

Dr. Cook Taylor, in the Letters on the Manufacturing Districts, which we have lately noticed in this paper, mentions as among the books which he saw upon the shelves of the operatives, the writings of the *Mormons*, or *Latter Day Saints*. "This strange form of fanaticism," he says, "which we have imported from America, seems to be taking deep root in Lancashire." This fact will perhaps give additional interest to the very interesting little book of Mr. Caswall, an 18mo of about 80 pages, but containing matter which most writers more practised than himself in the evil art of book-making would probably have swollen into 20 or 30 times the bulk. With regard to the doctrines of Christianity, it is not necessary to specify the tenets of these men—they are pretty much on a level with many other sects. But to these they add the belief, that as the Bible, so *The Book of Mormon*, is the Word of God, and that this book is in the keeping of one Joseph Smith, a "prophet of God," who professes to have been in the habit of receiving revelations ever since he was 15 years old, to have worked miracles, and to interpret unknown languages; has founded at Nauvoo, on the Mississippi, a kind of sectarian colony, mustering some 1,700 fighting men, of whom the prophet is himself General, and has gained in different parts of the world about 100,000 proselytes. Mr. Caswall visited their settlement, and of this visit his book is the result. We scarcely like quoting the blasphemies with which their proceedings are crowded; but as the plague seems to have made its way, and that largely, among the sharp and active-minded manufacturing population of Lancashire, it becomes no useless task to expose, for the sake of themselves and others, the wild notions to which their present condition—without authoritative guidance or superintendence—would seem to leave them a prey. But we must proceed to our extracts. The person and manners of the prophet will, perhaps, be the first object of curiosity. Mr. Caswall saw first his museum, which is a material part of his religious apparatus,—next, his mother—finally, himself. The former was explained to him by a Mormon shop-keeper. Certain sheets of papyrus were first shown, covered with hieroglyphics:—

"By some inexplicable mode, as the storekeeper informed me, Mr. Smith had discovered that these sheets contained the writings of Abraham, written with his own hand while in Egypt. Pointing to the figure of a man lying on a table, he said, 'That is the picture of Abraham on the point of being sacrificed. That man standing by him with a drawn knife is an idolatrous priest of the Egyptians. Abraham prayed to God, who immediately unloosed his bands, and delivered him.' Turning to another of the drawers, and pointing to a hieroglyphic representation, one of the Mormons said, 'Mr. Smith informs us that this picture is an emblem of redemption. Do you see those four little figures? Well, those are the four quarters of the earth. And do you see that big dog looking at the four figures? That is the old Devil desiring to devour the four quarters of the earth. Look at this person keeping back the big dog. That is Jesus Christ keeping the Devil from devouring the four quarters of the earth. Look down this way. This figure near the side is Jacob, and these are his two wives. Now do you see those steps?' 'What,' I replied, 'do you mean those stripes across the dress of one of Jacob's wives?' 'Yes,' he said, 'that is Jacob's ladder.' 'That is indeed curious,' I remarked, 'Jacob's ladder standing on the ground, and only reaching up to his wife's waist.'"

He shortly proceeded to call on the prophet's mother:—

"On entering the dwelling, I was introduced to this eminent personage as a traveller from England, desirous of seeing the wonders of Nauvoo. She welcomed me to the holy city, and told me that here I might see what great things the Lord had done for his people. 'I am old,' she said, 'and I shall soon stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; but what I say to you now, I would say on my death-bed. My son Joseph has had revelations from God since he was a boy, and he is indeed a true prophet of Jehovah. The angel of the Lord appeared to him 15 years since, and showed him the cave where the original golden plates of the book of Mormon were deposited. He showed him also the Urim and Thummim, by which he might understand the meaning of the inscriptions on the plates, and he showed him the golden breastplate of the high priesthood. My son received these precious gifts; he interpreted the holy record, and now the believers in that revelation are more than a hundred thousand in number. I have myself seen and handled the golden plates; they are about 8 inches long, and 6 wide; some of them are sealed together and are not to be opened, and some of them are loose. They are all connected by a ring which passes through a hole at the end of each plate, and are covered with letters beautifully engraved. I have seen and felt also the Urim and Thummim. They resemble two large bright diamonds set in a bow like a pair of spectacles. My son puts these over his eyes when he reads unknown languages, and they enable him to interpret them in English. I have likewise carried in my hands the sacred breastplate. It is composed of pure gold, and is made to fit the breast very exactly."

