii. 4*).

or forty souls) being led by the Lord from the city of Jerusalem through the wilderness south and east of that city, to the borders of the Red Sea, thence for some distance in the same direction near its coast, and then across the Arabian peninsula to the sea eastward. What insanity could have induced Mr. Spaulding to propose such a route for the ten tribes? For of all out-of-the-way methods of reaching the American continent from Media, this would be one of the most inaccessible, difficult, round-about and improbable, and would carry them along the two sides of an acute angle by the time they reached the shore where the ship was built. It would almost certainly have taken these tribes close to, if not through a portion of their own ancient homes, where it is reasonable to suppose nearly all would have desired to tarry, when we consider how great was the love that ancient Israel bore for that rich land given to them by divine power.

Mr. Spaulding, as a student of the Bible, would have made no such blunder. But even supposing that he was foolish enough in his romance to transport the hosts of Israel from the south-western borders of the Caspian Sea (where history loses them) by the nearest route, most probably over the Armenian mountains, across the Syrian desert, and by way of Damascus through the lands of Gilead, Moab and Edom into the wilderness of the Red Sea, where, we ask, is there an account of such a journey in any portion of the Book of Mormon? There is none, for the Book of Mormon opens with the description of Lehi's departure from Jerusalem, with the causes that led thereto, he having been a resident of that city all his days, and never a captive in Media. Therefore we are justified in asking, at the very outset of this inquiry, where, from the opening pages onward, is there any identity between the two books?

Then, again, is it not obvious to every thinking person that the moving of a nation, such as the ten tribes were, must have had associated with it events and circumstances entirely inconsistent and at variance with the simple story of the journey of Lehi and his family as given, frequently with minute detail, in the Book of Mormon? How numerous were the host of the captive Israelites we have no means of definitely ascertain-

ing. We learn, however, that in one invasion alone, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, carried off two hundred thousand captives from the kingdom of Israel. Even admitting that in their captivity these two hundred thousand did not increase in numbers, and entirely ignoring all the other thousands that were led away captives in other invasions, we should necessarily expect that Spaulding, in his account of the moving of this mass of humanity—men, women and children, with their flocks, herds and supplies—would write a narrative consistent with the subject and not one such as the Book of Mormon contains. But whether he did or did not, the Book of Mormon contains nothing whatever of the kind. In that work no vast armies are led out of Media by any route whatever to the American continent.

We have there an entirely different story, more dissimilar indeed from Spaulding's supposed narrative than the history of the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, under Moses, is from the story of the departure from the old world, the voyage across the Atlantic and the landing on this continent of the Pilgrim Fathers, of revered memory. In the narrative that the Book of Mormon gives of the journeyings of Lehi and his little colony, all the incidents related are consistent with the idea of a small people and entirely inconsistent with that of a vast moving multitude.

For instance, let us take as an example, the story of Nephi breaking his bow by which the little caravan was placed in danger of starvation. If there had been a vast host, numbering nearly a quarter of a million souls, such an incident could have had no weight; for surely Mr. Spaulding never wrote that one hunter alone supplied such a multitude with all the necessary food, and it would be equally absurd to imagine that that gentleman would tell such an improbable story as that all the hunters broke all their bows at the same time. Again, the Book of Mormon tells us that Lehi and his companions depended on the chase for their entire food. Where, we would ask, in the midst of the Arabian desert, could game enough be found to supply the entire wants of the migrating ten tribes? And further, what would they do for water for such a company in the trackless Arabian desert

without divine interposition and the manifestation of miraculous power? But the Book of Mormon hints at no such contingency.

Again, the story of the building of the ship by Nephi must have been entirely altered, for no one ship, though it had been twenty times as large as the *Great Eastern*, could have carried Mr. Spaulding's imaginary company and their effects across the wide waters of the Indian and Pacific oceans.