"While the old woman was thus delivering herself, I fixed my eyes steadily upon her. She filtered, and seemed unwilling to meet my glance; but gradually recovered her self-possession. The melancholy thought entered my mind, that this poor creature was not simply a part of her son's slavery; but that she had taken an active part in the deception. Several English and American women were in the room, and seemed to treat her with profound veneration."

Mr. Caswall had carried with him to Nauvoo an old MS. of a Greek psalter, which procured great respect and excited most superstitious longings for its possession among the Mormons. The old woman told him that "it was doubtless a revelation which had long been hidden, and which was now to be made known to the world by means of her son the prophet." A Mormon "knew it to be a revelation from the Lord, and that probably it was one of the lost books of the Bible." With this under his arm, and introduced by a Mormon doctor, he made his way to the founder of the sect:—

"I met Joseph Smith at a short distance from his dwelling, and was regularly introduced to him. I had the honour of an interview with him who is a prophet, a seer, a merchant, a 'revealer,' a president, an elder, an editor, and the general of the 'Nauvoo legion.' He is a coarse, plebeian person in aspect, and his countenance exhibits a curious mixture of the knave and the clown. His hands are large and fat, and on one of his fingers he wears a massive gold ring, upon which I saw an inscription. His dress was of coarse country manufacture, and his white hat was enveloped by a piece of black crape as a sign of mourning for his deceased brother, Ivor Carlos Smith, the late editor of the *Times and Seasons*. His age is about 31. I had not an opportunity of observing his eyes, as he appears deficient in that organ, straightforward look which characterises an honest man. He led the way to his house, accompanied by a host of elders, bishops, preachers, and common Mormons. On entering the house, chairs were provided for the prophet and myself, while the curious and gaping crowd remained standing. I handed the book to the prophet, and begged him to explain its contents. He asked me if I had any idea of its meaning. I replied, that I believed it to be a Greek psalter; but that I should like to hear his opinion. 'No,' he said; 'it ain't Greek at all; except, perhaps, a few words. What ain't Greek, is Egyptian; and what ain't Egyptian is Greek. This book is very valuable. It is a dictionary of Egyptian Hieroglyphics.' Pointing to the capital letters at the commencement of each verse, he said, 'These figures is Egyptian Hieroglyphics; and them which follows, is the interpretation of the hieroglyphics, written in the reformed Egyptian. Them characters is like the letters that was engraved on the golden plates.' Upon this, the Mormons around began to congratulate me on the information I was receiving. 'There,' they said; 'we told you so—we told you that our prophet would give you satisfaction. None but our prophet can explain these mysteries.' The prophet now turned to me, and said, 'This book ain't of no use to you, you don't understand it.' 'Oh yes,' I replied, 'it is of some use; for if I were in want of money, I could sell it, and obtain, perhaps, enough to live on for a whole year.' 'But what will you take for it?' said the prophet and his elders. 'My price,' I replied, 'is higher than you would be willing to give.' 'What price is that?' they eagerly demanded. I replied, 'I will not tell you what price I would take; but if you were to offer me this moment 1000 dollars in gold for it, you should not have it.' They then repeated their request that I should lend it to them until the prophet should have time to translate it, and promised me the most ample security; but I declined all their proposals. I placed the book in several envelopes, and as I deliberately tied up after knot, the countenances of many among them gradually sunk into an expression of great despondency. Having exhibited the book to the prophet, I requested him in return to show me his papyrus; and to give me his own explanation, which I had hitherto received only at second hand. He proceeded with me to his office, accompanied by the multitude. He produced the glass frames which I had seen on the previous day; but he did not appear very forward to explain the figures. I pointed to a particular hieroglyphic, and requested him to expound its meaning. No answer being returned, I looked up, and behold! the prophet had disappeared. The Mormons told me he had just stepped out, and would probably soon return. I waited some time, but in vain; and at length descended to the street in front of the store. Here I heard the noise of wheels, and presently I saw the prophet in his wagon flourishing his whip and driving away as fast as two fine horses could draw him. As he disappeared from view, enveloped in a cloud of dust, I felt that I had turned over another page in the great book of human nature."