We must now draw attention to the time when the Book of Mormon states Lehi and his company were led out of Jerusalem. There is no ambiguity on this point. It is repeatedly stated that this event took place six hundred years before the advent of our Savior; that is, it was previous to the Babylonish captivity. The ten tribes were not lost sight of at that time; they were undoubtedly still in the land of their captivity, and if Mr. Spaulding was foolish enough in his romance to set a date to his exodus, he certainly would not have placed it during the lifetime of Jeremiah, the prophet, and of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; for not only would such a date have marred the consistency of the story, but it is also utterly impossible for us to conceive, as an historical probability, that the mighty king of Babylon would have permitted the ten tribes to escape from their captivity at that time, and above all things to have taken such a route as would have brought them near the borders of the Red Sea. If they escaped at all, it necessarily would have been to the uninhabited regions northward. From a political standpoint it would have been suicidal and utterly inconsistent with the policy of the king of Babylon to allow the captive Israelites to march forth in the supposed direction; for it would have placed them in immediate contact with the kingdom of Judah and enabled them to have formed an alliance with their former brethren antagonistic to his interest and policy.

To pursue the subject still further: when the colony reached the land of promise, which we call America, the incidents related in the Book of Mormon are entirely consistent with the story of the voyage and of the peopling of the land by a small colony and not by a vast host. If Joseph Smith, as

some claim, had changed Mr. Spaulding's romance, he must have still continued to alter the narrative throughout the entire volume, for the story still maintains its consistency, and through it from beginning to end there runs a thread, possible only on the theory that it was a single family with their immediate connections through marriage that first founded the nations of the Nephites and Lamanites. The entire history hinges on the quarrels of the sons of Lehi and the results growing therefrom; for from the division of this family into two separate and distinct peoples grew all the wars, contentions, bloodshed, troubles and disasters that fill the pages of this sacred record; while on the other hand, the blessings flowing to both nations almost always resulted from the reconciliation of the two opposing peoples and the inauguration of a united and amicable policy beneficial alike to both. Had the American continent been peopled at the commencement by a vast host, the whole current of the story must have been vastly different, not only in the events that took place, but also in the motives that controlled the hearts of the actors who took part in those events, and in the traditions of the masses. In the case of the Nephites and Lamanites, these traditions had an overwhelming influence in the shaping of public affairs, which shape they never could have received by any set of traditions incidental to Mr. Spaulding's story.

What, too, shall we say of the Jaredites? From whence did Joseph Smith beg, borrow or steal their history? Did Mr. Spaulding bring his ten tribes from the tower of Babel, and give them an existence ages anterior to the lifetime of their great progenitor, Jacob? If not, will somebody inform us how this portion of the Book of Mormon was manufactured?

From the above it is evident that if Mr. Spaulding's story was what its friends claim, then it never could have formed the ground work of the Book of Mormon, for the whole historical narrative is different from beginning to end. And further, the story that certain old inhabitants of New Salem, who, it is said, recognized the Book of Mormon, either never made such a statement, or they let their imagination run away

with their memory into the endorsement of a falsehood and an impossibility. Either way there is a lie; if they asserted that the Book of Mormon is identical with the "Spaulding story," then they are guilty of having violated the truth; if they did not make this statement, then the falsehood is with those who, in their hatred to modern revelation, have invented their testimony. The same statement applies to those who assert that the Book of Mormon was copied almost word for word from the "Manuscript Found." A book that is entirely dissimilar in its narrative cannot be exact in its wording. As well might we say, and be just as consistent and every way as truthful, that the history of England was copied from the adventures of Robinson Crusoe. So it is with the Book of Mormon and the Spaulding romance.

If then the resemblance is so small between the Book of Mormon and the "Manuscript Found," when we consider the ten tribe version of the latter work, where is it possible there can be the shadow of similarity when we examine the Roman colony theory? For instance:

Lehi left Jerusalem; Spaulding's heroes sailed from Rome.

Lehi started on his journey not knowing whither the Lord would lead him; the Romans were bound for Britain.

Lehi and his companions wandered for several years on land; the Roman party made the entire journey by water.

Lehi traveled by way of the Arabian peninsula and the Indian and Pacific oceans; Spaulding's imaginary characters sailed by way of the Mediterranean sea and the Atlantic ocean.

The travels of one party were considerably south of east; the voyage of the others west or north-west.

One party landed on the South Pacific shore; * the other on the North Atlantic.

*—Regarding the route taken by Lehi and his company, the Prophet Joseph Smith states:

"They traveled nearly a south, south-east direction until they came to the nineteenth degree of north latitude; then, nearly east to the sea of Arabia, then sailed in a south-east direction, and landed on the continent of South America, in Chili, thirty degrees south latitude."

Mormon's record was written in reformed Egyptian; the imaginary "Manuscript Found" in Latin.

Mormon's record was engraved on plates of metal; Spaulding's pretended manuscript was written on parchment.

The original of the Book of Mormon was hid in the hill Cumorah, state of New York; Mr. Spaulding's manuscript is claimed to have been discovered in a cave near Conneaut, state of Ohio.

The Book of Mormon gives an account of a religious people, God's dealings with whom is the central dominant idea; Spaulding's romance tells the story of an idolatrous people. Such is the positive statement of his widow and daughter.

There is another point worthy of our thought: If Joseph Smith did make use of the "Manuscript Found," it must have been for one of two reasons: Either because he was not able to write such a work himself, or that he might save himself trouble and labor. In the first place he could not have done this for the lack of ability; for any one who could have so adroitly altered a history of the ten tribes so that it now reads as a distinct, detailed and consistent history of a small company of the tribe of Joseph, most assuredly could have written such a history for himself if he had felt so disposed. Then again, he could not have done it to save himself work, for to so change a long history from one end to the other, until it contradicted all it had previously asserted, and became the harmonious history of another people, would save no man trouble. Then, again, in considering these points, we must remember what an "idle vagabond" Joseph was, according to some people's stories. What could have possibly possessed him to do such an enormous amount of copying, when, as illiterate as he was, such an operation would have been immensely hard work? Though it must be remembered all this time he was loafing round the street corners, telling fortunes and doing everything but honest toil—that is, if some people's tales are to be believed.

And, again, to show the weakness of our opponents' arguments, supposing for a moment that Joseph was an impostor, then he ran the risk of detection by copying another man's

work, he ran that risk without a single motive, except it was the privilege of toiling for nothing, or the pleasure of being exposed, when by writing it himself he need have no risk at all.



CHAPTER VII.

JOSEPH SMITH'S EARLY LIFE.

THE supposed bad character of Joseph Smith when a youth has been made the text for many a tirade against the gospel that he, by God's grace, restored to the earth. How is it possible, it is asked, that we can believe that God would choose such an instrument for His work? We answer in the first place, God's ways are not as man's ways, and He has a perfect right to choose whomsoever He will. But further we assert, knowing we speak the truth, that the stories about Joseph Smith's bad character are false, and were never whispered until after God called him, and he had commenced the work that heaven assigned him. Until that time he and his parents with their entire family enjoyed a good reputation among their neighbors.

No sooner had Joseph borne his simple testimony of angelic visitations, than the evil one commenced to vilify his character, to destroy the effect of his testimony. Evil reports spread far and wide, growing as they went, as lies always do, until the days of D. P. Hurlburt, who, when going east to obtain the "Manuscript Found," made it his business to visit the neighborhood of Joseph's early home, and gather for publication all the floating scandal that had been in circulation from the beginning. He also procured an affidavit, or affidavits, which he asserted numbers of the old neighbors of the Smith family signed. Some of the persons whose names were attached to those papers have since repudiated all knowledge thereof, and make statements with regard to Joseph Smith's character entirely at variance with the