In another part of the book, Mr. Caswall relates a few personal anecdotes of this worthy, mentioned to him by actual witnesses:—

"By the Mormons settled in the vicinity, no shop for the sale of spirituous liquors had been established in Montrose. After their arrival, two of their preachers commenced a grog-shop in that place, which was principally supported by the 'Latter-day Saints.' In September, 1841, the prophet, being in Montrose, became intoxicated at this shop. While in this condition, he told the by-standers 'that he could drink them all drunk,' and requested the shop-keeper to 'at all his friends at his expense.' On another occasion, having been discharged from arrest, through intercession in the writ requiring his apprehension for high treason against the State of Missouri, Smith gave a party at Montmouth, and, after a regular frolic with his lawyers and friends, became thoroughly intoxicated. On being asked how it was that he, a prophet of the Lord, could

get drunk, he replied, 'that it was necessary that he should do so, in order to prevent his followers from worshipping him as a god.'

"While intoxicated at Montrose, at another time, he was heard by several persons saying to himself, 'I am a P.R.O.F.I.T. I am a P.R.O.F.I.T.'—spelling (or rather misspelling) the word deliberately, and repeating the letters in solemn succession."

"About two years since, at a political convention held in Nauvoo, the prophet became intoxicated, and was led home by his brother Hyrum. On the following Sunday he acknowledged the fact in public. He said that he had been tempted, and had drunk too much; but that he had yielded to the temptation for the following reason:—Several of the elders had got drunk, and had never made confession; but he was desirous of getting drunk and confessing it, in order to set the elders a good example."

Some insult offered to Mrs. Smith by a Mormon elicited the following language, delivered in an open air sermon, on the 9th of May, 1841:—

"He said, 'I hope I may never find out that person; for, if I do, my appetite shall never be satisfied till I have his blood; and if he ever crosses my threshold, I will send him to hell.'"

The following are extracts from the *Times and Seasons*, the periodical in which the current revelations of the day are put forth to the world—passages, at least, of a very unquestionable tendency:—

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, let all my saints come from afar, and send ye swift messengers, yea, chosen messengers, and say unto them, 'Come ye with all your gold, and your silver, and your precious stones, and with all your antiquities; and all who have knowledge of antiquities that will come, may come; and bring the box tree, and the fir tree, and the pine tree, together with all the precious trees of the earth; and with iron, and with copper, and with brass, and with zinc, and with all your precious things of the earth; and build a house to my name, for the Most High to dwell therein: for there is not a place found upon earth, that he may come and restore again that which was lost unto you, or which he hath taken away, even the fullness of the priesthood.'"

And again:—

"Verily, I say unto you, let my servant George, and my servant Lyman, and my servant John Snider, and others, build a house unto my name, such an one as my servant Joseph shall show unto them, upon the place which he shall show unto them also. And it shall be for a house of boarding, a house that strangers may come from afar to lodge therein. . . . Let it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it; and let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein, from generation to generation. For this anointing have I put upon his head, that his blessing shall also be put upon the heads of his posterity after him; and as I said unto Abraham, even so I say unto my servant Joseph, in thee and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Therefore, let my servant Joseph and his seed after him have place in that house from generation to generation, for ever and ever, saith the Lord; and let the name of that house be called the Nauvoo-house, and let it be a delightful habitation for man, and a resting-place for the weary traveller, that he may contemplate the glory of Zion, and the glory of this corner-stone thereof."

One more extract, and we have done. The following equally intelligible sentence was enounced *viva voce* in a sermon delivered between the date of the two above passages:—

"Many of the English who have lately come here have expressed great disappointment on their arrival. Such persons have every reason to be satisfied in this beautiful and fertile country. If they choose to complain, they may; but I don't want to be troubled with their complaints. If they are not satisfied here, I have only to say this to them—Don't stay whining about me, but go back to England and be damned."

We shall recur again, though with some reluctance, to this subject, and give a few extracts from Mr. Caswall's book, elucidating the moral and religious character of the new settlement, and shall dismiss this part of our subject—the personal character of its founder—with the additional statements, that on his trial for high treason against the state of Missouri, "John Correll testified that he had heard Joseph Smith say publicly, that, 'if people molested him, he would establish his religion by the sword, and that he would become to this generation a second Mahomet (p. 76),' and that the Indians gave the greatest possible contempt for Joseph Smith, and denominate him Tshe-wal-lis-ke, which signifies 'rascal (p. 51)'—a *sobriquet* so euphonous, as well as appropriate, that we almost wonder that the prophet has not willingly substituted it for his present less dignified appellation of "Old Joe."

GEOLOGY FOR BEGINNERS.

By G. P. RICHARDSON, British Museum, London. H. Baillière, 1842.)

This is a comprehensive book of elementary instruction, which acquires a specific value, from its having grown out of an actual necessity. Mr. Richardson, the author, states that, in the course of his geological lectures, he has been constantly called upon to name some treatise more particularly intended for the tiro—more introductory than Mr. Bakewell's Introduction—more elementary than the Elements of Mr. Lyell. Not being aware of the existence of such a work, he has written the present, to supply the want—a want which, even with all the geological manuals we possess, has been most extensively felt, both by the self-teaching, and by those engaged in the tuition of others. Great praise is due to Mr. Richardson for the manner in which he has executed his task. Though in a work embracing such a vast subject the temptation was great to an author to introduce partial theories of his own, Mr. Richardson has resisted it, and has judiciously confined himself to the simplification and arrangement of the materials supplied by others. In doing this he has displayed a commensurate knowledge of the whole scope of his subject, and a satisfactory lucidity in all its divisions and subdivisions. Moderate in price, and compendious in form, the volume will be found a valuable aid either in the acquirement or the communication of the science of which it treats, entering sufficiently into details to be an enticing stimulant to study, and at the same time so far comprehensive as to map out to the mind of the beginner the vast field of knowledge which geology forces him to acquire, and the grand results to which it inevitably leads. Within the limits of 500 pages, Mr. Richardson has contrived to present a clear outline of the objects and practical usefulness of geology—of the history of the science—of its claims as an aid to religion and revelation—of the multifarious qualifications required by the geologist—of the sciences associated with geology, as mineralogy, physical geology, fossil conchology, fossil botany, and palaeontology. In addition to these there are judicious outlines of the facts and laws more immediately appertaining to the practical portions of the study of geology; the different formations, and descriptions, and classifications of their more remarkable primeval inhabitants. The volume contains upwards of 250 illustrations.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Through your kind instrumentality we hear much about the price of bread, but nothing, till yesterday, about weighing it to the purchaser.

A full-priced baker thinks himself privileged to set the act of Parliament at defiance. Thus, ask him to weigh a loaf or package of flour, and he will immediately order you to leave his shop.

Why should not bakers be obliged to carry a pair of scales and weights when supplying out-door customers, as well as coal-merchants and others? Vexatious informations against tradesmen should not be encouraged; but the testimony of any person having a loaf of short weight ought to be sufficient to convict. The inspectors of weights and measures might make themselves very useful by taking the liberty to weigh a few loaves and packages of flour.

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant, Sept. 1. A HOUSEKEEPER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The prices of both bread and meat seeming to trouble you very much just now, perhaps (in justice to those who deal in the above articles, and who have some cause to complain of the many rude remarks made by your correspondents from time to time), you will enlighten that portion of the public who may be misled by such statements, by informing them that the competition which prevails among all the retail traders in London is quite a sufficient guarantee that bread and meat will always be sold at the lowest possible profit for cash—the simple answer to high prices (when they occur) is the long and ruinous credit required by the purchaser. The advice I should give the public would be, go to market with the money in hand, and they may rest very contented that the prices they pay will give them a pretty near guess at the markets for both meat and flour. Your invaluable journal is sold for the low price of 5d.; pray how much would you let it go for upon credit? Trusting to your impartiality to insert this, I remain, your constant reader, August 31. T. SMITH, Barbican.

THE ORGAN IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—May I suggest, in answer to your correspondent "F.," that at Canterbury, where the organ is placed in the triforium, the situation is generally allowed to be too high, and at Leeds the appearance of the organ in one of the transepts is most unsymmetrical? Would not the desired effect—namely, of having an uninterrupted area throughout the cathedral—be answered by placing the organ at the west end of the nave, as in several continental churches, or on the screen between the choir and lady-chapel? May I add, that if the organ at Westminster be removed, it would be well to print it in more sober hues? At present it is decorated in what may be termed the florid gingerbread style. Yours obediently, Cambridge, August 31. H. C.